



Analysis of the Role of Pokdarwis in the Development of Tourism Villages in Matangaji Kapupaten Cirebon

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Abstract

Background. The development of community-based tourism villages is a tourism development strategy that aims to improve the welfare of local communities while maintaining the sustainability of natural and cultural resources. One of the key actors in the development of tourism villages is the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), which serves as a driver, manager, and facilitator of tourism activities at the village level.

Aims. This study aims to analyze the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency; identify factors that support and hinder their role; and formulate strategies to enhance their contribution to the sustainable development of tourism villages.

Method. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, collecting data through in-depth interviews and field observations. The research informants include Pokdarwis administrators, village officials, and communities involved in village tourism activities. The data were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions to obtain a comprehensive picture of the role and dynamics of Pokdarwis in the development of tourist villages.

Results. The study results indicate that the Matangaji Village Pokdarwis play a relatively strategic role in the development of tourist villages, particularly in driving community participation, managing tourism activities, and promoting local tourism potential. However, this role is suboptimal due to limited human resource capacity, limited funding, and insufficient stakeholder synergy. The main supporting factors include local tourism potential, community support, and institutional legitimacy from the village government, while the inhibiting factors include the lack of training, mentoring, and cross-sector coordination.

Conclusion. Based on these findings, this study recommends a strategy to expand the role of Pokdarwis by strengthening human resource capacity, strengthening institutional and organizational governance, increasing funding, and enhancing stakeholder collaboration. This strategy is expected to promote the sustainable development of Matangaji Tourism Village in Cirebon Regency by empowering local communities.

Keywords: Pokdarwis, tourism villages, community-based tourism, tourism development, Cirebon Regency.



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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a strategic sector in national development that contributes significantly to economic growth, job creation, and improved community welfare. In its evolution, the tourism development paradigm has shifted from an approach oriented toward purely economic growth to a sustainable tourism development approach that emphasizes a balance among economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions. This approach places local communities as the main actors in the management and utilization of tourism resources. One form of sustainable tourism implementation that is widely developed in Indonesia is tourism villages. A tourist village is understood as a rural area that possesses distinct natural, cultural, and social attractions, packaged in an integrated manner to support tourism. Through the development of tourism villages, the community is expected to actively participate in planning, managing, and benefiting from tourism activities, thereby promoting equitable development in rural areas. (UNWTO, 2018) (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020-2021)

The development of tourism villages is closely linked to the concept of community-based tourism (CBT), which emphasizes local community involvement as a central focus of tourism development. According to , community-based tourism aims to empower local communities to control tourism development in their area, while ensuring that economic, social, and cultural benefits are distributed fairly within the community. In this context, the presence of local organizations is a key factor in the success of tourism village development. (Suansri, 2003)

The Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) is a community-based institution established to support tourism development at the local level. Pokdarwis play a role in driving public awareness of the importance of tourism, implementing tourism activities, and mediating between the community, the government, and other stakeholders. The success of the development of tourist villages is greatly influenced by the extent to which Pokdarwis can effectively and sustainably fulfill their roles. (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif/Kemenparekraf, 2012)

Cirebon Regency is one of the areas in West Java Province with diverse tourism potential, particularly in culture, history, and rural heritage. The development of tourist villages in Cirebon Regency is part of the regional development strategy aimed at improving community welfare and strengthening local identity and wisdom. However, the development of tourism villages in this region continues to face various challenges, particularly in management, human

resource capacity, and stakeholder coordination.(Damanik, Janianton & Weber, Helmut F, 2006)

Matangaji Village, located in Cirebon Regency, has the potential to be developed into a community-based tourism village. This potential encompasses the characteristics of the village environment, the community's socio-cultural life, and opportunities to develop tourism activities that utilize local resources. However, the potential of Matangaji Village has not been fully developed or optimally planned, so the benefits of tourism for the village community remain relatively limited. In the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Pokdarwis are expected to play a central role in coordinating various village tourism activities. However, in practice, Pokdarwis still face several obstacles, including limited human resource capacity, insufficient funding, and inadequate support and coordination with the government and other relevant parties. This condition is in line with the findings of previous research, which stated that weak institutions and the capacity of Pokdarwis are often an inhibiting factor in the development of tourism villages. In addition, the sustainable development of tourism villages requires balancing the use of tourism potential with the preservation of the local environment and culture. Without effective planning and management, tourism activities can have negative impacts on the community and the surrounding environment. Therefore, an analysis of the role of Pokdarwis is important to ensure that the development of Matangaji Tourism Village can run sustainably and provide long-term benefits to the local community (A. Yoeti, 2008)(Goodwin, H, 2011).

Based on this description, this research is relevant and important to be carried out in order to analyze the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency, identify factors that support and hinder this role, and formulate strategies that can be applied to increase the role of Pokdarwis in supporting the sustainable development of tourism villages.

Studies on tourism villages and Pokdarwis have developed in several main clusters:

Sustainable Tourism & Tourism Village

The global literature, including UNWTO (2018), emphasizes the balance among economic, social, and environmental dimensions in tourism development. In Indonesia, tourism villages are positioned as an instrument for equitable development based on local potential. Previous studies have generally highlighted: tourism village development models, the economic impacts of tourist villages, Destination branding and promotion strategies, and the Strengthening of tourist facilities and attractions. However, most research still focuses on

the outcomes of tourism village development rather than on an in-depth institutional analysis of local actors.

Pokdarwis as a Local Institution

According to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2012) guidelines, Pokdarwis is positioned as a driver of tourism awareness and a strategic partner of the village government.

Previous research has tended to address: The normative role of Pokdarwis based on policy, General problems of human resource capacity, Funding challenges, General evaluation of community participation. However, most of the studies are still general descriptive and have not examined: Internal dynamics of organizations, Levels of participation in strategic decision-making, Relationship between institutional capacity and sustainability of tourism villages

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) & Empowerment

The CBT study by Peter Suansri and Harold Goodwin emphasizes community control over tourism resources. Robert Chambers and Julian Ife highlighted the importance of structural empowerment and community capacity building. However, in the practice of Indonesian tourism villages, Participation is still often functional, local institutions do not yet fully have strategic control, and empowerment has not reached the level of decision-making power

This article strengthens the study of local institutions by focusing on: the Analysis of the strategic role of Pokdarwis; the identification of supporting and inhibiting factors; and the Formulation of capacity-building strategies based on local contexts. Thus, this article is on the cutting between: Institutional study of tourism villages, Community-Based Tourism, Community empowerment theory

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Tourism and Tourism Villages as the Basis for Analysis of the Role of Pokdarwis

Tourism is a multidimensional phenomenon characterized by complex interactions among tourists, local communities, governments, and business actors within a given location. emphasizing that sustainable tourism must consider economic, social, and environmental aspects simultaneously. In the context of villages, tourism is not only an economic activity but also a means of strengthening cultural identity and environmental preservation. A tourist

village is defined as a rural area that preserves the authenticity of village life, as reflected in its architecture, culture, and social activities. This concept emphasizes that tourist villages must provide an authentic experiences for tourists while empowering local communities to serve as managers and beneficiaries. Analysis indicators related to the concept of tourism villages include Pokdarwis' ability to identify and manage village tourism potential, such as natural attractions, culture, and local creative economy activities. This analysis ensures that Pokdarwis not only act as implementers of activities but also as managers who understand the village's unique characteristics and potential. In addition, the indicators also include the role of Pokdarwis in maintaining the sustainability of the village environment and culture. This is important because tourist villages can have social and environmental impacts if not managed effectively. The development of tourist villages requires coordination between the community, the village government, and other stakeholders. Therefore, the analysis indicators also assess the extent to which Pokdarwis can build a network of cooperation and cross-party coordination. This is essential to ensure that tourism development strategies are implemented effectively and sustainably. In this research, the concept of tourism village provides a theoretical basis for evaluating the extent to which Pokdarwis have contributed to the development of Matangaji Tourism Village. This evaluation will examine the role of Pokdarwis from managerial, participatory, and sustainability perspectives.(UNWTO, 2018)(Nuryanti, 1993)

This concept also underpins the examination of strategies to expand the role of Pokdarwis, both in the short and long term. The concept of tourism and tourist villages can be mapped systematically, enabling each finding to be directly linked to relevant theories. This approach strengthens the validity of the analysis and makes an academic and practical contribution to the development of tourism villages.

The Concept of Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis)

(Ministry of Finance) Tourism and Creative Economy/ Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2012) The Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) is a community organization formed independently by the community to support and develop tourism activities in an area. Pokdarwis serves as a forum for community participation in tourism development, with the primary goal of fostering community awareness and active participation in creating a conducive tourism climate. According to Pokdarwis, it functions as a community driver in realizing Sapta Pesona and improving the quality of service and competitiveness of tourist destinations at the local level. Conceptually, the existence of Pokdarwis is very closely related

to the community-based tourism approach (*Community-based tourism*). In this approach, local communities are positioned as the primary subjects of tourism development, with rights and responsibilities in the management of tourism resources. emphasized that the success of community-based tourism is highly determined by the strength of local institutions that are able to organize communities, build capacity, and bridge community interests with external parties. In this case, Pokdarwis serves as a local institution that performs this function.(Suansri, 2003)

The role of Pokdarwis in tourism development encompasses various aspects, ranging from planning and implementation to the evaluation of tourism activities. Pokdarwis play a role in identifying and managing tourism potential, coordinating community activities, and promoting tourist destinations. In addition, Pokdarwis function as mediators between the community and the government, business actors, and other stakeholders. This role places Pokdarwis as a strategic actor in the sustainable development of tourist villages. In practice, the effectiveness of the role of Pokdarwis is greatly influenced by human resource capacity and the organization's institutional strength. stated that effective tourism management requires competent human resources, an understanding of tourism, and professional competence. Therefore, increasing the capacity of Pokdarwis members through training, mentoring, and ongoing coaching is a key factor in improving Pokdarwis performance in the development of tourist villages. (Damanik, Janianton & Weber, Helmut F, 2006) (A. Yoeti, 2008)

In the context of national policy, Pokdarwis has been recognized as a strategic partner of the government in tourism development. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia encourages strengthening the role of Pokdarwis through empowerment, mentoring, and facilitation programs to develop tourist villages. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of the concept of Pokdarwis is an important theoretical foundation in analyzing the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency. (Kementrian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020-2021)

Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Community-Based Tourism (Suansri, 2003) (CBT) is a tourism development approach that places local communities as the main actors in the planning, management, and utilization of tourism activities. The concept of CBT emerged in response to the conventional tourism development model, which is often oriented toward large investments and ignores the interests of local communities. According to CBT, it aims to improve community welfare through active

participation in tourism management, while ensuring that economic, social, and cultural benefits are enjoyed equitably by the local community. In the CBT approach, local communities not only serve as service providers and laborers but also as decision-makers in the tourism development process. emphasized that CBT emphasizes the importance of community control over tourism resources, so that the community has a strong bargaining position in determining the direction and form of tourism development in their area. Thus, CBT fosters community independence and reduces dependence on external parties.(Goodwin, H., & Santilli, R, 2009)

Community-based tourism is closely linked to the principles of sustainable tourism development. According to , sustainable tourism development must balance economic, social, and environmental dimensions. CBT contributes to sustainability by fostering community involvement in efforts to preserve the local environment and culture. With a sense of ownership of tourism activities, people tend to be more responsible in maintaining natural resources and cultural values that are tourist attractions. In practice, the success of CBT implementation is greatly influenced by the strength of local institutions and the capacity of human resources. stating that strong local institutions, such as community groups or village tourism organizations, are the main prerequisites in community-based tourism management. The institution functions as a forum for coordination, decision-making, and conflict management that may arise in the tourism development process.(UNWTO, 2018)(Damanik, Janianton & Weber, Helmut F, 2006)

In the context of tourism villages in Indonesia, CBT is a relevant and strategic approach for empowering village communities. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia places CBT as one of the main principles in the development of tourist villages, with the aim of improving the welfare of village communities and maintaining the sustainability of the local environment and culture. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of CBT is an important foundation for analyzing the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency.(Kementrian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020-2021)

Community Empowerment Theory

Community empowerment is a development approach that aims to increase the community's ability, independence, and capacity to manage resources and determine the direction of development in accordance with its needs and potential. The concept of

empowerment emphasizes a shift in the community's role from an object of development to an active, empowered subject in the decision-making process. According to , community empowerment focuses on strengthening underprivileged community groups to achieve greater access, control, and benefits from development resources.(Chambers, 1998)

From a social development perspective, community empowerment is not limited to economic dimensions; it encompasses social, political, and cultural dimensions as well. states that community empowerment aims to increase the capacity of individuals and groups to understand the problems they face, organize themselves, and collectively advocate for their interests. Thus, empowerment is a sustainable process and requires the active participation of the community in every stage of development.(Ife, J., & Tesoriero, F, 2008)

The theory of community empowerment also emphasizes the importance of strengthening capacity (*capacity building*) as the main prerequisite for successful empowerment. According to , empowerment involves three main components: empowerment at the individual, organizational, and community levels. At the individual level, empowerment is realized through increased knowledge, skills, and confidence. At the organizational level, empowerment is reflected in local organizations' ability to manage programs and resources independently. Meanwhile, at the community level, empowerment is achieved through increased community participation and control over the development process. In the context of tourism development, community empowerment theory provides an important foundation for implementing community-based tourism. Community empowerment in tourism aims to ensure that local communities obtain equitable economic benefits, are involved in decision-making, and play an active role in preserving the local environment and culture. emphasizing that empowerment in tourism can be seen from four main dimensions, namely economic, psychological, social, and political empowerment, which together determine the success of community-based tourism development. (Zimmerman, B.J., 2000) (Scheyvens, 1999)

In the development of tourist villages, community empowerment is achieved by strengthening local institutions, increasing human resource capacity, and creating inclusive participation spaces. The existence of Pokdarwis as a local institution has a strategic role in implementing the principles of community empowerment at the village level. Therefore, understanding the theory of community empowerment is very relevant to analyzing the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency, especially in encouraging community participation and independence in a sustainable manner.

Based on the literature review and article content, there are several research gaps that have been successfully identified:

Gap 1 — Dominance of Normative Approaches

Some previous studies have only explained the function of Pokdarwis normatively according to government guidelines, without analyzing how these functions are carried out empirically in the field. This article addresses the gap by presenting a contextual case study of Matangaji Village.

Gap 2 — Lack of Internal Institutional Analysis. There have been few studies that examine the operational organizational structure of Pokdarwis, analyze managerial and governance capacity, or measure the level of decision-making participation. This article shows that participation is still at a functional stage, not yet strategic.

Gap 3 — Lack of CBT and Empowerment Integration. Previous research has often discussed CBT without systematically linking it to empowerment theory, and it does not measure the economic, social, psychological, and political dimensions of empowerment. This article integrates CBT and empowerment theory as an analytical framework.

Gap 4 — The Local Context of Cirebon Regency is minimally researched. Research on tourist villages in Cirebon Regency is relatively limited compared with other areas, such as Yogyakarta and Bali. This study provides a new empirical contribution from the local context of West Java.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to examine in depth the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency, along with the supporting factors, constraints, and strategies to enhance their role. The qualitative approach emphasizes understanding social phenomena from the perpetrator's perspective, yielding context-rich data that enable holistic analysis. This approach is consistent with the nature of community-based tourism research, in which local social and cultural realities significantly shape the success of tourism development.(Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N., 2018)

The research design is qualitative descriptive. Descriptive research aims to describe phenomena systematically, factually, and accurately, without manipulating or intervening in the research object. In the context of this research, qualitative descriptive research enables researchers to describe how Pokdarwis operate, how the community participates, and the factors that affect the effectiveness of the Pokdarwis role in Matangaji Village.(Sugiyono, 2019)

Research data was obtained through in-depth interviews and participatory observations. In-depth interviews were conducted with Pokdarwis administrators, community leaders, and village governments related to the development of tourist villages. Participatory observation was conducted to observe firsthand Pokdarwis activities, interactions with the community, and village social and cultural conditions that affect tourism. This approach allows researchers to obtain valid, comprehensive, and contextual information. (Marshall, C. & Rossman, G, 2014)

In addition, this research is a case study because the analysis focuses on a single location, namely Matangaji Tourism Village. The case study enables researchers to explore the phenomenon in depth, including the social, institutional, and tourism village development strategies implemented by Pokdarwis. emphasizing that case studies are well-suited to examine real contexts where the boundaries between phenomena and their contexts are unclear. (Yin, R. K., 2018)

This approach and type of research were chosen to ensure that the analysis results accurately describe real conditions in the field and comprehensively address the problem formulation. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and case studies, research can capture the social, cultural, and institutional nuances that shape the role of Pokdarwis, which are difficult to measure with quantitative methods.

Thus, this approach and type of research align with the research purpose to analyze the role of Pokdarwis in the development of tourist villages, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate strategies to enhance the role of Pokdarwis in a sustainable manner. The combination of in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and case studies provides a strong methodological foundation for producing valid, relevant, and applicable findings.

Research Location and Time

This research was conducted in Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency, West Java, because the village has diverse tourism potential and is actively managed by the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis). Matangaji Village was selected as the research site because Pokdarwis are established and active in developing community-based tourism villages, thereby aligning with the research objectives to comprehensively analyze their role. The selection of location also considers the characteristics of the tourist village that reflect the uniqueness of the culture, environment, and socio-economic of the local community. Matangaji Village has several excellent tourist attractions, including local cultural attractions, natural beauty, and community creative activities. This condition enables researchers to study the interaction

among Pokdarwis, the community, and tourists directly. In addition, this village exemplifies the implementation of community-based tourism (CBT), in which the community plays an active role in management, decision-making, and the sharing of tourism-related economic benefits. In addition to its tourism potential, this location was chosen for the availability of data and the accessibility of key informants. Pokdarwis in Matangaji Village already have adequate activity records, program documentation, and organizational structures for in-depth analysis. This supports the validity and reliability of the data collected through interviews and observations. (Nuryanti, 1993)(Suansri, 2003)(Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N., 2018)

The research is planned to be long-term. Four months, starting from the preparation stage, data collection, and initial analysis. This timing accounts for the schedule of Pokdarwis activities, the village's tourism season, and the availability of informants. The research was conducted during the tourist village's active period, ensuring that the observed conditions reflected real practices in tourism management by Pokdarwis. In qualitative research, appropriate time selection is essential for obtaining authentic and contextual data. emphasizing that the context of time must be adjusted to the phenomenon being studied in order for the analysis to reflect the true dynamics. Therefore, this study adjusted the observation and interview schedule to the routine agenda of Pokdarwis, including organizational meetings, training, and tourism activities in the village. With appropriate location and timing, this research is expected to obtain representative and relevant data to address the research problem. This enables researchers to analyze, in depth and accurately, the roles of Pokdarwis, the supporting and inhibiting factors, and the strategies for enhancing their roles, in accordance with the research objectives to support the sustainable development of tourism villages. (Marshall, C. & Rossman, G, 2014)(Yin, R. K., 2018)

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study employs Descriptive Qualitative Analysis, which emphasizes an in-depth understanding of social phenomena through systematic, contextual descriptions. This analysis aims to evaluate the role of Pokdarwis, the supporting and inhibiting factors, and sustainable tourism village development strategies, in accordance with the indicators in Chapter IV. (Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N., 2018)

The first step is the transcription and organization of the data. All interviews are recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accurate information. Observation and documentation data were classified into analysis categories, including the role of Pokdarwis, community

participation, and tourism village development strategies. This organization facilitates the association of empirical data with the Chapter IV indicators.

The next stage is Data Reduction, i.e., screening, summarizing, and selecting relevant information. This reduction emphasizes key information on the role of Pokdarwis, supporting and inhibiting factors, and tourism village development strategies. (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J., 2020)

Furthermore, coding and categorization are carried out based on themes or categories in accordance indicators, such as:

1. The role of Pokdarwis: attraction management, coordination, tourism promotion.
2. Supporting and inhibiting factors: community participation, institutional support, and limited resources.
3. Development strategy: program innovation, member training, and collaboration with the government.

The next stage is thematic analysis, which aims to identify patterns, relationships, and linkages between the role of Pokdarwis and the success of tourism village development. This analysis reveals the internal mechanisms of Pokdarwis, interactions with the community, and external factors that affect the effectiveness of its role.

DISCUSSION

Matangaji Tourism Village is located in Cirebon Regency, West Java Province, and is recognized as a village that has developed its community-based tourism potential. This village has unique characteristics that combine local wisdom, traditional culture, and rural natural beauty, making it an attractive tourist destination for domestic and foreign tourists. Its strategic location, easily accessible from the center of Cirebon, suggests that this village has the potential to be further developed into a leading tourist village. The majority of residents of Matangaji Village work as farmers, craftsmen, and micro-entrepreneurs. However, as tourism develops, people begin to play an active role in creative economy activities related to tourism, such as handicraft making, traditional culinary, and homestays. This is in line with the concept (Nuryanti, 1993) Community-Based Tourism (CBT) emphasizes the involvement of local communities in the management and development of village tourism potential. (Suansri, 2003)

This village offers a variety of excellent tourist attractions that are the primary draws for visitors. Among others, natural tourism in the form of rice fields and green hills, cultural tourism in the form of traditional art performances, and educational activities such as local craft

workshops. Each attraction is managed with the aim of prioritizing an authentic experience for tourists while empowering the local community. This concept aligns with the theory of Tourism Village Design, which emphasizes the integration of the tourist experience and the empowerment of local communities. Institutionally, the management of the Matangaji Tourism Village is supported by (Nuryanti, 1993) Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), which is active in planning, implementing, and evaluating tourism activities. Pokdarwis function as the main drivers of village tourism development, mediators between the village government and the community, and promoters of village potential. The organizational structure of Pokdarwis comprises a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and several field coordinators, each responsible for attraction development, promotion, and community development. In the socio-cultural field, Matangaji Village has a strong tradition and has been passed down from generation to generation. Cultural activities such as local art performances, traditional ceremonies, and village festivals are used to attract tourists. Community participation in these cultural activities strengthens local identity while increasing community involvement in tourism, which is an important indicator in CBT theory. (Damanik, Janianton & Weber, Helmut F, 2006) (Goodwin, H., & Santilli, R, 2009)

Environmental factors are also the attraction of this village. The beauty of nature, the wisdom of agricultural land management, and efforts to maintain environmental cleanliness demonstrate public awareness of Sustainable Tourism. This approach to environmental management aligns with the theory of community empowerment, which emphasizes the balance between economic development and environmental conservation. From an economic perspective, this village demonstrates growth potential in the tourism sector. Homestay businesses, local culinary, and handicrafts are an additional source of income for the community. Interview data showed that these activities provided equitable economic opportunities, especially for women's groups and village youth, thereby supporting inclusive development goals. This phenomenon is consistent with the theory of community empowerment, which emphasizes strengthening local economic capacity. (Chambers, 1998) (Ife, J., & Tesoriero, F, 2008)

The involvement of Pokdarwis in community development is a key factor in the success of tourism villages. Pokdarwis conducted training in small business management, promotional skills, and counseling for tourism services. This activity increases the ability of community members to actively and independently participate in tourism development, thereby creating the social and economic sustainability of the village (Zimmerman, B.J, 2000)

Overall, Matangaji Tourism Village is a real example of holistic community-based tourism development. The integration of the natural potential, culture, economy, and village institutions creates a tourism ecosystem that supports sustainable development. This overview of the village serves as the basis for the analysis of the role of Pokdarwis, supporting and inhibiting factors, and role-enhancement strategies, which will be discussed in the next subchapter, thereby enabling a systematic analysis.

Profile, Structure, and Characteristics of Pokdarwis of Matangaji Village

Pokdarwis Matangaji Village is a community organization formed in a participatory manner as a forum for the community to play an active role in the development of village tourism. Pokdarwis function as movers, managers, and partners of the village government in planning and implementing tourism activities at the local level. The existence of Pokdarwis aligns with the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia's policy, which positions Pokdarwis as the spearhead of community-based tourism village development. (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif/Kemenparekraf, 2012)

The organizational structure of the Matangaji Village Pokdarwis comprises the chairman, secretary, treasurer, and several departments that oversee strategic aspects of tourist village management, including tourist attractions, cleanliness and the environment, and promotion and documentation. The structure's division of tasks aims to clarify responsibilities, enabling more effective and coordinated management of tourist villages. However, based on field observations and interviews with Pokdarwis management, the implementation of organizational tasks and functions remains constrained, particularly by human resource capacity and budget constraints. This condition aligns with findings from previous research, which indicate that most Pokdarwis at the village level continue to face challenges in strengthening the institutions and professionalism of tourism management.

The Matangaji Village Pokdarwis has played a central role in the development of tourist villages through planning, tourism attraction management, community empowerment, and promotional and marketing activities. The role reflects the basic principles of *Community-based tourism*, which places the local community as the main subject of tourism development, not just objects or beneficiaries. The active involvement of the community through Pokdarwis is an important indicator in assessing the sustainability of tourism village development. However, this study also found that the role of Pokdarwis in Matangaji Village is not fully optimal relative to the ideal role of Pokdarwis as articulated in the national tourism policy.

Limited human resource capacity, weak funding support, and a lack of sustained assistance have prevented Pokdarwis from carrying out all their functions optimally. This finding is consistent with the view that strengthening the Pokdarwis institution is the primary prerequisite for the success of tourism village development. From the perspective of community empowerment, the study's results indicate that the Matangaji Village community's involvement in tourism activities remains at the stage of functional participation, in which the community serves as an implementer but is not yet fully involved in strategic decision-making. explained that sustainable community empowerment requires increased community control over resources and decisions that affect their lives. Therefore, the role of Pokdarwis should be understood not only as the implementation of activities but also as a forum for collective decision-making in the development of tourist villages. (Suansri, 2003)(Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif/Kemenparekraf, 2012)(Zimmerman, 1995)

An important implication of these findings is the need for a systematic and sustainable strategy to strengthen Pokdarwis. The strengthening includes increasing human resource capacity through destination management training, tourism services, and digital marketing; providing sustainable funding support; and strengthening the governance of the Pokdarwis organization so that it can independently carry out the functions of planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program. This aligns with the view that emphasizes the importance of structured tourism planning and management to ensure the sustainability of tourist destinations. In addition, the results of this study underscore the importance of strengthening synergy and collaboration among tourism stakeholders, including village governments, local governments, tourism offices, academics, and tourism businesses. Effective collaboration is believed to strengthen Pokdarwis' position as a connecting actor (Yoeti, O. A., 2008), between the community and the government in the development of tourist villages. emphasized that the success of tourism villages is greatly influenced by the existence of integrated cross-sector coordination and support.(Kementrian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia, 2019)

Academically, this research contributes to the study of the role of Pokdarwis in the development of tourist villages, particularly in the local context of Cirebon Regency, which remains relatively under-researched. The findings of this research can serve as a reference for future research on the institutional strengthening of Pokdarwis, the development of culture-based tourism villages, and community empowerment models in the tourism sector. In practice, the results of this research are expected to serve as the basis for village and local governments in formulating policies and programs for the development of tourism villages that are more

contextually grounded and empirically informed. The recommendations arising from this research aim to strengthen the role of Pokdarwis in a sustainable manner, enabling Matangaji Tourism Village to develop into an independent, competitive tourist destination and to provide economic, social, and cultural benefits for the local community.

The Role of Pokdarwis in the Development of Matangaji Tourism Village

Tourism planning in Matangaji Village is a crucial stage in the development of tourism villages, as it determines the direction, scale, and quality of tourism activities. Based on the results of interviews with members of Pokdarwis Sdri. Mely Uswatun Hasanah, the planning process began with the identification of village potential, covering the community's natural resources, culture, culinary heritage, and creative economy. Pokdarwis members stated, "We started by mapping the potential of nature, culture, and the creative economy. Then make an annual activity schedule and determine the priority scale of tourist attractions." This statement shows that Pokdarwis plays a mediator who connects community aspirations with tourism development strategies, in accordance with Pokdarwis' theory, which emphasizes the function of tourism awareness groups as facilitators and drivers of tourism villages. (Damanik, Janianton & Weber, Helmut F, 2006)

Pokdarwis members added that they collectively determine the tourism program, fund allocation, and division of responsibilities among members. "We determine the type of activity, the allocation of funds, and who is responsible for each program, while listening to the input of residents," said one of the Pokdarwis members. This analysis shows that tourism planning in Matangaji Village is participatory, integrating citizen input to ensure that the program is more relevant and aligned with local needs. This is in line with the principles of Community-Based Tourism (CBT), which emphasizes community participation in every stage of tourism development. (Suansri, 2003)

Community participation is an important indicator of planning success. Villagers are involved through deliberative meetings, group discussions, and consultation forums, enabling them to provide input on attraction types, activity schedules, and local resource management. One resident stated, "Residents are invited to a deliberation meeting, provide ideas about cultural and culinary attractions, and provide input for the activity schedule." This citizen involvement not only improves the program's quality but also fosters a sense of social ownership, a core principle of community empowerment theory. (Zimmerman, B.J, 2000)

In planning, Pokdarwis also integrates the evaluation of previous activities as a consideration. The analysis of the findings shows that a routine evaluation of the previous year's activities helps Pokdarwis determine the priorities for new activities and adjust strategies to meet tourists' needs and community capabilities. This approach reinforces the principle of local capacity-based empowerment, in which the community is not only an object, but a subject of decision-making.(Chambers, 1998)

Pokdarwis applies the principle of sustainability in planning. The tourism program is designed to provide long-term economic, social, and cultural benefits. The Pokdarwis member emphasized, "We always consider the long-term impact on the community, so that tourism activities provide sustainable benefits for the village." This demonstrates the alignment between Pokdarwis' practice and CBT theory, and with the concept of sustainable tourism villages, which emphasizes the integration of the utilization of local potential with the protection of cultural and environmental values. The institutional structure of Pokdarwis in planning is also clearly visible. The chairman leads the coordination, the secretary handles the documentation, the treasurer manages the finances, and the coordinator for attractions and promotions prepares the field program. This systematic division of roles enables more effective planning and minimizes internal conflicts. This analysis supports the theory of Pokdarwis as a tourism-conscious group that must have a strong institutional structure to optimize its role.(Nuryanti, 1993)(Damanik, Janianton & Weber, Helmut F, 2006)

Planning-supporting factors also arise from external support, such as training, funding, and facilities provided by governments or NGOs. Pokdarwis members said, "Training from the government, financial support, and homestay facilities helped us to develop a more professional tourism program." This support strengthens Pokdarwis' internal capacity, consistent with the theory of community empowerment, which emphasizes the importance of social capital and institutional capacity in enhancing the effectiveness of local groups. The role of Pokdarwis in tourism planning in Matangaji Village is strategic, participatory, and sustainable, involving strong internal coordination, community participation, and external support. This planning process is the foundation for implementing effective activities, improving the quality of tourist attractions, and empowering the community. This analysis provides clear empirical evidence that Pokdarwis are not only managers of activities but also drivers of social, economic, and cultural development in tourist villages, according to the indicators and theories that underpin the research.(Ife, J., & Tesoriero, F, 2008)

Factors that Support and Hinder the Role of Pokdarwis in the Development of Tourism Villages in Matangaji Village, Cirebon Regency

The role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village is not isolated; it is shaped by internal and external factors that interact. Based on the results of in-depth interviews with Pokdarwis Members and village officials, and on field observations, these factors can be classified as supporting or inhibiting. Identifying these two factors is important for understanding the effectiveness of the role of Pokdarwis and for formulating strategies to strengthen Pokdarwis's support for the sustainable development of tourist villages.

Factors Supporting the Role of Pokdarwis

One of the main supporting factors for the implementation of the role of the Matangaji Village Pokdarwis is the availability of local tourism potential, which is relatively diverse and supports community-based development. This potential encompasses community cultural activities, rural social life, and the village environment's character, which still reflects local values. The existence of this potential is in line with the concept of tourism village development, which emphasizes the use of local resources as the main attraction (Yoeti, O. A., 2008)

The next supporting factor is Social support and participation of village communities. The study results indicate that some residents of Matangaji Village hold positive attitudes toward the development of tourist villages and are willing to participate in activities initiated by Pokdarwis. This community participation reflects the existence of social capital in the form of trust, mutual cooperation, and a sense of belonging to the village, which is an important element in the success of community-based tourism (*Community-based tourism*) (Suansri, 2003)

The institutional legitimacy of Pokdarwis is recognized by the village government as an important supporting factor in the fulfillment of its role. The formal recognition provides a legal basis for Pokdarwis to participate in village development activities, particularly in the tourism sector. Although still limited, village government support provides space for Pokdarwis to coordinate and contribute to tourism village programs. This aligns with the national policy that positions Pokdarwis as a strategic government partner in the development of community-based tourism. Other supporting factors are (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif/Kemenparekraf, 2012) Motivation and commitment of Pokdarwis members in developing tourism villages. The study results indicate that Pokdarwis members have a

strong desire to improve community welfare through tourism development. This intrinsic motivation is an important resource for maintaining the sustainability of Pokdarwis activities, despite various resource limitations.

Factors That Hinder the Role of Pokdarwis

Identify various inhibiting factors that affect the optimization of the role of Pokdarwis in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village. The most dominant inhibiting factors are Limited human resource capacity. Most Pokdarwis members lack formal educational or training backgrounds in tourism, destination management, or tourism services. This condition limits Pokdarwis' ability to prepare strategic plans, manage tourism activities professionally, and evaluate the development of tourist villages. The next inhibiting factor is funding limitations. The Matangaji Village Pokdarwis remain highly dependent on non-governmental funds and limited support from the village government, which limits the optimal development of tourism support facilities, the improvement of attraction quality, and promotional activities. This limited funding has implications for the low competitiveness of tourist villages in attracting tourist visits. stated that adequate funding support is one of the main prerequisites for the sustainable development of tourism villages. In addition, (Kementrian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia, 2019)The lack of continuous training and mentoring from local governments and related agencies is also a significant impediment. Sporadic and unsustainable training undermines the capacity-building of Pokdarwis members, preventing them from operating optimally. In fact, continuous assistance is needed to strengthen the Pokdarwis institution and improve the professionalism of tourism village management (I. A. Lestari, S. Rahim, & R. Rasdiana., 2023)

Another inhibiting factor is the lack of effective coordination and synergy among tourism stakeholders at both the village and regional levels. Coordination that is not carried out systematically leads to overlapping programs, a lack of clarity in role division, and weak policy support for the development of tourist villages. This condition may hinder the development of integrated and sustainable village tourism governance. Overall, the presence of these supporting and inhibiting factors indicates that the role of the Matangaji Village Pokdarwis is dynamic. On the one hand, Pokdarwis possess strong social capital and local potential; on the other, they still face various structural and institutional limitations that require strategic intervention.

Strategy to Increase the Role of Pokdarwis in Supporting the Development of Sustainable Tourism Villages in Matangaji Village, Cirebon Regency

The role of Pokdarwis as well as supporting and inhibiting factors in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, requires the formulation of a comprehensive and contextual strategy to increase the role of Pokdarwis in a sustainable manner. This strategy is not only aimed at solving technical problems faced by Pokdarwis but also at strengthening institutions and increasing human resource capacity, enabling Pokdarwis to carry out their roles in a more professional, independent, and sustainable manner.

Pokdarwis Human Resource Capacity Building Strategy

One of the main strategies to expand the role of the Matangaji Village Pokdarwis is to enhance human resource capacity through planned, sustainable training and mentoring programs. The training focuses not only on the technical aspects of tourism, such as tourism services and attraction management, but also on managerial aspects, including destination planning, organizational management, and tourism marketing. This increase in human resource capacity is particularly important, given that the study's results indicate that the limited competence of Pokdarwis members remains the primary inhibiting factor in the development of tourism villages. In addition, sustained support from local governments, tourism offices, and academics is needed to ensure that the knowledge and skills gained through training are effectively applied in tourism village management. This assistance is expected to encourage Pokdarwis to be more adaptable to changes and demands in an increasingly competitive tourism management environment.

Strategies for Strengthening the Institutional and Governance of Pokdarwis

The next strategy is to strengthen the Pokdarwis institution by clarifying the organizational structure, establishing clear divisions of tasks, and strengthening the administrative system and decision-making processes. This institutional strengthening is needed so that Pokdarwis not only functions as an implementer of activities but also plays a strategic role in planning, implementing, and evaluating the development of tourist villages. In addition, it is necessary to prepare a tourism village planning document that involves Pokdarwis as the primary actor, so that tourism village development is more focused and sustainable. With a clear plan, Pokdarwis are expected to manage resources more effectively and reduce dependence on external parties.

Strategy to Strengthen Funding and Resource Support

The funding limitations faced by the Matangaji Village Pokdarwis require a strategy to strengthen financial resource support. This strategy can be implemented through collaboration among village governments, local governments, and private parties concerned about tourism development. In addition, Pokdarwis should be encouraged to develop tourism business units as a source of independent income, thereby reducing the dependence of tourism activities on external assistance. This increased funding is expected to support the development of tourism support facilities, improve the quality of attractions, and enable more intensive and targeted promotional activities.

Strategies for Increasing Community Participation and Empowerment

The strategy to increase the role of Pokdarwis must also be directed toward strengthening local community participation and empowerment. Pokdarwis needs to encourage community involvement not only as the implementer of activities, but also as a partner in strategic decision-making related to the development of tourist villages. By increasing community participation, it is hoped that a stronger sense of ownership will develop in tourism villages, thereby maintaining the sustainability of development. In addition, community empowerment through tourism activities is expected to improve the community's economic welfare while preserving the village's culture and environment.

Strategy to Strengthen Synergy and Collaboration Between Stakeholders

The final strategy, equally important, is to strengthen synergy and collaboration among tourism stakeholders at both the village and regional levels. Pokdarwis need to be encouraged to establish more intensive cooperation with village governments, tourism offices, academics, and tourism business actors. Effective collaboration is believed to strengthen Pokdarwis' position as the primary driver of tourism village development. This synergy among stakeholders is expected to enable integrated tourism village governance, ensuring that the development of Matangaji Tourism Village can be sustained and provide optimal benefits for the local community.

The novelty of this article can be formulated in several aspects:

Novelty Contextual. This study presents a specific case study of Matangaji Tourism Village, which has not been widely researched in the academic literature.

Novelty Analytical. The research not only describes the role of Pokdarwis, but Systematically identifying supporting and inhibiting factors, categorizes structural, capacity, and coordinating barriers, Linking findings to CBT theory and empowerment

Conceptual novelty. This article shows that the role of Pokdarwis in Matangaji Village remains at the stage of functional participation and has not yet achieved strategic empowerment (decision-making empowerment). It makes a theoretical contribution in clarifying: The stages of empowerment in tourist villages, the relationship between institutional capacity and the sustainability of the destination

Novelty Strategis (Policy-Oriented Contribution). This research does not stop at problem diagnosis, but formulates concrete strategies: Strengthening human resource capacity, Strengthening organizational governance, Diversifying funding sources, and Strengthening cross-stakeholder collaboration. This contribution is applicable to and relevant for village- and regional-level policymaking.

Research on tourism villages and Pokdarwis has developed within the frameworks of sustainable and community-based tourism, but most remains normative and focuses on economic impacts, not yet examining the institutional dynamics of Pokdarwis in depth within specific local contexts.

CONCLUSION

Pokdarwis plays a strategic role in the development of Matangaji Tourism Village, Cirebon Regency, particularly as a driver of community participation, implementers of village tourism activities, and facilitators connecting the community with the village government and external parties. Pokdarwis play a role in identifying tourism potential, coordinating tourism activities, and encouraging community involvement. However, this role remains more prominent during implementation and is less effective in strategic planning and the evaluation of tourism village development.

Second, the role of Pokdarwis in the development of tourism villages is influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include the availability of local tourism potential, social support and community participation, the village government's institutional legitimacy of Pokdarwis, and the motivation and commitment of Pokdarwis members. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors include limited human resource capacity, limited funding, a lack of continuous training and mentoring, and inadequate coordination and synergy

among tourism stakeholders. These inhibiting factors prevent Pokdarwis from fulfilling their role optimally and sustainably.

Third, increasing the role of Pokdarwis in supporting the sustainable development of Matangaji Tourism Village requires a comprehensive and integrated strategy. The strategy includes increasing the capacity of Pokdarwis' human resources, strengthening institutional and organizational governance, strengthening funding and resource support, increasing community participation and empowerment, and strengthening synergy and collaboration between stakeholders. The implementation of these strategies is expected to encourage Pokdarwis to play a more effective role as the primary actors in the management and development of tourist villages.

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