Optimizing village assets for rural tourism development in South Malang

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ABSTRACT: This study discusses the optimization of village assets for the development of rural tourism in South Malang. This research is motivated by the many cases of mismanagement of village assets that have led to criminal acts of corruption since the enactment of law No. 16 2014 on villages. Whereas on the other hand this law gives broad authority to the village to manage assets for improvement of community welfare. The purpose of this research is to design a village asset optimization for the development of rural tourism. The research method used is descriptive qualitative research with data collection techniques through observation, interviews and documentation. The data obtained were analyzed through three stages. The results of this study recommend that the management of village assets in South Malang be carried out in optimal, professional, and modern in accordance with statutory regulations and still consider the success factors of rural tourism development.

Keywords: village, rural, tourism

1 INTRODUCTION

The village is a homogeneous and egalitarian social unit that has experienced a process of socio-economic differentiation since the colonial era (Shohibuddin 2016). This raises two major problems, namely internal (within the village) and external (rural-urban) economic disparities. This problem is common in developing countries. Over the past 2 decades Malaysia has established programs to narrow the progress gap between rural and urban areas, improve living standards and the socio-economic conditions of rural communities, especially for the poor (Fauziah & Hamzah 2012). Meanwhile in Indonesia, the resolution of this problem has received legality since the enactment of Law No. 6/2014 on villages. The de-centralized system established in this law allows villages to design regulations, plan village development, and manage finances independently where this authority was previously held by a higher authority (Susan & Budirahayu 2018).

In addition to opening up new opportunities, this regulation also presents a big challenge for village governments, especially in practicing good governance values such as anti-corruption, transparency, participation and accountability considering that it is generally known that the majority of human resources at the village level still have primary and secondary education backgrounds with limited governance knowledge (Prasetyo & Muis 2015; Azbihardiyanti & Ma'ruf 2016). This is evident from the many cases of corruption that arise not because of embezzlement of funds but because of ignorance in financial management as found by Setiawan that 44.8% of corruption at the village level is caused by low understanding of village officials on accountability for fund management (Ismail et al. 2016; Setiawan & Yuliani 2017). This is in line with ICW's monitoring which states that the amount of corruption in villages has continued to increase since 2015 due to large budget management, but its implementation at the village level is not accompanied by the

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principles of transparency, participation and accountability in political governance, development and village finance (*Outlook dana desa 2018 potensi penyalahgunaan anggaran desa di tahun politik 2018*).

These governance problems not only have an impact on the increasing number of corruption crimes, but also the reluctance of the village government to take innovative steps to develop the village economy, especially those related to the management and use of village assets. Even though the government has launched the Sipades (Village Asset Management System) application, in its implementation there are still not optimal obstacles experienced by Village officials in using the SIPADES application such as the system that often errors, lack of understanding of village officials in using SIPADES, and there is no sustainable assistance if village officials encounter difficulty in using the application (Q. & Raharso 2020). The management of village assets is an important instrument in bringing prosperity and happiness to the villagers (Anwar & Angga 2018). Departing from these problems, this article seeks to provide an overview of the design of optimizing village assets for regional economic development through rural tourism.

2 METHOD

The research method used is descriptive qualitative research. Collecting data in this study using observation, interview and documentation techniques. Observations were made to 11 sub-districts in South Malang, this was done to see the condition of the community and to examine village assets that have the potential to become rural tourism destinations. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with sub-district or village leaders in the research location. Furthermore, documentation is done by analyzing the documents available at the Central Bureau of Statistics, Malang Regency. The collected data is tabulated and processed by analysis through three stages, namely the stage of data reduction, data display, and conclusions.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Village assets and potential for improving community welfare

Based on Village Law 6/2014 the original village wealth (point a) is village treasury land, village market, animal market, boat moorings, village buildings, fish auctions managed by the village, agricultural product auctions, village owned forests, owned springs, villages, public baths, and other original village assets. Village assets are one of the village's original sources of income that have the potential to increase the community welfare if it well managed ('Undang-Undang Nomor 6 Tahun 2014 tentang Desa' 2014; Andari et al. 2017).

Previously, the concept of welfare was only seen as an economic phenomenon. However, along with the development of thought, the manifestation of prosperity is increasingly diverse, including economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability. Community independence is an important indicator of measuring welfare. The village community has this independence capital because they have original village income that comes from village assets. Basically, village independence - including independent asset management, is a manifestation of village autonomy whose existence is protected and regulated in laws and other legal products (Permatasari & Pratiwi 2013). However, if the principle of independence is not balanced with the existence of qualified village resources, it will only hinder village development and the welfare of its people. The problem that occurs is that there are not sufficient resources to assess the potential of each village asset. Whereas the assessment of village potential is included in the planning stage which is important in providing an orientation for the management of village assets so that they can run effectively. Other welfare indicators include economic conditions, housing conditions, development opportunities, social security, environment, and psychology (Bao et al. 2018). All of these things will be realized in

accordance with the mandate of the law through the optimization of village assets, especially for the implementation of reliable rural tourism.

3.2 Rural tourism potential in South Malang

South Malang or the southern part of Malang Regency covers 11 districts with a total of 125 villages. This area covers an area of approximately 1399.70 km² (BPS Malang Regency 2020). The contours of the southern Malang region are mountainous and hilly. In some places, you can find beautiful forests, waterfalls, and springs. In addition to the hilly contours, there is also a landscape in the form of a stretch of coast that stretches from Donomulyo District to Ampelgading District. The beaches face directly to the Indian Ocean.

Regional geographical conditions in such a way constitute the superior potential of South Malang in the tourism sector. This can be seen from the dominance of the types of natural tourism in South Malang. However, the tourism potential in South Malang is not only natural tourism but also includes socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions. Tourism potential based on the socio-economic conditions of the community, among others, is agro-tourism, tourism villages, and other artificial tourism. Meanwhile, tourism potential that comes from socio-cultural conditions includes religious and cultural tourism, historical heritage, and culinary tourism.

The majority of tourism potential management in South Malang is managed by villages and village Pokdarwis (tourism awareness group), the rest are managed by other asset owners such as individuals, Perhutani, or PD Jasa Yasa. The tourism potential that can be managed by the village is the one whose status is a village asset. Rural tourism depends on various natural and cultural resources, both publicly owned (village assets, etc.) and private, as well as the existence of related infrastructure and supporting facilities, such as road access, transportation, provision of accommodation, and restaurants.

Each sub-district in South Malang has the potential for rural tourism, both natural tourism and artificial tourism. In the category of natural tourism, beaches have a strong dominance as the tourism image of South Malang. Based on BPS 2020, there are 45 beach attractions. The number of beach tourism managed by the village reaches 27 objects. Sum-bermanjing Wetan sub-district occupies the top position with a total of seven village beach tourism objects. Coastal tourism is supported by easier access with the construction of the Southern Cross Route (JLS) in South Malang so that coastal tourism, both managed by villages and other stakeholders, has good prospects.

3.3 Village asset optimization design as a tourism pillar in South Malang

The increasing need for alternative tourism opens opportunities for villages to plan and develop village tourism by utilizing village assets they have. The rural tourism is a “rural experience” that offer a variety of attractions and activities in agricultural or non-urban areas. The types of activities include nature holidays and ecotourism, walking, climbing and riding holidays, adventure, sport and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism and, in some areas, ethnic tourism (Irshad 2010). This activity has many advantages for the village for the growth of employment opportunities, expansion of the economic base, social progress, and the revitalization of local crafts. The development of rural tourism is a complex multilevel process and is related to the restructuring of the economy in general (Van Der Ploeg et al. 2017). The development of this tourism will be even more interesting if it is connected with the roots of the historical traditions of the community which offer direct involvement in the daily life of the community (Herawati et al. 2014). This management must also be done optimally, professionally, and modernly to improve efficiency, effectiveness and create added value in managing assets (Heriningsih et al. 2015). In addition, in its development, it is necessary to consider factors that affect the success of rural tourism, including awareness of community tourism, management assistance, and sustainable training (Irshad 2010; Ajri et al. 2019; Larasati & Kurrahman 2019).

The optimal development of village tourism is carried out by careful planning, first, mapping tourism potential based on assets owned. Several village assets that have potential include village

treasury lands, fish auctions, forests, springs, public baths and coastlines. Second, a SWOT analysis is carried out to determine the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and SOAR to identify the situation and position faced by the village in the tourism business competition according to internal strategic factors owned by the village and external factors facing the village. Third, determining the tourism development strategy according to each potential. While professional development is carried out by carrying out good management, namely first (Anggraeni 2016). Second, managed independently involving youth and communities who have expertise in their fields because they are important elements in this development (Ezeuduji 2015; Van Der Ploeg et al. 2017). Third, using integrated information technology for planning, management (production and distribution), and reporting so that management runs transparently and accountably (Kayumova 2017). The development of modern village tourism is carried out by designing destination designs and products according to market needs that meet quality, ethical, and easy factors. This convenience takes the form of IT-based travel guides and promotions.

Apart from the managerial factors, another social factor is needed, namely tourism awareness. The community must become the subject and object of village tourism development so that they have a sense of belonging and are aware that they are an important part of developing tourism in their environment (Raharjana 2012; Putri & Manaf 2013). If possible, this form of involvement will be in the form of CBT (Community Based Tourism) which combines several variables, namely social, economic and environmental (Herawati et al. 2014). This CBT will be successful if the community is able to bring up the uniqueness of the location, facilitation of grants for the embryos of existing activities, there are driving figures and links to important stakeholders (Putri & Manaf 2013). An example of the uniqueness that can be presented is food. Typical food can be a tourist attraction seen from the point of view of consumer behavioral theories, the “experience economy” and the “intimacy” model. Typical foods serve to reinforce personal identity, the search for freshness, taste and authenticity, support for local producers, and environmental concerns (Baldacchino 2015; Sidali et al. 2015). Local food and its associated culture can help sustain rural tourism particularly and rural communities generally. One of the potential food and beverage products in South Malang is coffee originating from the slopes of Semeru (Dampit) which has been famous since the Dutch colonial government. The last but also very important is the continuous management and training assistance. Village communities are basically not people who understand the ins and outs of the tourism industry so that in management they must be accompanied by third parties such as government agencies, universities, and other social institutions. This is done to optimize management, avoid conflicts between residents fighting over assets, and avoid corruption due to ignorance of governance.

The implementation of strategies and success factors that determine the development of village tourism is expected to be able to lead people to prosperity according to the mandate of the law. In order to achieve a successful tourism village, development planning and implementation need to be evaluated based on the seven successful aspects of rural tourism community involvement: proximity to a generating market or gateway, product development (Tourism planning, infrastructure, and activities), a visitor center, partnership collaboration/cultural heritage, welcome centers, a quality brand, a regional label brand and funding (Irshad 2010). Although it is quite difficult, this must be started immediately, because it has been proven that many villages have succeeded in managing their assets such as Pangkah Kulon Gresik Village, villages in Dieng Plateau, a village in Jogjakarta (Putri & Manaf 2013; Astuti & Issundari 2016; Chomariyah et al. 2016). In addition, real examples in Malang can be seen in Pujon Kidul Tourism Village, Sumber Maron Tourism Village, Boon Pring Tourism, etc.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on this study, it can be concluded that village assets as a source of village income can be used to improve community welfare as long as it is well managed. South Malang is a region that is rich and has village assets that can be used optimally for economic improvement and community

welfare. The village assets are in the form of village treasury lands, fish auctions managed by the village, agricultural product auctions, village owned forests, village springs, public baths, and coastlines. This management must be carried out in an optimal, professional, and modern manner in accordance with statutory regulations and still consider the success factors in the development of rural tourism, including awareness of community tourism, management assistance, and continuous training.

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