

Local Community Participation In The Development Of The Mawun Beach Area, Central Lombok

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the forms of community participation and local empowerment in the development of the Mawun Beach tourism area, Central Lombok Regency. The research focuses on three key aspects: tourism development, community participation, and local empowerment in creating inclusive and sustainable tourism. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, utilizing primary and secondary data collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data were analyzed using tourism development theory based on five indicators: attractions, transportation, accommodation, service facilities, and infrastructure. Additionally, the study applied community participation theory comprising seven typologies (manipulative, passive, consultation, material incentive, functional, interactive, and self-mobilization) and community empowerment theory with six dimensions (authority, competence, trust, opportunity, responsibility, and support). Findings indicate significant progress in attractions and local culture, while transportation and infrastructure remain limited. Community involvement reflects five participation forms, dominated by a top-down approach. Empowerment efforts have emerged through Pokdarwis and local groups, enhancing capacity and collective responsibility toward sustainable community-based tourism development.

Keywords: Community Empowerment, Community Participation, Mawun Beach, Tourism Development



INTRODUCTION

Community participation in tourism development is widely recognized as a crucial component for maximizing the potential of local geographic and cultural assets (Sunarta, 2021). According to Theresia (2015), participation encompasses involvement throughout the development process, from planning and program formulation to policy-making and decision-making stages. Despite its importance, participation often remains suboptimal. For instance, Putra (2020) reported limited community involvement in planning, management, and monitoring at Taman Beach. A similar condition exists at Mawun Beach in Central Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), where opportunities for active participation are still constrained. Stiglitz (2002) in Sari (2020) asserts that participation not only promotes inclusivity but also strengthens communication and collaboration between governments and communities, thereby facilitating sustainable development. Complementing this, Wicaksono (2017) highlights community empowerment as a key strategy for enabling local residents to utilize their inherent potential effectively. From a governance perspective, Sunarta (2017) emphasizes the necessity for a comprehensive approach, incorporating vertical and horizontal coordination to assess the social and economic impacts of tourism development.

Community-based tourism (CBT) has emerged as a strategic model for achieving sustainability goals. Antara et al. (2022) affirm that CBT enhances economic benefits while preserving environmental integrity, cultural values, and social cohesion. Participatory development principles within CBT frameworks position communities as central actors in tourism planning and destination management. In line with this, Yoeti (2008) in Rudy (2019) argues that tourism's primary objective is to improve community welfare, which necessitates collaborative efforts among governments, private sectors, and local stakeholders. The case of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB)—comprising Lombok, Sumbawa, and 280 smaller inhabited islands—illustrates the region's substantial tourism potential supported by its rich natural and cultural diversity (Bappeda NTB Province). Central Lombok Regency alone spans 1,095.03 km² with a population exceeding 1 million (Amir et al., 2020), offering pristine beaches, lush mountains, and vibrant traditional practices. The presence of Lombok International Airport further enhances accessibility, positioning Central Lombok as a prime tourism hub.

Policy frameworks reinforce this direction. Presidential Regulation No. 97 of 2019 identifies tourism as a critical economic driver and cultural preservation mechanism, underscoring the need for strong human resource development (Nurman, 2015). Within this context, Mawun Beach stands out as a flagship attraction managed by the local Tourism Awareness Group



(Pokdarwis). Renowned for its crescent-shaped shoreline, white sand, and verdant hills, the destination appeals to both domestic and international markets (Fauzan, 2022). Despite these advantages, current management faces challenges such as low community involvement, disorganized facilities, and limited awareness of tourism's economic potential (Fariza, 2022). These gaps hinder the realization of tourism's multiplier effects, which, as Kanom (2015) notes, could significantly enhance local livelihoods through job creation and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Therefore, empowerment strategies that foster capacity-building, economic inclusivity, and participatory governance are imperative for sustainable destination development. Previous studies, such as Sapari et al. (2024), have acknowledged the role of local communities in managing Mawun Beach but have not comprehensively explored participation typologies or empowerment mechanisms. Addressing this research gap, the present study aims to analyze the existing forms of community involvement and formulate strategic recommendations to enhance participation, thereby contributing to sustainable tourism development at Mawun Beach.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Tourism Development

Development is a process of transforming a design into a physical form with specific characteristics. In the context of tourism, development focuses on creating and designing tourism products that meet field requirements. According to Kurniawan (2015) and Anggara et,all (2024), there are five main elements in tourism development: Attraction, Transportation, Accommodation, Service Facilities and Infrastructure.

Participation

Participation, according to Mubyarto (in Anandhyta & Kinseng, 2020), is an individual's involvement in helping achieve a program without sacrificing personal interests. Community participation may be direct (such as labor) or indirect (such as ideas or funds) (Pratiwi in Salmah et al., 2021). Furthermore, Lewaherilla (in Anandhyta & Kinseng, 2020) identifies four aspects of participation in tourism development. According to Pretty (1995), community participation can be categorized into seven levels: Manipulative Participation, Passive Participation, Consultative Participation, Participation Based on Material Incentives, Functional Participation, Interactive Participation and Self-Mobilization.



Community Empowerment

The ACTORS framework, proposed by Sarah Cook and Steve Macaulay (1997), views communities as agents of change through empowerment. This framework includes six key elements: Authority, Confidence and Competence, Trust, Opportunities, Responsibilities and Support

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative approach with an initial planning phase to clarify the research focus and formulate the problem. The analysis is based on relevant theories and concepts, aiming to provide conclusions and recommendations for the development of Mawun Beach. The research model is presented in Figure 1.

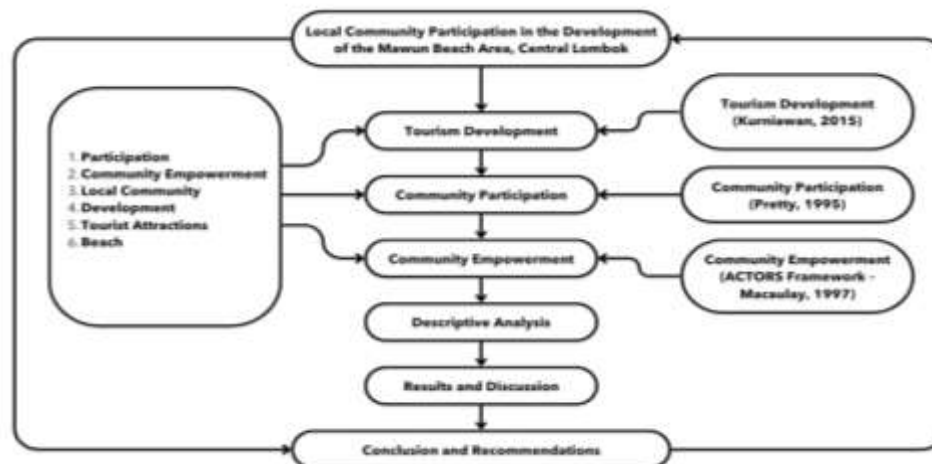


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Researcher, 2025

According to Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong (2017), qualitative research generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from observed individuals and behaviors. Sugiyono (2018) states that qualitative methods are used to study objects in their natural setting, with the researcher acting as the main instrument. Data collection uses triangulation, analysis is inductive, and the results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. This approach was chosen to examine local community participation in the development of Mawun Beach, Central Lombok.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and literature review, ensuring complementary information to improve validity. The study was conducted at Mawun Beach, located in Tumpak Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, approximately 15 km from Lombok International Airport. The research used qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data focused on forms of community participation in tourism development, gathered through interviews, observation, and documentation. Quantitative data included statistical information such as the number of residents involved in tourism. Data sources consisted of: Primary data: From key informants such as Tourism Office officials, community leaders, and local residents and Secondary data: From scientific reports, archives, and official documents related to the development of Mawun Beach (Sugiyono, 2016).

The main instrument in this study was the researcher (Sugiyono, 2013), supported by interview guides, stationery, and recording devices. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, targeting individuals with in-depth knowledge of Mawun Beach (Sugiyono, 2017). The sample included tourism officials, village heads, business owners, tour guides, and local residents, totaling 10 informants. Data collection techniques included: Observation, In-depth interviews, and Documentation (Sugiyono, 2016). Data analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative methods through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification, following Miles and Huberman's model (Sugiyono, 2020). The analysis process was interactive and iterative until data saturation was achieved. Findings were presented in a narrative form to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, as recommended by Sugiyono (2018) and Moleong (2019).

DISCUSSION

Mawun Beach, located in Mawun Hamlet, Tumpak Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok, is one of the island's leading marine tourism destinations. Known for its crescent-shaped coastline flanked by lush green hills, this beach offers a distinctive and visually captivating landscape. The central section of the shoreline provides calm waters suitable for swimming, while the edges experience stronger waves, ideal for surfing. The turquoise waters, fine white sand mixed with small pebbles, and its natural bay formation create an exotic panorama that distinguishes Mawun Beach from other destinations (Moleong, 2019). The primary draw of Mawun Beach lies in its natural beauty. The beach's curved coastline, white sandy shores, and crystal-clear waters form an iconic coastal panorama. Green hills surrounding the bay provide opportunities for trekking, camping, and panoramic photography. Besides natural elements, cultural attractions reinforce the



destination's appeal. Local traditions such as peresean (stick fighting), Sasak dance performances, and traditional music enrich the visitor experience. The annual Bau Nyale festival—a traditional ritual of collecting sea worms—acts as a cultural magnet. Recreational activities include swimming, surfing at designated points, and light hiking (Moleong, 2019).

Mawun Beach is situated approximately 40–60 minutes from Lombok International Airport and is reachable via the Praya–Tumpak route or the Mandalika Bypass. The main access road is asphalted, though some segments require maintenance. Directional signs and information boards are available along the route. A well-organized and spacious parking area further ensures visitor convenience. Essential amenities at Mawun Beach include gazebos, prayer rooms (mushola), toilets, rinse rooms, and food stalls offering local dishes such as grilled fish and plecing kangkung. Souvenir kiosks selling traditional crafts add to the cultural value. Basic infrastructure like clean water and electricity is available, and collaborations with tour operators in Mandalika and Praya enable package tours. Although large-scale amenities remain limited, current facilities sufficiently support tourism activities. Additional services at Mawun Beach include beach umbrella rentals, mats, recreational gear, life jackets, and rescue boats. Parking attendants and local guides provide safety and enhance visitor experience through cultural interpretation and storytelling. Souvenir kiosks selling Lombok woven textiles contribute to cultural preservation and economic opportunities for the local community (Moleong, 2019).

Local Community Participation in Mawun Beach Development

Sustainable tourism development heavily relies on active local community involvement. According to Pretty (1995), community participation can be categorized into several levels based on the degree of involvement and control. Field findings at Mawun Beach demonstrate multiple forms of participation:

Manipulative Participation

At this level, local representation in tourism structures exists but with minimal decision-making power. Community involvement is often symbolic, such as attending tourism-related meetings and cultural festivals, without significant influence over strategic planning. These findings align with Rismayanti et al. (2020), who noted limited roles at the implementation stage.

Passive Participation

Here, the community only receives information about pre-determined decisions. While participation in cultural activities such as Cupak Gerantang dance and Peresean stick fighting is



significant, their role in decision-making remains minimal, supporting Ariasri's (2022) findings on passive involvement in tourism development.

Consultative Participation

Communities act as partners in discussions concerning tourism initiatives, especially regarding business ventures. Consultations often occur between villagers, community leaders, and Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Group), indicating growing willingness to engage (Irwan et al., 2022).

Participation Based on Material Incentives

Community members contribute land or labor in exchange for financial benefits, such as donating land for access roads or opening food stalls. This form enhances household income and motivates economic engagement, as also reported by Ariantika (2022).

Functional Participation

Members of Pokdarwis play an active role in promoting tourism awareness and facilitating collaborations with educational institutions, such as Lombok Tourism Polytechnic. This organizational involvement fosters capacity building and collective engagement (Putri & Santoso, 2023).

Interactive Participation

The community actively participates in planning, implementation, and monitoring. Examples include village meetings to discuss zoning, self-managed parking systems, and regular clean-up activities. Locals also run businesses such as food stalls, surfboard rentals, and tour guiding, reflecting a sense of ownership and shared responsibility (Anandhitya & Kinseng, 2020).

Self-Mobilization

At this highest level, the community independently initiates and manages activities without external intervention. Examples include organizing environmental preservation efforts, operating rotational parking systems, and installing warning and information boards. This autonomy underscores strong local stewardship of tourism development, as highlighted by Thetsane (2019).



Community Empowerment at Mawun Beach

Community empowerment in Mawun Beach tourism development is participatory, emphasizing capacity building for individuals and groups through a local wisdom-based approach. Findings reveal six key empowerment dimensions: authority, confidence and competence, trust, opportunities, responsibilities, and support.

Authority – Delegated Decision-Making

Local communities are granted authority to make decisions on tourism management, facilitated through Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Groups) and other local bodies. Discussions cover zoning, local regulations, and beach cleanliness. The government acts as a facilitator rather than a dominant actor, ensuring community-driven initiatives. This supports Hikmah (2021), highlighting authority as a driver of local independence.

Confidence and Competence – Skills and Self-Efficacy

Training programs in hospitality, English, cooking, and product processing have improved community confidence and technical skills. Many locals now run small businesses such as food stalls, equipment rentals, and guiding services. This aligns with Ariyaningsih (2024), who found training to be a catalyst for active tourism participation.

Trust – Building Collective Confidence

Collective trust grows through hands-on experience and institutional support, reflected in effective rotational work systems, cleanliness maintenance, and shared business zoning. Similar to Hidayat (2023), trust is essential for collaborative governance in tourism.

Opportunities – Economic and Social Openings

Communities enjoy freedom to develop ventures such as culinary businesses, water sports rentals, and tour services. Trainings also expand access to information and skills, enhancing economic independence and job creation (Hannaji, 2022).

Responsibilities – Collective Awareness

High community awareness manifests in shared responsibilities for cleanliness, parking management, and fair zoning through deliberation. Local cultural values such as gotong royong (mutual cooperation) reinforce these practices, confirming Wahyuni's (2018) findings on the



importance of collective responsibility.

Support – External Facilitation

Institutional support from tourism agencies includes training (language, guiding, cooking, product development), promotion, and organizational strengthening via Pokdarwis. This assistance is facilitative, not dominating, ensuring communities remain primary actors in tourism governance (Wahyuni, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that tourism development at Mawun Beach holds significant potential to become a leading sustainable destination, supported by its rich natural and cultural resources as primary attractions. However, limited accessibility and infrastructure remain challenges that require serious attention through collaboration among government, tourism stakeholders, and local communities. Community participation in managing Mawun Beach has been relatively active, though it largely operates at a functional level under institutional structures such as Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Groups). This indicates the need to broaden participatory space to make it more autonomous, interactive, and inclusive from the planning to evaluation stages.

Community empowerment has shown positive progress through enhanced capacity, authority, confidence, collective responsibility, and access to local business opportunities. Active involvement in maintaining cleanliness, managing facilities, and attending training programs demonstrates that the empowerment process is underway. Nevertheless, sustained institutional support, continuous mentoring, and improved access to economic resources are essential to ensure consistent and long-term community independence in tourism management.

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