

Community Empowerment through the Development of a Tourist Village in Penatih East Denpasar

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ABSTRACT

Penatih Tourist Village in East Denpasar, Bali, exemplifies a successful integration of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and community involvement. Featuring scenic rice fields and the traditional Subak Lestari system, the village offers activities such as walking, cycling, and photography. Development efforts include enhancing telajakan areas with ornamental plants, installing direction boards, and reorganizing the jogging track, which improve visitor experience and navigation. The establishment of local SMEs further supports the village's tourism infrastructure. This research employed qualitative and descriptive methods, including field surveys and interviews with local stakeholders, to assess the village's tourism potential. Post-COVID-19 challenges, such as reduced market hours and neglected maintenance, highlighted the need for revitalization. Enhancing the traditional market and extending its operational hours, along with further developing SMEs, can strengthen the village's appeal, support local entrepreneurship, and preserve its cultural and environmental assets.

INTRODUCTION

Bali Island has a diverse range of tourism potential, including natural tourism, cultural tourism, and the hospitality of its people. The synergy between natural beauty, local culture, and agricultural life, when developed, can become a tourist attraction for a region. This is what makes Bali Island one of the world's tourist destinations. The combination of natural beauty, local culture, and agricultural life is developed into tourist villages that offer natural beauty and education (Saepudin et al., 2022). Additionally, the development of rural tourism in a region benefits the community by improving their welfare and increasing government revenue (Aprilia, 2015). The integration of these elements into tourist villages not only attracts visitors but also preserves the traditional lifestyles and practices of the local communities. By promoting cultural heritage and agricultural practices as part of the tourist experience, these villages ensure that the local traditions are maintained and passed down to future generations. This preservation is crucial in maintaining the unique identity of Bali, setting it apart from other global tourist destinations that may focus solely on modern attractions.

Furthermore, the success of these tourist villages can lead to a more sustainable tourism model, where the economic benefits are distributed more evenly across the community. Unlike mass tourism, which often concentrates profits in the hands of a few large businesses, rural tourism empowers local entrepreneurs and farmers. By engaging in tourism activities, local residents can diversify their income sources, making them less dependent on traditional farming alone. This diversification not only boosts the local economy but also encourages the community to invest in the conservation of their environment and cultural assets, ensuring that Bali remains a top tourist destination for generations to come.

A tourist village is the development of a village area that fundamentally does not alter what already exists but focuses on developing the village's potential by utilizing existing elements within the village. These elements function as tourism product attributes on a small scale, forming a series of tourism activities capable of providing and meeting a range of travel needs, both in terms of attractions and supporting facilities. The tourist village referred to here is a rural area that serves as both entertainment and a tourism destination, as well as a village that offers learning about agriculture and fisheries, and it is expected to become an attraction for tourists (Muljadi, 2012: 12).

In addition to preserving the natural and cultural integrity of the village, the concept of a tourist village also promotes community-based tourism. This approach actively involves local residents in the planning, development, and management of tourism activities, ensuring that the benefits are felt directly by the community. By fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among villagers, community-based tourism not only enhances the visitor experience through authentic interactions but also contributes to the sustainable development of the area. Local crafts, traditions, and knowledge are showcased and preserved, while the community gains valuable skills in hospitality, guiding, and business management, further empowering them to sustain and grow their

tourism initiatives. Denpasar City in Bali has several tourist destinations, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Tourist Destinations in Denpasar City

No	Tourist Attractions
1	Taman Kumbasari
2	Lapangan Puputan Badung
3	Taman Jangan
4	Taman Kota Lumintang
5	Taman lansia
No	Tourist Village in Denpasar City
1	Desa Wisata Penatih
2	Desa Wisata Kesiman Kertalangu
3	Desa Wisata Sanur Kaja
4	Desa Wisata Sanur Kauh
5	Desa Wisata Sanur
6	Desa Wisata Serangan

Source: Pemerintah Kota Denpasar 2023

One of the tourist villages in Denpasar City is Penatih Tourist Village, located in the East Denpasar District. Penatih Tourist Village is included in the city tour itinerary for tourists visiting Denpasar City. The preparation for Penatih Tourist Village was discussed in seminars and meetings at Graha Sewaka Dharma Lumintang, led by the Mayor, I.B. Rai Dharmawijaya Mantra, accompanied by the Head of Tourism, Wayan Gunawan, and leaders of the Regional Government Organization of Denpasar City. This discussion was also attended by community leaders from Penatih Village, the Head of Penatih Village, Wayan Astawa, and the East Denpasar Sub-district Head, Dewa Made Puspawan. The discussion covered each program of the Penatih Tourist Village in depth, also involving expert groups and expert staff from the Denpasar City Government.

The development of Penatih Tourist Village focuses on the Subak Lestari icon as the core of the village's development. This allows for a holistic planning approach, including the preparation of a master plan to ensure the program's sustainability. Subak Lestari serves as a conservation program to prevent land-use change while providing community productivity, supported by necessary infrastructure to make Subak Lestari productive and sustainable. The arrangement of the village area, including the presence of traditional markets, also requires attention and comprehensive planning. This is also linked to the potential of the village, which can be prepared, so that in the future, Penatih Village can become a leading tourist village through the implementation of physical programs and the empowerment of the Penatih Village community (Sutama et al., 2023).

Muliawan, as cited in Santoso (2022), states that the criteria for a tourist village to develop its potential include: (1) Having unique potential and distinctive tourist attractions (as tourism attractions), whether in the form of the physical characteristics of the rural natural environment or the social and cultural life of the community. (2) Possessing the support and readiness of tourism-related facilities, such as accommodation, spaces for community interaction with tourists/guests, or other supporting facilities. (3) Engaging with the market (tourists), as reflected in tourist visits to the village. (4) Having the support, initiative, and participation of the local community in developing the village as a tourist destination.

During the COVID-19 pandemic until now, several potentials of Penatih Tourist Village have been neglected, partly due to the lack of community participation in tourism management. In this context, it is emphasized that the existence of a community-based tourist village in Penatih has not yet optimally provided economic benefits, such as absorbing local labor in tourism accommodation or supporting tourism activities. Therefore, it is necessary to reorganize the potential of Penatih Tourist Village and raise community awareness to actively participate in supporting the existence of the tourist village according to their respective fields.



Figure 1. Initial Conditions of the Subak Lestari Jogging Track

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

The article was compiled using a qualitative research method and a descriptive approach. The aim was to understand a specific event, condition, or phenomenon by presenting what actually occurred to depict the research results, though it was not intended for drawing conclusions. Data were collected through field surveys and interviews with the Head of the Village, who served as a work partner, as well as with the local community leaders and residents of Penatih Village.

This method allowed for an in-depth exploration of the social and cultural dynamics within the village, providing rich insights into the lived experiences and perspectives of the community members. By focusing on descriptive analysis, aimed to capture the nuances of the village's unique context, offering a detailed account of the challenges and opportunities faced by the residents. This approach ensured that the findings were grounded in the actual conditions of the village, allowing for a more authentic representation of the community's realities.

Additionally, the qualitative nature of the study facilitated a more flexible and responsive research process, enabling the researchers to adapt their inquiry as new insights emerged during the fieldwork. This adaptability was crucial in uncovering the complexities of the village's social fabric, which might have been overlooked with a more rigid, quantitative approach. The combination of field surveys and interviews provided a comprehensive understanding of the village, enriching the overall analysis and contributing to a more holistic portrayal of the research topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Penatih Village was one of four villages in the East Denpasar District, Bali Province, along with Kesiman, Sumerta, and Dangin Puri Villages. Penatih Village covered an area of 281 hectares, bordered by Jagapati Village to the north, Kesiman Petilan Village to the south, Penatih Dangin Puri Village to the east, and Peguyangan Kangin Village to the west. Penatih Village comprised 10 hamlets/communities: Anggabaya, Pelagan, Paang Kaja, Paang Tengah, Paang Kelod, Semaga, Saba, Tembau Kaja, Tembau Tengah, and Tembau Kelod. The population of Penatih Village was 9,359 people, consisting of 4,789 males and 4,570 females. The number of families residing in Penatih Village was 2,558 (Profil Desa Penatih, 2023).

The main potential of Penatih Village lay in its scenic rice fields, maintained through the traditional Subak Lestari system. These lush fields, with their intricate irrigation networks, not only provided a picturesque landscape but also embodied the deep cultural heritage of the village. Visitors were drawn to the area for activities such as walking through the rice fields, cycling along the verdant paths, and capturing photographs with the serene backdrop of the fields and farmers at work. This immersive experience allowed tourists to connect with the village's agricultural roots and appreciate the harmonious relationship between the community and its environment. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a decline in the maintenance of these attractions. The once well-tended fields became overgrown with grass, trash was left scattered, and the signage that guided visitors through the area became unclear and dilapidated. This neglect diminished the village's appeal and risked undermining its reputation as a tranquil retreat for visitors seeking an authentic rural experience. Recognizing the need to restore Penatih Village's charm, efforts must be made to revitalize the area. Reorganizing and revitalizing the village's attractions will require a concerted effort from both the local community and external stakeholders. By addressing the overgrowth, improving waste management, and updating signage, the village can regain its status as a premier destination for eco-tourism. These improvements not only enhance the visitor experience but also ensure that the cultural and environmental significance of the Subak Lestari system is preserved for future generations.



Figure 2. Installation of Direction boards and Jogging Track Arrangement



Figure 3. View of Rice Fields and Local Plantations

To support Penatih Village as a tourist destination, the *telajakan* areas were meticulously reorganized with a focus on planting ornamental plants. This initiative aimed to enhance the village's aesthetic appeal and create a more inviting environment for visitors. The introduction of carefully selected ornamental plants not only beautified the space but also contributed to the overall ambiance, making it a more attractive and enjoyable area for tourists to explore.

The reorganization effort involved strategic planning to ensure that the plants chosen were well-suited to the local climate and complemented the existing landscape. By integrating vibrant flowers, lush greenery, and well-maintained garden features, the village's visual appeal was significantly improved. This enhancement played a crucial role in elevating the tourist experience, as the aesthetically pleasing surroundings provided a picturesque setting for leisurely strolls, relaxation, and photography.

Moreover, the upgraded *telajakan* areas served as a testament to the village's commitment to tourism development and environmental stewardship. The thoughtful landscaping not only attracts visitors but also sets a positive example for sustainable practices, demonstrating how traditional areas can be revitalized to support modern tourism without compromising their natural charm. This approach not only improves the immediate appeal of Penatih Village but also contributes to its long-term success as a destination that harmoniously blends natural beauty with cultural heritage.



Figure 4. Arranging the *Telajakan* with Ornamental Plants

The traditional market in Penatih Village has been instrumental in supporting the village's tourism accommodations, offering a vibrant hub of activity for both locals and visitors. The market's unique arrangements, coupled with its emphasis on cleanliness and the presence of local vendors selling traditional foods, made it a distinct attraction that drew tourists eager to experience authentic Balinese culture. Among these markets, Kertawaringin Market stood out, winning first place in the "Village Market Competition" in 2019. This accolade, awarded by the Denpasar City Community Empowerment and Village Office, recognized the market for its exemplary cleanliness and hygiene, which significantly contributed to its appeal.

Visitors to Kertawaringin Market could explore a diverse array of local handicrafts and agricultural products while enjoying traditional Balinese foods, enhancing their cultural experience. However, the COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges that affected the market's operations. The market was forced to reduce its hours, operating only half-day, which limited its ability to fully engage with tourists and serve the community.

To address these issues and rejuvenate the market's role as a key tourism asset, there is a pressing need for renewed community empowerment, particularly within the culinary sector. By extending market hours into the evening and night, Penatih Village can transform the market into a vibrant culinary center, attracting more visitors and providing locals with additional economic opportunities. This revitalization effort should focus on enhancing the market's offerings and ensuring that it can effectively operate as a dynamic and integral part of the village's tourism infrastructure.



Figure 5. Traditional Markets and Typical Balinese Culinary Delights

Community empowerment in Penatih Village was also achieved through the development of SMEs. Training was provided in simple bookkeeping and digital marketing. Simple bookkeeping helped SMEs understand their profits or losses and set competitive prices. Digital marketing was needed as a promotional tool for SME products, which often remained unknown to tourists.



Figure 6. MSME Development

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Penatih Tourist Village, highlighted by the Subak Lestari icon, offers a tranquil and picturesque landscape that captivates visitors. The serene views of lush rice fields, meticulously tended vegetable gardens, and vibrant flower gardens along the jogging track create a calming environment that enhances the village's appeal. This natural beauty is further complemented by the traditional market and local SMEs, which add a cultural and economic dimension to the village's charm. The traditional market provides a lively focal point where visitors can experience the local culture through artisanal crafts, fresh produce, and traditional foods. This market, along with the thriving small and medium enterprises (SMEs), plays a vital role in showcasing the village's unique offerings and supporting its tourism infrastructure. Together, these elements create a cohesive experience that merges natural beauty with cultural richness, making Penatih Tourist Village a desirable destination for those seeking both relaxation and engagement with local traditions. Furthermore, the integration of the Subak Lestari system into the village's landscape not only preserves traditional agricultural practices but also enhances the sustainability of tourism activities. This holistic approach ensures that Penatih Tourist Village remains a harmonious blend of scenic beauty and cultural authenticity, providing visitors with an enriching experience while supporting the local economy and community.

In managing Penatih Tourist Village, there is insufficient involvement of the community, particularly in maintaining the cleanliness and sustainability of several tourist attractions that are characteristic of Penatih Village. Therefore, continuous community development is necessary. Training for SMEs is also essential, especially in digital marketing, so that the products and services unique to Penatih Village can be quickly recognized by tourists.

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