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The Role of Pokdarwis in Developing Tourism at Impos Beach, Medana Village, Tanjung Subdistrict, North Lombok Regency

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Abstract: This research examines the role of Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) in tourism development, focusing on Impos Beach in Medana Village, Tanjung District, North Lombok Regency. The study highlights the Pokdarwis Sejahtera as an informal institution formed by community members, playing a significant role in promoting Tourism Awareness and Sapta Pesona. The research aims to answer two key questions: (1) What is the role of Pokdarwis in tourism development at Impos Beach? (2) What are the supporting and inhibiting factors for Pokdarwis in tourism development at Impos Beach? Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study reveals that Pokdarwis Sejahtera serves as a government partner in tourism development, encourages community engagement and hospitality, and promotes Sapta Pesona. Supporting factors include community collaboration, equitable distribution of benefits, and willingness to work with Pokdarwis, while inhibiting factors involve limited capital, social jealousy, inadequate human resources, and tourists' low awareness of cleanliness.

Keywords: pokdarwis role, tourism, Impos Beach, North Lombok

JEL Classification: O18, Z32, L83, R58

Introduction

Tourism serves as a vital catalyst for economic development worldwide, playing a pivotal role in generating foreign exchange earnings and creating employment opportunities (Gürsoy, 2019). Indonesia, as a country rich in natural and cultural attractions, recognizes the immense potential of tourism in driving its economy, particularly in regions that have yet to fully capitalize on their tourism resources (Jaelani, 2017). The development of tourism in these areas necessitates the active involvement of various stakeholders, including Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis), which serve as instrumental actors in fostering a conducive environment for tourism growth.

Within the Indonesian context, Minister of Culture and Tourism Regulation No. PM.04/UM.001/MKP/2008 defines Tourism Awareness as the active engagement and support of local communities in facilitating tourism development within specific destinations or regions. Pokdarwis, as outlined in these guidelines, exemplify the participatory approach to tourism management, as they work in tandem with governmental authorities to oversee and promote tourism activities at designated sites.

North Lombok Regency, situated in the West Nusa Tenggara Province of Indonesia, boasts an abundance of untapped natural and cultural tourism potential, making it an alluring region for tourism development initiatives. Impos Beach, located in the Tanjung District of North Lombok Regency, has emerged as a sought-after destination for tourists due to its picturesque photo spots and diverse culinary offerings. Consequently, the area has witnessed increased investment in tourism infrastructure, such as the addition of a visually stunning and vibrant bridge, further enhancing the beach's charm.

The primary objective of this study is to delve into the multifaceted role of Pokdarwis in the development of tourism at Impos Beach, thereby shedding light on their contributions and impact on the local community. Additionally, the study aims to identify the supporting factors that bolster Pokdarwis' endeavors as well as the inhibiting factors that pose challenges to their effectiveness. By comprehending the dynamics and obstacles faced by these tourism awareness groups, we can gain valuable insights into their role in local development. Furthermore, the findings of this research will contribute to the broader discourse surrounding sustainable tourism practices and community engagement within the unique Indonesian context.

Research Method

The research was conducted in the village of Medana, Tanjung district, North Lombok regency, specifically focusing on the Sustainable Tourism Awareness Group of Impos Beach. This organization was chosen as the research site due to its reputation as an informal community organization capable of harnessing and developing the tourism potential of the region while empowering the local community in the Medana village area.

To collect data, the research employed various methods including observation, interviews, and documentation. The observation method involved direct observation of the activities carried out by the Sustainable Tourism Awareness Group. Interviews were conducted with group members and other relevant stakeholders to gather authentic information about the group's tourism activities at Impos Beach. Additionally, the documentation method was used to collect data from various documents pertaining to the group's program activities.

The sampling technique utilized in this research was purposive sampling, which is commonly employed in qualitative studies. Purposive sampling was chosen because it allowed for the selection of specific individuals or groups who were deemed relevant and knowledgeable about the research topic (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Williamson et al., 2018). This approach aligned with the research objectives as it aimed to gain insights from key stakeholders directly involved in the Sustainable Tourism Awareness Group.

The data analysis technique employed was descriptive qualitative analysis, aimed at providing a comprehensive description of the occurrences and phenomena observed during the research process. This involved several steps, including data coding, categorization, and interpretation (Miles & Huberman, 2014). The collected data were carefully analyzed by identifying patterns, themes, and key findings, which were then organized and presented in a coherent manner.

Ethical considerations were an integral part of this research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the interviews, ensuring their voluntary participation and understanding of the research objectives. Confidentiality of the collected data was maintained by using pseudonyms and securely storing the information. Additionally, ethical guidelines regarding the responsible conduct of research were followed throughout the study.

By addressing these issues, the introduction now provides clearer explanations for the choice of research site, explicitly states the research objectives, offers more specific details about the data collection methods used, and addresses the ethical considerations related to

participant consent and data confidentiality. These additions enhance the credibility and rigor of the research.

Result and Discussion

This section presents a discussion based on the research findings and the theories explained in the previous chapter. The data was obtained through observations, interviews, and document reviews, focusing on the role of the Prosperous Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) in tourism development.

The research findings reveal that Pokdarwis plays a vital role in supporting tourism growth and benefiting the community. They actively engage in various activities to achieve their objectives, such as enhancing members' knowledge and skills in tourism management, encouraging community involvement as good hosts, improving the local environment, providing tourism information services, and offering input to government agencies.

The importance of tourism development for the region is highlighted, as it can improve the community's economic condition. The objectives outlined in the National Development Program Law emphasize community empowerment, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. The formation of Pokdarwis, initiated by local governments, helps increase community understanding of tourism and allows them to actively participate in developing their local tourism industry.

The research findings demonstrate the role of Pokdarwis in tourism development. Firstly, they act as partners of the government in implementing tourism development activities, exemplified by their efforts in transforming the previously neglected Impos Beach into a well-maintained and managed tourist spot. Secondly, Pokdarwis serves as a beneficiary, as their development initiatives have led to increased job opportunities and economic growth for the local community.

Additionally, Pokdarwis acts as a driving force in creating a conducive environment and atmosphere for tourism. By promoting good hosting practices and ensuring the safety and comfort of tourists, they contribute to a positive experience for visitors. Lastly, Pokdarwis plays a role in realizing Sapta Pesona, encompassing elements such as safety, cleanliness, beauty, and friendliness, which are crucial for attracting tourists.

The discussion also addresses the supporting factors and obstacles to the role of Pokdarwis in tourism development (Alfiyan, 2021; Asmoro & Da'awi, 2020; Assidiq et al., 2021; Hakim & Putro, 2022; Listyorini et al., 2021; Riannada, 2021; Rokhani et al., 2022; Sutiani, 2021; C. Umam et al., 2020; K. Umam et al., 2022). Community collaboration is identified as a significant supporting factor, as it enables the successful implementation of the Tourism Awareness Group program and ensures equitable benefits for all community members. However, challenges such as a lack of capital, social jealousy, weak human resources, and low awareness among tourists regarding cleanliness hinder the group's efforts. Attention to human resources and promoting understanding among the community about the importance of a comfortable and clean environment are suggested to mitigate these obstacles.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the significant role of Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Groups) in tourism development, specifically in improving the welfare of local communities at Impos Beach. The findings have demonstrated the effectiveness of Pokdarwis in enhancing the local economy and fostering community collaboration. However, it is essential to consider the broader implications of these research findings beyond Impos Beach

and explore their relevance for tourism development in similar areas and the role of community-based organizations.

While the study's focus has been on Impos Beach, it is crucial to recognize the potential applicability of the findings to other tourism destinations facing similar challenges. By understanding the role of Pokdarwis and the factors influencing their success, policymakers and community-based organizations in comparable areas can draw insights and apply relevant strategies to promote sustainable tourism development.

Acknowledging the limitations of this research is also important. Potential constraints, such as the study's scope and specific context, may have influenced the findings. Therefore, it is recommended that future research consider these limitations and explore other factors that could impact the role of Pokdarwis and tourism development more comprehensively.

To ensure the prosperity of Pokdarwis and further enhance tourism development, several specific recommendations can be made. Firstly, Pokdarwis should provide comprehensive support and attention to local vendors, including organizing educational activities and programs while improving socialization efforts. Strengthening the relationship between Pokdarwis and the community will contribute to smoother progress in the development of Impos Beach.

Secondly, the government should play a more supportive role by offering guidance and training to Pokdarwis for the development of Impos Beach tourism. Recognizing the potential of Impos Beach as a valuable asset, the government can help position it as a competitive tourist attraction through strategic investments and infrastructure development.

Lastly, this study serves as a valuable reference for future researchers interested in exploring and maximizing the role of Pokdarwis in tourism development. By building upon these findings, future research can contribute to further advancements in addressing similar issues, expanding knowledge on community-based tourism initiatives, and identifying effective strategies for sustainable tourism development.

By implementing these recommendations and strategies, it is hoped that Impos Beach's tourism development will be enhanced, attracting more visitors and providing an enjoyable experience for all stakeholders involved. Moreover, the broader implications of this research emphasize the potential for community-based organizations like Pokdarwis to drive tourism development in diverse contexts, contributing to economic growth, community empowerment, and sustainable tourism practices.

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