

DEVELOPMENT OF AGROTOURISM AT SUKAPULANG TOURIST DESTINATION IN SUKASETIA VILLAGE, CIHAURBEUTI DISTRICT, CIAMIS REGENCY

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Abstract

Sukasetia Village in Cihaurbeuti District has great potential to be developed into a sustainable agrotourism destination. This study focuses on identifying agrotourism development strategies in the Sukapulung area using participatory methods involving local communities as the main stakeholders. This study used qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, and descriptive analysis. The results showed that agrotourism development can provide significant economic benefits, such as creating alternative sources of income and preserving local culture and traditions. In addition, agrotourism also increases community involvement and encourages sustainable tourism practices that are in line with global trends. However, there are several challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to information, and less than optimal promotional strategies. This study recommends improving infrastructure, digital promotion, and capacity building programs to empower local communities. These strategies aim to ensure the sustainability and long-term competitiveness of agrotourism initiatives. The findings suggest that with collaborative efforts involving local communities, government, and the private sector, Sukasetia Village can become a model for community-based sustainable tourism development in rural areas, providing positive impacts on economic and social growth.

Keywords: Agrotourism, Tourism Village, Community Empowerment, and Promotion Strategy

A. INTRODUCTION

Sukasetia Village, located in Cihaurbeuti District, Ciamis Regency, is one of the villages that has abundant natural wealth and unique local culture that has the potential to be developed as a tourist destination. One of the leading areas in this village is Sukapulung, which offers beautiful natural scenery, expanses of productive agricultural land, and a community that mostly works in the agricultural sector (Ramonita et al., 2025). This potential provides a great opportunity to develop agrotourism, a tourism concept based on agricultural activities and rural life. By combining the agricultural and tourism sectors, the development of Sukapulung agrotourism can be a strategic solution to improve community welfare while preserving the environment (Rahmawati et al., 2020).

Agrotourism is a form of tourism that not only offers recreational experiences but also educates tourists about agricultural practices, environmental conservation, and local culture. This concept is increasingly relevant in the modern era where experience-based tourism and sustainability are major trends (Binnedyk et al., 2024). The development of Sukapulung agrotourism is expected to provide economic benefits in the form of increasing community income, creating new jobs, and developing locally-based small and medium enterprises (SMEs). In addition, agrotourism also has the potential to preserve local traditions and culture which are additional attractions for tourists (Putri & Santoso, 2021).

However, until now, the great potential of Sukapulung has not been optimally utilized. Some of the main obstacles faced include the lack of supporting infrastructure such as adequate road access, public facilities for tourists, and modern communication facilities. In addition, minimal promotion and limited public knowledge about professional tourism management also become obstacles. These obstacles cause the potential of Sukapulung to not be able to provide maximum contribution to village economic growth. This condition shows the need for strategic steps that are planned, integrated, and sustainable to overcome these various obstacles (Aditya, 2022).

The urgency of developing Sukapulung agrotourism is increasing considering the efforts of the Ciamis Regency government to place the tourism sector as one of the development priorities (Andini, 2013). In the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD), the government targets the development of community-based tourism destinations to encourage local economic growth. Sukapulung agrotourism, with all its potential, can be a model for community-based tourism management that supports this goal (Hermawan, 2017). By actively involving local communities in every stage of management, agrotourism can create a strong sense of ownership, so that the sustainability of management can be guaranteed in the long term (Rahmawati et al., 2020). Various studies show that the development of agrotourism has had a positive impact in various regions.

For example, Nglanggeran Tourism Village in Yogyakarta has succeeded in increasing village income by more than 40% through community-based management. A similar approach is also applied in Penglipuran Tourism Village in Bali, which integrates local traditions in tourism management, so that it not only attracts tourists but also preserves local culture. This success shows that a community-based approach is the main key in developing agrotourism. By learning from this success, Sukapulung has a great opportunity to develop a management model that suits its local characteristics (Putri & Santoso, 2021).

In addition to economic and social benefits, agrotourism also provides added value in the form of education for tourists. This education covers various aspects, from sustainable agricultural practices to environmental conservation (Haryanto & Sarjan, 2025). In the modern era, the concept of tourism that supports sustainability is increasingly in demand by tourists, especially from millennials and generation Z. Sukapulung Agrotourism can take advantage of this trend by offering authentic and sustainable tourism experiences. This is in line with global efforts to achieve sustainable development goals or Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in terms of environmental conservation, poverty alleviation, and community empowerment (Aditya, 2022).

To realize the development of Sukapulung agrotourism, careful planning and a participatory approach are needed. (Al-Fajar, 2023) This approach involves local communities as the main actors in tourism management. Community participation is not only important to create a sense of ownership but also provides opportunities for communities to increase their capacity through training and mentoring. In addition, support from external parties, such as local governments, academics, and the private sector, is also needed to ensure the success of the development program (Aziz & Shohib, 2024). Good collaboration between various parties can create a conducive ecosystem for tourism growth in Sukapulung (Rahmawati et al., 2020).

In the local context, the development of Sukapulung agrotourism can also be a solution to address the challenges faced by the Sukasetia Village community, such as dependence on fluctuating agricultural products. By integrating the agricultural sector into the tourism sector, the community can have a more stable alternative source of income (Umam & Nafiah, 2024). In addition, the development of agrotourism can also support the preservation of agrarian

traditions that are part of the cultural identity of the local community (Darmawan et al., 2024). For example, tourists can be invited to take part in traditional agricultural activities, such as planting rice or harvesting garden produce, which are not only interesting but also educational (Putri & Santoso, 2021).

This study aims to identify Sukapulung agrotourism development strategies with a planned, integrated, and sustainable approach (Pambudi & Setyono, 2018). The focus of the research includes increasing community capacity in tourism management, developing supporting infrastructure, and developing effective promotional strategies. This development will be based on the local characteristics of Sukapulung and actively involve the community at every stage. Through this research, it is hoped that Sukapulung can become a leading tourist destination in Ciamis Regency that is highly competitive, has a positive impact on the community, and is a successful example of community-based tourism management at the national level (Aditya, 2022).

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept and Potential of Agrotourism

Agrotourism is a form of tourism activity that utilizes agricultural potential as a tourist attraction. This activity combines the agricultural and tourism sectors that not only offer natural beauty, but also educational experiences and direct interaction with agricultural activities (Farida et al., 2025). Agrotourism potential is usually found in rural areas that still have active agricultural land, plantations, or livestock, as well as local cultural richness that can add to the tourist attraction (Maulida, 2019).

Community-Based Tourism Destination Development Strategy

Community-based tourism development emphasizes the active participation of local residents in management and decision-making. This aims to improve community welfare and create a sense of ownership of the tourist destination (Rochman, 2016). Development strategies can include increasing human resource capacity, improving infrastructure, diversifying tourist attractions, and promoting sustainable destinations. Community involvement is also important in preserving the local environment and culture (Angela, 2023).

The Role of Government and Stakeholders in Agrotourism Development

The success of agrotourism development cannot be separated from the support of various parties, including local governments, business actors, academics, and local communities (Mandataris et al., 2024). The government plays a role in providing regulations, financing, and supporting infrastructure. Meanwhile, other stakeholders can contribute through training, promotion, and collaboration in creating integrated tourism packages. Synergy between all parties is the key to creating competitive and sustainable agrotourism destinations (Nurhidayati et al., 2025).

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in Sukasetia Village, Cihaurbeuti District, Ciamis Regency, with the main focus on the Sukapulung area which has the potential to be developed into an agrotourism destination (Yuliani, 2018). The research activities were carried out for three months, namely from January to March 2025. The selection of the research location was based on the natural potential, cultural uniqueness, and challenges faced by the community in managing tourism potential sustainably. The target groups in this study included local communities, consisting of farmers, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and community leaders; village officials, such as village heads and village officials involved in tourism

planning; tourists, who provide perspectives on tourism needs and experiences; and external parties, such as the tourism office and partners from the private sector who have the potential to support the development of the area. The study used qualitative methods to explore in-depth information about the potential, obstacles, and opportunities for agrotourism development in Sukapulung.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with local communities, village officials, and tourists to understand their perceptions, needs, and involvement in tourism management (Raharjo, 2011). In addition, participatory observation was conducted to directly observe the condition of the area, including infrastructure, community activities, and elements that can be optimized as tourist attractions. The collected data were analyzed descriptively by identifying the main themes from the results of interviews and observations. This analysis aims to obtain a comprehensive picture of the condition and potential of the area, as well as provide strategic recommendations for the development of Sukapulung agrotourism. The results of the analysis are then presented narratively to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research findings.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Sukasetia Village, especially the Sukapulung area, has great potential to be developed as an agrotourism destination. However, this development effort needs to be supported by a deep understanding of the characteristics of the community as the main subject of devotion. Based on the results of the initial identification, the people of Sukapulung Village showed several characteristics that are relevant in the context of agrotourism development. In terms of age, the majority of the community is in the productive age group, namely between 25 and 55 years. As many as 40% of the community are aged 25-35 years, 35% are aged 36-45 years, and the other 20% are aged 46-55 years. This age group has great potential to be involved in agrotourism management activities. They not only have high energy and motivation, but also practical skills that can support tourism management. On the other hand, the age group over 55 years, although only covering 5% of the population, plays an important role as advisors and community leaders. The experience and knowledge they have are valuable assets in designing development programs.

In terms of education, the majority of the community has a final educational background at the junior high school level (50%) and high school (40%). Meanwhile, only 10% of the community has a higher education (D3 or S1). This level of education reflects the limited access of the community to higher formal education. However, they have sufficient practical knowledge in the fields of agriculture and local economic activities. This knowledge is an important capital in developing village potential, especially in the agrotourism sector, although they need intensive assistance to understand the technical aspects of tourism management. Most of the population of Sukapulung Village work as farmers, with a percentage reaching 65%. The agricultural sector is the backbone of the village economy, supported by the existence of fertile agricultural land and a variety of local crops, such as rice, vegetables, and fruits. In addition, around 20% of the population works as small business actors, such as craftsmen and local food producers. The rest are involved in the informal sector, such as village transportation services and freelancers. This diversity of professions creates opportunities to integrate the agricultural sector with tourism activities, thus generating significant added value for the village economy.

Community interest in tourism development is quite high, although most do not yet have adequate knowledge about tourism management. This community service program aims to increase community insight into the economic and social potential of the tourism sector,

while providing practical skills in managing agricultural-based tourist destinations. The social structure of the Sukapulung Village community also strongly supports the implementation of the development program. The community is divided into several groups, such as farmer groups, craftsmen groups, and village social community groups. The existence of these groups facilitates coordination and program implementation, because each group has a clear organizational structure and active members.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the Sukasetia Village community

Characteristics	Percentage (%)	Information
Age 25–35 years	40%	Productive age group, majority farmers
Age 36–45 years	35%	Involving family in economic activities
Age 46–55 years	20%	Main drivers of local businesses
Age > 55 years	5%	Community leaders and advisors
Junior High School Education	50%	Practical knowledge in agriculture
High School Education	40%	Higher secondary education
D3/S1 Education	10%	Few actively involved

Source: Processed by Researchers, 2025

Socialization was conducted to introduce the basic concept of agrotourism and the importance of sustainable agriculture-based tourism management. Socialization materials included tourism management strategies, promotion techniques, and environmental conservation. This activity was carried out through discussion forums, group training, and direct counseling. The evaluation results showed that 75% of socialization participants had a better understanding of tourism management after participating in the program. Previously, the community only knew the agricultural sector as the main source of income. Now, they are starting to see the potential of the tourism sector as a promising alternative. Tourism promotion is carried out through social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. The community is given training to create promotional content, such as video documentation and photos of local products. This program has succeeded in increasing the exposure of Sukapulung Village as an agriculture-based tourism destination. In the first three months after the program was implemented, the number of tourist visits increased by 20%.

The development of agrotourism in Sukapulung Village has a positive impact on improving community welfare. The results of this community service show that socialization is a key component in increasing community understanding of local tourism potential. According to Rahmawati et al. (2020), a participatory approach is very important in managing community-based tourist destinations. This is reflected in the success of the socialization program in Sukapulung Village, where the community is not only a beneficiary, but also plays an active role in designing and managing the program. Through training and outreach activities, the community not only gains new knowledge, but also practical skills in managing tourism. This has a long-term impact on the sustainability of the program. Some of the challenges faced in this program include limited infrastructure and lack of policy support from the local government. Inadequate road infrastructure is a major obstacle to attracting tourists. Therefore, infrastructure development is a priority to support this program. Compared to similar community service results, such as in Nglanggeran Tourism Village, Yogyakarta, a community participation-based approach has proven effective in creating

program sustainability. The success of Sukapulung Village shows that this model can be adopted in other villages with similar potential. With a continuous approach, Sukapulung Village is expected to become a successful model for agrotourism development, while also improving the welfare of the local community.

E. CONCLUSION

Sukapulung Village has succeeded in increasing community understanding of professional agrotourism management. Socialization, training, and promotion activities have had a significant impact on the tourism sector, with 75% of participants understanding the concept of sustainable management. The development of local tourism products, such as garden tours and organic farming demonstrations, as well as promotion through social media, have also increased the village's appeal as a tourist destination. Although there are still challenges in infrastructure and government support, the participatory approach has shown positive results in building local potential. For sustainability, infrastructure support by the local government and further training are needed to strengthen tourism destination management. Collaboration with the private sector and intensive mentoring over the next few years can help communities manage destinations independently. In addition, it is important to involve the younger generation through technology-based training to ensure the sustainability of tourism management in the future. The implementation of these steps is expected to make Sukapulung Village a model for sustainable agrotourism.

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