Participatory Action Research (PAR) Model for Developing A Tourism Village in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) Model is not only referred to as a research method but is also referred to as an approach to community empowerment and development, including community-based tourism development. This paper describes the stages of empowerment and development of a tourist village in Indonesia using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach consisting of observing, mapping, reviewing, making program diagram maps, and re-planning the development of tourist villages. The data obtained through the PAR approach were analyzed using the Nvivo 12 Plus Software. This paper reveals that Ngadas Village has tourism potential, including nature tourism and socio-cultural tourism. The tourism potential of Ngadas Village has not been managed and developed properly due to the limitations of village facilities and infrastructure that support the presence of Ngadas Village as a tourist village. The participatory integrative model is a model that can be implemented to develop Ngadas Village as an agriculture-based tourism village. Through this model, stakeholders, especially the village government, local government, universities, and local communities, can synergize and play a role according to their respective abilities which are directed to realize the same goal, namely to build Ngadas Village as a tourist village as a source of opinion that supports community welfare. The findings of this study contribute to the development of local tourism in developing countries, especially in Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Massively launched by the Indonesian government, community empowerment programs have experienced their ups and downs. Theoretically, community empowerment is derived from the perspective of people-centered development, which is the antithesis of the previous approach, namely the approach rooted in growth (Buckingham & Brodsky, 2021; Bunche-Smith et al., 2018; Mayaka et al., 2020; Cho & De Moya, 2016; Wardani et al., 2021; Fetterman, 2018). In addition, the shift from a top-down to a bottom-up empowerment strategy is also increasingly popular (Schuster et al., 2019; Luisi & Hämel, 2021; Mulder et al., 2018; Erdiaw-Kwasie & Acheampong, 2018; Maryunani, 2019; Simmons, 1994). The bottom-up strategy is part of implementing a participatory and collaborative empowerment model, namely community empowerment involving local communities who understand the potential and problems of rural development (Bien-Gund & Elrowmeim, 2019; Simanjuntak & Syahputra, 2021; Hossen, 2016; Jamal & Getz, 1995).

Many previous studies explained that collaborative and participatory empowerment models positively impact regional and village development in all development sectors, including tourism (López-Guzmán et al., 2011; Okazaki, 2008). Empowerment activities that involve the community in the formulation of programs, activities, and budgeting result in empowerment activities that impact the success of development (Hadi et al., 2022; Khanifah et al., 2020; Margareta & Sihidi, 2022; Ningsih & Sihidi, 2022; Kenton & Singha, 2018; Zajac & Godshall, 2020; Valentine et al., 2020). The public can increase and strengthen networks and trust that affect public solidarity in supporting the successful implementation of empowerment activities (Akhter & Md Syed, 2021; Amzat et al., 2019; Jamal & Getz, 1995). Therefore, many countries have adopted the participatory empowerment model, including Indonesia (Sayono et al., 2020; Douglas et al., 2016). In Indonesia, the participatory empowerment model is implemented through development planning deliberation activities (musrenbang) which are carried out on a bottom-up basis by the village community, sub-district, district/city, province, and national level. Stakeholders, including the community and communities, are involved at all stages of the Musrenbang implementation (Salahudin et al., 2017).

Therefore, community empowerment activities in villages focus on community-based development, such as life quality improvement in rural communities (Kamruzzaman & White, 2018; Dadabaev, 2016; Asriyana et al., 2018; Sauw & Djami, 2021; Roslina & Andas, 2020). It refers to efforts to improve the quality of human life physically, mentally, economically, and socio-culturally. Especially in agrarian villages, the goal of empowerment is directed at improving agriculture techniques (better farming), agriculture economy (better business), and the lives of farmers and communities (better living) (Tosun, 2006). Most Indonesian villages have abundant natural resources besides agriculture potential to be developed as tourist destinations.

Other than the agricultural industry, Ngadas people engages in a number of other economic and commercial activities (Supanto, 2016). These comprise the mining, trading, and service industries. In Ngadas village, there are 24 shops, 15 food stalls, 46 homestays, two small wood processing small industries, two motorcycle repair shops, two salon service providers, two massage service providers, two equipment rental service
providers and marriage tools, and two units of sand mining business activities (Trilaksono, 2015). In addition, there is also one women’s cooperative office, one savings and loan group (with 22 members), one entertainment service business unit (12 workers), three reog group units, three electric power rental business units, and six retail units of gas and fuel oil. Based on these data, the main business activities besides the agricultural sector are primarily homestays and service centers (Nurhuda et al., 2017).

In the Ngadas Village RPJM (village development programs), it is stated that the highland topography with fertile soil conditions allows this village to produce premium vegetables. The main agricultural products in Ngadas village are potatoes, Dutch eggplant, and green chili/paprika. Nine hectares of land are available in this village to be developed for Dutch eggplant plants and Green Chili. Famous for its natural beauty, Ngadas Village offers several tourist attractions, such as the giant Coban Waterfall and the B-29 Perhutani plot (Trilaksono, 2015).

The seriousness of Ngadas village becoming a tourist village is interesting to investigate further, focusing on the research question "What is the potential, problem, and development model of Ngadas Village towards a tourist village". Therefore, this study was conducted to map the potential, problem, and development models of Ngadas Village as a tourist village. This study is essential as a scientific step to formulate a tourism village development model based on the participation and collaboration of the locals.

Numerous earlier studies focused mostly on the tourism village development strategy directed on problem-disclosure without the subsequent formulation of models and strategies (Rosliina & Andas, 2020; Mutiaraningrum & Meniwati, 2021; Nurhuda et al., 2017; Supanto, 2016; Trilaksono, 2015; Yunita & Suryono, 2019; Badaruddin et al., 2021; Lia et al., 2021). Meanwhile, this study attempts to establish tourism development models based on village potentials and issues with the involvement of stakeholders. A participatory approach is used to construct models and strategies, with the researcher serving as both an observer and a model developer alongside stakeholders like village officials, community leaders, and the village community at large.

METHOD

This study applied the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method, in which researchers served as both observers and model developers. A more thorough practice characteristic was used for PAR. The following traits describe PAR as a research strategy or type: (a) planning a change, (b) studying and observing the process and consequences of the change, (c) studying the process and its consequences, (d) re-planning, (e) studying and observing (f) studying and analysis, (g) concluding. In this case, Participants did and learned from the changes made in the process.

The Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) methodology, which is a method for swiftly knowing a village through the first stages of inquiry by studying the research subject, was used in this study. The following phase was balancing bias, a principle that the researcher applied while acting quietly and paying attention to the subject. Village communities engaged in tourism-related economic activity were sought for by researchers. Measurements that were taken in compliance with the principle of optimizing trade-offs, which was to look for precision and detect inaccuracies, did not go beyond what was necessary. To determine the scope of the information obtained, the network of measuring
locations was searched. To enrich the data, researchers searched the variety for differences in the subject's data.

The research was conducted in Ngadas Village, Malang Regency. Ngadas Village was designated as a traditional tourism village by the Malang Regency Government by Law Number 4 of 2014 concerning Villages and Constitutional Court Decision Number 35/PUU-X/2012 dated 16 May 2013, as well as the plan to launch the Malang Regent in February 2017 regarding Ngadas Village as a traditional tourist village. Applying the snowball principle, the researcher met Mr. Mujianto as the Ngadas head of village, in Malang Regency Tourism Office. The homestay management group, the tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis) and other villagers involving in economic activities also attended the meeting.

**Figure 1. Circulation of Data Analysis**

The data source needed in the RRA method was a secondary data source in the form of RPJMD in Ngadas village, Ponokusumo sub-district, Malang Regency. In addition, primary data sources were obtained by means of semi-structured interviews, both individually to the subject and in groups with Pokdarwis. After getting various data from the village RPJMD and also from transect walks in the RRA principle and the reflective cycle of PAR, namely acting, observing then acting and observing then reviewing and the final step is to make changes together with the subject (village residents) to find empowerment strategies rural communities to tourism villages. Data analysis using Nvivo 12 plus Software with Crosstab and Hierarchy Chart Analysis features.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Phase I: Observation of the Potential of Ngadas Village as a Tourism Village**

Ngadas Village is located in the highland topography in Ponokusumo Sub-district, Malang Regency, East Java Province. Ngadas Village covers 4 km2, divided into two hamlets, two RWs, and 12 RTs. Registered as the highest village in Java, Ngadas is located in the Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park (TNBTS) territory. The temperature ranges from 0°C to 20°C. (BPS Kabupaten Malang, 2012). The fertile land in this area is suitable for agricultural activities. With more than 450 mountain slopes, most of the population owns a fairly extensive farming area.

The agricultural land in Ngadas Village covers 396 hectares, all of which are dry land. Many vegetable commodities are produced in this area, including potatoes, cabbage, carrots, leeks, shallots, mustard greens, and others. Vegetables are among the leading commodities in Ngadas Village. These agricultural products are mainly marketed to Malang, Surabaya, Situbondo, Jember, Banyuwangi, Denpasar, Bali and Mataram. The Head of Ngadas Village, Mr. Mujianto, reveals two potential plants as the main commodity, the Dutch eggplant (Solanum betaceum) and green chili. Dutch eggplant...
grows and bears fruit every year regardless of the season, which makes it possible for them to produce eggplant-based processed drinks sustainably.

Besides farming, Ngadas people also live by raising cattle. It shows that the locals have the potential to run multiple jobs at once. Such a potential must be supported with excellent and sustainable cooperation between the cultural and tourism service, the agriculture and plantation service, and the Malang Regency livestock service. One of the collaborations is to arrange training and mentoring for the youth in Ngadas Village.

Ngadas Village offers several tourist attractions, such as the giant Coban Waterfall and the B-29 Perhutani plot, located in the administrative area of Ngadas Village, as affirmed by the Head of Village:

"Ngadas has promise by nature. The agricultural item is distinctive. We can become a leading tourism destination; the only question is how. In addition, we have a huge Coban, stunning hills, and sunrise-sunset locations, not to mention our regional custom, which is closely related to the old Mojopahit culture" (interview on July 20, 2018).

Sixty percent of the people in Ngadas village are Buddhists. Thirty percent are Muslim, and the rest are Hindu. Despite the religious differences, the people live in harmony, cooperation and tolerance. When Buddhists celebrate holidays or religious events, other religions help them. These values need to be adopted in everyday life. Urban people, with their individualistic norms, need to exemplify the tolerance of Ngadas people. There are three worship places in Ngadas: a monastery, a prayer room, and a temple.

Each of these buildings is unique because it adopts the village’s culture. Restoration needs to be done to bold the characteristics of a worship place located in a tourist village, which somehow also increases the attractiveness of this village.

The population consists of approximately 558 families. They help each other in order to build a better village to live. Without adequate education infrastructure, they are not among highly educated people. There is only one elementary school and one junior high school merged in a building. Nevertheless, they can successfully develop their business while maintaining the original Javanese culture. Therefore, modern humans need to learn living in peace, togetherness, and cooperation in this remote place.

In Ngadas, a unique traditional ceremony called Karo ceremony is still carried out and preserved. It is a ceremony to honor all the ancestors in the Tengger area. This ceremony has four important elements: Bopo Kuoso, motherland, pedanyangan and water sources. These represent their respect for the earth on which they stand. Besides Karo, other rituals are puja kapat, puja kawolu, puja kasongo and puja kasada. Every windu (an eight-year cycle), unan-unan is held as a ceremony to save the village from the volcano eruption.

It is as stated by the head of the Tourism Awareness Group in the following interview regarding the tourism potential of the Ngadas traditional village:

“The artistic potential is already there, such as Jaran Joged. This sacred dance includes the dance of the ends. Then there are braids and bulls. Jaran joged is performed when a child is circumcised. There are many traditional ceremonies—annual, every five years, and one year four ceremonies. That is the uniqueness of our custom. Then every five years, when the head of village ends his term, there is
a traditional ceremony; Village officials are also replaced during the ceremony.” (Interview on July 21, 2018).

In terms of dressing, the people only use a wrapped sarong to protect their bodies from the cold mountain air. Besides, they also have many arts or folk attractions, namely Kuda lumping, Bull, and Kuda Kecak. In addition to its unique customs, Ngadas Village has a variety of interesting natural tourism potentials, namely Coban Trisula, Ranu Pani and many others.

Tourism development program needs to pay attention to the potential of the village. The potential lies in natural wealth and all aspects with economic value and different characteristics. The mapping of the tourism potential of Ngadas Village consists of three aspects, namely: (a) nature village, (b) culinary village and (c) culture society. The findings revealed the village’s three most attractive potential: cultural society (50%), natural village, and culinary village. The nvivo 12 plus analysis reveals such potentials. As stated previously, the most potential aspect is the cultural characteristics, which the Malang Regency Government shall develop.

The characteristic of the community is the main factor in determining tourism attraction in Ngadas Village. Lies under the slopes of a mountain, agro-tourism and culinary are not the main potentials in Ngadas Village. Otherwise, cultural practice—beliefs, traditions, and other social norms—is the most attractive tourism potential with the highest economic value.

**Phase II: Problems and Strategies of a Tourism Village Development**

Since 2007, Ngadas has been declared one of the Tourism Villages in Malang Regency. Currently, there are 22 residents’ houses rented for homestays for tourists. Five homestays have been built around the Wahana Mount Bromo Semeru tour. However, problems that need to be solved are inadequate toilet facilities and road access to Ngadas. The chart below illustrates some problems in developing Ngadas village as a tourism village.
Overall, the problems of Ngadas Village development could be classified into six, namely; (a) citizen’s awareness, (b) institution, (c) government support, (d) skills, (d) information and (e) education. Based on the chart above, the main problems in developing Ngadas Village tourism were public awareness (40%), institutions (23%), government support (17%), skills (10%), information (5%), and education (5%). From those, the three main problems in developing Ngadas Village tourism were public awareness, institutions, and government support. A traditional community, whose life is directly dependent on natural resources, resulted in low awareness and a low level of public education. The geographical condition of Ngadas Village has resulted in low government incentives for Ngadas Village. As a result, the government seemed difficult to develop the tourism potential in the social culture aspect properly.

Several strategies to develop Ngadas Village tourism were as follows: stakeholder collaboration, advocacy for village tourism policy, and capacity improvement. By understanding the geographical and socio-cultural conditions of the community, the steps that need to be taken by the government were advocacy for village tourism policy,
stakeholder collaboration, and capacity improvement. These three strategies were based on the results of the hierarchy chart analysis; the hierarchy chart analysis mapped out the government's main strategies or steps to be taken by the government in developing the tourism potential of Ngadas Village.

**Phase III: Participatory Community Empowerment Model of a Tourism Village**

Training and mentoring programs manifested the strategy of empowering the Ngadas village community in developing a traditional tourism village. Considering that empowerment also means a learning process, the community learned together to change their default mindset from only relying on agricultural activities to support the establishment of the tourism village. What had been done by the Ngadas village community, together with the local government and universities, was in accordance with the statement of Sulistyani (2004). The Ngadas village community had undergone three stages of the empowerment process: (a) the stage of awareness and behavior formation. This stage was where empowerment actors create preconditions and public awareness to understand the need to increase self-capacity. (b) Capability transformation stage in the form of knowledge insight, skills aimed at opening up insight and providing basic skills to take a role in the development. (c) The stage of increasing intellectual ability aimed to form innovative initiatives and abilities towards independence. It was still early stages that needs further assistance from the government and universities.

Community empowerment in Ngadas village affirmed Usman's assertion that strategies or activities to achieve community empowerment goals that can be considered to be selected and then applied begin with the first strategy, which are fostering a tourism village climate (enabling), enhancing the influence of this is local human resources (empowering), and safeguarding locals from the deterioration of local culture (adat Ngadas). The government's rural development program in developing nations, including Indonesia, has launched a number of rural programs, including (1) agricultural development based on conditions in Ngadas village—a village that produced potatoes, green chilies, and Dutch eggplant; (2) rural industrialization, which enabled the formation of home industries related to processed beverage and food products made from local agricultural products; (4) plans for regional village growth centers. (3) Development of integrated village communities as tourism villages. This program for agricultural development was anticipated to help farmers produce more and to prevent food shortages in rural regions, even to meet the most basic requirements of small businesses and households, as well as to satisfy rich nations' need for agricultural exports. A product's added value increased as part of the agricultural-based rural industrialization program, which ultimately raised the product's selling price and boosted the income of rural communities.

Therefore, it can be inferred that the empowerment of the Ngadas village community was a long learning process that included stages of awareness and behavior formation, ability transformation, and intellectual improvement of the people of a traditional tourism village. From such a point of view, a holistic and integrative approach is needed, meaning that there is a need for synergy between empowerment actors, both state, community and private actors. This synergy is, of course, also aimed at the synergy of various stakeholders to create a conducive system that can accelerate the community's
empowerment process. From this process, the community empowerment scheme can be described as follows.

![Integrative Participatory Community Empowerment Model](image)

**Figure 5.** Integrative Participatory Community Empowerment Model towards a Tourism Village by Strengthening Local Potential.

The village community continued to adhere to a conventional economic paradigm that exclusively focuses on agricultural products, as can be seen in the input step of the model above. The possibility for the creation of a tourist village was overlooked. In the second stage, the local government, the Department of Tourism and Culture, the Village Head, as well as the Universities, established a program to alter the perception that rural communities must develop their villages by setting up infrastructure, a sanitary environment, homestays, transportation, and processed food and beverage products made from local agricultural products. The results were individuals with (1) environmental awareness, (2) management skills for tourism services (homestays, guides, and transportation), (3) skills in processing local beverages, and (4) marketing network skills. The final product is people with the entrepreneurial ability to support the development of tourist villages.

An advocacy strategy was used to launch the growth of Ngadas Village's tourism. The community and the government may read about opportunities and comprehend Ngadas Village's potential. Cultural tourism will be the emphasis of government and community cooperation. Understanding the issue of tourism development was the next stage. According to the research, citizen awareness, institutions, government backing, skills, information, and education were the main issues with the growth of tourism in Ngadas Village. Using the principle of community engagement, the objective was to develop Ngadas Village's primary tourism potential.

Tourism development needs to pay attention to local communities so that it can be managed properly by the government and the community (Situmorang, Trilaksono, & Japutra, 2019). For this reason, the strategic step was policy-making through advocacy. Another consideration in tourism development was accessibility. As stated by
Kurniawan, Adrianto, Bengen, & Prasetyo (2016), tourism development in Indonesia is problematic with its information accessibility. Therefore, the most important step was to inform locals about the benefits of tourism development.

Due to poor management practices and lack of financial backing, the tourist destination is no longer appealing (Momeni, Janati, Imani, & Khodayari-Zarnaq, 2018). Nguyen, Young, Johnson, and Wearing (2019) suggested that stakeholder involvement in tourism management is necessary. Tourism development, according to Nguyen, Young, Johnson, and Wearing, involves not just the government and the community but also a third party known as actor-network theory (ACT). Due to ACT’s aptitude for comprehending regional conditions, it is permitted to work with others on the growth of the tourism industry. The ACT is a concept for developing tourism that relies on community involvement (Wondirad & Ewnetu, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates the cultural, natural, and culinary potentials of the Ngadas tourism village. Culture is the most wanted of these three, and it considerably improves the welfare of the Ngadas community. However, a lack of stakeholder knowledge, professionalism in tourism management, government funding, skills, and information accessibility has hindered the growth of Ngadas as a tourism destination. As a result, urgent strategic actions like policy advocacy, stakeholder collaboration, and community skill development are needed. An integrative participatory community empowerment model is required in this situation. In order to promote Ngadas village as a tourism village, this model emphasizes tourism governance that incorporates all partners and makes the community the primary actor.

The integrative participatory community empowerment model that has not been adequately implemented in Ngadas is the only model covered by this study. As a result, additional study must concentrate on model testing and explain the research concerns surrounding whether the integrative participatory community empowerment model successfully transforms Ngadas village into a tourist village. Additionally, it is necessary to look further into the obstacles and stages of the integrative participatory community empowerment model’s evaluation. The answers to these study questions will help the Indonesian village of Ngadas in East Java handle tourism better.

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