

Geopark Rinjani, Sport Tourism, and the Rise

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Submission date: 19-Jul-2022 08:00AM (UTC+0800)

Submission ID: 1872369365

File name: ia_Bonanag_1207-1214_JEMT_Issue_4_60_Summer_2022_1_-1-13_2.pdf (746.3K)

Word count: 3607

Character count: 21326



DOI: [https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4\(60\).25](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4(60).25)

Geopark Rinjani, Sport Tourism, and the Rise of Local Participation Post COVID in Lombok, Indonesia

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Suggested Citation:

Bonang, D. *et al.* (2022). Geopark Rinjani, Sport Tourism, and the Rise of Local Participation Post COVID in Lombok, Indonesia. *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, (Volume XIII, Summer), 4(60): 1207 - 1214. DOI:[10.14505/jemt.v13.4\(60\).25](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4(60).25)

Article's History:

Received 16th of November 2021; Received in revised form 4th of February 2022. Accepted 20th of April 2022; Published 28th of June 2022. Copyright © 2022 by ASERS® Publishing. All rights reserved.

Abstract:

This study aims to determine the role model of local community participation in the post-pandemic Rinjani geopark sport tourism festival. The pandemic has caused a shift in tourism to focus on Nature, Eco, Wellness, and Adventure (NEWA). For this reason, the local community of Sembalun Village, a key gateway to an arduous trek up Mount Rinjani in West Nusa Tenggara Province, initiated a sport tourism event due to the natural resource potentials. Hence, this qualitative descriptive research unveils several motivations that underlie the festival's implementation, including economic, cultural, and natural environmental factors—a role model for local community participation based on these driving factors with a Bottom-Top approach.

Keywords: festival; sport tourism; local community participatio; Rinjani Geopark.

JEL Classification: L83; R13; R11; Z32.

3

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected the global financial, economic, and health sectors (Roy 2020). One of the impacts is the decline in the travel and tourism industry's state revenues (Jaffar 2021). The World Travel and Tourism Council stated that 50 million workers in the tourism industry worldwide, including Asia, were

affected by the pandemic, where recovery could take ten months or more (WTTC, 2020). Implementing a lockdown by limiting access in and out between countries decreases tourism activities (Christian 2020). Many events or festivals that cause crowds must be canceled (Xavier 2021). This condition is a severe challenge to the tourism industry in Indonesia.

The government created various efforts to restore tourism in the post-covid period. One of them is organizing the Sport Tourism Festival initiated by Rinjani Lombok UNESCO Global Geopark (RL-UGGp). Rinjani Geopark is the first geopark among six geopark areas in Indonesia to hold a festival. The integration of tourism and sports activities become a locomotive for the revival of tourism in Lombok. Richelle and Laura explain that sporting events positively impact the economy, local communities, recreational opportunities, creating jobs, and developing cities and human resources (Richelle 2015). Nancy and Craig revealed that sport tourism events promote the local community's cultural identity and social interaction (Nancy 2010). However, Joseph stated that the festivals also have some drawbacks on the community (Joseph 2017).

Local communities are prominent in tourism sustainability, a primary source of employment for local communities' livelihoods by providing jobs and involving them in various activities. This fact is in line with the statement of Nagarjuna (2015), which opines that local community participation is essential in tourism development.

Based on the rationale above, a growing body of research has discussed the discourse of sport tourism and participation. However, the discussion about the role model of local community participation in the post-covid period in sport tourism activities is still limited. For this reason, this study contributes to the tourism management policy model starting from adaptation, innovation, and pentahelix collaboration.

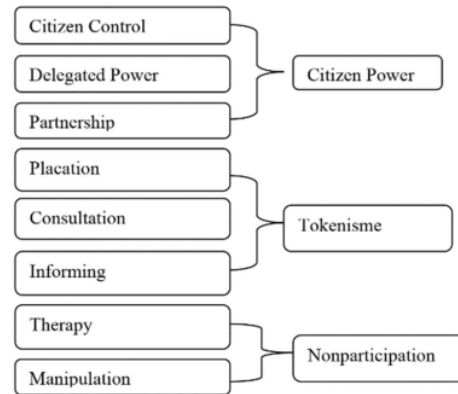
1. Literature Review

Sports tourism combines several physical activities such as kayaking, cycling, trekking, and others (Weed 2008). Weed further explained that sport tourism is a social, economic, and cultural phenomenon that arises from the unique interactions between activities, communities, and destinations. Similarly, tourism and sports are essential elements in contributing to the economy and society in numerous countries (Samaranch 2001). These activities also contribute to shaping the destination's image (Villiers 2001). Several supporting components are needed for conducting the events, such as: First, tourist attractions (natural, cultural, artificial), Second, infrastructure and facilities (availability of water, electricity, networks, parking lots, toilets). Third, amenities such as accommodation (lodging and restaurants). Fourth, transportation (availability of public transit, connectivity of land, sea, air transportation, road conditions to the location). Fifth, local community participation (Gets 1991). The involvement of local communities has urgency in organizing tourism events. Every tourism resource and local wisdom that exists is a wealth owned by local communities who inhabit tourist destinations (Nugroho 2019). Additionally, all types of tourist attractions enjoyed by visitors are sourced from the ownership of the local community (Damanik 2006). Thus, the community is an inseparable part of a tourist destination with tourism activities (Adikampana 2017).

Responding to the above, community participation in tourism activities can be carried out in two stages: decision-making and sharing tourism benefits (Timothy 2003). They must be involved in planning, determining the design, monitoring, and enjoying the results (genuine participation) (Cohen 1977; Pitana 2005). On the other hand, Mikkelsen (2003) adds two participation approaches; the first is passive participation, characterized by a one-way communication pattern by the authority. Second, active participation is characterized by two-way communication and requests from local communities, according to their needs instead of the designer's needs. In addition, a more specific measure of community participation was formulated by Arnstein (1969), which contributed to the idea of a participatory strategy model based on the distribution of power between the community and the public sector (see Figure 1).

The first stage, manipulation, indicates no dialogue between the authority and the community. The goal is limited to power intervention: second, therapy, is limited one-way communication: third, the informing location is an intense dialogue but is still limited to one direction and has no reciprocity: fourth, consultation is characterized by two-way communication, but there is no guarantee that power will follow people's aspirations: fifth, placation, pointed out by the community having the capacity to propose activities, but those in power still have more substantial authority: the last is a partnership; at this stage, the community and government are on an equal footing. Furthermore, this stage is marked by granting power to the community, and negotiations are established—seventh, delegated authority, which means that the government gives power to the people independently: and the last is citizen control; at this stage, the community fully manages all activities without government intervention.

Figure 1. Participation Stages



Source: Arnstein, 1969

In more detail, the participation stages above are still top-down initiated and determined from above, so that community needs are formulated outside, without involving local communities (Sudjatmoko 1983). The weakness of the top-down pattern raises attention to the importance of participation and involvement of local communities (Gupta 2003). Thus, the community participation model in this study formulates a bottom-up concept of participation or initiated from the bottom. The community participation and management model refers to three elements; local variety, local resources, and local accountability. Local variety means the characteristics and local wisdom of one region are different from other regions. Therefore, the local community is the subject who has the most sense of the surrounding situation. Local resources, controlled and managed by local communities. Subsequently, local accountability means the regional management will be more responsible than the authorities since these activities will directly affect their lives (Korten 1986).

In addition, community participation is motivated by internal and external factors. Internal factors include gender, age, education, occupation, length of stay, orbit, and centrality (Slamet 1994). On the other hand, external factors are influenced by: leadership and communication (Sunarti 2003). The motive for community participation is the increasing need for sufficient intensity, thus encouraging someone to act (Kotler 2009). Maslow (1970) classifies motivation into five categories; physical, safety, social, motivational rewards, and self-actualization motivations (see figure 2). Physical motivation is biological necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, etc. Safety motivation is the need for a sense of security. Subsequently, social stimulation means the importance of interacting with other people. Fourth, motivational rewards are based on a feeling of wanting to be appreciated and recognized by others. Meanwhile, self-actualization motivation is based on the demand of finding an identity.

Figure 2. Motivation, Maslow's Theory



(Source: Dohlman, 2019)

2. Methodology

Although the local community participation in organizing events or festivals has become a widely discussed topic, most investigations focus on society in general. Thus, this study employs a qualitative approach to answer research problems. The data were gathered through an accidental sampling technique through observing and interviewing purposively selected tourists as respondents in the Rinjani Geopark, Lombok. The documentations consist of articles, books, and relevant documents related to the topic. Moreover, the data were examined through an exploratory analysis by describing local community participation's role model from various perspectives (Singh 2007). The data analysis technique utilizes an inductive approach to interpret the multiple data (Moleong, 2017).

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Overview of Rinjani Geopark Sport Tourism Festival

Rinjani Geopark Sport Tourism Festival 2021 is the first event in Indonesia, precisely in Sembalun village. The village was chosen as the location due to the natural potential for various types of tourism. These potentials have a high selling value and international standard sport tourism.

Figure 3. Sembalun Village Natural Scenery



Source: geoparkrinjani.com, 2021

The festival consists of three primary and six supporting events. The three main events are the Rinjani Geopark Sembalun 7 Summits from 25 to 28, 2021. The seven peaks include Rinjani (3726 masl), Sempana (2329 masl), Lembah (2200 masl), Kondo (1937 masl), Anak Dara (1923 masl), Pergasingan (1806 masl), and Bao Ritip (1500 masl). This event results from collaboration with the Sembalun 7 Summits Committee attended by trail run enthusiasts, athletes, and mountain sports lovers. Total participants 60 people from West Nusa Tenggara and outside the province (rinjanigeopark.com, 2021)

Figure 4. Sembalun 7 summits participants



Source: geoparkrinjani.com, 2021

The second main event is the Sembalun Paragliding Festival from 30 to October 31, 2021, resulting from collaboration with East Lombok's Regional Tourism Promotion Board (BPPD). Sembalun Paragliding Festival with the concept of fun fly and ground handling games from Bukit Lawang to the Sembalun Rest Area.

Figure 5. Sembalun paragliding event



Source: geoparkrinjani.com, 2021

The third main event is Rinjani Geopark International Enduro, with 300 participants from 2 categories; the athlete and adventure classes. Some of the participants came from inside and outside the Province, and there were even 4 participants from England. The athlete class competes for two days in six S.S. (Special Stages), which have been prepared in several bicycle lanes around the Sembalun Area, including two S.S. in the Rinjani Adventure Bike Park track, Pusuk Sembalun, two S.S. in Sembalun Village, and two The S.S. in the Mount Rinjani National Park area from second Pos Tengengean ends at Sajang Village. Meanwhile, the adventure class only lasts for a day on November 7, 2021. This activity is a collaboration between the Rinjani-Lombok UGGP Management Agency with Gravity Enduro Indonesia.

Figure 6. Rinjani Geopark International Enduro



Source: geoparkrinjani.com, 2021

Furthermore, these three main events also promote six conventional games exhibitions to support the community's preservation and hereditary of traditional games. The six classic games include Rinjani Art Camp, MSME Bazaar, stilts, spinning top, Archery, Chess, and conventional game Exhibitions. Sport tourism and the richness of local arts and culture provide different sensations to participants and enrich local income.

3.2. Forms of Community Participation in the Rinjani Geopark Festival

The success of an event is due to the community's participation. The people are aware of the wealth of tourism resources in the village. Both modern and traditional communities participated in the event, including the Sembalun 7Summits, Paragliding, Enduro, Archery, Stilts, SeNina, the Acoustic Sasak, the Destination Management Organizer, and the Spinning Top Communities. These communities have the same commitment to generate local revenue, introduce and preserve nature and culture in this post-pandemic period.

3.2.1. Economic Factors

This pandemic has caused economic losses for both developed and developing countries, undeniable Indonesia. Large numbers of people have experienced reduced working hours and lost their jobs, but they have to survive. This condition encourages the community to welcome the implementation of the festival. In his motivation theory, Maslow explains that the first need for humans is physiological needs related to fulfilling economic demands, such as clothing, food, and housing. Based on this theory, the event will boost the community to participate

actively. A.J. Strydom (2006) and KI Peterson (1995) confirmed that holding a festival could strengthen the local community's economy. Moreover, the SembaluNina Community (interview, 2021) consists of 30 Sembalun women who collaborated in this festival in the MSME bazaar event, helping buy and sell local products to increase local revenue. In addition, all lodging facilities have been booked as the participants and their families want to stay more than one day.

3.2.2. Cultural Preservation Factor

The development of modernization is feared to erode culture and customs. This shift in value has prompted the organizers to include traditional attractions and games in supporting events. The cultural preservation factor is related to self-actualization in Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (1970). The culture can be defined as the result of human creativity, initiative, and taste or, in western terms, referred to as the way of life. Self-actualization allows the people to introduce and preserve the existing culture and customs, including spinning, stilts, archery, and chess events. Favilopa (2018) and Stankova (2015) reinforce that tourism with the cultural preservation concept is an impressive trend. Tourists who visit are eager to learn and try the local's culture.

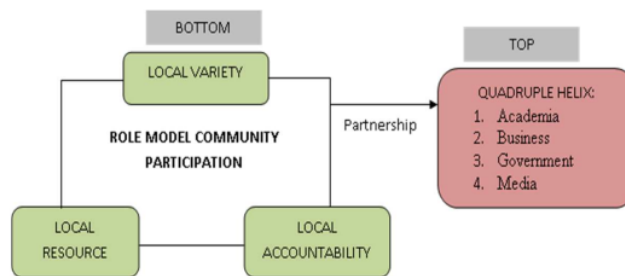
3.2.3. Natural Environmental Factors

Sembalun is an area on the slopes of Mount Rinjani surrounded by majestic hills. The cognizance of natural resource wealth is one of the driving factors for the community in organizing the event. The pandemic has shifted the popular tourist trend to Nature, Eco, Wellness, and Adventure (NEWA). The reason is that nature tourism is beneficial for health with low risk due to the flexibility to continue implementing physical distancing with other visitors. The local community hopes that the tourism implementation model carried out in the festival can be a model of tourism sustainability to develop the potential of Sembalun. Diane and Marion (2002) revealed that festivals provide opportunities for sustainable local economic development.

3.3. Role Model for Local Community Participation

Based on the description above, the role model of the people participating in the activity can be encapsulated as follows:

Figure 7. Sembalun Local Community Participation Role Model



Source: Author's

The model answers the weakness of the top-down distribution theory of community participation (Arnstein 1969). The participation model formed above illustrates that the awareness drives community involvement in an event to manage and develop the wealth of natural resources through sustainable tourism to profit the local revenue. The quadruple helix (academic, business, government, and media) acts as a partnership supporting all activities initiated by the local community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the festival has been successfully conducted due to community participation supported by various parties. The integration of tourism and sports packaged in a festival is carried out with three main events and six supporting events. These events are a combination of modern and traditional events that reflect the local wisdom. The community benefits from an economic perspective, cultural and natural preservation. The role model for the distribution of community participation is formed from a bottom-up approach initiated and managed by the community. In contrast, the top method is only a partnership in supporting events undertaken by local communities.

Theoretically, this research contributes to forming a role model for participation from bottom to top so that it can be an additional reference in the scientific treasures of tourism. Meanwhile, managerially, the findings contribute to the adjustment of tourist destination policies due to a shift in tourism trends in the pandemic era, which focuses on the concept of nature, eco, wellness, adventure (NEWA).

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