

**STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING TOURIST VISITS TO AIR BETUNG BERSERI
IN SUMBER RAHAYU VILLAGE, RAMBANG SUB-DISTRICT, MUARA ENIM
DISTRICT, SOUTH SUMATRA DURING THE PANDEMIC**

¹Randi, ²Yulasteriyani, ²Rizki Goffar Ismail, ²Yosi Arianti

¹ Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sriwijaya University

² Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sriwijaya University

Corresponding e-mail : *randi@fisip.unsri.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Businesses run by actors in the village still have many problems such as marketing and poor facilities to tourist attractions. Air Betung Berseri tourism is located in Sumber Rahayu Village, Rambang District, Muara Enim Regency. This research focuses on Increasing the Visit of Air Betung Berseri Tourism in Sumber Rahayu Village, Rambang District, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra. Air Betung Berseri tourism is a superior product of Sumber Rahayu village. However, the number of visitors is only crowded at certain times. This is what causes the number of visitors to decrease day by day. The results of this research are active and social networking. The object studied here is Air Betung Berseri Tourism which is driven by actors. The actor is the manager of Air Betung Berseri Tourism. Researchers see that the strategy that must be done is to actively promote to social media and utilize the social network owned by each actor or manager of Air Betung Berseri Tourism. The research method used is qualitative research.

I. INTRODUCTION

Law Number 10 of 2009 concerning tourism, tourism aims to increase economic growth; improve people's welfare; eliminate poverty; overcome unemployment; preserve nature, the environment, and resources; advance culture; raise the nation's image; foster a sense of love for the country; strengthen national identity and unity; and strengthen friendship between nations. Based on the Law, it is clear that tourism certainly has a very clear purpose. Ratnaningsih, (2014) states that the development of tourism destinations is expected to create jobs, improve the community's economy, so as to achieve community welfare.

Improving and developing the economy of rural communities needs to be done through tourism villages. However, the lack of tourist facilities makes tourism short-lived, and not even a few tourism businesses have closed, with 10,000 tourism companies closed, according to the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI). This is due to the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Tourism in villages can also close if they cannot survive in such difficult conditions.

The community continues to strive for tourism development supported by a government program known as Desa Wisata. However, limited facilities and infrastructure are a challenge for village managers. Narendra (2018) argues that tourism development, especially tourism facilities and infrastructure, is a process of increasing value in all fields. Atmaja, (2015) argues that infrastructure is the main support for an area to carry out the development process, and infrastructure also has an important impact on improving the quality of life and human welfare.

Figure 1. Air Betung Berseri Tourism



Source: by the researcher, 2022

The problems faced by communities around tourist objects, namely low economic levels, poverty, low levels of education, need attention, so that the cooperation of all parties, local governments, communities and educational institutions, namely universities, is needed to provide the right solution to overcome them, including One solution that can be given is to implement the "Creative Economy Development" program. "Targeting the community in the existing tourist attraction area (Batilmurik, Rudolf W Lao, Hans A. 2016). Air Betung Berseri Tourism Sumber Rahayu Village, Rambang District, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra is

the embodiment of the creative economy and the development of tourist villages. However, the obstacle faced is the lack of visitors, visitors only appear on certain days. This is due to the lack of promotion or marketing of BUMDes products, so it is necessary to improve the promotion system so that BUMDes is expected to be profitable. According to the researchers' field survey, the obstacles faced by the community that make the product not develop significantly are that the product cannot last too long, and the product lasts 3-4 weeks at most still lacking.

Tourist visits are still insufficient, but the government plays a role in increasing visits, starting from always holding events that invite the wider community, even inviting tourism agencies, all for the benefit of people outside the village and tourism agencies. As you know, tourist attractions in our village are not inferior to other villages. Based on the researcher's initial search, the main problem that arises in the vibrant village of BUMDes Sumber Rahayu is the mismarketing of clean water tourism, which is only through leaflets and word of mouth. Managers must be more active in managing Air Betung Berseri tourism. Therefore, in the future, Air Betung Berseri tourism will improve the standard of living of the people of Sumber Rahayu village and increase the number of tourists in Sumber Rahayu village. In addition, the manager must also evaluate Air Betung Berseri tourism. Because evaluation is very important, depending on the level of success. Abdurrahman, (2017) states that performance evaluation is needed to provide information on the extent to which activities have been completed.

II. METHODS

This research can be divided into descriptive research and qualitative research. The purpose of this form is to explore and illuminate social reality. This qualitative approach was implemented using a combination of focus group discussions (FGDs), observation and outreach. The subjects included village government employees interested in training, business actors and employees of BUMDes Semarak Berseri in Sumber Rahayu village. Their presence also supported the smooth running of this research, especially in identifying strategic themes to increase water tourism visits to Air Betung Berseri during the pandemic, Sumber Rahayu Village, Rambang District, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Increasing the Visit of Air Betung Berseri Tourism Sumber Rahayu Village Rambang District Muara Enim Regency South Sumatra

In general, strategy will be understood as an outline of a direction of action to achieve a predetermined goal (Asrori, 2013). Various strategies can be used to execute survival strategies to overcome economic shocks and pressures. The strategy to increase water tourism visits to Air Betung Berseri, Sumber Rahayu Village, Rambang Sub-district, Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra is explained in more detail below. The village government has played a good role in developing tourism in Air Betung Berseri such as managing tourist attractions, the government builds lodges to make tourists in these tourist attractions feel comfortable, and conducts promotional activities to increase tourism in Sumber Rahayu village, but it seems that the publicity is still lacking, only publicity in the form of pamphlets, and now only a few people read it.

a. Active Strategy

A proactive strategy is a strategy that must be carried out by managers, namely by actively promoting Air Betung Berseri tourism. Social media can be used to spread the word and be active. In addition, we must actively innovate and utilize existing resources. Like the interview with informant IY that:

This Air betung berseri tourism has often been promoted, starting from making posters and holding events such as karaoke which is carried out almost every month to always introduce this betung tourism outside the village. Social media promotion is indeed very necessary, such as endorsements, I strongly agree and it is very good to do because social media is a means that can make BUMDes Semarak Berseri products better known to the wider community.

Social media is a bridge to be able to reach out and find out about tours that are far from the location of consumers. Social media can provide very fast information to consumers. Besides that, it is also active in utilizing celebgrams, YouTubers or people who have considerable influence in social media. As revealed by informant AR that:

And maximizing AR informants strongly agree to do celebrity endorsements with interesting content and make people interested.

An active strategy that is usually carried out by the manager of Air Betung Berseri tourism is to continue to make innovations such as photo spots and children's playgrounds. In this case, increasing visits to overcome the problem of the number of visitors. Visitors are very interested in new things. Although Air Betung Berseri tourism is under BUMDes, it must continue to actively innovate. The beginning of the formation of BUMDes from the community who proposed in 2016, and in Sumber Rahayu village the BUMDes was inaugurated in the same year. Many products are being developed, but what is being focused on is radiant betung tourism, for food products which are now still in the planning stage to make developments because most of these food products are still new, and all products that coordinate with BUMDes are all at the development stage. As revealed by informant AR, who is a 35-year-old man, he serves as BPD in Sumber Rahayu Village:

The formation of this BUMDes has been a very long time ago but has only been continued recently under the name BUMDes Semarak Berseri. Many products are being managed in this BUMDes semarak berseri such as tempe chips and stationery facilities, besides that there are also tourist attractions and village tama that are being developed. Strategies to meet the criteria for these products to be sold out already exist, such as being neatly packaged and branded. Most Sumber Rahayu villagers have been active and participatory in the process of developing products in the village, but according to informant AR, there are obstacles that make this development hampered, one of which is the unstable income of materials. So that makes the product for now still sold limited to the village and not to large markets.

Based on the description above, what is meant by active strategy is the manager's strategy in increasing the number of visitors. Many businesses run by the village community are still only limited to this village for marketing, because there are still many residents who are confused about how to sell outside this village. Residents in Sumber Rahayu village who have played a

very active role in seeding the various processes carried out to develop village products. The village government has made great efforts to improve every BUMDes product, one of which is that the village government plays a role in efforts to increase visits to betung berseri tourism, by making several huts and various facilities that make the tourism more attractive. Capital is always facilitated by village officials as a process of managing the Air Betung Berseri tourism.

3. Network Strategy

Web strategy is a strategy that is implemented using social networks. In this case, managers utilize the networks they have. This utilization of social networks can be in the form of web access and promotional assistance. Social networks will help provide more reliable information related to Air Betung Berseri. However, Suharto (2009) also revealed that using the Internet for survival is like building relationships, both formal and with the social and institutional environment (e.g. borrowing money from neighbors, borrowing money at stalls or shops, using poverty alleviation projects, borrowing money from money lenders or banks, etc.). Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the social networking strategy means a management strategy to attract a wider range of local tourists. As revealed by Informant AF, a 28-year-old male native of Sumber Rahayu village who is now mandated to be the Director of BUMDes Semarak Berseri said that:

The village government is always supportive, the government often holds events in Sumber Rahayu village so that Sumber Rahayu village and Air Betung Berseri tourism and all the products in it can be recognized by people outside the village, besides that holding this event is also a strategy for the village government to be able to invite the community to play an active role in it. In addition to holding promotional events, there are also existing promotions such as social media for residents who sell these products, and making posters that are distributed. The role of the community is quite active in participating in developing products, especially PKK mothers, where PKK mothers rarely participate in exhibitions to showcase products in the village. In addition to PKK mothers, there are still people who also play a role in product development promotions such as young people in Sumber Rahayu village.

The village and central government will be a very important social network in increasing

the number of visitors. The community also plays an active role in the development of this Air Betung Bersari tourism where this tourist spot was formed from the self-help of the community itself, so the community also took part in the construction of developments at the tourist spot such as huts, boats and so on. Village officials also participated in the development, where village officials were obliged to donate a photo spot for one cottage at the tourist spot. Besides there is still a lot to be improved, this Air Betung Bersari tourism also needs more promotion, and I myself strongly agree about celebrity endorsement as a social media promotion considering that we don't really exist in social media with this endorsement, hopefully it can introduce the products of this village more widely. As revealed by informant Informant NP is a 40-year-old woman, Informant NP is now one of the administrators of the Air Betung Bersari tourist spot that:

Proposals from people who understand and have good social relations such as relationships with the community and local government so that the government, community and BUMDes can help community businesses and improve the economy of the Sumber Rahayu village community. There are so many village products that are being developed, one of which I am working on is Air Betung Bersari tourism, which will later become an icon for Sumber Rahayu Village, with the existing potential and strong community desire. In addition, there are also many such as tempeh chips and so on.

The community and government are very important social networks to introduce village products. Because the products in the village are products that are ready to be marketed and compete in the global market. Products in Sumber Rahayu Village have met the criteria to be sold to large markets, or even sold out of town, it's just that the community's knowledge of how to do it is still lacking, for the product itself is very good in my opinion by being well packaged and branded. I think it meets the criteria to be sold widely, not only in the village.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The active role of the manager and the role of the village government has been very good in the process of product development, and has facilitated enough as well, the village apparatus also participates in management such as the management of this Air Betung Bersari tourism, the government participates in the construction of lodges and always holds events such as karaoke,

the promotion carried out has also been quite a lot such as making Facebook accounts for village businesses such as Air Betung Berseri tourism Facebook accounts, distributing brochures and inviting guests from outside the village. But even that is still lacking, we must continue to look for new innovations in promotion to be better known by outsiders. Promotion on social media is very necessary in this digital era, considering that young and old people are all using social media, the existence of celebrity endorsements is very helpful to introduce this product outside the village and even outside the country, that's why I strongly agree about the procurement of this endorsement, with the hope that this village will be better known and will be even more advanced. Besides that, social networking is also very helpful in developing village products.

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