

## **Community Participation in Agrotourism Development in Cibodas Village, Lembang District, West Bandung Regency**

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### **Abstract**

Community participation or involvement plays an essential role in developing tourism activities, from planning to implementation. Consequently, community participation plays a part in determining the success factor of tourism development conducted in Cibodas Village, an emerging community-based tourism village in Bandung, Indonesia. This study aims to identify several forms of community participation in developing agrotourism. The descriptive qualitative method is used for the research to collect data by observing, interviewing, and studying existing documentation. The study indicates that the strong relationship among local communities, farmers, and government primarily empowers community participation in Cibodas Village. Although the development of agrotourism in the village still faces challenges due to other farming preferences among the local communities, the farmers' participation in contributing to the development has significantly increased. Agrotourism activities offered by the community and farmers in Cibodas Village are in the form of educational tourism through visiting agricultural land to identify types of plants, learning how to pick and care for plants, and enjoying processed food and drinks from agricultural products.

**Keywords:** community participation; tourism village; agrotourism

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### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The tourism sector has quite promising opportunities as one of the factors driving economic growth. Tourism is expected to be an opportunity to encourage the growth of other sectors such as plantations, agriculture, trade, and others. In developing sustainable tourism, the participation of the community in the developed tourism area is required. Community involvement in tourism development is necessary because the community is the owner of the land and residents in the destination, so the community has the right to determine tourism development (Singh et al., 2003). Thus, the development of agro-tourism in Cibodas Village requires the participation of the village community so that agro-tourism can be developed sustainably.

Previous studies have shown a strategy for developing the Cibodas tourism village through community participation and involvement in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating (Setokoe & Ramukumba, 2020). Community participation is driven by three factors: the will, opportunity, and ability of the community to participate (Saepudin et al., 2019). This statement is under the definition of community participation. Soetomo (2006) explains that community participation includes a series of actions in tourism development: planning, organizing, actuating, and evaluating to obtain results. Through the participation of the community in the agrotourism development in Cibodas Village, the welfare of the people in the village will be obtained.

Knowing this, the development of agro-tourism requires community participation. The form of community participation in Cibodas Village in tourism development needs to be known. Knowledge of the forms of community participation helps determine the direction of agro-tourism development in Cibodas Village, which is under the wishes of the people in the village. This research aims to identify forms of community participation

in developing agro-tourism in Cibodas Village by describing the management flow carried out by various elements of the Cibodas Village community to develop agro-tourism.

### *The Role of Society in Tourism*

The essential aspect of tourism development is community participation. Community development in tourism is focused on empowering and equipping people with skills to advance the community. Then agro-tourism not only brings people closer but also has economic value. In addition, agro-tourism also benefits rural farmers and opportunities to develop less developed areas (Gunawijaya & Pratiwi, 2018; Joshi et al., 2020). The role is dynamic when a person exercises rights and obligations according to his position (Soekanto, 2002)—he also explained that society is several people who live in groups for a long time and work together to organize themselves in social units formed together to become explicit norms. So, the role of the community is individual or group participation to drive efforts to be made in an organization or area to achieve existing goals.

Tourism is a sector that cannot be separated from human beings. Because basically, tourism sells services carried out by the people who host it in the area. The role of the community is needed in tourism; so that people feel involved and get the benefits of tourism. Then the community is also the main target in tourism development to improve the community's welfare.

### *Agrotourism*

According to (Aref & Gill, 2009), agro-tourism is associated with tourism activities in rural areas (rural tourism) in addition to agricultural tourism (farm tourism), soft tourism, and ecotourism. (Sutjipta, 2001) defines agro-tourism as a series of activities that combine agricultural activities in a coordinated manner based on environmental preservation and community welfare, especially for farmers. Meanwhile, (Sznajder et al., 2009), agrotourism is a variety of activities in which there are agricultural and recreational activities in an agricultural environment. Agro-tourism has potential in the field of agriculture as well as natural scenery and the diversity of activities carried out by the community. The existence of agro-tourism in a tourist area will benefit the surrounding community by increasing people's income.

Several considerations must be considered in the development of agro-tourism: 1) Setting the natural base, which includes the uniqueness of biophysical resources, conservation, cultural culture, and historical culture; 2) Educational value; Tourist objects and local people with all their local wisdom are a source of knowledge for tourists; and 3) Community participation in preserving attraction facilities and participation as guides, providers of accommodation, food, and handicrafts.

In general, (Sznajder et al., 2009) defined three functions of agro-tourism in the form of socio-psychological, economic, and environmental. Socio-psychological functions include providing entrepreneurial skills and new experiences for farmers through professions and meeting tourists, traditional rural livelihoods, and education. The economic function is in the form of supporting the development of accommodation facilities, agriculture, raising livestock, providing job vacancies, and increasing income for farmers and the local government. Environmental functions include increasing efforts to conserve natural resources, develop infrastructure, increase the selling value of housing, utilize resources, and minimize migration rates from rural areas to cities (Randelli & Martellozzo, 2019).

(Maruti, 2009) explains the benefits of developing agro-tourism as follows: 1) Open job opportunities for farmers and their families; 2) Prevent farmers' income from being unstable by providing additional sources of income; 3) Develop cultural and moral values between urban and rural communities; 4) Improving the standard of living of farmers through interaction with people from visiting cities; 5) Urban communities can exchange experiences with rural communities regarding life in the village and their daily lives; and 6) Support for rural development and agricultural business.

### *Community Participation in Tourism Villages*

In article 78 of Law NO 6 of 2014, it is explained that a village is built to improve the welfare and quality of life of rural communities and alleviate poverty through meeting basic needs supported by the development of village facilities and infrastructure, development of economic potential in the village, as well as utilization of natural resources and on an ongoing basis. Therefore, the participation of the village community is needed to realize the goals to be achieved by the village. Community participation in the village is community participation in an activity, especially in the development of a village where community participation is also the key to success for the village itself. Because in the development of a village, community participation is needed so that the village can develop.

Participatory activities that grow in the community are a form of initiative and creative ideas that emerge from the community through their awareness and sense of responsibility. In participating, the community can be divided into several levels. According to (Arnstein, 1969), these levels are manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power, and citizen control. (community control).

There are three main reasons for the importance of community participation in development: 1) community participation becomes a measuring tool to obtain information regarding the conditions, needs, and attitudes of local communities that influence the success of development project programs; 2) Communities become more confident when development projects or programs are implemented by involving them in preparation and planning because they have a better understanding of the ins and outs of the project and a sense of ownership of the project arises; and 3) There is a democratic notion that it is the people's right to be involved in development for the community itself. Communities have the right to provide input and determine the type of development to be carried out in their area of residence.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

The research was conducted in Cibodas Tourism Village, one of the villages in West Java, located in Lembang District, West Bandung Regency. This research is a type of qualitative research with descriptive data analysis techniques. According to (Husaini & Akbar, 2009), descriptive qualitative research describes respondents' opinions according to research questions, then analyzes using words that underlie the behavior of respondents, such as reduction, triangulation, conclusion, and verified. Descriptive research aims to describe a natural or social phenomenon systematically, with facts, and accurately.

This study determined that the determination of informants used the Snowball Sampling technique, which then determined six informants, including 2 Village Representatives, 1 Hamlet Head, 1 Farmer Group Chair, and 2 Farmers. The location of research was carried out in Cibodas Village, Lembang District, West Bandung Regency. The area in Cibodas Village is around 1,273.44 Ha and is located at an altitude of 1,260 meters above sea level. Cibodas village is divided into four hamlets. 17 RW areas and 66 RT areas. Cibodas Village was founded in a hilly area and had fertile soil. The main livelihood in Cibodas Village is in the agricultural and animal husbandry sectors.

The collection of research information using in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with six informants in Cibodas Village who were assessed to know more clearly about the condition of the area, problems, and Agrotourism in Cibodas Village, including 1) Village Representative; 2) Hamlet Head; 3) Head of Farmers Group; 4) Farmers. Secondary data also strengthen the data collection process to support the completeness of the information.

The data analysis in this study was carried out by examining all the data collected from various sources, such as the results of interviews with informants, direct field observations (observations), and documentation such as official documents, personal documents, and written documents.

## C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### *Informant Profile*

Respondents for data collection consisted of 6 respondents who were all members of the Cibodas Village community. Among the six respondents, one was female, and five were male. Two respondents were farmers, 1 was the head of a farmer group, and 3 were members of village government institutions, including the head of the hamlet, head of village government affairs, and head of village planning affairs. Respondents were found in farmer's fields, at farmer group houses, and at the Cibodas Village office in collecting data.

### *Forms of Community Participation*

The forms of community participation in Cibodas Village in the development of agro-tourism in Cibodas Village, which were found included community activities, partnerships, community preferences, fields of work carried out, and community participation through institutions. Community activities, primarily farmers, in developing agro-tourism include establishing relationships between communities, participating in learning and opening homestays and becoming workers for tourist destinations in Cibodas Village. Based on findings in the field, the community mutually empowers its neighbors in agricultural development by exchanging ideas, labor assistance, and aspirations among farmers. They developed modern agriculture by applying agricultural technology such as greenhouses and temperature gauges. Communities, both farmers and non-farmers, also learn about agricultural development at the Farmer and Rural Self-Help Training Center (P4S) directly or indirectly. They are also interested in opening homestays in response to the agro-tourism opportunities they have studied. The people of Cibodas Village work at tourist destinations in Cibodas Village as employees and parking attendants. The people of Cibodas Village are employed based on recommendations from RT and RW.

The community has partnered with several institutions in Cibodas Village, including youth organizations, destination owners, third parties, and the village government. The cooperation between the community and youth organizations resulted in an agreement regarding managing parking lots for tourist destinations in Cibodas Village, one of which is The Lodge Maribaya. This form of cooperation between the community and the destination owner resulted in efforts by the destination owner to set up kiosks for MSMEs in the area around the tourist destination. The forms of MSMEs the community operates include souvenir and processed food and beverage businesses. The community cooperates with third parties in the form of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by assisting NGOs in the form of capital. This collaboration was carried out by a farmer group called Agronative Serenity with the Dompot Dhuafa institution. The community cooperates with the village government to provide facilities in the form of coaching services, training, and employment for the Cibodas Village community itself.

In addition to the form of cooperation carried out by the community, they also participate in agro-tourism development through farmer groups consisting of the Cibodas Village community itself. Through farmer groups, they receive guidance and knowledge, which is applied to their farms, and the community also invites tourists to visit their farms. Several farmer groups have developed into Independent Farmers and Rural Training Centers (P4S), which provide training services to farmers and the people of Cibodas Village.

According to (Arnstein, 1969) that community participation has a level of participation that describes the level of initiative and creation that can be born. The higher the level of participation in a community, the more initiative from the community will be seen, and there is the ability to control development independently. The level of community participation can be measured, one of which is the form of activity and mindset carried out and owned by the community. It is known that the community has partnered with several institutions, including youth organizations, destination owners, third parties, and the government. This shows a relatively high participation rate based on (Arnstein's, 1969) participation ladder. However, it is known that not all have participated, even though the opportunities for this have been known. The farmer groups in Cibodas Village know this and provide information to the farming community through coaching and training programs. Thus, there has

not been an even level of community participation in Cibodas Village in developing agro-tourism. Therefore, the level of participation of the Cibodas Village community in the development of agro-tourism, according to (Arnstein, 1969), is in the range of the informing to partnership ladder.

#### *Agrotourism Development*

The form of participation that the community has carried out significantly influences agro-tourism development in Cibodas Village as a tourism village. In agro-tourism, the farming community has a role as a provider of tourism products and, at the same time, as a host for visiting guests. The community has seen an opportunity for Cibodas Village to be developed into an agro-tourism destination in Lembang District, West Bandung Regency. However, the community's enthusiasm for developing agro-tourism has not been fully achieved in Cibodas Village, so agro-tourism is carried out intensively in several RW areas, one of which is RW 05 with the Halimunan Agro-tourism Park developed by the Binama Farmer's Group.

Agrotourism activities in Cibodas Village include educational programs and agro-production. The agro-education program in Cibodas Village was an introduction to plant types and land maintenance, delivered directly by farmers to visitors. Agrotourism lands produce processed food and beverages whose raw materials are obtained from these agrotourism lands. One of the products is processed herbal drinks for health. The community, as the host, also interacts with visiting tourists. They welcomed visits from agencies outside Cibodas Village and invited them to join their activities as farmers. They explain to visitors about farming and provide homestay services for visitors to stay.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

Community participation is community involvement in tourism development which involves planning, implementing, and obtaining results. The existence of community participation in tourism development is one of the determining factors in the success of tourism development because the community is a resident and the owner of the tourism development area, especially in the development of tourist villages with agro-tourism as the main attraction. Cibodas Tourism Village is a rural area located in Lembang District, West Bandung Regency, with agro-tourism as the main attraction of this tourist village and is in the process of being developed. Most of the people of Cibodas Village make a living as grain farmers and already have associations with farmer groups in Cibodas Village.

The form of community participation in Cibodas Village in developing agro-tourism is carried out through the activities of farming communities that empower each other; becoming workers as employees at tourist destinations in Cibodas Village, participation through community institutions in the form of farmer groups, and partnerships with several institutions including youth organizations, owners of tourist destinations, third parties through CSR, and the village government. The level of participation of the Cibodas Village community in the development of agro-tourism is considered relatively high at the partnership level. However, it has not been evenly distributed throughout the Cibodas Village area due to the preference of the people who choose modern agriculture, which does not fully support agro-tourism. Nevertheless, the community is aware of agrotourism potential, and the farmer groups inform this through guidance and training. The agro-tourism activities offered by the people of Cibodas Village are in the form of educational tours by visiting agricultural land to identify types of plants, learn how to care for plants, pick, and learn and enjoy processed food and agricultural products.

The findings from this study can be used as an illustration of the form of community participation in Cibodas Village in the development of agro-tourism, which is then taken into consideration by the local village government to develop agro-tourism development strategy in Cibodas Village based on community participation.

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