

Analyzing Sembalun Village's Potential as an Agrotourism Attraction

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Abstract: Sembalun Village boasts abundant natural resources, yet only Mount Rinjani has been fully developed to its maximum potential. Therefore, it is crucial to explore and analyze the various potentials that Sembalun Village possesses for agrotourism development. This study aims to identify these potentials and their implications for the community in developing agrotourism attractions. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach to provide an in-depth overview of the conditions and potential for agrotourism development in Sembalun Village. Data collection was conducted through three primary techniques: participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results indicate that Mount Rinjani and its surroundings have significant potential for integrated tourism development. The hills around Sembalun Village offer spectacular views that attract photography enthusiasts. Developing photography spots with supporting facilities can enhance the tourist experience. Additionally, the fields and plantations offer refreshing natural tourism experiences. The development of integrated tourism packages with agrotourism can provide a richer experience for tourists and economic benefits for the local community.

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Introduction

Sembalun Village, located at the foot of Mount Rinjani on Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara, is one of the most intriguing agritourism destinations to explore. Known for its stunning natural scenery, this village offers a variety of captivating attractions for tourists. Mount Rinjani is the main draw of Sembalun. As the second-highest volcano in Indonesia, Rinjani offers challenging hikes with spectacular views from its summit (Azhari et al., 2024; Puspita, 2023). Hikers can enjoy panoramic views of Lombok, Bali, and even Sumbawa. Within Rinjani's crater lies Segara Anak Lake, a beautiful crater lake with turquoise-blue water, which is often a camping destination for hikers. In addition to Mount Rinjani, Sembalun is also known for its beautiful hills, such as Pergasingan Hill and Selong Hill. Pergasingan Hill is a favorite spot for light trekking, offering spectacular sunrise and sunset views. From the top of this hill, visitors can see expansive green fields and charming villages below (Putri et al., 2023). Selong Hill also offers equally stunning views, with

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neatly arranged rice fields resembling a green mosaic. The fields and plantations in Sembalun are an important part of the village's tourism appeal. Thanks to the fertile volcanic soil, Sembalun is an ideal place for various types of crops. Tourists can visit strawberry farms, organic vegetable gardens, fruit orchards, and ornamental flower plantations scattered throughout the village. The experience of picking strawberries directly from the plant, learning about organic farming techniques, and purchasing fresh products from local farmers is a unique attraction for visitors (Agustina, 2022). Sembalun Village also has a rich local culture. Visitors can enjoy various cultural activities such as traditional dances and ceremonial events that are still preserved by the local community (Ratmaja & Pattaray, 2024; Zulpan et al., 2023). With a combination of natural beauty, agritourism activities, and rich culture, Sembalun Village is a perfect destination for an educational and refreshing holiday. However, this great potential has not been optimally utilized for tourism development, particularly agritourism.

Agritourism is a tourism concept that integrates agricultural activities with recreation, education, and environmental conservation. This concept has been successfully implemented in various parts of the world, providing economic benefits to local communities as well as unique experiences for tourists (Jamalludin et al., 2024; Pauzi et al., 2022; Zaitun et al., 2022). However, in Sembalun Village, agritourism development still faces several challenges. Supporting infrastructure such as accommodation facilities and transportation means are still limited. Additionally, the lack of promotion and marketing leads to low tourist visits. Unprofessional tourism management and minimal innovation in tourism products also become major obstacles in the development of agritourism in this village.

Literature on agritourism development (I Gede Agus Ryananta Mudawan et al., 2023; Pakpahan et al., 2023; Pekerti et al., 2024) shows that several key factors can support the success of this program. First, enhancing human resource capacity, especially for farmers and local communities, is essential (Dyah Indriyaningsih Septeri, 2023; Junaidi et al., 2021; Rahayu et al., 2024). Training and education on tourism management, hospitality, and digital marketing can help the community understand and leverage agritourism opportunities. Second, the development of adequate infrastructure, such as good road access, sanitation facilities, and comfortable accommodations for tourists, is crucial (Ihsan & Rakhmanita, 2023). Third, collaboration between the government, community, and private sector is an important pillar in sustainable agritourism development (Selvia et al., 2024). Case studies from various regions such as Bali, Yogyakarta, and several European countries show that implementing these three factors can enhance the appeal and sustainability of agritourism.

However, solutions in the literature are often general and need to be tailored to the local context. In the context of Sembalun Village, the approach used must consider the unique characteristics of this village. For example, while training for farmers is important, the training methods should be adapted to the culture and habits of the Sembalun community. Moreover, effective promotion must consider digital marketing strategies that have not been widely applied in this area. The use of social media, websites, and other online platforms can be effective tools to attract domestic and international tourists. This gap highlights the need for a more holistic and contextual approach in developing agritourism in Sembalun Village.

This study aims to analyze the potential of Sembalun Village as an agritourism attraction and its implications for agritourism development. By adopting a holistic approach that combines the analysis of natural, social, and economic potential, and considering local wisdom and community

participation, this research is expected to provide applicable and relevant recommendations for sustainable agritourism development. The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive and specific approach to the context of Sembalun Village. The results of this study are expected not only to benefit the development of agritourism in Sembalun but also to serve as a model for the development of agritourism in other regions with similar characteristics.

Research Method

This study aims to analyze the agritourism potential in Sembalun Village, Sembalun Subdistrict, East Lombok Regency. The focus of this research is to identify the potential and analyze the implications of this potential for the community in developing agritourism attractions. The study is designed using a qualitative descriptive approach to provide an in-depth picture of the conditions and potential for agritourism development in Sembalun Village. A descriptive design was chosen as it is suitable for uncovering detailed and rich information about the phenomenon being studied, particularly concerning the perspectives and experiences of the local community. This approach can give researchers a comprehensive understanding of various factors influencing agritourism development in the village.

Data Collection

Data collection in this study is conducted through three main techniques: participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation.

Participatory Observation

Researchers will directly engage in the daily life of the Sembalun Village community to observe various activities related to agritourism. This observation provides information to understand the social and cultural context that influences agritourism development and to identify the existing potential in the field.

In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews will be conducted with various stakeholders, including local government officials, agritourism managers, farmers, and community members. These interviews aim to explore their perceptions, knowledge, and views on the potential and its implications for agritourism development. The in-depth interview technique allows researchers to obtain rich and detailed information from the perspectives of those directly involved.

Documentation

Documentation involves collecting data from various official documents, such as government reports, statistical data, local publications, and other relevant records. These documents will be used to complement and support the data obtained from observations and interviews.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study will follow the interactive model of Miles & Huberman, which consists of four main stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

Data Collection

Data is collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Every data obtained will be recorded and organized to facilitate subsequent analysis.

Data Reduction

Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data obtained from the field. In this stage, irrelevant data will be discarded, while important data

will be selected and categorized based on predetermined themes or topics. This process aims to simplify and summarize the information to make it easier to analyze.

Data Display

The reduced data will be presented in the form of matrices, tables, graphs, or charts that make it easier for researchers to see patterns and relationships between data. Systematic data presentation helps in understanding the structure and context of the data obtained and facilitates the identification of key findings.

Conclusion Drawing/Verification

Conclusions are drawn based on the presented data, aiming to identify important findings and formulate recommendations. Initial conclusions will be re-verified through data checks to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the findings. This verification is essential to enhance the validity and reliability of the research results.

Result and Discussion

Rinjani Mountain

Mount Rinjani, standing at approximately 3,726 meters above sea level, is one of the highest volcanoes in Indonesia and a highly sought-after destination for adventurers. The view from the summit is breathtaking, featuring the stunning Segara Anak Lake nestled within a vast caldera. The natural beauty and spiritual experience offered by Mount Rinjani make it an exceptionally appealing destination for hikers. Not only does the trek provide a satisfying adventure with challenging trails and magnificent scenery, but Mount Rinjani is also renowned for its spiritual significance and associated myths. For the local community, Mount Rinjani is considered a sacred place filled with legendary tales. One famous legend is about Dewi Anjani, a goddess believed to be the guardian of the mountain. This spiritual experience often adds to the reasons hikers visit Rinjani, not just to enjoy its natural beauty but also to feel a connection with nature and the cultural values it embodies.

The implications for agritourism development around Mount Rinjani include opportunities to create integrated tourism packages with agritourism. Hikers climbing Mount Rinjani can rest and enjoy local agricultural products before or after their trek. This could involve enjoying various local products such as vegetables, fruits, or other processed items from local farmers. Thus, tourists not only get to experience the breathtaking natural beauty at the mountain's summit but also gain a deeper understanding of the local farming lifestyle and taste local products. With this development, farmers can also economically benefit from the growing tourism. For example, farmers can sell their products directly to tourists or even collaborate with tour operators to provide lunch or snack packages using local ingredients. Additionally, with an increasing number of tourists, there will be a higher demand for accommodation, food, and other services, all of which can offer additional economic opportunities for the local community.

The Scenery of the Hills

The hills surrounding Sembalun Village offer captivating vistas, especially during sunrise or sunset. The natural beauty presented by these hills is a distinctive attraction for tourists seeking enthralling and picturesque photography experiences. Numerous tourists are drawn to capturing panoramic images of the hills and savoring the serene and peaceful natural ambiance. The uniqueness of these landscapes also appeals to tourists who enjoy photography or wish to explore natural beauty in visual form. These hills not only offer visual splendor but also present physical challenges for

hikers. Trekking these hills provides a different experience compared to climbing Mount Rinjani. The trails on these hills are generally shorter and less demanding, making them suitable for tourists who may not have the time or physical capability to climb Rinjani. Additionally, these hills often offer broader and more varied views, including expanses of green fields, small villages, and distant sea views.

The implications are the opportunities to develop tourist spots and activities related to nature photography around these hills. By creating photographer-friendly trekking paths and strategic observation points, tourists can enjoy a profound experience and capture stunning scenery. These spots can also serve as venues for photography workshops guided by local photographers, adding value to the tourist experience. Furthermore, developing supporting facilities such as observation towers, seating areas, and informational boards can enhance tourists' comfort and experience. Information about local flora and fauna, as well as local stories, can be provided to enrich tourists' knowledge and make their visits more meaningful. In this way, tourists not only obtain beautiful photographs but also gain a deeper understanding of the unique natural and cultural aspects of the area.

Farms and Plantations

The green fields and fertile plantations surrounding Sembalun Village offer an authentic agritourism experience. Tourists can learn about traditional farming techniques, interact with local farmers, and directly engage in agricultural cultivation processes. This experience allows tourists to gain a deeper understanding of the local farmers' lives and appreciate the efforts involved in producing high-quality agricultural products. Moreover, tourists can also sample fresh agricultural products from the local fields and plantations. Sembalun Village is renowned for its abundant vegetable and fruit farming, thanks to its cool climate and fertile soil. Products such as garlic, strawberries, and various green vegetables are the mainstay of agriculture in this region. Direct interaction with farmers provides an opportunity for tourists to learn about organic and sustainable farming methods, which are increasingly favored in the context of environmentally friendly global tourism.

The implication is the potential to develop farmer tours or agricultural tours that can increase local farmers' income and introduce rural life to tourists. These tours can include various activities such as harvesting, processing agricultural products, or even teaching traditional farming techniques to tourists. These activities not only provide educational experiences for tourists but also enrich their experiences by seeing and feeling the local farmers' lives directly. Additionally, the development of agritourism can include the construction of supporting facilities such as homestays, restaurants, and souvenir shops selling local products. Tourists can stay in local homes and experience daily life in the village while enjoying local cuisine made from fresh ingredients from the fields. This not only offers an authentic experience for tourists but also provides direct economic benefits to the local community. Educational and training programs for farmers on how to manage and capitalize on tourism opportunities are also crucial. With the right skills and knowledge, farmers can be better prepared to interact with tourists and offer engaging and meaningful experiences. Moreover, collaboration between the government, local communities, and the private sector is necessary to ensure that the development of agritourism proceeds well and provides sustainable benefits for all parties involved.

Conclusion

The development of tourism around Mount Rinjani, the hills of Sembalun Village, and the surrounding farmlands offers great potential to boost the local economy and provide diverse and immersive experiences for tourists. Mount Rinjani presents unique natural beauty and spiritual experiences, while the hills of Sembalun offer stunning views and opportunities for photography tourism. The fields and plantations provide freshness and tranquility for visitors, as well as opportunities for developing integrated tourism packages with agritourism. The farmlands in Sembalun Village offer an authentic experience of local farmers' lives and traditional farming techniques. By developing integrated tourism packages, such as agricultural tours, nature photography tours, and hill tourism packages, tourism in this area can provide significant economic benefits for the local community. Collaboration between the government, local communities, and the private sector is essential to ensure sustainable development focused on environmental conservation and the preservation of local culture. Thus, the area around Mount Rinjani can become a leading agritourism destination, offering natural experiences that can bring prosperity to the local community.

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