



The Augmentation of Societal Cognizance Regarding the Harnessing of Natural Endowments with the Agrotourism Consept

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Abstract

Low community resources and limited knowledge in Betteng Village impede the development of significant yet unintegrated local potential, particularly in the agriculture and tourism (Pattumea') sectors. *This study aims to increase* community cognizance regarding the utilization of these natural resources through the agrotourism concept, in order to provide a pathway for integrated village development. *The method* used was a participatory approach, including outreach, lectures, and intensive group discussions to socialize the concept, its economic impacts, and the practical integration between agriculture (such as sugar palm and durian) and local tourism. *The activity results* showed high enthusiasm and a clear increase in knowledge among participants. The community demonstrated a better understanding of how to integrate their agricultural products with the Pattumea' tourism site as an economic driver. This increase in knowledge is a crucial first step for community empowerment in planning sustainable development.

Introduction

The low quality of community resources and limited cognizance in rural areas remain fundamental problems in efforts to develop village potential. This condition causes many natural endowments possessed by the village to not be optimally harnessed. One case study is Betteng Village in Pamboang District, Majene Regency. This village has great natural resource potential, including a diverse agricultural sector and beautiful mountain nature tourism potential, where one of the most famous is the Pattumea' tourism site. However, these two main potentials have not yet been managed in an integrated manner.

One framework considered most relevant to integrate this potential is the Agrotourism concept. By definition, agrotourism is a series of tourism activities that utilize the agricultural or plantation sector as its main object. The distinctive natural scenery of the agricultural area and various related activities become the main featured attraction. This concept is increasingly in demand because it can offer an authentic experience in an area with cool air and beautiful natural scenery.

Nevertheless, the implementation of this concept in Betteng Village faces a primary challenge, namely the limited knowledge at the community level itself. In order to plan village development that integrates these two sectors, the most fundamental step is the need for an augmentation of cognizance at the community level.

Answering this need, an outreach program was implemented focusing on "the augmentation of societal cognizance regarding the harnessing of natural endowments with the agrotourism concept". This activity aims to provide a basic understanding to the community about what the agrotourism concept is, what its impact on the economy is, and what its implementation strategy is for managing and integrating the existing agricultural and tourism potential in Betteng Village sustainably.

Method

This study was structured as a community service initiative, leveraging a participatory methodology. The program was executed in June 2023 within Majene Regency, specifically targeting Betteng Village in the Pamboang District; the Betteng Village Office served as the central venue for the activities. The primary audience for this intervention included village administrators alongside local community members, with an emphasis on individuals engaged in farming, as they represent the principal stakeholders for developing local potential.

To align with the research objective of augmenting community cognizance, a three-phase implementation framework was adopted. This comprised: (1) an initial outreach phase for conceptual socialization, (2) an interactive lecture component, and (3) intensive group discussion sessions. The informational content centered on disseminating the agrotourism concept, detailing its potential economic ramifications for the village, and outlining practical strategies for integrating agricultural resources (like sugar palm and durian) with the local Pattumea' tourism site. The enhancement of knowledge, serving as the outcome variable, was assessed qualitatively by employing participatory observation and analyzing audience feedback captured throughout the discussions.

Result

Adhering to the designated participatory design, the program's execution was centered on elevating the societal cognizance of the Betteng Village community. This intervention involved village administrators and local residents, particularly farmers identified as principal stakeholders, engaging them through a structured sequence of outreach, interactive lectures, and intensive group discussions.

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