

## **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT IN THE HISTORICAL AND PILGRIMAGE TOURISM AT NGRINGINAN VILLAGE OF BANTUL, YOGYAKARTA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Rural tourism is one of the community empowerment programs that stimulate the rustic's economic growth through its potential. The local community has sought to promote tourism as an alternative development strategy, which magnificently attracts many tourists each year. This study aims at analyzing the tourism products' development patterns and formulate the model of community empowerment practices in Ngringinan tourism village. The study was conducted in Ngringinan, Palbapang village, Bantul sub-district, Yogyakarta. Data was collected through field observation, interview, Focus Group Discussion, and literature review. The analytical method used was descriptive analysis. The study results revealed that community empowerment in Ngringinan rural village consisted of two stages: community awareness and capacity improvement. Both schemes appeared to be detrimental for the success of rural tourism product development. The community empowerment chain starts with planning, implementation, and evaluation. As a result, community empowerment through a tourist village development in Ngringin Village has successfully established the local community resilience toward socio-cultural, economic, and environmental changes.

**Keywords:** rural, tourism, community, empowerment, Ngringinan

### ***PEMERKASAAN KOMUNITI DALAM PELANCONGAN SEJARAH DAN ZIARAH DI DESA NGRINGINAN BANTUL, YOGYAKARTA***

#### **ABSTRAK**

*Pelancongan luar bandar merupakan salah satu program pemerikasaan komuniti yang merangsang pertumbuhan ekonomi desa melalui potensinya. Masyarakat tempatan telah berusaha untuk mempromosikan pelancongan sebagai strategi pembangunan alternatif, yang menarik ramai pelancong setiap tahun. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis corak pembangunan produk pelancongan dan merumus model amalan pemerikasaan komuniti di kampung pelancongan Ngringinan. Kajian dilakukan di Ngringinan, desa Palbapang, kecamatan Bantul, Yogyakarta. Data dikumpul melalui pemerhatian lapangan, temu bual, perbincangan kumpulan Fokus, dan tinjauan literatur. Kaedah analisis yang digunakan ialah analisis deskriptif. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pemerikasaan komuniti di desa Ngringinan terdiri daripada dua peringkat: kesedaran masyarakat dan peningkatan kapasiti. Kedua-dua faktor ini memacu kejayaan pembangunan produk*

*perencanaan luar bandar. Rangkaian pemeraksanaan komuniti bermula dengan perancangan, pelaksanaan dan penilaian. Hasilnya, pemeraksanaan komuniti melalui pembangunan perkampungan perancangan di Kampung Ngringin telah berjaya membentuk daya tahan masyarakat setempat terhadap perubahan sosiobudaya, ekonomi dan alam sekitar.*

**Keywords:** *luar bandar, perancangan, komuniti, pemeraksanaan, Ngringin*

## INTRODUCTION

The combination of rural and tourism is a vigorous direction of global development. "Back to nature" is the recent trend in the tourism industry and aligns with sustainable tourism. The scenic rural area can be transformed into attractive recreation sites, a contemporary tourism development genre powered by markets and rural communities (Webster, 2015). Consequently, several regions have started developing new forms of tourism due to an increase in leisure demand (Muhanna, 2006; OECD, 2010). As a manifestation of the community-based service sector, rural tourism is defined as a form of the leisure industry, regulated and owned by the rural community, that synergize the rural environment, social, cultural-heritage value, and the social structure of the localities as tourist attractions. The aim is to attract as many tourists to visit the site allowing them to indulge with the rural inhabitants and their traditions (Hadiwijoyo, 2006; Manaf, Purbasari & Astuti, 2018). Rural tourism remains a forceful drift all over the world. It should be seen as a mechanism for sustaining and regenerating rural culture and existence. A rising number of academics have recently become involved in rural heritage and communities in the tourism village (Ibănescu, Stoleriu, Munteanu & Iațu, 2018).

Damanik (2013) states that three factors drive rural tourism development; first, rural areas have the potential of relatively unique natural and cultural attractiveness compared to urban areas. People who live in rural areas still carry out cultural ritual traditions and matching topography. Second, rural areas are surrounded by artistic, cultural relics, indigenous people, and a pollution-free natural environment. Third, some rural areas' hindrance includes poor infrastructure, which slows down economic development. The utilization of local economic, social, and cultural potential is among the nourishment for rural tourism development.

Bantul is one of the districts in Yogyakarta Province that has a variety of potentials tourist destinations to be developed. However, some of the tourism potentials in the area have not been optimally explored. Although the growth of lagging regions is encouraged by rural tourism, the market is highly competitive. Small resource gaps can have enormous short-term and long-term implications. Despite the existence of some tourism villages in the Bantul district, its infrastructure is still underdeveloped. Besides, the low quality of accommodation offered in the village reduces the number of homestay bookings. Other shortcomings that stagnate the tourism village developments are the less professional management of tourism villages, less effective marketing, insufficient product packaging, and lack of creativity and innovation.

Ngringin is one of the tourist villages in Palbapang Village, in Bantul Districts, Yogyakarta. The site is located at the edge of the Yogya highway - Samas Beach, approximately 15 km south of Yogyakarta city, close to the Church and Temple Hati Kudus Tuhan Yesus Ganjuran, the Catholics pilgrimage destination. To reach the village, travelers may use inter-city public buses from the bus terminal Giwangan in Samasing at a very reasonable cost, approximately five thousand rupiahs. However, due to the limited availability of public buses on that route, waiting in the bus shelter may be time-consuming. In that case, the trip may take a little longer. Yogyakarta's direction can be started directly from Beteng Kulon Corner straight south after passing through the city of Bantul. Tourists will arrive at the Palbapang intersection and five hundred meters to the left from the north (east of the Jogja-Samas highway), tourists will arrive at Homestay Ngringin. This village is about fifteen kilometers from the city of Yogya, and it may take about 20 minutes by motorbike or private vehicles.

Administratively, Ngringin is the sub-village of Palbapang Village located in Bantul Yogyakarta, with approximately 0.25 km<sup>2</sup>. The village is populated by about 1,408 people consisting of 10 community groups (RT) and 495 families. Most of the villagers working as farmers, laborers,

and some are traders, entrepreneurs, and government employees. Ngringinan Tourism Village is a rural area with rice fields and settlements, so its natural surroundings are still beautiful. The rural inhabitants still uphold their unique customs and culture. Therefore, the Ngringinan Tourism Village possesses local potential in the historical and pilgrimage sectors and has natural and cultural tourism perspective, which becomes the main attraction for tourists visiting Ngringinan Tourism Village.

Tourism Village is one of the tourism attractions that can be developed with the concept of community-based tourism, where tourism management and development initiatives come from the community, undertaken by them and targeted for them. Local potential in the community is best utilized in tourism activities, which will ultimately provide economic benefits and bring prosperity to the people who develop it. Therefore, the tourism villages' attraction development strategy and management must have carried out by the rural communities based on the village potential.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

At present, the development and management of tourist villages in Ngringinan have been performed but less optimal due to the limited number of knowledgeable and skillful human resources willing to participate in the project. Lower rate of community participation in tourism activities resulted in the long-winded development of the tourism village. Moreover, the existing institutional system, namely Pokdarwis, also encountered problems in exercising their role optimally, contributing to the less developed villages. Based on the phenomena presented earlier, the research problems can be formulated as follows:

- a. What is the mechanism of community empowerment for tourism development in the Ngringinan village?
- b. What is the mechanism for developing community-based historical and pilgrimage attractions in the village of Ngringinan?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Tourism Attractions**

Some potential tourist attractions in the rural area include beautiful scenery, unique cultural, and artifacts. The attraction is the main driving factor for the increasing number of visitors to the village. After acknowledging tourism's potential contribution to economic growth and job creation and the restricted possibilities of economic diversification, local communities tried to promote tourism as an alternative development. In political and research circles, initiatives were long advocated to encourage the development of the tourism industry. The dependence on tourism as a source of income, nevertheless, also create ecological and financial shocks. The tourism sector will contribute significantly to the achievement development agenda in the district, provided handled responsibly. According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 10 of 2009, Travel Attractions are defined as everything that has a uniqueness, convenience, and value in the form of the diversity of natural resources, culture, and handicrafts targeted visited by tourists. The attraction is the primary motivating factor for tourists visiting a destination. The community then provides various facilities for tourist needs such as accommodation, eating and drinking facilities, and transportation.

### **Community Empowerment**

The local community's role in empowering tourism village development in the countryside is becoming a critical research strand nowadays. The importance of community empowerment as strategic social capital that results in competitive advantage has been extensively acknowledged in the Tourism development literature. The community empowerment shall promote innovation and motivate the village inhabitants' behavior to support tourism village development. Adimiharjaja (1999) said that community empowerment had been understood as a process that not only develops the economic potential of the community but also seeks to improve the dignity and confidence and the preservation of local cultural order and values (Sunaryo, 2013). In principle, community

empowerment can be interpreted as an effort to increase the power or ability of people who previously lack power. Community empowerment is a process to motivate both individuals and communities to have the ability to determine what their life choices are.

Ngringinan Village Group's empowerment seeks to boost the capacity of local communities to pursue their future. In this case, the word "communities" applies to rural citizens. They have shared objectives, identity, and interests, while the work 'Empowerment' refers to how people influence their lives and decisions. It is the mechanism by which their assets and qualities are increased, and they can gain access, allies, networks, and voice to gain power. By gaining more power, society will empower itself. The local inhabitants are one of the precious assets of Ngringinan village. External parties such as governments, NGOs, and academics may catalyze power and facilitation of community empowerment.

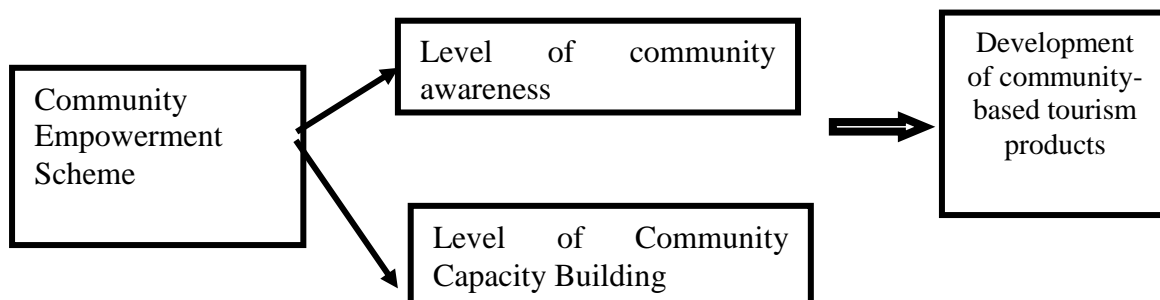
## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research aimed to examine the community empowerment scheme in developing tourism products in the village of Ngringin. This research was conducted using descriptive methods, namely, research that seeks to describe phenomena or relationships between systematically, factually, and accurately examined phenomena. (Kusmayadi, 2004). This research is descriptive with a qualitative approach. The authors used primary data, which was obtained through observations and interviews. Our observations focused on the tourism village manager's daily activities and the local community in managing the village. Another emphasis was on the site's physical condition, such as the environment, tourist attractions, and tourism support infrastructure. In-depth interviews were conducted with the village tourism managers, followed by Focus Group Discussions. Meanwhile, secondary data was derived from literature reviews from various sources such as books, journals, and other publications and documentation relevant to the research interest. The literature review aimed to acquire more advanced theory in the field that may be used as a reference in developing the utmost preference of community empowerment model in rural tourism. The proposed model was developed based on a careful analysis of the existing conditions of the tourism village. The analysis was used as input in approaching the problem statements of this study.

The analysis was done by identifying and compiling data derived from an in-depth interview and focus group discussion with stakeholders. Triangulation data analysis was performed on various sources of information to obtain more reliable and valid data. The aim was to find out how the community empowerment scheme manages tourist attractions in the tourist village.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The community participation analysis was of the approach used in this study to explain the community empowerment scheme in Ngringinan as a tourism village. There are two steps involved in the analysis: the awareness stage and the community capacity building stage. The output of the analysis is a recommendation on a viable strategy for developing community-based tourism products in the Ngringin tourism village, as depicted in the chart below:



## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Community Empowerment Scheme**

Some of the barriers that hinder the Ngringin tourism village development are lack of community participation, lack of villagers' awareness of Ngringin as the tourism village. The majority of the Ngringin inhabitants realize that Ngringin offers a tourist destination and transforms into a tourism village. The utmost issue in supporting Ngringin as a tourism object is the availability of willing human resources. The availability of human resources in the village inhibits tourism management activities. There is a burgeoning trend for rural people leaving their villages and migrate to large cities to pursue a better life. In developing countries, rural lifestyles have almost perished as a result of urbanization and modernization,

The community empowerment scheme in the development of tourism village activities in the village of Ngringin will be carried out through two stages, namely awareness raising and capacity building.

#### **a. Awareness Stage**

This awareness phase was carried out through socialization on the concept of a tourism village. The targeted audience of the socialization was all Ngringin village community's leaders, such as the hamlet head, Neighborhood head, and community organizations. The socialization was the process of knowledge transfer to the local community about various aspects of tourism village management, including its vision and mission. The development of a tourism village is inseparable from the participation of its people. Therefore, tourism conscious mindset of the people is the prerequisite of the tourism village initiation. The villagers' increasing awareness encourages people to participate in tourism activities. Community support can be exhibited in various forms: first, maintaining a conducive village atmosphere by protecting the environment; second, preserving their culture as the rural culture are perishing because of modernization; third, actively involved in promoting the rural tourism activities, such as providing homestays, becoming local tour guides, and preparing attractions.

#### **b. Capacity Building Phase**

The capacity building phase aims to increase the community's ability to manage tourism villages, starting from planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. In this stage, the government and the tourism industry's role is needed to encourage and assist the community in improving the rural inhabitants' capability in managing the site. The government intervention can be in training, mentoring, and counseling on various aspects of the tourism village management. Capacity building is also aimed at enhancing community access to business opportunities pursuits. The mentoring and training programs are expected to increase the community's ability to manage the tourism village. The capacity building phase was carried out through community service involving students from Tourism Diploma Program. The students act as a facilitator by providing technical assistance on tourism village management training and tourist tour guide training to members of the Ngringin Pokdarwis.

##### **1) Tourism village management training**

With this tourism village management training, it is hoped that Pokdarwis can increase their understanding and competence in managing tourism villages, especially on the packaging and marketing of innovative and creative tourism village products. The training was attended by all *Pokdarwis* and *Pak Dukuh* as the head of the Ngringin village administration. In this training activity, the trainees were invited to an interactive discussion about tourism village potential, attractions management, and how to provide convenient shelter or accommodations in the tourism village. Moreover, the facilitator also educates the communities on good governance by explaining the concept of task divisions, establishing the tourism village organizational structure, and how to build strategic alliances among internal and external stakeholders.

The training has systematically focused on village development planning that leads to the formulation of a strategy to achieve it. Other technical matters, such as packaging, branding, and marketing of the products was also discussed. The training is a highly-valued effort to ensure that product plans and designs will be implemented more effectively and efficiently.

## **2) Tour guide training**

This tour guide training was given to members of the Pokdarwis village of Ngringin, aiming at increasing their ability to serve tourists who visit their village. The training session was conducted in two-way communication, whereby participants were encouraged to be actively involved in the discussion. Moreover, direct simulation of a tour around Gadjah Mada University using a bicycle was experiential learning allowing the participants to interact with the visitors directly. During the campus tour activities, participants were invited to several exciting points at Gadjah Mada University that could be told to visitors to increase their competence as tour guides. Direct simulation is also advantageous as it provides an overview of the tour guide profession such as the job, the communication style, and conflict handling. The simulation also inspires making a tourism bundling package, offering the package to potential visitors, and making the trip joyful. In this training, the participants also learned about tourist scouting techniques, including communicating well with tourists.

In the next stage, *Pokdarwis* and the local community implemented the historical and pilgrimage tourism products that have been designed as the typical tourist attractions of the Ngringin tourism village. Monitoring and evaluation were always carried out to ensure high-quality service delivery to visitors. The strategy was developed based on careful analysis of the weaknesses, strengths, potentials, challenges, and threats identified while offering tourism products. For the next service activities, the Study Program will be directed more towards enhancing the participants' marketing activities and the historical tourism products and pilgrimages to the targeted market. An effective marketing strategy is crucial in promoting the activities, services, and pilgrimage tourism products in the Ngringin tourism village.

## **Strategy for developing historical and pilgrimage tourism products**

The tourism potential in the Ngringin tourism village can be unique because it is rarely found in other tourist villages, especially the historical and pilgrimage tourism attractions. If appropriately managed, this uniqueness will strengthen the Ngringin tourism village's branding that would distinguish it from other tourist villages. However, at present, the potential is still under managed. Innovations and creativity of the communities are needed to develop tourist attractions, both in packaging and marketing. Based on observations and feasibility studies that have been conducted on some tourism potentials in the village of Ngringin, the author recommends historical and pilgrimage tours as the branding strategy in developing tourist attractions in the Ngringin tourism village. The attraction development strategy based on priority conditions and attraction readiness to support historical tourism and pilgrimage is elaborated as follows:

### **a. The Dutch Bantul Museum**

The Dutch Bantul Museum is one of the tourist attractions in the village of Ngringin. This museum was built using one of the residents' houses in Ngringin. There are several collections from the Dutch era, photographs, and documentaries about the Dutch heritage in the 1800s and early 1900s in Bantul and its surroundings. In this museum, tourists will experience the memory of past events, whereby Bantul and Palbapang, in particular, were once the center of the city. The evidence that the region was also the center of the economy's surroundings can be seen from the rest of the railroad lines and the former Palbapang train station. Likewise, the Palbapang area used to be a large sugar factory that meets the demand of the Gondanglipura area. In this museum, tourists can also see photos of the Palbapang Train Station in the past, as the meeting center of trains from the west (Sewugalur sugar factory), south (Gondanglipuro Ganjuran-Dawetan Sugar Factory-Pundong Sugar Factory), and to the north (Bantul Station - Tugu Jogjakarta Station). Also, there are photographs and

documentation about the history of the Ganjuran church's construction or the Ganjuran Temple in this museum.

Based on observations, the museum building, which still uses one of these citizen's houses, already offers an exciting concept that is a center for information on the history of Bantul in the Dutch period. This museum has a few collections in the form of photos and video documentaries of Bantul in the Dutch period. However, the information about Bantul in the Dutch period is limited. Among the object's drawbacks is the lack of supporting facilities such as no tour guide and poor infrastructure.

#### Direction for the development of the Dutch Bantul Museum

No	Component	Description
1	Uniqueness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bantul historical information center during the Dutch era</li> <li>• Documentation for Dutch heritage items in Bantul</li> </ul>
2	Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display photos during the Dutch period</li> <li>• A documentary about Bantul at the time the Dutch occupancy.</li> </ul>
3	Activities that might be developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circling the museum collections</li> <li>• Offering interactive discussion with the visitors and role play games about the history of Bantul in the Dutch period</li> </ul>
4	Development Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing the museum facilities and improve the infrastructure</li> <li>• Provide a professional tour guide</li> <li>• Provide waste bins</li> <li>• Provide some computers as a means of obtaining information that can be accessed by visitors</li> </ul>
5	The role of the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become a local tour guide</li> <li>• Manage museum attractions</li> <li>• Conduct promotional activities</li> </ul>

Source: processed by the author

#### a. Ganjuran Church

Ganjuran Church is the oldest Catholic church in the Bantul district and is often visited by Catholics. This church was built on April 16, 1924. The church was correctly designed by combining European and Javanese architecture. In this church, there is also a building that resembles a temple used as a place of worship. Prof. Dr. Ir built the Ganjuran Church. Josef Ignaz J Marie Schumtzer and Ir. Julius Robert Anton Marie Schmutzer, a Dutch brother who also manages and owns the Gondanglipuro Sugar Factory. Today the Ganjuran church is a place of pilgrimage and worship for thousands of Catholics. They believe that by praying and bringing Perwitasari water that emerges from underneath the temple, his prayers will be answered by God.

The atmosphere, a beautiful, tranquil, and relaxed church environment, make visitors comfortable and more solemn in carrying out worship. Based on observations, the number of visitors to the Ganjuran Church is quite large, both from around Jogja and outside Jogja's city. Some of the visitors even stayed there overnight. The substantial number of worshipers coming to the church every week is potential visitors. Promotional efforts are required to grab the worshippers' attention at the Ganjuran church's attention to travel to Ngringin village.

Directives for the development of the Ganjuran Church

No	Component	Description
1	Uniqueness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The oldest Catholic church in Bantul</li> <li>• Unique building structure from European and Javanese architecture</li> <li>• Architectural of the Ganjuran temple</li> </ul>
2	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worship Place</li> <li>• Information Center</li> <li>• Toilet</li> <li>• Souvenir center</li> </ul>
3	Activities that may be expanded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilgrimage tours</li> <li>• Educational tourism</li> </ul>
4	Development Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit the Ganjuran Church as part of a tour package in the village of Ngringinan</li> </ul>
5	The role of the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Package pilgrimage tour packages to the Ganjuran Church</li> <li>• Provides homestay</li> </ul>

Source: wrote by the author.

b. Palbapang heritage tour

Traces of Dutch heritage in the past can still be found around the Ngringin Tourism Village in the form of ancient buildings and wells, and some conditions are still well preserved, including:

1. Palbapang Station
2. Dutch well for irrigation of Dutch sugar cane plantations
3. Palbapang Electric Tower.
4. Kanisius Elementary School and Ganjuran Kanisius Middle School.
5. Gathak Market

The buildings illustrate that the Dutch government had once built Palbapang - Ganjuran as the main economic center in the south Jogjakarta city that drives its economy. Tourists can feel the atmosphere of the past while attending the points, see the ancient architecture and feel the Dutch period's life, and the Gondanglipuro Sugar Factory building, which currently only remains ruins of the building.

Based on observations, several heritage buildings are still well preserved, and some are still used, such as buildings in the Gathak market and elementary schools, Kanisus Ganjuran Middle School. While for Palbapang station, Menara Listrik, and wells, even though they are no longer utilized, the conditions are still well maintained. The existence of these heritage buildings has the potential for the development of educational tourism attractions based on historical themes. Tourists can flashback the atmosphere of Bantul during the Dutch period and learn about the history of Bantul in the past, accompanied by a local guide.



Directives for developing tours Palbapang heritage

No	Component	Description
1	Uniqueness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiencing the atmosphere of Bantul in the Dutch era</li> <li>Existence of heritage buildings with distinctive architecture</li> </ul>
2	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bicycles to go around seeing historical buildings</li> <li>Local guide</li> <li>Consumption</li> </ul>
3	Activities that may be expanded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bike tour to see historic buildings from the Dutch</li> <li>Interactive discussions and games about the history of Bantul in the Dutch era</li> <li>Photography</li> </ul>
4	Development Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bantul Heritage tour activities as part of tour packages offered to tourists in the village of Ngringin</li> </ul>
5	The role of the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become a local guide</li> <li>Rent bicycles for tour activities</li> <li>Provides consumption</li> </ul>

Source: wrote by the author.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the description of the development of community-based tourism in the village of Ngringin above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- 1) The community empowerment scheme in tourism development activities in Ngringin village can be done through two stages: the community awareness stage and capacity building. The awareness phase can be done through a dialogue with the Ngringin villagers about their potential and an agreement with the village vision and tourism mission. Meanwhile, the capacity-building phase is carried out by providing training and FGDs on tourism to support the development of Ngringin village tourism.
- 2) The development of tourist attractions in the village of Ngringin is a strategic empowerment tool to increase community participation in the tourism village programs, including tourism promotion. While there is growing evidence that community empowerment can serve as a foundation for competitive advantage, tourism villages represent a varied nature of borders, cultures, and processes that make it difficult for stakeholders to build and transfer information.

## SUGGESTION

Some fruitful suggestions that can be considered in developing community-based tourism in Ngringin Hamlet, Palbapang sub-district, Bantul sub-district, Bantul regency are as follows:

- 1) The potential of tourist attractions in the village of Ngringin is feasible to be developed. However, it must be supported by adequate facilities, proper infrastructure, and product innovation to attract more visitors.

- 2) In the following phase of the tourism village project, it is necessary to conduct a study on market segments analysis and effective marketing strategies to attract these market segments.
- 3) There is a need to establish and strengthen networks with various parties, including stakeholders and the tourism industry, to promote and market the Ngringin tourism village jointly.

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