

Community Empowerment Strategy towards a Sustainable Rural Community-based Tourism Village

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the potential of Bira Village to become a Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism based on the implementation of the concept of community empowerment. This research was conducted at the Panrangluhung tourist attraction, Bira Village, Bonto Bahari District, Bulukumba Regency. The research method used is a qualitative case study type. Research informants were determined purposively consisting of village heads, Village Representative Board, community leaders, religious leaders, women leaders, youth leaders, village communities, sub-district government officials, and district tourism officials. Data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis. The sociological perspective used is applied sociology, which is the concept of community empowerment. The results showed that the community empowerment model could be implemented in this village to support the realization of Bira Village as a Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism (SRCBT). This concept is the integration of the concept of tourism villages, community-based tourism, and sustainable tourism within one boundary of Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism. This research also complements the concept of village tourism elements, namely the willingness of local communities to make their area a Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism. community-based tourism and sustainable tourism within one boundary of Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism. This research also complements the concept of village tourism elements, namely the willingness of local communities to make their area a Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism. community-based tourism and sustainable tourism within one boundary of Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism. This research also complements the concept of village tourism elements, namely the willingness of local communities to make their area a Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism.

Keywords: *Community empowerment, rural community, tourism village.*

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Introduction

The tourism sector is the world's largest industry which absorbs the most workers. This sector does not only involve large capital entrepreneurs but also involves many small businesses. As formulated by The ASEAN Secretariat (2016) that internationally, the tourism economic sector is dominated by small businesses that provide goods and services for visiting tourist customers (Arifin and Arifin, 2020). Thus, tourism has great potential to grow the welfare of the community around tourist objects (Eric, et al., 2020; Yergeau, 2020). This is in line with the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 2009 concerning Tourism, especially Porigin 4 that tourism aims to; (a) increase economic growth; (b) improve people's welfare, and (b) eradicating poverty; overcoming unemployment. This shows that tourism is believed to be one of the main sectors that are a mainstay for the people's welfare.

Concerning the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda, the tourism trend is shifting towards the involvement of local communities as the main stakeholders in tourism. This is evidenced by the development and implementation of the concept of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) by the ASEAN Secretariat (2016) and world organizations as the *Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation* (APEC) emphasizes sustainable tourism (Guo, et al., 2019; Purnomo, et al., 2020). The two world organizations emphasize the importance of involving local communities in tourism. So that local people do not become “spectators” in their ancestral lands.

The implementation of the tourism village concept internationally can be found in the European Union (EU). Research Apostolopoulos et al. (2020) show that the EU has implemented this concept in Greece, as an example. The results showed that the concept of a tourist village that aims to improve the farmer's economy seems not to be maximized due to several obstacles both related to regulations and policies as well as obstacles faced by the community. While the research results Ballesteros and Hernández (2016) on the impact of rural development in the European Union on tourism show that investors (private investors) have an impact on local communities, in particular, can destroy territorial identity. While the study Ayazlar & Ayazlar (2015) show that the implementation of tourism villages has a positive impact on local communities, both in terms of local resource management, community participation, and economic improvement in several countries in the world.

In the context of ASEAN, Bouchona and Rawat (2016) emphasized the importance of innovations that involve local communities and resources in rural areas of ASEAN countries, particularly related to tourism. The implementation of this concept can also be found in Thailand, especially in Mae Kampong. Research result Kontogeorgopoulos et al. (2014) show that the application of CBT in Mae Kampong, Thailand has had a positive impact in terms of community participation, the transformation of local leadership, and management of local resources. In Indonesia, the application of the CBT concept has also been carried out in several villages. One of them can be found in Batu City, East Java. Research Nurhidayati and Fandeli (2012) show that the application of CBT in Batu City has succeeded in increasing the economic income of local rural communities. The opinion of the villagers is obtained from spending tourists in their village.

The various descriptions above show that the application of the concept of tourism villages and CBT has been carried out in various countries in the world, ASEAN countries, and even in Indonesia. However, in South Sulawesi, especially in Bira Village, this concept has not been implemented. Bira Village has become the prima donna of tourism in this area. Based on the research of Musawantoro and Ridwan (2019), one of the objects that have great potential in this village is Panrangluhung Beach. Panrangluhung Beach has an attraction in the form of white sand, panoramas, and Phinisi-making activities and the connectivity between tourist objects in Bira Village is connected to each other. Several tourist objects in Bira Village besides Panrangluhung Beach, among others; Tomb of Pua Janggo, Tomb of Dato Tiro, Hila-hila Bathing Place for Lolisang Beach, and Samboang Beach. Apart from the potential for tourism objects, the potential for visiting tourists is also high. The data shows that the number of visits to Bira in 2016 amounted to 175,455, 2017 totaled 203,934 visits and in 2018 totaled 262,225 visits. The visit data shows that there is an increase in tourist visits to Bira every year. However, different from other tourist objects in Bira, visits to Panrangluhung Beach did not increase significantly. This is due to the lack of information on the existence of this beach, starting from information on attractions, availability of accommodation to amenities (Musawantoro and Ridwan, 2019).

The data also shows that although Bira Village has become a popular tourist attraction in South Sulawesi, the existence of this village as a tourist object has not been able to improve the welfare of the village community, especially the people around Panrangluhung Beach as a whole. This can be seen from the number of poor families in this area. Based on data from BPS Bulukumba (2020), the total population of Bira Village is 3,585, with details of which are 1560 men and 2025 women. The data shows that the number of poor people in Bira Village is 760 people or around 21% of the total population. This data shows that the existence of Bira Village as a tourist attraction has not been able to increase the welfare of the community equally. This is evidenced by the high number of poor people in the village.

Sociologically, this phenomenon in Bira Village shows that there are important things that are neglected, namely the involvement and empowerment of local communities in the sustainability of tourism in this village. Through the official website of Bira Village, namely; www.desabira.com, it is known that the Bira Village Government has formed a Sustainable Development Working Group (Pokja SDGs). However, the involvement of village communities has not materialized in the form of sustainable empowerment.

In addition, in the context of tourism, based on the 2020 Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget Implementation Report (APBD Desa Bira), the program of declaring Bira Village as a Community Based Tourism (CBT) and Sustainable Rural Tourism-based tourism village has not yet been seen. The programs implemented are still ceremonial and not special. Therefore, it is important to do community empowerment to involve the local community, especially the community around Panrangluhung Beach to encourage the implementation of community-based tourism villages.

Naturally, the concept of empowerment referred to is the concept of empowerment which is sourced from the knowledge, skills, and wisdom of the local community to then be implemented based on the needs of the local community and visitors who come to this area. The potential of Bira Village, especially the people around

Panrangluhung Beach, to implement the concept of Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism (SRCBT) is enormous. So that the sustainability of tourism can be an integral part of people's lives. Absolutely, with the concept of mutual strengthening (empowerment) which integrates knowledge and skills.

Therefore, the concept of community empowerment that is integrated with the SRCBT concept is important to become a scientific study to encourage the improvement of the welfare of the local community. Thus, it is not only the local people who benefit from this research but academically, there is a significant contribution to the development of concepts of community empowerment and the concept of Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism (SRCBT) or Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism as a global development agenda.

The concept of community empowerment which is important to be a reference in this study is Ife and Tesoriero (2008) who argue that empowerment aims to increase the empowerment of those who are disadvantaged. Empowerment strategies can be carried out through policies and planning; social and political action; and education and awareness. When referring to the root of the theory, it can be argued that in the context of empowerment, there are actors who act. This refers to Weber's theory of rational action (Veeger, 1986) and there are regulatory and coercive regulations. This regulatory contest refers to Durkheim's theory of social facts (Veeger, 1986). Based on the middle theory, community empowerment in the context of tourism can refer to Giddens' structuration theory (1995). The theory of structuration emphasizes the importance of the roles of agents and structures in the totality of society. This theory integrates the role of agents and structures as important in people's lives. The agent referred to here is an individual related to tourism and the structure is a structure related to tourism. Then more practically or empirically, community empowerment theory (Ife and Tesoriero, 2008) becomes the main reference.

The concept of community empowerment is symmetrically related to supporting concepts such as; the concept of rural tourism (Akkus, et al., 2018). According to this concept, a tourism village includes support for regional potential (village natural environment), village community life, village community activities, cultural heritage, and village traditions that are integrated with another. Likewise, Community Based Tourism (ASEAN Secretariat, 2016) and sustainable tourism (APEC, Asker, 2010) support the existence of Bira Village to become a tourist village, community-based tourism village, and sustainable tourism object. Based on the description above, it can be emphasized that this study aims to show the potential of Panrangluhung Beach, Bira Village, to become a Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism (SRCBT) by applying the concept of community empowerment.

Materials and Methods

This research was conducted at the tourist attraction Panrangluhung Beach, Bira Village, Bonto Bahari District, Bulukumba Regency in March 2021. An interesting tourist icon on Panrangluhung Beach is a sloping beach and white sand, there is a traditional boat-making place and there is a silk cloth weaving activity carried out by village women. The research method used is a qualitative case study type. Research informants were determined purposively consisting of village heads, Village Representative Board (BPD), community leaders, religious

leaders, women leaders, youth leaders, village communities, sub-district government officials, and district tourism officials (Ridwan, et al., 2020). Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews and secondary data through literature reviews and related documents, both online and offline. Data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis as intended by Miles and Huberman (Upe, et al., 2019), including; data display, data categorization, and conclusions drawing.

Results and Discussion

Potential and Opportunities of Bira Village to Become SRCBT

There are three main concepts in this discussion, namely; the concept of rural tourism (Wijijayanti, et al., 2020), the concept of Community-Based Tourism (Yanes, et al., 2019), and the concept of sustainable tourism (Zolfani, et al., 2015). The concept of rural tourism or village tourism includes support for regional potential (village natural environment), village community life, village community activities, cultural heritage, and traditions of village communities that are integrated with another (Akkus, Cetin, and Akkus, Gulizar (ed.), 2018). Meanwhile, according to the Regulation of the Minister of Culture and Tourism in 2010, Tourism Village is a form of integration between attractions, accommodation, and supporting facilities that are presented in a structure of community life that integrates with the prevailing procedures and traditions (Wiweka, et al., 2021).

CBT concept is a popular tourism model which in this case is defined as a tourism model that integrates national, provincial, and regional tourism policies, which gives the widest access to the community in terms of ownership, management of all tourism potential and objects as well as control of all tourism-related processes for sustainable community life. This confirms that CBT stakeholders, namely any individual, group, or organization that can influence or be affected by the existence of the CBT (Arifin and Arifin, 2020). As for the principles of the ASEAN CBT (2016), namely: involving and empowering communities to ensure transparent ownership and management; build partnerships with relevant stakeholders; obtain recognition recognized by the relevant authorities; enhancing social welfare, and maintaining human dignity; including fair and transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms; improve relations with local and regional economies; respect for local culture and traditions; support the conservation of natural resources; enhances the quality of the visitor experience by enhancing more pleasant host and guest interactions, and aim to achieve financial independence (Puja and Aryasih, 2020).

The concept of sustainable tourism as approved by the world tourism organization that sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure broad participation and consensus-building. Sustainable tourism is an ongoing process and requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and or corrective measures (Asker, 2010). The principles of sustainable tourism according to Asker (2010), namely: utilizing environmental resources which are key elements in optimally developing tourism, maintaining ecological processes is important and helping to preserve natural heritage and biodiversity; respecting the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, preserving their built and cultural heritage and traditional values, and making intercultural

contributions to mutual understanding and tolerance; ensure viable and long-term economic operations, provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders who are equitably distributed, including stable employment and income-generating opportunities and social services for host communities, and contribute to poverty alleviation (Amerta, et al., 2018).

These potentials have been integrated with another. This is evidenced by the access to Panrangluhung which is already connected to Bira Beach. Although some infrastructure still needs improvements. Why is Panrangluhung called a model because the beach is not an autonomous village government area but is part of Bira Village where previously there was a Bira Beach tourist attraction which had been developed earlier. Bira Beach cannot be used as a miniature (model) of a tourist village because large investors (investors) have first made large investments in the form of lodging and other tourist facilities that are difficult to own or become part of the local community's ownership. While the conditions for becoming a tourist village are community participation, both in terms of ownership of capital and involvement in all tourism processes. Therefore, it is Panrangluhung who has the potential to become a model for a tourist village on a more micro-scale.

Apart from having the potential to be a miniature tourist village, Panrangluhung also has the potential to become a community-based tourism object or CBT. CBT aspects, namely; engage and empower communities to ensure transparent ownership and management; build partnerships with relevant stakeholders; obtain recognition recognized by the relevant authorities; enhancing social welfare and maintaining human dignity; including fair and transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms; improve relations with local and regional economies; respect for local culture and traditions; support the conservation of natural resources; enhances the quality of the visitor experience by enhancing more pleasant host and guest interactions, and aim to achieve financial independence (Puja and Aryasih, 2020).

Based on the CBT concept, the informants admitted that they were willing to make their house a place to stay for guests. This shows that local people are willing to become owners and involve themselves in tourism activities in their area as long as conflicting actions and values, norms, and religions of the local community. Apart from that, informants are also willing to cooperate with external parties and the government. In the context of legality, informants from government elements are willing to provide support as a model for sustainable community-based tourism villages. Informants are also willing to improve relations with local and regional economies. The informants claimed to respect their culture and traditions. In addition, informants are willing to support the conservation of natural resources. Social capital is in the form of courtesy and hospitality to guests owned by the surrounding community Panrangluhung Beachbe a supporter of improving the quality of the visitor experience. What is equally important is that informants are willing to make a collective agreement to benefit from each guest visit at an affordable cost so that they can have an alternative source of income to achieve financial independence. Based on these data, Panrangluhung has fulfilled the CBT aspects or this object has the potential to become a community-based tourism object.

Likewise with the application of the concepts of sustainable tourism, which includes aspects; participation of all stakeholders such as Village Heads, Community Figures, Village Representative Bodies, and other elements to

involve themselves in tourism, both in planning, implementing, and supervising the implementation of all tourism activities in their area. The informants also stated that they were willing to apply the principles of sustainable living as the main condition for sustainable tourism. However, the informants admitted that it is important to carry out joint education to practice these principles.

The description above emphasizes that this research complements the concept of a tourism village according to Akkus and Akkus (2018) regarding the importance of the willingness of local communities to make their area a sustainable community-based tourism village. Based on this description, it can be emphasized that Panrangluhung, has the potential to become a pilot model for Sustainable Community-Based Tourism Villages.

Conceptually, this research finds an integration of concepts; tourism villages, CBT, and sustainable tourism to become Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism (SRCBT). The implementation of empowerment practices with the local community must be carried out in a participatory manner, with full involvement to share experiences, knowledge, skills, open access to ownership, and management of resources fairly by promoting ecological sustainability. These practices are carried out jointly and mutually supportive between the local community and the village administration and the government above them. In addition, the parties (stakeholders) jointly build mutually beneficial networks and partnerships to support an increase in family economic income.

The Impact of Bira Village as a Tourism Objects on Local Communities Life

The existence of Bira Beach as a mainstream tourism object that was developed earlier has no significant benefit from the local community, especially the people around Panrangluhung. The existence of hotels, inns, facilities, and other tourist infrastructure in Bira Village is still dominated by groups of capital owners. The people in Panrangluhung admit that they do not understand the empowerment model, including empowerment in the tourism sector. This shows that there is still social distancing that is far between the local community and tourism that has been developed by the government and tourism investors in Bira Village. Therefore, an integrative concept is needed that can fully involve local communities in the entire tourism process in their region (Ridwan, et al., 2020).

The data also shows that the concepts of community empowerment have been implemented in Bira Village. Community empowerment programs and activities are carried out by the government. Based on the data, the empowerment model is carried out through the implementation of training that presents resource persons from Bulukumba Regency. In addition, there are also village assistant officers assigned by the government. Even so, the data show that the concept of empowerment that has been carried out so far still emphasizes the importance of the presence of sources and/or resources from outside the village. Meanwhile, exploration, mapping, and involvement of local community resources have not been carried out. This has resulted in the dependence of the local community on the existence of assistants and external resource persons. Thus, the existence of these intervention programs is difficult to become a sustainable program.

External empowerment program interventions have not been of a specific nature to support Bira Village tourism, in particular, Bira Village as a Sustainable Rural Community-Based Tourism (SRCBT). One of the obstacles to this agenda is the absence of community-based social data, namely data generated from social mapping (social mapping) based on the social potential of households. The available data is macro which is used to intervene in welfare programs such as social assistance and village infrastructure development. In connection with the Bira Village development priority program, the data shows that the development of community-based tourism objects has not become a priority. However, the Bira Village Government showed openness and willingness to transform the village from a tourist attraction into an SRCBT.

The Potential of Transforming the “Empowerment” Model towards “In-powerment”

The realization of the SRCBT should be done by transforming the concept of empowerment into the concept of in-powerment of those who are disadvantaged. According to Ife and Tesoriero (2008), empowerment strategies can be carried out through policies and planning; social and political action; and education and awareness empowerment through policy and planning can be achieved by changing structures and/or institutions to open up more equitable access to resources or services and opportunities to participate in people's lives. Empowerment through social and political action emphasizes the importance of political struggle and change in increasing effective power (Ife and Tesoriero, 2008). Empowerment through education and awareness emphasizes the importance of an educational process to increase their in-powerment. According to Ife and Tesoriero (2008), the context of “in-powerment” is the result of empowerment. These concepts emphasize the existence of external knowledge to strengthen the local community, including entering new “vocabulary” to strengthen the community.

This concept has an impact on program intervention from outside and “great people” from outside the community who “as if” clearly understand the social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions of the local community. Empowerment practices like this place the local community as the person who must be taught and/or empowered by outside forces. This concept has an impact on program intervention from outside and “great people” from outside the community who “as if” clearly understand the social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions of the local community. Empowerment practices like this place the local community as the person who must be taught and/or empowered by outside forces. This concept has an impact on program intervention from outside and “great people” from outside the community who “as if” clearly understand the social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions of the local community. Empowerment practices like this place the local community as the person who must be taught and/or empowered by outside forces.

Likewise with the concept of empowerment based on the Regulation of the Minister of Culture and Tourism Number: PM.26/UM.001/MKP/2010 of 2010 concerning General Guidelines for the National Program for Community Empowerment for Independent Tourism through Tourism Villages. According to this regulation, what is meant by community empowerment is creating or increasing the capacity of the community, both individually and in groups, in solving various problems related to efforts to improve the quality of life, independence, and welfare (Sulistiyani in Pratiwi, 2019). Both the concepts put forward by Ife and Tesoriero

(2008) and the regulations above do not emphasize the urgency of strength from within the community itself but emphasize the existence of external strength to strengthen (empower) the community. Even though, the concept of empowerment emphasizes the empowerment of potentials and strengths from within the community itself because local people have knowledge, skills, values, norms, and wisdom that better understand their social, economic, and cultural conditions. Intervention from outside was, at least, balanced with internal resources. This concept is called the concept of “empowerment” or (in-powerment) and not (empowerment). This idea shows a difference with the concept put forward by Ife and Tesoriero (2008). This concept is called the concept of “empowerment” or (in-powerment) and not (empowerment). This idea shows a difference with the concept put forward by Ife and Tesoriero (2008). This concept is called the concept of “empowerment” or (in-powerment) and not (empowerment). This idea shows a difference with the concept put forward by Ife and Tesoriero (2008).

Transformation of the concept of empowerment into the concept of in-powerment can be done at Panrangluhung. This statement is based on data from informants who state that several social resources are owned by the local community, such as community members who have completed higher education, there is also a transformation of knowledge from outside because there are members of the local community who have migrated and have experience, there are special skills. local people in making the finis boat, community members can variously snack. In addition, based on the data, informants were open and friendly and willing to make part of their house rooms a place to stay for guests who came to their area. In addition, they are willing to open up to learn and participate in developing their area to become a model for a sustainable community-based tourism village if invited or given the opportunity.

The informants emphasized that they were willing to study outside the region to gain knowledge about tourist villages. They admit that they prefer to go out to study to see first-hand the tourism villages that have been successful than if they were lectured. Informants said that if they were trained or lectured, their knowledge was limited, but if they witnessed a successful tourism village, they would have more knowledge. After this, the informants admitted that they were willing to apply the tourism village model in their area once they had outside knowledge. The reason is that the village tourism practices they will implement are sustainable because they are people who live in the area. However, the informants also realized that trainers or facilitators of tourism villages from outside were also important if they did not have the financial capacity to see firsthand tourism villages that had been successful in other areas.

Several strategic steps that can be taken with the informant's consent are; informants are willing to be involved in conducting social mapping (social mapping) based on names in addresses to reveal social potential, including values, norms, customs and potential of natural resources; informants are willing to be actively involved in disseminating potentials to related parties; there are informants who are willing to assist the tourism village; informants are also willing to attend village tourism facilitators who can come from outside the village if there are no facilitators from within the village; informants are willing to map the needs of tourist villages in a participatory manner; informants are willing to involve themselves in planning, implementing and supervising the implementation of sustainable community-based tourism villages; informants are willing to be involved and support sustainable community-based tourism village communities; and informants are willing to build a

network together to open access to the public about the attractiveness and charm of Panrangluhung Beach which is part of Bira Desa Village as a Sustainable Community-Based Tourism Village.

Conclusion

Panrangluhung Beach which is one of the areas in Bira Village has fulfilled the aspects of village tourism, CBT, and sustainable tourism. Therefore, it can be emphasized that the Panrangluhung Beach area has the potential to become a miniature of Sustainable Community Based Tourism Village (SRCBT). The implementation of the SRCBT concept can be done by transforming the empowerment model that has been taking place in Bira Village into a model of in-powerment. This concept emphasizes the urgency of utilizing the potential of local social and natural resources. This potential is supported by the existence of potential social, cultural, and economic resources in the form of; values, traditions, and economic resources of local communities; the openness and commitment of the village government to support the village; and information disclosure as a market for Bira Village products. Based on this, it can be emphasized that the new findings of this study are the importance of integrating the concept of tourism villages, CBT, and sustainable tourism. This integration becomes a Sustainable Rural Community Based Tourism (SRCBT). The strategy is to transform empowerment determination into the concept of in-powerment. Another new finding is the urgency of the local community's acceptance to be part of the overall tourism practices in their area. This completes the concept of a tourism village according to Akkus and Akkus (2018). If the village community is not willing, other potentials cannot be used to support the tourism village.

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