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## Learning From Goa Pindul: Community Empowerment through Sustainable Tourism Villages in Indonesia

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### Abstract

This study aims to reveal the success of community empowerment based on sustainable tourism in Goa Pindul, Indonesia. This study adopted the interpretative phenomenological analysis approach to understand the village community empowerment process phenomenon. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine (9) research participants from the Goa Pindul tourism village community. The findings of this study indicated that tourism-based community empowerment is started with awareness-raising through socialization and community service, followed by capacity building through various needs-based tourism management training and the formation of tourism awareness groups that are given to manage their potential and evaluate their development. This tourism-based community empowerment is carried out while still paying attention to environmental and cultural sustainability in society's lives. Youth involvement is optimized to support sustainable tourism villages.

### Keywords

tourism village, interpretative phenomenological analysis, community empowerment village, community-based tourism

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This study aims to reveal the success of community empowerment based on sustainable tourism in Goa Pindul, Indonesia. This study adopted the interpretative phenomenological analysis approach to understand the village community empowerment process phenomenon. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine (9) research participants from the Goa Pindul tourism village community. The findings of this study indicated that tourism-based community empowerment is started with awareness-raising through socialization and community service, followed by capacity building through various needs-based tourism management training and the formation of tourism awareness groups that are given to manage their potential and evaluate their development. This tourism-based community empowerment is carried out while still paying attention to environmental and cultural sustainability in society's lives. Youth involvement is optimized to support sustainable tourism villages.

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## Introduction

Empowerment is an effort to increase participation in the community development process and an effort to build personal power by providing encouragement or motivation so that individuals can raise awareness of their potential and contribute to development (Adebayo & Butcher, 2021; Kokko et al., 2021; Nabilla Fada, 2022). One of the goals is to encourage people's welfare economically, socially, and culturally (Badarudin et al., 2018). This is to the aim that a community empowerment village can be directed to solve the problem of poverty and improve people's welfare. Empowerment is believed to be a tool for alleviating poverty for individuals and society (Aghazamani & Hunt, 2017). However, low-level programs are often constrained and do not run optimally because people have limited time and education levels are still low (Hermawan & Suryono, 2016)

In Indonesia, empowerment is an alternative to overcoming the problem of poverty. The poverty rate in Indonesia is still high, and the government has not been able to solve it (Ikawati & Wahyuni, 2016). Compared to metropolitan areas, the standard of living in rural areas is inferior (Golboni et al., 2018; Hassine, 2015). Various factors cause this: firstly, top-down policies in rural development cannot encourage and utilize rural potential (Shucksmith, 2012); and secondly, economic growth in urban areas is better, especially in the industrial and construction sectors (BAPPENAS, 2019). Therefore, rural communities with more productive ages are moved to work in urban areas (Shucksmith, 2012) and in the end, villages were abandoned for better city life. Poverty in the villages is also caused by the low level of education and limited skills possessed by the villagers, which makes their chances of getting a job less adequate (Hasibuan et al., 2019).

Amid the economic crash and poverty problems of rural communities, it turns out that many potentials can be explored and developed to improve people's welfare, one of which is through tourism-based environmental management. Tourism is a rapidly expanding industry with a long history in Indonesia, dating back to the previous century and continuing into the current time. Tourism villages must significantly be growing in Indonesia, offering solutions for conservation, development, and the alleviation of poverty for rural population segments. Tourism is a rapidly growing industry in this century (Kerr, 2003), so community development through tourism is widely accepted as a solution for conservation and development.

Tourism-based community development can undoubtedly be the right choice to advance local economies. Sustainably optimizing the environment's potential can be called ecotourism (McAlpin, 2008). Developing the tourism community is one of the critical components that will encourage prosperity (Ranasinghe & Pradeepamali, 2019). Empowerment in the tourism sector is very encouraging and contributes to increasing income so that it can reduce poverty. Nowadays, tourism is the main driver of development practices and policies designed to encourage regional development (Ruault, 2018).

Empowerment through the development of tourist villages is increasingly visible in several regencies spread throughout Indonesia, one of which is the Gunungkidul regency. Tourism is one of the alternative sectors in development in the Gunungkidul district (Yuliadi et al., 2013). Gunungkidul regency is an area that is synonymous with drought during the dry season as well as barren limestone mountains. On the other hand, Gunungkidul has a lot of good natural potential for tourism, including mountains, caves, beaches, and cultures. Rural communities must seek alternative ways to find and expand their local economy (Maneenetr et al., 2014).

One of the developing villages in the district is Bejiharjo village, with the potential of Goa Pindul. Goa Pindul offers the charm of the natural beauty of underground water. Every visitor can enjoy Goa Pindul by using an inflatable boat. Currently, Goa Pindul is developing as a leading destination in the Bejiharjo tourist village and has an impact on increasing community welfare. Bejiharjo village is presently used as a model for developing community-based tourism villages (Margono et al., 2013). This development can impact economic activities in micro, meso, and macro ways (Suci & Pahlawan, 2015; Yoga & Wenagama, 2015). Some still have not felt the benefits of the development of the Pindul Cave tourist attraction (Nurohman, 2017).

One main arisen problem is that the community has not realized the village's potential, so many investors from outside the town take advantage and dominate the local economy. The inability of the community to manage its tourism potential has made several strategic locations controlled and operated by outside investors (Fildzah A'inun et al., 2015). Community involvement is only as a workforce to assist investors in managing tourism (Khotimah, 2008). The community should profit more from the development of Goa Pindul while investors gain instead. The benefits investors have over the community are powerlessness, local leadership tends to be authoritative, and community development is involved in making decisions related to tourism in their area (Weng & Peng, 2014).

As a developing area, Goa Pindul often experiences overcapacity with many visitors. The state of Pindul Cave is in danger, especially for the integrity and natural preservation of Pindul Cave in the form of vulnerabilities that damage cave walls and interfere with the growth of stalagmites and stalactites. In addition, water pollution from sewage and tourism activities further disrupts the ecosystem, water pollution from sewage, and tourism activities (Putu et al., 2017). The decline in environmental quality also occurs due to ongoing tourism development activities (Khotimah, 2008). The continuing development causes the increasing abandonment of local culture, and some people are starting to be preoccupied with making money for themselves rather than for the common good. This is in line with previous research that tourism

development can erode the local cultural value of the community (Ranasinghe & Pradeepamali, 2019). It shows that tourism development can have a negative impact on a sustainable basis if it is not appropriately managed.

The various problems above, of course, require special efforts to ensure continued development, economic growth, and maintaining of local culture. Therefore, this study seeks to explore in depth the practice of community empowerment in Bejiharjo village. The empowerment process has sought to encourage local community participation to manage tourism potential in their area so that the community's economy is active and grows slowly. However, because of the unique process, it is necessary to find the authenticity of the development and community-based movement.

## Literature Review

### Community Empowerment

Empowerment is defined as an effort to increase the ability of the community (poor, marginalized) to add their opinions, needs, and choices to participate, negotiate, influence, and manage community institutions in an accountable manner for the improvement of life (Theresia et al., 2014). It aims for the community to become controlling actors and agents of change for themselves and their environment (Zapp, 2019). Therefore, they are able to decide and manage their development process according to their needs (Soetomo, 2011). Empowerment presents a space for individuals to actively participate and find new alternatives in the community development process (Mardikanto, 2014).

The main goal achieved from the community empowerment process is to form individuals and communities to become independent. This independence includes thinking, acting, and controlling what they do (Sulistiyani, 2007). The community can increase its dignity, especially for those still trapped in underdevelopment and poverty (Noor, 2011). Community empowerment enables individuals, organizations, and communities to increase their personal and societal control (Khalid et al., 2019). So, it is correct when empowerment is said to be a poverty alleviation tool for individuals and society (Aghazamani & Hunt, 2017).

### Community Based Tourism

The concept of community based tourism (CBT) village development becomes important in the development of sustainable tourism strategy. CBT is useful as an alternative to mass tourism and a strategy for sustainable tourist development (Arintoko et al., 2020; Bertocchi et al., 2020). CBT developed in the 1970s, and CBT initiatives relate to tiny rural communities and nature protection via ecotourism; nevertheless, the concept has been extended to diverse tourism products that integrate local culture and global managerial principles (Hall & Lew, 2009; Hutagalung et al., 2022). CBT also revitalizes people's culture, social capacities, and organizational strategies to fulfil the powerful incentive for a prosperous future linked to their life goals (Pilquimán-Vera et al., 2020). CBT is considered village community participation in tourism management, which is regarded as a form of sustainable tourism intended to strengthen the relationship between tourists and local communities (Priatmoko et al., 2021). CBT can become a mechanism for reducing poverty and improving the quality of life, providing greater economic benefits to individuals in local communities (Bertocchi et al., 2020; Dodds et al., 2018). The tourism sector is an effective method for reducing poverty and inequality for people in the world (Yunikawati et al., 2021). The tourism industry relies on the involvement of residents (Stone, 2015). Furthermore, community leaders and local government support are needed in tourism development (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2004; Stone & Stone, 2013).

## **Sustainable Tourism Village**

A tourist village offers a natural atmosphere of rural authenticity from socio-economic life, culture, daily life, and habit/custom (Priasukmana & Mulyadin, 2001). All the unique potentials of the village become a tourist attraction (Junaid, 2020). Of course, it involves community members who work together to develop their village (Heny et al., 2013). The determination of a village to be a 'tourist village' requires good accessibility, tourist attraction, support from the community, guaranteed village security, cool/naturally cool atmosphere, and finally, connection to other tourists known by the public.

The community is the main factor in tourism development (Đukić & Volić, 2017a). The development of this tourist village cannot be separated from the involvement of local communities because local people understand what in their village might offer potential enjoyment for tourists so that they can experience and feel the people sway of life and explain the existing products (Richards & Hall, 2000) as they stay in the village (Bouchon & Rawat, 2016). The capacity of local communities is the key to village development (Nugroho et al., 2018). As a development effort, the capacity of tourism village managers must be increased, and they can also produce a long-term or sustainable legacy (Getz & Page, 2014; Khalid et al., 2019).

## **Methodology**

### **Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

This research used a qualitative interpretive approach (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis; IPA) to obtain certain meanings and behaviours encountered in certain social phenomena through participants' subjective experiences (Neubauer et al., 2019). IPA ensured a thorough examination of a specific experience phenomenon in detail, what the experience for this person is like, and what sense this person is making of what is happening to them (Bustard et al., 2019). This study intended to understand the meaning and process and gain a deep understanding of a person or individuals in the community managing a sustainable community based tourism village. The research was located in the tourist village Bejuharjo, specifically in Karangmojo, in the Gunungkidul regency of the province of Yogyakarta. IPA aims to understand how people make sense of events, relationships, and processes in the context of their particular lifeworlds (Larkin et al., 2011). IPA ensures a detailed analysis of a particularly experienced occurrence, that is, what the person's experience was like and how they interpreted it (Bustard et al., 2019).

### **Data Collection and Participants**

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the Bejuharjo tourism village community as participants to gain understanding regarding managing a tourist village. A series of questions guided interviews based on literature reviews and field observations before research to build the exploratory research process to suit. The interview guide consisted of thirty-five questions. The researcher was involved in the dialogue and developed based on the responses to investigate what is interesting to obtain quality results (Larkin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2009). Snowball sampling was used to comprehend the concrete, unique, and specific data while keeping personal integrity and obtaining the relevance and depth of the data they generate (Rajasinghe, 2020). In IPA, five or six participants were suggested (Smith et al., 2009). However, there were a total of nine participants in this study. They were selected for their contribution to the management of the Bejuharjo village.

After gaining authorization from the head of the tourism village administrator, the researcher began his investigation and spent three weeks in the Bejiharjo tourist village to become familiar with the locals and observe village life firsthand. This study's primary participant was P1, the managing director who permitted additional research. P1 and the managing coordinators, P2 and P3, provided researchers with information regarding the organization's history, vision, mission, goals, and management strategies for tourism areas. The researcher intended to find more information about other communities that manage the tourism village from P4 and P5, who are a village authority and a public figure, respectively. Since the inception of the tourist village, P6 has always been associated with the youth organization and has played a crucial role in ensuring the tourism village's continued viability. P7 and P8 own culinary and souvenir companies that contribute to the growth of tourist villages. At the same time, P9 is a cultural practitioner who plays a role in maintaining and packaging culture as a tourist attraction for communities.

**Table 1**  
*Participant Data*

No.	Code	Sex	Roles
1	P1	Man	Head of Management
2	P2	Man	Field Coordinator
3	P3	Man	Attraction coordinator
4	P4	Man	Village officials
5	P5	Man	Public figure
6	P6	Man	Head of Youth organization
7	P7	Woman	Entrepreneur
8	P8	Man	Entrepreneur
9	P9	Woman	cultural practitioner

## Data Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was the approach used in this study. This study aims to determine the meaning of the experience of the people of Pindul Goa from intersubjective activities in the dual hermeneutic process between those who experience it, consider how they interpret the experience, pay attention to patterns in the participants' experiences, and deal with these experiences in a social and theoretical context (Miller et al., 2018). Data analysis utilized a scientific approach, namely (1) rereading the results of interview transcripts; (2) taking notes early; (3) developing emerging themes; (4) looking for relationships between themes; and (5) proceeding to the next theme. Science has flexible guidelines that researchers can adapt for research purposes (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

Researchers processed the data in this study through the following stages: (1) reading and understanding the text repeatedly; (2) collecting various initial notes from the field and topics discovered; (3) analyzing the initial data obtained in the field and the topics discovered in superordinate form; (4) classifying the superordinate based on their meaning; and (5) reexamining additional cases to draw research conclusions.

After conducting interviews with nine participants, the researcher transcribed all audio recordings of the interviews multiple times to ensure that the information was written appropriately, and a professional team translated the information into good Indonesian. Then, the researcher validated the results of the interview transcripts by checking the audio recordings using a two-to-three-week method to comprehend the study outcomes in-depth and frequently

read them. Then, the researchers took notes and compared similar themes (superordinate). The researchers studied the superordinate results to address their study queries.

### **Findings**

Improving the quality of a society can be accomplished in part through empowering individuals. Community participation is required for the empowerment process to be successful. Villagers of Bejiharjo are always participating in the management of the tourism village. “We are developing this Bejiharjo tourism village together, Ma’am” (P1). They are eager to engage in activities when they are in a group.

Villagers contribute to the development of this tourism village initiative. As stated by P8, “attend every meeting and once recommended creating a designated area for selling souvenirs.” Many community recommendations were documented and subsequently used as planning considerations. “All villager's recommendations were recorded, and it was explored again as a potential program” (P1). In addition, villagers' participation in the implementation process is excellent. This P4 statement demonstrates collaboration in implementation: “We began a tourist village by cleaning up the cave area and creating signboards in multiple locations” (P4). Every time a guest arrives, we participate in their welcome and experience joy (P3). The manager invites all residents to participate in routine evaluations: “We invite all inhabitants to contribute to the improvement of the management of the tourist village” (P1).

This study's findings reveal that community participation in the empowerment-based development of the Bejiharjo tourism village begins with planning, implementing, and assessing with a sense of joy and togetherness. Empowerment in the Bejiharjo tourist village has been successful in improving the welfare of the community because it has been able to create new jobs for locals: “Many villagers who previously did not have a job have now joined together to manage this tourist village” (P5); “Many of my friends who previously did not work are now delighted to be able to work as tour guides in their village” (P6). It is regarded that tourism villages are one of the most intriguing notions for empowering people, particularly in rural areas. The local community is the central actor in every step of building a tourist village.

### **Awareness Process**

Awareness process is growing public awareness and understanding of its potential so that the community can manage and develop it. Managers carry out the awareness process through various activities: socialization, education in family and work friends, and cooperation activities. The awareness process focuses on understanding the village's potential and the importance of maintaining it. “We do mass community service and socialization to the community so that people know the potential is a river that can be developed so that people no longer throw garbage and wash with a detergent in the river” (P4); “We also urge us to share understanding with our families and co-workers so that we can both maintain the potential of this village” (P1).

Socialization activities are carried out through various forums, including household pillar forums, hamlet forums, and village forums, to provide the public with the potential and dangers of destroying nature. This awareness has succeeded in forming a shared commitment to protect Pindul Cave and begin to develop it.

Raising awareness takes considerable time, so the participation of all sections of society and the government is required. “We constantly support the manager by granting management power over tourist locations” (P4). In addition, the job of community leaders is to be at the forefront of enforcing mutually agreed-upon obligations, as it is simpler for the community to



be pushed by community leaders than by others (P1). Community leaders must play a role in every stage of developing a tourist village.

### **Community Capacity Building Process**

The manager is responsible for building a tourist village to increase community capacity as a key individual in empowerment. The community must continue to have its talents enhanced through various programs. Local community capacity is a defining factor in the growth of tourist settlements (Nugroho et al., 2018). The development of the Bejiharjo tourist village has had a significant impact on the lives of the locals, who were originally farmers and who had to learn how to serve tourists in a tourist village, requiring them to acquire new skills to adapt: “The majority of the locals are gold farmers, so they don't know how to become tour guides” (P4). The manager made a similar statement: “At the beginning of implementing this tourism village program, training on managing a tourism village was essential for the community, which at first lacked this expertise and implemented it in line with their respective responsibilities” (P3).

The tourism village of Bejiharjo has performed several pieces of training that have been segmented into various groups based on the participants' specific requirements. These organizations include tourism village administrators, culinary provider groups, farmer and livestock groups, homestay groups, and arts groups: “We conduct training for the community based on the needs of each group so that they can serve guests according to their responsibilities” (P3). The village's efforts to improve community capacity are based on evaluating the community's needs and potential.

According to their various areas of expertise, specialists conduct training: “[a] team of IT experts from Jakarta instructed us on how to market Goa Pindul via social media” (P6). The training period is decided by agreement between the participants and the trainer to not interfere with their busy schedules serving customers: “We requested that the training time be changed so as not to interfere with their work” (P1). The community reaps the benefits of the training – “now understand how to prepare traditional cuisine for sale to tourists” (P7) – the training enhances the community's capability to expedite growth and preserve the viability of tourist communities.

### **Establishment of POKDARWIS and Granting Authority**

The village government supports the community's ability to manage tourist villages by developing an official institution; namely, the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS). The goal is that the community has the basis and authority to manage the village's potential. The village apparatus conveyed this: “We give authority to the community to be able to manage tourist villages by creating official institutions so that they are not illegal” (P4). The results of the interview with the manager confirmed them.

We formed the management of the pokdarwis by involving the community so that it was clear that they had to do, according to their respective abilities and fields, and first for the youth who were expected to continue the management in the future (P1).

**Figure 1**  
*Members of Pokdarwis*



Giving the community authority is one of the essential elements of empowerment. Pokdarwis is one of the community stakeholders with a crucial role in developing the Bejiharjo tourism village: “Its mission is to develop and manage the potential of Bejiharjo village’s natural and cultural heritage to become a tourist attraction” (P1).

Thus, local government support is crucial in promoting and protecting tourism in their region. Because future tourist growth will raise regional income and strengthen the surrounding community’s economy, “The government promotes the community’s participation in the development process, constantly guiding the pokdarwis so that they may effectively manage tourism villages” (P4). In the meantime, the community is aware of its place and role in the development of the village: “We always speak with the village council and carry out their responsibilities in line with applicable legislation” (P1). Community members have grasped the significance of participating in determining and monitoring the development process.

### ***Gotong Royong and Culture***

The facilities the Bejiharjo tourism village manager provides support tourism development so that visitors feel satisfied when traveling. This aligns with the opinion (Kotler, 2005) that all facilities in the form of physical equipment the manager provides must support the comfort of consumers or tourists. “Managers and the local community work together to prepare all the equipment needed to make tourists comfortable, make parking locations, hold meetings, clean the Pindul cave area, roads and the environment” (P1); “The community is very enthusiastic because they hope the village will be bustling and develop” (P9).

The preparation process is carried out with mutual cooperation interconnected between managers and the community so that they are able to provide adequate facilities and ensure environmental cleanliness. If the community fully supports it, they will be responsible for ensuring ecotourism activities in their area (Nugroho et al., 2018).

Support and cooperation from the community are also getting stronger, as evidenced by various cultural attractions in attractive packages to welcome tourists. *Gejok lesung*, one of

the cultures originally intended to pound rice traditionally, has become an attraction to tourists through singing accompanied by music that sounds like *gejok mortar*.

**Figure 2**

*Gejok Lesung Traditional Music Attraction*



### **Village Youth Management Program**

The manager of the Bejiharjo tourist village assessed the need for regeneration in the tourism business world. This provided opportunities for the younger generation to participate in managing the Bejiharjo tourist village. The younger generation is the potential heir to this community-based tourism business. Currently, the younger generation in Bejiharjo village was not only given the knowledge of making events for tourists but also given training related to how to do business with digital media: “We started to invite young people who are still in school or have just graduated, this is to form a competitive business. We provide digital marketing training” (P1); “We were given training related to tourism management and especially digital, for our future tourism” (P6).

Knowledge of tourism management and development through digital technology is important for future tourism villages that care about cultural and environmental sustainability.

Prospective future generations must take advantage of this tourist village business. They know how to do business using digital, and they must understand how to develop tourism in the future, not abandoning let alone destroying its great potential (P9).

The sustainable development of tourist villages in Bejiharjo aimed to find equitable development between generations now and in the future. The younger generation's involvement is a tourism village management program that took place and has full support from community leaders.

### Monitoring and Evaluation to Find Out Successes and Shortcomings

Monitoring and evaluating activities is a routine for managers and is an important stage in tourism management. The aim is to find out how far the work program plans made by village managers are based on the needs and character of Bejiharjo Village: “Our evaluation is carried out to find out the achievements of our program, sir, whether there are complaints from visitors, whether the manager experiences problems, whether there is damage and others” (P2). A forum for rectifying and enhancing management's accomplishments to ensure the tourism village's continued growth and viability.

#### Figure 3

*Evaluation Forum*



The member evaluation forum conveys suggestions and input as material for joint discussion for the sustainability of tourist villages. “From the results of the evaluation, it was agreed that at the end of each month, we will clean up the Goa Pindul area” (P5); “to preserve the comfort of Goa Pindul tourism, tree-planting initiatives and other initiatives have been implemented” (P6). This forum also reviews how the community preserves and sustains Goa Pindul tourism, including projects such as maintaining the road to Goa Pindul, removing rubbish from the Goa Pindul area, and planting trees.

Administrators and community representatives attended the evaluation process. In the evaluation, suggestions were discussed democratically in the context of developing tourist villages. Even in various matters, including financial management, visitor satisfaction, and operational standards, the number of visits is also reported in the evaluation.

We regularly evaluate, sir, at the end of every month along with the sharing of joint performance results. We invite the head of the village, representatives of community leaders and all members (P1).

The above evaluation was carried out and based on the mutually agreed objectives. Monitoring and evaluation were carried out monthly using social media (WhatsApp groups), which is one of the familiar tools that can run effectively. Each member is easy to communicate with and can even provide input directly if a problem occurs without waiting for a routine schedule.

Our routine monthly evaluation also involves community leaders. We invite them to the secretariat to provide input and suggestions for the management. Discussion about the purpose of our program. However, members can also provide input at any time via WhatsApp Group (P5).

The monitoring and evaluation carried out by managers and stakeholders above reflect two things: firstly, the community can participate directly through forums or invite managers; secondly, using social media such as WhatsApp Group shows that managers and communities are connected in a more open and democratic space. The development process continues based on the outcomes of the evaluation.

## Discussion

Tourism-based empowerment is one of the most effective national development initiatives for enhancing the welfare of rural people by involving the people as the primary players in the development of their villages (Heny et al., 2013). Tourism-based community development in Bejiharjo village is impossible without the active participation of the local people. The researchers identified several patterns in the management of the Bejiharjo tourist village: (a) awareness-raising process; (b) community capacity-building process; (c) formation of pokdarwis; (d) implementation in cooperation and culture preservation; (e) youth involvement; and (f) monitoring and evaluation to determine successes and shortcomings.

Numerous forms of community involvement are fulfilled through community work, serving guests, and the opportunity to express opinions and engage in forum discussions. This fact supports the notion that to enhance village tourism, local inhabitants must be involved in every tourism development process (McDonald & Jolliffe, 2003). It is due to the tight relationship between tourism villages and people's lives from the perspectives of the natural environment, sociocultural, and economic activity (Nugroho et al., 2018). In other words, a tourist village cannot be detached from the original rural lifestyle and its potential.

### Awareness Process

The development of the Bejiharjo tourism village cannot be separated from the involvement of local communities, planning, implementation, evaluation, and development because the community is placed as the main or key factor in the development of the tourist village carried out (Đukić & Volić 2017b). The initial process is public awareness through neighbourhood forums, hamlet forums, and others. This community will be the main actor or person who understands what the village has and has so that it can guide tourists around enjoying the village. Thus, besides enjoying the natural scenery, tourists can experience the community's way of life (Richards & Hall, 2000). The awareness of the local community in Bejiharjo village fosters a sense of belonging, commitment, responsibility, and appreciation for preserving their natural and cultural environment. This approach explicitly combines an individual's intrapersonal component (self-critical awareness, self-efficacy, self) with a social interaction component; namely, an understanding of the village's potential needed to achieve goals (Banyard & LaPlant, 2002) so that empowerment is not just how people make money.

Still, the community understands this potential and can be more empowered to manage it (Strzelecka, 2015).

### **Training Process**

The ideal concept of a tourist village is to place the community as a key factor in the development carried out (Đukić & Volić, 2017b) so that increasing the capacity of Bejiharjo tourism village managers becomes a priority; those who were originally farmers must have the skills to manage tourist villages. The capacity of local communities is a determining factor in developing tourist villages (Nugroho et al., 2018). The training was provided to all actors involved: a group providing cooking training, a farmer, and livestock group through training in farming and livestock tourism packages, a homestay management group, and an arts group doing performance training. It is done to support the development process, so the capacity of the village management community must also be increased to produce a lasting and sustainable legacy (Getz & Page, 2014). Education and skills development can improve intrapersonal outcomes, self-esteem, self-confidence, and happiness (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2016).

### **Give Authority**

The tourism awareness group is the only institution with legal authority to manage the Goa Pindul tourist area. The local community manages Pokdarwis Bejiharjo village. Community involvement in the Bejiharjo tourist village is the key determinant of its success. This empowerment can result from involvement in managing tourism operations (Aghazamani & Hunt, 2017). The community began to manage based on community togetherness, which is evidenced through interaction in every process. Forums are often held to obtain decisions on the development of tourist villages and the collaborative development of supporting facilities so that the community grows a sense of ownership and great responsibility for the progress of tourist villages. The forms of empowerment are not only related to efforts to improve the economy but also to the community's political influence and opportunities for local community management (Coria & Calfucura, 2012; Strzelecka, 2015). Therefore, community empowerment indicators improve the economy and increase access to local facilities, utility systems, and protected areas (Coria & Calfucura, 2012).

### **Preservation of the Environment, Culture, and Involvement of the Younger Generation**

In this instance, sustainable tourism development is an effort to ensure that the natural, cultural, and social resources that are utilized for tourism development in the current generation can be enjoyed by future generations as well. Village potential is used as the primary funding source for tourist development in the village (Junaid, 2020). The young generation of the village of Bejiharjo is beginning to contribute information and awareness to preserve the environment and culture. Youth has enormous potential as the central focus of tourism development (Tambunan et al., 2021). Youth are taught how to operate a tourism village, how to promote digitally, how to show fascinating attractions, and how to serve traditional village cuisine. This potential becomes a provision for the community to turn their village into a tourist village, as it must be tightly tied to people's sociocultural and economic lives (Nugroho et al., 2018).

### **Evaluation: Efforts to Maintain Sustainability**

Tourism effect monitoring and assessment is developing as a crucial instrument for achieving the sustainability of rural tourism destinations (Rio & Nunes, 2012; Steele et al., 2017). The administration of tourism villages is routinely evaluated to determine the program's level of success, target attainment, financial management, visitor happiness, operational standards employed, number of visits, and the Goa Pindul tourism area preservation program.

Community leaders and all members were invited to the evaluation forum. They provide suggestions and input as discussion material for the development of the tourist village. They allow members a stronger voice and more influence over their lives (Goodkind & Foster-Fishman, 2002). This periodic monitoring and evaluation aim to guarantee that the tourism village adheres to the principles of sustainable development. By understanding and accessing information, tourists can participate in decision-making, a crucial component of sustainable development (Cole, 2006).

### **Preservation of the Environment, Culture and Involvement of the Younger Generation**

Sustainable tourism development, in this case with efforts to ensure that the natural, cultural, and social resources are optimized in tourism development, in the present generation can also be enjoyed for future generations. Village potential can be utilized as the main asset of tourism development in the village (Junaid, 2020). The creation of the younger generation in Bejiharjo village began to be involved to provide knowledge and understanding to preserve the environment and culture. This potential is a provision for the community to make their village a tourist village because a tourist village must be closely related to people's lives from the socio-cultural aspect, the natural environment, and economic activities (Nugroho et al., 2018).

### **Conclusion**

Tourism-based community empowerment is an empowerment approach that involves and places local communities as important actors in the context of a new paradigm of sustainable development. Community based tourism villages have an impact on strengthening local community empowerment and increasing social responsibility in a sustainable manner (Hutagalung et al., 2022). Empowerment is an opportunity to mobilize the potential and dynamics of the community by making the village a destination and combining natural and cultural tourist attractions, public tourism facilities, and adequate accessibility with the procedures and traditions of village life.

Community involvement fosters a sense of belonging and encourages positive behavior to maintain the sustainability of tourist destinations because community participation is an important factor (Yu et al., 2018), starting with how to create an atmosphere or climate that allows the community to develop through socialization and work faithfulness. The skills possessed by the community are the key to tourism development, becoming a determining factor in the development of tourist villages (Nugroho et al., 2018). The types of skills which must be possessed by the community in developing a tourist village include; skills in managing tourist destinations; skills in presenting interesting attractions; skills in serving village specialties; the ability to make improvements to maintain local community incomes (Ramos & Prideaux, 2014). These skills are closely related to the ideas and creativity possessed, so that coaching is always developed and given the authority to manage through Pokdarwis or groups formed by the community to optimize their potential and support them to take more control of their lives (Goodkind & Foster-Fishman, 2002). Development continues to be carried out based

on the results of the evaluation which is a forum for correcting each other and improving what the managers have achieved so that the tourism village continues to develop and be sustainable.

### Study Limitations

This research attempts to find a pattern of empowerment practice based on the tourist village of Goa Pindul, Gunungkidul Yogyakarta. Although this research setting has its uniqueness, it is only limited to describing tourism-based empowerment practices, so it is nothing more than the fundamental aspects surrounding it, such as sustainable nature management and an overview of micro-enterprises in the tourism environment. Further research needs to conduct a more in-depth study of the above in the same village or other tourist villages.

Despite the limitations, the results of this study can be the basis for new perspectives in similar research based on interpretive phenomenological analysis, which is not only carried out in tourism village communities but can also be the basis for further research on other community empowerment phenomena. It is a reference for in-depth research on community strategies in realizing self-reliance through tourism villages.

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