

Revitalization of Tourism Village Facilities in Gunung Wangi to Enhance Income and Local Economic Sustainability

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Abstract

Developing tourist villages in Indonesia is an essential strategy of the government to increase the local economy and regional income. Villages with diverse assets such as natural beauty, rich cultural traditions, traditional culinary, handicrafts, and historical sites have great potential to become attractive tourist destinations. The research focuses on Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism, which offers attractions such as sunset views, city lights at night, and camping activities. However, inadequate facilities and infrastructure are the main challenges in this development. Through the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approach, this research proposes solutions to revitalize facilities and infrastructure and long-term strategies to increase the attractiveness of Mount Wangi. The FGD was attended by 14 residents, including the manager of Gunung Wangi Tourism. Local community involvement is integrated into every research stage, including problem identification, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), implementation, and evaluation. Revitalization efforts in the tourist village of Gunung Wangi have shown positive results, with significant improvements reported in the post-revitalization evaluation. Input from stakeholders, including visitors, MSME actors, and tourism village managers, shows substantial improvements in infrastructure and visitor experience. Although some respondents suggested room for improvement, the overall success was seen in the increase in the number of visitors, with the majority experiencing a significant increase. This revitalization has revived the attraction of tourist attractions and boosted economic growth in the local community.

Keywords: Community-Based Participatory Research; Local Economic Development; Sustainable Tourism; Tourism Revitalization; Village Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, an archipelago with incredible natural wealth and rich cultural diversity, has become an attractive global tourist destination (Lesmana et al., 2022). 2019 the tourism industry recorded significant achievements, becoming the country's second-largest foreign exchange contributor. This achievement highlights its role as an essential driver in the national economy (Lesmana et al., 2022). Indonesia's unique natural and cultural assets provide a strong foundation for the tourism sector to play a strategic role in driving economic growth in the future (Ausat et al., 2023). The sector, more than a source of foreign exchange, is recognized as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth, stimulating economic activity, supporting development at the regional level, and creating sustainable employment (Antara & Sumarniasih, 2017).

In this context, the Indonesian government took the initiative to develop village tourism as a critical strategy for improving the social economy at the local level (Auliah et al., 2022). This approach has proven effective in strengthening the tourism sector and improving the welfare of villagers. Each village, with its diverse assets, including natural beauty, rich traditions and culture, traditional cuisine, handicrafts, historical sites, and cultivation activities, has the potential to become a unique tourism destination (Deliana, 2023). Utilizing these assets transforms the village into an attractive tourist destination and opens up economic opportunities for local communities. In addition, tourism villages also play an essential role in promoting and commercializing local products, thus providing a broader economic impact on a regional scale (Baral & Rijal, 2022).

The era of regional autonomy in Indonesia, significantly strengthened by the passage of Law No. 6/2014 on Villages, provides greater authority to local governments in managing the unique potential of their regions (Asian Development Bank, 2016). This grant of autonomy allows villages to convert their natural resources and distinctive cultural characteristics into tourist attractions, with the primary goal of improving the welfare of the local community (Nurhantoro et al., 2022). In this context, developing tourism villages becomes an integral part of the community-based tourism approach, which supports inclusive and sustainable rural economic growth but also assists in preserving cultural and natural wealth (Soeswoyo et al., 2021).

For example, Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism in Bantul Regency, located in Bangkel hamlet, Srimulyo village, Piyungan sub-district, is an implementation of the concept of Desa Wisata (Latifatul et al., 2019). This area, known for its rich potential, has inspired residents to develop Gunung Wangi into a tourist destination that offers activities such as sunset viewing, nighttime city lights viewing, and camping (Andika et al., 2023). The development of this tourist attraction began around mid-2018 by the residents of Bangkel Hamlet and has continued to grow, with Gunung Wangi now becoming one of the main assets of the hamlet. Managed by the Tourism Awareness Group of Bangkel Hamlet ('Pokdarwis'), Gunung Wangi has transformed into a popular tourist destination and an essential source of income for residents, reflecting the economic and social benefits of the Tourism Village concept. However, Pokdarwis Gunung Wangi faces significant challenges, including the low enthusiasm of members who often opt for other occupations such as construction and farming. Coupled with limited funding, this has resulted in many tourist facilities that are poorly maintained and not available adequately, such as damaged tables and chairs, shabby guardrails, unattractive stages, inadequate trash bins, unclear prohibition, and direction boards.

In response to this condition, the Community Service Team (PKM) from Janabadra University, in synergy with Pokdarwis Gunung Wangi, initiated a revitalization activity of tourist facilities at Gunung Wangi. This revitalization will improve the quality of the tourist experience and trigger greater involvement from Pokdarwis members. With improved infrastructure and facilities, there is expected to be increased revenue from the tourism sector, which can provide economic incentives for community members to participate more actively in tourism management. These revitalization activities are also essential to ensure the sustainability of Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism as an attractive and competitive tourist destination.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This research uses the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) method, an innovative research approach in which the community plays an active role in the research process (Röger-Offergeld et al., 2023). CBPR focuses on community empowerment through collaboration and social change by integrating communities in every research

stage. The main goal is to mobilize communities to identify and address relevant social issues and initiate and sustain long-term social change programs. This approach emphasizes the importance of support from various stakeholders to ensure the continuity and success of the program. The involvement of communities and stakeholders in the implementation and evaluation stages is essential to increase their capacity and ensure the sustainability of these initiatives. The research procedure applied is as follows:

1. Tourist Site Survey and Problem Identification

Initially, a thorough survey was conducted on the Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism site to identify existing problems and needs. This survey includes mapping the condition of infrastructure, facilities, and environmental and social aspects. Field observations and interviews with visitors, residents, and local stakeholders provide a clearer picture of their experiences, perceptions, and suggestions. The survey results are then processed into a report containing a list of problems, needs, and opportunities for improvement.

2. FGDs with Stakeholders

After collecting data from the field survey, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was held with relevant stakeholders, including 14 residents and managers of Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism. This FGD serves as an essential forum to discuss survey findings, find solutions, and plan strategies for the implementation of revitalization. Participants in the FGD included representatives of local governments, managers of Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism, and representatives of youth organizations. These discussions aim to create a realistic and sustainable action plan, ensuring all parties have the same understanding of the goals and methods to achieve revitalization. Most importantly, the FGD also focuses on developing local capacity and skills, allowing communities to manage tourist sites independently once the project is completed.

3. Revitalization Implementation

The third stage involves the implementation of the revitalization plan that has been prepared. Various infrastructure development, renovation activities, and facilities are carried out according to the agreed schedule. Good coordination and cooperation between all parties is essential at this stage.

4. Revitalization Evaluation

The last stage involves evaluating the implementation of revitalization activities. Feedback is collected from visitors and stakeholders through surveys and data analysis. The goal is to assess the effectiveness and impact of revitalization activities, considering aspects of infrastructure, tourism experience, and economic impact. The participatory evaluation process involves community members and stakeholders to ensure that their perspectives and insights are integrated. A report was prepared based on the evaluation results, which included findings and recommendations for further development and sustainable improvement in the Gunung Wangi Nature Park. The review also assesses the community's readiness and capacity to manage the site independently, ensuring sustainability beyond the project's duration. The stages of implementing the activity are shown in Figure 1.

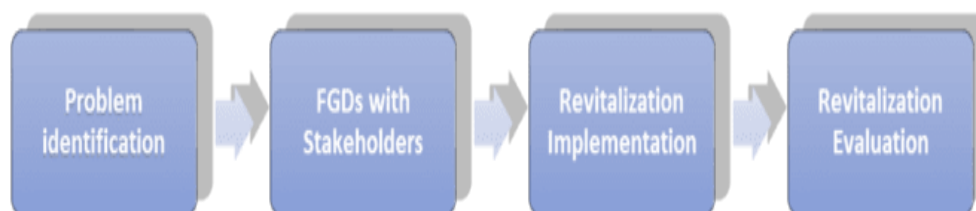


Figure 1. Activity Stages

RESULT and DISCUSSION

This community service activity (PKM) was carried out in Gunung Wangi Tourism Village, Bangkel Hamlet, Srimulyo Village, Piyungan District, Bantul Regency. This PKM took place from October 9 to November 22, 2023. The initial survey conducted at Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism Village revealed that the community has initiated the development of the tourism village through self-help methods. This initiative was realized by a community group known as Pokdarwis (Kelompok Sadar Wisata). However, Pokdarwis' development of the tourism village faces significant limitations. For example, their efforts to improve tourism facilities and infrastructure through cooperation activities are sporadic and limited to simple facilities such as constructing a simple music stage.

In addition, Pokdarwis faces significant challenges in managing Gunung Wangi Tourism Village, which includes the low participation of members, who often opt for alternative occupations such as construction and agriculture, and limited funds. This results in a lack of maintenance of existing tourism facilities, including broken tables and chairs, shabby guardrails, inadequate trash bins, and unclear signage and directions. In addition, the road infrastructure is uneven, and car parking is insufficient.

In response, on October 14, 2023, the community service team organized a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) that is shown in Figure 2. with various stakeholders at the residence of the Head of Bangkel hamlet. The FGD aimed to evaluate survey findings, find collaborative solutions, and plan revitalization strategies. FGD participants included local government representatives, Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism managers, and youth organization members. The forum aimed to produce a realistic and sustainable action plan for revitalizing Gunung Wangi tourism village.

The FGD results showed the need to map and prioritize the solutions offered. These solutions include revitalizing tourist facilities, such as stage renovation, painting guardrails, procuring signage and warnings, trash bins, donation boxes, and making tables and chairs.



Figure 2. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Activity

The implementation of the revitalization program can be described as follows. The revitalization program that began on October 19, 2023, took its first steps by renovating the stage, including adding murals to improve aesthetics. The process started with applying cement plaster to create a flat and smooth stage surface, which is essential for the quality of the murals. Once the surface had dried, a thorough cleaning was done to remove any debris hindering paint adhesion. A base coat is then applied, providing a solid foundation for the mural colors to be laid. The creative stage begins with a sketch of the mural design, followed

by detail painting using a variety of brushes and specialized paints for murals. Stencil and color blending techniques are used to add dimension and depth. During this process, the PKM Team conducts periodic evaluations to review the work from various angles to ensure proper proportion and color harmony. This process continued until the mural was perfect, as shown in Figure 3, resulting in an attractive and appealing backdrop to support the atmosphere of the music performance on the stage.



Figure 3. Mural Process at the Music Stage

After renovating the murals on the music stage, which brought a new artistic feel, the next step in the revitalization was to focus on the sustainability and cleanliness of the Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism area by providing trash bins. As part of the eco-friendly effort, used buckets were transformed into trash bins with a creative recycling process. These buckets were painted striking red and labeled with the word "WASTE DISPOSAL SITE" to make it easier for visitors to identify them, as shown in Figure 4. A total of six buckets were set up, demonstrating a commitment to a clean and organized environment. This not only supports cleanliness but also adds aesthetic value to the area. This process emphasizes the importance of preserving the environment while encouraging visitors to take part in keeping it clean.



Figure 4. Procurement of Trash Bins

After the trash bin initiative, the next step is to improve navigation and information provision in Gunung Wangi Tourism Village by installing signage and Sapta Pesona values shown in Figure 5. These boards make it easier for visitors to find the village's main facilities while instilling the positive values promoted by the tourist village. Meanwhile, prohibition boards remind visitors of the importance of maintaining cleanliness and order. Thus, Srimulyo Tourism Village is a comfortable and informative place for visitors and reflects a solid commitment to environmental preservation and sustainability.



Figure 5. Signage and the Sapta Pesona Board of the Tourism Village Symbol

Furthermore, as part of the development of Gunung Wangi Tourism Village, the PKM team procured a new infaq box to replace the old one that had rotted. This initiative is significant considering that the financing of the Tourism Village is still minimal, mainly sourced from community self-help and village funds. The infaq box is vital in collecting funds for various development purposes. The new infaq box is carefully crafted, painted, and labeled to ensure that it is durable and easily recognizable to visitors who wish to contribute. This update not only maintains the practical function of the infaq box as a container for donations but also underscores the community's commitment to maintaining and developing Gunung Wangi Tourism Village, ensuring quality facilities and services for current and future visitors, as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Procurement of Infaq Box for the Development of Gunung Wangi Tourism Village

In a series of activities to revitalize Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism, the PKM team has identified and taken action on the shabby condition of the guardrails. This included repainting the fences with brighter and more attractive colour schemes, which not only improved the visual aesthetics but also reinforced the boundaries of the tourism area, ensuring visitor safety. The initiative was meticulously carried out, ensuring that the result was aesthetically pleasing and durable, reflecting the PKM team's dedication to the management and maintenance of Gunung Wangi Nature Park, as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Painting the guardrail of Gunung Wangi Tourism

The final stage of the revitalization implementation at Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism is the construction of tables and chairs that aim to add visitor facilities. The tables and chairs are designed to provide a comfortable place for visitors to relax and enjoy the natural scenery. The manufacturing process involves selecting materials resistant to outdoor weather conditions and considering stability and durability. The PKM team performs the casting and shaping of the table with safety and user comfort in mind, as shown in Figure 8. This initiative enhances functionality and comfort within Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism. It adds aesthetic value to this beautiful natural environment, enriching visitors' experience as they spend time at the tourist site.



Figure 8. Table and Chair Making



Figure 9. The Final Result of Gunung Wangi Tourism Village Revitalization

After completing the revitalization phase of Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism, the final stage includes evaluating the effort's success through collecting feedback with questionnaires distributed to visitors, managers, and MSME players at the location. The questionnaire aimed to measure satisfaction levels and the impact of revitalization on visitor experience and business operations, as reflected in Figure 9. The feedback was collected one month after the revitalization, with 24 visitors, two managers, and 7 MSME players responding. The results, reflected in Figures 10 and 11, provide essential data to assess the effectiveness of the improvements.

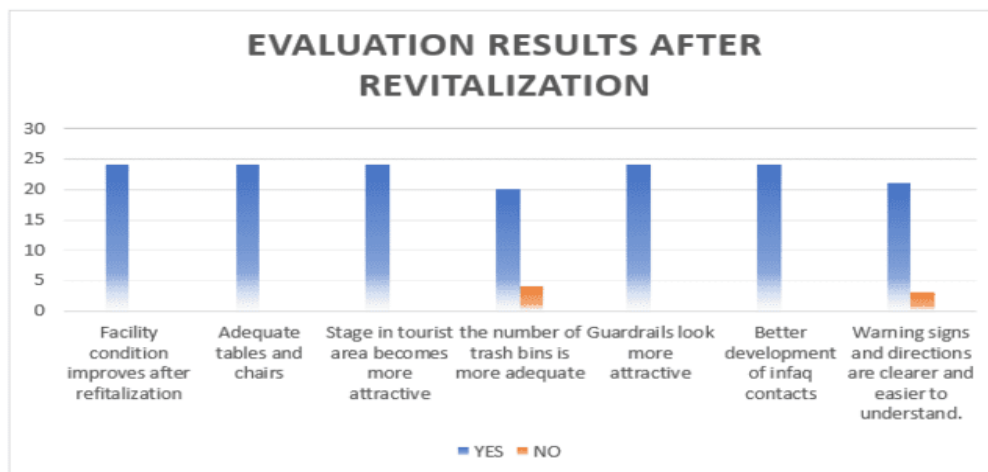


Figure 10. Post-Revitalization Evaluation Results

Based on the post-revitalization evaluation results in Figure 10, respondents perceived several significant improvements. The condition of the facilities, including the stage in the tourist area, the number of trash bins, the appearance of the guardrail, and the development of the infak contact, all showed positive improvements, with the majority response stating 'Yes.' In addition, clearer directional signage also received positive

responses. This indicates that revitalization efforts have successfully improved the aesthetics and functionality of various aspects of Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism. However, there is room for improvement in the availability of tables and chairs, with a small percentage of respondents not witnessing any changes. In conclusion, the revitalization initiative can be considered successful in upgrading the infrastructure and enriching the visitor experience. However, more attention needs to be paid to improving seating facilities in the future.

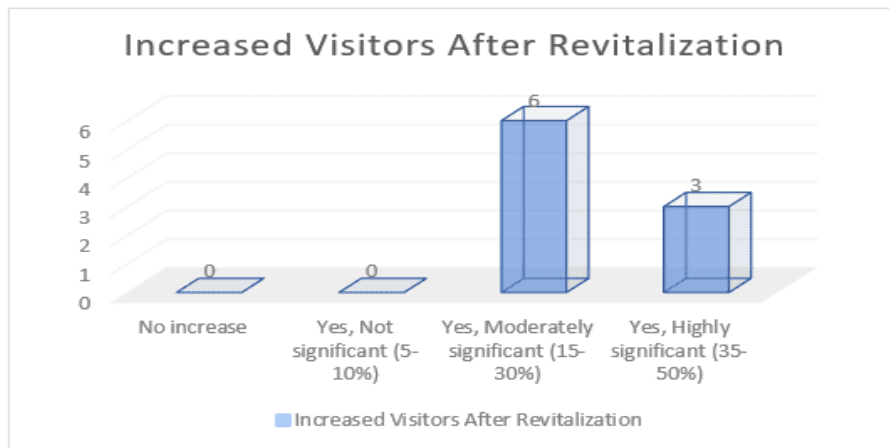


Figure 11. Graph of increase in visitors after revitalization

The graph presented shows the evaluation results from MSME respondents and Gunung Wangi nature tourism managers, with data reflecting an increase in visitor numbers post-revitalization. From the evaluation, none of the respondents experienced stagnation or an insignificant increase in visitors; instead, the majority of respondents (six out of nine) reported a fairly significant increase in visitors (15-30%), and three respondents saw a very substantial increase (35-50%). It can be concluded that the revitalization efforts have successfully increased visitor interest and numbers, positively impacted Gunung Wangi Nature Tourism, and supported local economic growth involving MSMEs.

CONCLUSION

Revitalization efforts at Gunung Wangi Nature Park have shown positive results, with substantial improvements reported in post-revitalization evaluations. Feedback from stakeholders, including visitors, MSME players, and Gunung Wangi Tourism village managers, indicated significant improvements in infrastructure and visitor experience. The installation of signage and Sapta Pesona, upgraded facilities, and aesthetic improvements, such as murals on the stage and newly painted guardrails, all contributed to a more attractive and welcoming environment for visitors. Providing new donation boxes and transforming used buckets into vibrant trash bins reflect a commitment to community engagement and environmental sustainability. While a few respondents suggested room for improvement, particularly in the provision of seating and trash bins, the overall success is evident in the increase in visitor numbers, with the majority experiencing a significant increase. This revitalization has rejuvenated this tourist spot's attractiveness and boosted economic growth in the local community.

For future recommendations, focus on improving visitor facilities on an ongoing basis, significantly enhancing and maintaining the quality of seating areas, increasing trash bins, and further clarifying road directions to tourist sites. In addition, providing children's play areas, building gazebos, and improving parking areas and road infrastructure will enhance the visitor experience. It is also recommended that a regular maintenance schedule

be created to ensure the sustainability of the revitalization efforts. Engaging the community to encourage continued participation and exploring additional funding opportunities can promote further development. In addition, a structured feedback mechanism can provide real-time insights for dynamic improvements, ensuring that Gunung Wangi Nature Park remains an attractive and sustainable tourist destination and benefits the local economy.

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