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# Empowerment Models of Telaga Madirda Tourism Management to Increase Visitors during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

Telaga Madirda village in Ngargoyoso District, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java is a tourist destination managed by Berjo Village-Owned Enterprise (BUM Desa). This natural site has the potential for further development. Therefore, this study investigates the Berjo Village BUM empowerment model and innovative approaches to managing the site's potential as a tourism destination. This study employed a qualitative descriptive method, focusing on the three stages' empowerment model: awareness, capacity building, and empowerment. The findings indicate that the empowerment process of Berjo Village BUM is supported by the commitment of village leaders. It enables the implementation of innovative models for site to attract more visitors. The development of spiritual tourism and night camping has attracted many people to visit Telaga Madirda as a recreational and healing place, specifically for those who seeking comfort and tranquility during COVID-19 therapy patients while praying/meditating.

Keywords: Telaga Madirda; Berjo Village BUM; tourism management; empowerment models

## ABSTRAK

Telaga Madirda merupakan objek wisata desa yang dikelola Badan Usaha Milik Desa (BUM Desa) Berjo, Kecamatan Ngargoyoso, Kabupaten Karanganyar, Jawa Tengah. Objek wisata alam eksotik ini memiliki daya tarik yang layak dikembangkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji model pemberdayaan BUM Desa Berjo dan mengkaji inovasi pengelolaan objek wisata. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan model pemberdayaan melalui tiga tahapan, yaitu penyadaran, pengkapasitasan, dan pendayaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses pemberdayaan BUM Desa Berjo mendapat dukungan berupa komitmen pimpinan/kepala desa. Hal ini memungkinkan terwujudnya model inovasi event di objek wisata untuk semakin menggeliat dan menarik minat pengunjung. Pengembangan wisata spiritual dan kemah malam membuat banyak masyarakat tertarik berkunjung ke Telaga Madirda sebagai tempat rekreasi sekaligus sebagai tempat isolasi penyembuhan yang memberikan rasa nyaman dan syahdu untuk pasien terapi COVID-19 sembari berdoa/meditasi.

Kata kunci: Telaga Madirda; BUM Desa Berjo; manajemen pariwisata; model pemberdayaan

## A. INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background

Improving the economy and escalating income of rural communities is a key problem that become the focus of solutions regarding the poverty problems that occur in Indonesian society. Therefore, to overcome these problems, many efforts have been conducted by various parties. Efforts to reduce poverty have begun supported by several aspects, starting from the government through its leading programs, to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) through their efforts to cut poverty and improve society's well-being. One of the

efforts made by various parties is through community empowerment. This is also in line with the statement by Widayanti (2012) that community empowerment becomes a public concern and an appropriate approach to solving social issues, particularly poverty, which is conducted by several aspects, including the government, the business field, universities, and communities through local organizations. Community empowerment action aims to provide strength for the community to be able to cope with their problems. Various steps and community empowerment actions are also intended to empower the community to be able to face various challenges in their lives. Community empowerment actions is able to be implemented through several actions, one of which is the potential tourist destination development action in the village. Tourist destination or tourist villages development as a community empowerment agenda aims to grant power and concurrently reduce poverty within a region by employing local resources. Through the development of tourist destinations, people gain income from a large number of visitors. This tourism destination development program potentially serves benefits to increase the living standard of the society. This is in line with government policy contained in the Rule of the Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia No. 29/2015, namely the advancement of tourism focused on rural areas such as tourism villages, will stimulate economic activity within these regions as an effort to prevent migration of rural societies to urban centers. This rural tourist advancement will support natural conservation, such as sceneries encompassing rice fields, rivers, lakes, and ponds, which are expected to help preserve nature by decreasing global warming. This tourism village agenda is also developed at the Telaga Madirda tourist destination. It is expected to create a significant contribution to society's development. Karanganyar area, which is known as INTANPARI (industry, agriculture, and tourism), has a variety of potentials, both natural and cultural tourism potential. It's just that the various potentials have not been optimally utilized by the community, due to various limitations in human resources (HR) and tourist facilities.

The development of world tourism is growing rapidly along with the development of civilization and an increasingly modern human lifestyle. The demands of the need to live happily and prosperously by finding ways to be able to please themselves and with their families and communities in the midst of busy work can be fulfilled by conduct tourism activities. Seeing that the prospects of tourism development are very bright, in the modern

world nowadays, almost all countries have made efforts to improve tourism management, including Indonesia, which continues to strive to manage national tourism, regional tourism, and village tourism. However, it is very unfortunate that along the way, many tourist destinations spread across Indonesia have had to close since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and even various tourist activity agendas have had to be canceled to anticipate wider spread due to activities at these tourist destinations. The cessation of tourist destinations economically affects people who are engaged in tourism administration. It is in line with Espinoza et al. (2021) that tourism destination becomes one of the sectors that it is the mainstay of the government to earn regional income and the expansion of employment as well as to introduce identity and culture. This also had an impact on the tourism industry, which suffered huge losses and was one of the industries most affected due to this unexpected pandemic.

Berjo Village has had a BUM Desa since 2008. To escalate society's well-being and economic condition, this institution continues to explore village businesses. Through the Berjo Village deliberations, it was decided that Berjo Village BUM was appointed by the Berjo Village Government to manage some of the village's tourism potential.

Immediately after being given the trust since 2008, Berjo Village BUM managed the Jumog Waterfall tour. Over time, Berjo Village BUM continued to be entrusted with managing some of the tourism potential in their village, until early 2020 it began to be entrusted with managing Telaga Madirda. It's really hard for BUM Desa, when they have to manage the Telaga Madirda tourist site at the same time as the COVID-19 pandemic is hitting the world, including Indonesia, as well as the Berjo Village. However, on the other hand, this is a dare for the members of BUM Desa to be able to manage the Telaga Madirda tourism assets so that they can compete with other tourist destinations during the pandemic. Therefore, armed with the capital of belief and expertise to managing tourism destinations, Berjo Village BUM continues to seek development innovation models while improving human resources quality managing tourist attractions and immediately repairing tourist service, managing sellers, arranging parking lots, and improving tourist areas to meet the needs of visitors. Judging from its development, some of the existing facilities are always increasing and getting more interesting almost every time. The management of Berjo Village

tourism realizes that if they want to attract visitors, they must always complement tourism facilities with an interesting touch of innovation and creativity.

## 2. Theoretical Studies

Indonesia was first confirmed with a COVID-19 case in early March 2020. Since then, this pandemic has quickly spread to all regions in Indonesia. The term COVID-19 stands for "corona", "virus", "disease", while the "19" indicates the season (year) the disease was discovered, namely the end of 2019. <sup>1</sup> The National Committee for Taxonomy of Viruses (NCTV) gives the official name for the new corona virus, which first became an epidemic in China, with the name <sup>8</sup> *severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2* (SARS-CoV-2), then WHO declared it with the name COVID-19 as a new type of illness. Several indicators of COVID-19 sufferers such as fever, dry cough, and hard breathing. A disease is given a specific name from its genetic structure to ease the development of diagnostic testings, vaccines, and medicines, as well as to develop research and discussion for disease prevention, transmission, severity, as well as treatment so that the disease is officially classified by WHO as an international disease (Nurhanisah, 2020).

Now the world is moving into the <sup>1</sup> third year of transition, shifting from a pandemic state to an endemic state. One of Indonesia's primary strategies for reviving the destination sector involves trust from <sup>1</sup> adaptation, innovation, and collaboration across sectors. The government's ongoing commitment in driving tourist sector continues to be carried out through a number of regulations, including accelerating vaccine, <sup>1</sup> easing travel restrictions, implementing the CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability) program, and establishing an open border system without quarantine requirements. All of this is done in the context of national tourism recovery. This move was welcomed by tourism industry players. Therefore, a number of other steps are being carried out, including private tourism occasion in the ongoing of transition period and working with overseas celebrity in an effort to increase foreign people trust in Indonesian tourism destination (Kementrian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2022).

In a general sense, visitors or tourists are variously defined by experts. Inskip (1991) defined tourists as one or a group of people who visit a certain place, be it a region or area that is different from the location where they live, with the aim of not seeking a livelihood. Therefore, tourists in this definition are divided into tentative tourists and travellers.

Temporary tourists are those who visit for a minimum of 24 hours at the visiting location, while travelers are tourists or visitors who stay only brief visits lasting less than 24 hours at the destination. Norval (1936) in Fidgeon (2010) stated that tourist is someone who enters the territory of another country for reasons other than searching job and permanent residency and who spends money in the visited country, with the funds not from that country. The Constitution No. 10/2009 concerning tourism states that tourists are people who visit and travel. Therefore, according to this understanding, everyone who goes on a tour is called a tourist. Whatever it is, the important thing is that the trip is not for the purpose of staying or earning a living in the place visited.

A model serves as a simplified representation of an object, concept, or system, mirroring natural conditions or phenomena. Its purpose is to facilitate the study of the actual system by encapsulating relevant information about the phenomenon. Models may also mimic real objects, system, or event incorporating essential data for analysis (Achmad 2008). The term "model" originates from the Latin *mold* or *pattern*. Achmad (2008) outlines four general forms of models: system models, mental models, verbal models, and mathematical models (Cayaray 2014: 1).

Conceptually, empowerment is defined as the giving of power (empowerment), from the basic word "power" that means empowerment. The fundamental concept of empowerment is closely linked to the concept of power. Power is frequently correlated with the capacity to influence others to act in accordance with our desires, irrespective of their own wishes and interests. Empowerment, when interpreted as a whole, is "a process of providing space for the development of a variety of diverse human abilities" (Wrihatnolo and Dwidjowijoto 2007: 78). Empowerment is an attempt to create power by encourage, motivate, and raise awareness of their resource and seek to increase and strengthen their resource (Minami, Utami, and Prihatiningsih 2017). Quoting the book "Basic Concepts of Community Service: Development and Empowerment" by Sudarmanto et al. (2020: 21), the notion of society's empowerment is an attempt to leverage the self-respect and worth of certain groups of citizens in poverty and underdeveloped situations. The objective of these efforts is to enhance community capacity by encouragement, motivation, heightened awareness, and the cultivation of potential. Concerning empowerment, four principles are commonly employed to ensure the success of empowerment programs: equality, participation, self-sufficiency or

independence, and sustainability (Najiyati, Asmana, and Suryadiputra 2005: 54). The elaboration of community empowerment principles is as follows: (1) Equality Principle. The fundamental principle essential in the process of community empowerment is the existence of equality between the community and the institutions that carry out community empowerment programs/assistance, both men and women. It entails fostering equal dynamics by establishing mechanism for mutual sharing of knowledge, experience, and expertise. Both parties recognize each other's strength and weakness, fostering a reciprocal learning process. (2) Participation. Empowerment agenda aimed at fostering community independence are those that are participatory, devised, executed, overseen, and evaluated by the community itself. However, achieving this level of autonomy necessitates time and a mentoring process that demands a strong commitment to community empowerment. (3) Self-sufficiency or independence. The principle of self-sufficiency emphasizes respecting and prioritizing the capabilities of the community itself, rather than relying solely on assistance from external parties. This concept does not perceive the impoverished as helpless objects (*the have nots*), but rather as individuals with limited abilities (*the have littles*). They possess a wealth of knowledge about the challenges they face, understand the conditions of their environment, have the manpower and determination, and adhere to societal norms that have been ingrained over time. These resources must be thoroughly explored and utilized as foundational assets for the empowerment development process. External material assistance should be viewed as supplementary support, ensuring that its provision does not inadvertently undermine levels of self-sufficiency. (4) Sustainability program. Empowerment have to be designed to be sustainable, even though initially the role of the assistant is more prominent than the community. Eventually, facilitators will withdraw altogether as the community becomes adept at managing its own activities.

Society's empowerment according to Sulistiyani (2004) has a goal to be achieved, namely to establish individual and community independence. Independence encompasses the freedom of thought, action, and control over one's activities. Attaining community independence is a gradual process. Through a learning journey, the community gradually gains the capacity and authority over time. Meanwhile, the purpose of empowerment stated by Tjokowinoto in Christie S (2005) mentioned by Andriani, hasibuan, and Rahayu (2018) over three areas: economic, political, and socio-cultural: "Empowerment activities must be

carried out in a comprehensive manner covering all aspects of community life to liberate community groups from domination of power that includes the economic, political, and socio-cultural fields."

A tourist destination, which is often also referred to as a tourist area, is a place for recreation/tourism. According to the Menparpostel Decree No. KM. 98/PW.102/MPPT-87, A tourist destination is a location that attracts visitors due to its abundance of resources, encompassing both natural and man-made elements, include natural wonders such as mountains, beaches, flora, and fauna, as well as human-made attractions like historical landmarks, monuments, temples, traditional dances, and unique cultural experiences (Ananto 2018). Siregar (2017) stated that A tourist destination encompasses everything sought after by tourists, making it closely intertwined with tourist attractions. To be called a tourist attraction, an area must have uniqueness that can attract visitors to come to the area. The distinctiveness of a tourist area is evident in its local culture, natural features, flora and fauna, technological advancements, and spiritual elements. Tourist destination includes all places or natural conditions that have built and developed resources so that they have attractiveness for tourists. Tourist destination may be in the form of natural attractions, such as mountains, lakes, or in the form of architectural marvels, such as museums, forts, historical heritage sites, and other built attractions.

Karanganyar Regency is one of the areas in Central Java Province that has the potential to manage the tourism sector deeply. Karanganyar region, which is under Mount Lawu with cool temperatures and presents the scenery around Karanganyar, is a beautiful site, makes tourists interested in visiting the area. The business development of the tourism field in Karanganyar Regency influenced by the existence of tourist attractions that can attract tourists to increase the economy in Karanganyar Regency. Telaga Madirda, as one of the natural attractions located in the slopes of Mount Lawu, used to be just a lake with shady trees and lack of tourist facilities and building. However, with the management of BUMDesa as the manager, the service and facilities at the Telaga Madirda tourist attraction is growing. Nevertheless, the facilities and infrastructure on this tour have not been fully completed. In fact, road access to arrive to this area is not good because of its location, which is still in a mountainous area and is rather difficult to reach by tourist buses. This area can only be



reached <sup>1</sup> by motorbikes and private cars. Therefore, empowerment is still needed for managers to further improve the quality of management in <sup>1</sup> this tourist destination.

A lake or pond is a small-scale ecosystem, occupying a limited area of the Earth's surface, shaped like a basin, distinct from <sup>1</sup> marine and terrestrial habitats. Based on the Rule of Ministry of Environment No. 28/2009 concerning the Capacity of Pollution Load of Lakes and/or Reservoirs, lakes/ponds are water containers and naturally formed ecosystems, including lakes and similar water containers in local terms. In this study, the notion of Telaga Madirda is a lake whose ecosystem is formed naturally and has a spring that is clear enough to flow throughout the year to form a mini waterfall. <sup>1</sup> Telaga Madirda is situated at the base of Mount Lawu, in the hamlet of Tlogo, Berjo Village, Ngargoyoso District, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java. Since early 2018, it has been overseen <sup>1</sup> by the Berjo Village Government as a village-owned tourist attraction. In its development, since early 2020, its management has been handed over to Berjo Village BUM. As a natural tourist attraction, Telaga Madirda has its own charms, such as beautiful and soothing natural conditions, flowing springs, various game features, and the availability of camping facilities by the lake.

Based on a further frame of mind, in investigating the results of empowerment of Berjo Village BUM in managing <sup>1</sup> the Telaga Madirda tourist attraction in the middle of COVID-19, and in the recovery transitional period, researchers used the approach to the principle of empowerment proposed by Najiyati, Asmana, and Suryadiputra (2005: 54), which is the principles of <sup>1</sup> (1) equality, (2) participation, (3) self-sufficiency or independence, and (4) sustainability. Furthermore, the execution of programs and activities follows a three-stage empowerment process, encompassing <sup>1</sup> awareness, capacity building, and empowerment. (Wrihatnolo and Dwidjowijoto 2007: 33). This progress which carried out with awareness and participation, can be explained as follows: (1) At the awareness level, the target audience comprises the underprivileged community, who need to be enlightened about their entitlement to capability and motivated to acquire the skills necessary to overcome poverty. Accelerating this process and assessing outcomes can be achieved through mentoring initiatives. (2) the capacity building level seeks to empower the less fortunate by equipping them with the skills required to seize opportunities presented to them. This stage is carried out by serving training, workshops, and other agenda aimed at improving people's skills. (3) At the empowerment level, <sup>1</sup> the community is provided with

opportunities that align with their abilities through active and sustainable participation, which is achieved by gradually assigning responsibilities based on their capacities and abilities, while also accommodating and guiding their aspirations. They are encouraged to conduct self-evaluations of choices and implementation of that choice.

### 3. Problems

Starting from the various good reactions from contributor in Berjo Village, especially the Berjo Village BUM operational management as the manager of the Telaga Madirda tourism destination, there is a prospect of studying several key matters related to leverage the number of tourists to Telaga Madirda amidst the COVID-19, especially in (1) how the empowerment processes/stages are carried out, (2) how are the models and strategies of empowerment implemented, and (3) what are the difficulties to employing the Berjo Village BUM empowerment design and technique in order to leverage the number of tourists at Telaga Madirda.

### 4. Gab Analysis

The most important principle to be understood in the process of empowerment is that there is equality among village government, BUM Desa members, and the business circle at the Telaga Madirda, as well as with the Berjo Village community. The dynamics established revolve around fostering equality through leveraging collective knowledge, experience, and expertise to enhance the Telaga Madirda tourist destination. Every party acknowledges each other's capability and vulnerability so that generate beneficial learning process. The process of learning from each other and in line with the vision have to ideally grow from below and from each member of the BUM Desa and the community. However, it should be understood that in an unbalanced condition, it is very difficult for the community to rise to build strength from within and from below. Thus, it is clear that they need assistance/intervention from outside parties. Stakeholders like the Berjo Village administration, Karanganyar Regency authorities, NGOs, local organization, leaders, universities, financial institutions, and others are anticipated to serve as facilitators in empowering Berjo Village's BUM members. Their role is to help these members enhance their tourism management skills

professionally and prosperously, thus uplifting both the BUM Desa members and the overall welfare of the Berjo Village residents.

### 5. Novelty of Research Topic

As an effort by researchers to obtain information on the novelty of research through tracing that has been carried out by previous researchers, the findings from tracing prior research on empowerment design and technique for managing tourism sites can be outlined as follows: (1) Research by Mudana (2015) investigated empowerment developed in the Pemuteran Village, Gerokgak District. The study shows the empowerment strategy commonly can be said to be mezzo in nature, but in certain cases it is also carried out with micro and macro strategies so that the Pemuteran Village community does not only support nature and socio-cultural conservation, but also supports the development of sustainable tourism. (2) Previous research on Telaga Madirda by Hilmy, Daryanto, and Pitana (2020) have assessed the efficiency of a centralized system at Madirda Lake tourist destination mass management in Berjo Village, Ngargoyoso District, Karanganyar Regency. The study indicates that the Telaga Madirda tourism zone has been prepared by considering the four main components of tourism that can be mapped into six zones, namely the attraction zone, support zone, service zone, lodging zone, parking zone, and receiving zone. All zones have access to the lake as the main attraction. The advantage of using a mass-concentrated system is that it can strengthen the existence of Telaga Madirda as a major tourist attraction through the processing of zones and compositional elements. In addition, the use of a centering system on this mass system can also streamline contour processing so as to minimize cut and fill practices on land. (3) Research conducted by Sinaga, Nasution, and Dewi (2021) scrutinized the execution of tourism development policies rooted in community empowerment in Pantai Cermin District, Serdang Regency. The results show that the planning carried out in the development of a region is also the basis for the success of a development program. Thus, the demographic aspect or the potential of a region becomes an important consideration in establishing a policy that involves government, private sector, and society group. (4) Research conducted by Sagita, Delianoor, and Afifah (2021) investigated the sustainability of a farming community within the Griya Taman Lestari Housing area, located in Gudang Village, Tanjung Sari District, Sumedang Regency. This

community was formed to fight against the pandemic situation with the aim of maintaining family food security, as well as improving the economy and welfare of residents. This community carries out agricultural and fishery cultivation activities. Counseling activities to strengthen community empowerment are carried out online, bearing in mind the COVID-19 situation that did not allow the team and participants to meet face to face. The results of the study show that the low citizen participation was occurred due to the community empowerment stages not being carried out properly, which began with the inappropriate stage of action plan formulation, so that it had an impact on the execution stage to the evaluation stage. The solution generated in this activity was in the form of compiling a framework aimed at enhancing society empowerment for the Lestari Farm Community, as well as increasing communication forum activities that mutually reinforce knowledge, skills, and motivate fellow members. (5) Research by Damayanti and Indriyani (2021) examined the effect of the development of the Kuta Mandalika Circuit on the advancement of MSMEs according to the viewpoint from the Islamic economic standpoint. The results show that the advancement of MSMEs has increased and some has decreased because business activists did not understand the concepts and strategies regarding business activities. The impact of MSMEs development in the Special Economic Zone of Mandalika has made people of Kuta Lombok Village aware of the important role of the surrounding community to participate in providing for the needs of tourists while respecting to the Islamic teachings.

Several prior studies on the advancement for the operational of tourist attractions have discussed policies, empowerment methodologies, and the determination of tourist attraction zones with various conclusions, including always dynamizing empowerment through principles, processes, methods, strategies, and forms of empowerment, which still highlight and focuses on general actions proposed by the community or community groups; also analyzes the structural and functional side of empowering BUM Desa members and tourism business groups, which are defined in an empowerment model wrapped in local traditions. This study examines facts based on the results of discussions and interviews, as well as observations at the research location. Thus, the principles and process of empowerment will encourage the high commitment of BUM Desa to dare to open a night camp spiritual tourism model, as well as facilitating community members who carry out private isolation to recover from COVID-19 at the Telaga Madirda tourist location and are

consistent in establishing partnership networks, as well as tourism community, so as to escalate significant number of tourists amidst the pandemic.

## 6. Research Objectives

This study is in purpose to (1) identify and examine the phasing process of empowerment, (2) examine the application of empowerment strategy and design, and (3) examine the difficulties to implementing the strategy and design in order to escalate the number of visitors at Telaga Madirda.

## B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a qualitative approach, emphasizing a research methodology that generates descriptive data through written or spoken words from individuals and observable behaviors. Through a qualitative method, it is expected to obtain natural characteristics (natural serfing) as a direct data source. Thus, in this study the process is more important than the result. In this type of qualitative research, analysis tends to be carried out inductively and the generated meanings are essential (Moleong 2006: 04). This approach was expected to able to examine the various aspects studied in order to produce valid, reliable, and relevant data to what is needed. Data collection techniques used were observation, interviews, and documentation. After that, the technique used to analyze the research data was an interpretative descriptive analysis technique with steps that include (1) choosing the related documents/data and coding them, (2) creating objective records, (3) making reflective records, (4) generate a summary of the data by making a format based on the data analysis technique the researcher wants, and (5) conducting triangulation, in which verifying the correctness of the data by concluding the multiple data obtained. According to Wiliam Wiersma in Sugiyono (2007: 372), "Triangulation is qualitative cross-validation. It assesses the sufficiency of the data according to the convergence of multiple data sources or multiple data collection procedures." In this context, triangulation for credibility assessment entails verifying data from diverse sources, using different methods, and at different points in time, so that triangulation can be grouped into three types, namely source triangulation, data collection technique triangulation, and time. In this study, triangulation used three data sources, namely village officials (village head and village secretary), heads and members of

BUM Desa as managers of Telaga Madirda tourism, and other groups (small and medium enterprises/UKM groups for tourist sites and local youth organizations). Triangulation with three data collection techniques was conducted through interviews, observation, and FGD (Bachri 2010). Observations were carried out over three years, through the following stages: the first year (2020) focused on identifying and analyzing the readiness of Berjo Village BUM, the second year (2021) focused on developing empowerment models and strategies, and the third year (2022) focused on implementing innovative models and empowerment strategy. The research informants were determined based on who have an important role and comprehend how to empower village tourism, which is based on a purposive sampling technique, namely by taking subjects, which are not based on strata, random, and location, but based on specific goals. For this reason, informants who really know the problem in depth are needed. The informants proposed in this study include village officials, BUM Desa officers, village public figures, leaders, and the people who are directly engaged in the management and empowerment of the Telaga Madirda village tourism. The main instrument in this research was the researchers themselves. Therefore, the researchers went straight to the field, conducted field observations and interviewed informants.

## C. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Empowerment Stages and Processes

Telaga Madirda is a community-owned tourist destination overseen by BUM Berjo Village in Karanganyar Regency, situated at the base of Mount Lawu, enriching the array of tourist sites in the area. True to its name, Telaga Madirda is a lake situated approximately 1,050 meters above sea level (masl). Therefore, besides the beautiful scenery, the typical mountain air will also add to the atmosphere that visitors can enjoy. Because of this captivating beauty at the foothills of Mount Lawu, Telaga Madirda is the right choice for a weekend getaway. This lake is precisely located to the east of the center of Karanganyar Regency, approximately 20 km from Karanganyar or about 35 km from Solo. The interview results towards the manager of the Telaga Madirda obtained data on the price of a visitor entrance ticket, which is IDR 15,000/person. Children with a height below 110 cm are free of charge. The price of admission applies only to regular visitors, because there are entry tickets at different prices for visitors who stay overnight or camp at night. In addition, the opening

hours for regular visitors are also different from those who spend the night or camp. Telaga Madirda is open from 08.00 WIB to 16.30 WIB. Starting in mid-2020 when the COVID-19 outbreak broke out, Telaga Madirda was also opened for tourists who stayed overnight or camped while enjoying the beauty of the lake at night. In fact, camping at night became busy when Telaga Madirda was appointed as isolation site for the COVID-19 patients by executing health protocols (Prokes) and special oversight that includes both community members and medical professionals. The appearance of the special event that time became lively and even went popular on the internet, until Ganjar Pranowo, who is in charge as the governor of Central Java was also present, leading the planting of reforestation trees <sup>1</sup> on the slopes of Mount Lawu. He stopped by at Telaga Madirda and gave a good reaction to the opening of a <sup>1</sup> special night camping event at Telaga Madirda.



Figure 1. Ganjar Pranowo, together with local residents, planted trees for mass <sup>1</sup> reforestation, followed by a visit to Telaga Madirda. (Doc. Central Java Public Relations, March 13, 2021).

Regarding the planting of reforestation trees and the opening of the camping event at night, according to the interview results <sup>1</sup> with the head of Berjo Village and several BUM members of Berjo Village as the manager of the Telaga Madirda tourist attraction, as well as interview with Ki Warseno Slank, the famous puppeteer, obtained data and information about the need to take care of the existence of <sup>1</sup> Telaga Madirda and the Mount Lawu surroundings, because Telaga Madirda is the "barrel" of Karanganyar Regency. In essence, this area still requires proper <sup>1</sup> attention and management from third parties, societies, and the government officers in Karanganyar Regency and Central Java Province, so that the planting initiated by the Governor is highly prioritized by them and will continue to be carried out. Likewise with maintenance, local wisdom needs to be continuously explored and developed

as a village tourism asset. Telaga Madirda has an area of around 3.5 hectare (ha), while the other 3 ha in the vicinity will be used for nature conservation and natural tourism support facilities. As a natural tourist spot, Telaga Madirda itself is an area that has many springs. There are at least six large springs at that place. This place was subsequently managed as a natural destination commercially by Berjo Village BUM together with local residents, and in the period from mid-May to June 2020 it was used <sup>1</sup> as a quarantine place for COVID-19 patients. With the innovative model in the form of an overnight camping event at Telaga Madirda, <sup>1</sup> the Head of Berjo Village helps the village community and provide motivation to Berjo Village BUM to continue to develop it seriously, by completing facilities of night tourism in the form of designing tents as attractive and comfortable as possible. This place has a very beautiful and cool panorama at night. Tourism business actors, partners, tourism communities, and other tourism business actors can help develop community human resources by making innovative tourism at Telaga Mairda so that they can increasingly attract visitors to stay/camp at night at Telaga Madirda.

Empowerment for village tourism officers <sup>1</sup> at the Telaga Madirda tourist attraction is carried out through the establishment of empowerment strategy and is processed through stages and various activities implementing empowerment model training. Everything is done in order <sup>5</sup> to improve the quality of human resources, the self-regard of officers, especially <sup>1</sup> members of Berjo Village BUM and businessmen at the tourism site. It is intended to empower society by supporting and raising their awareness, as well as developing the human resources. Thus, in this empowerment effort, it is first necessary to identify the condition of the Telaga Madirda tourist attraction. When the management was handed over to Berjo Village BUM since the beginning of 2020 as a tourism village asset that must be managed properly, at the beginning of its management, the Berjo Village BUM experienced various obstacles, such as access roads that were still narrow and twisty and there were still minimal road signs leading to the location, the arrangement of tourist zones has not been professionally arranged, visitors to Telaga Madirda have decreased due to the pandemic, public awareness and tourism business actors have not proven good as can be seen from the large amount of garbage scattered around the location, and the entrance ticket system has not been arranged according to the proper mechanism. Apart from the various conditions that still need to be developed and perfected, Telaga Madirda tourist attraction from a



management perspective turns out to have quite an attractive tourist attraction for tourists. This natural tourist attraction is supported by the inherent existence of a lake at the foot of Mount Lawu, as the edge of the lake forms a beautiful panorama against a mountainous background. The cool air creates a serene atmosphere and refreshes the body. Walking around the clean lake is the main attraction for visitors.

As a manager, BUM Desa Berjo continues to strive to manage this object professionally and is committed to making this tourist attraction continue to progress and develop by collaborating with several partners as empowerment consultants/assistants for improving human resources to manage tourist destination and develop the innovation models so that it become more advanced and attractive to visitors. Thus, by looking at the condition of the existing tourism management and facilities, it is necessary to implement the principles of empowerment method and the phasing process in the form of activities described with assistance by institutions/activity partners and the outputs/results achieved, which are displayed in the table as follows.

**1** Table 1. The Process/Phases of the Empowerment Method for Officers of Telaga Madirda Tourism Site

Stage	Activity Description	Activity Assistant /Resource Person	Outcome/Result
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I. Awareness	1. Socialization a. The importance of managing tourism potential and zones b. The importance of widening tourist roads c. The importance of innovation in tourism events, tourist attractions, and local wisdom d. The importance of developing the potential of SMEs e. The importance of greenery f. The importance of processing waste from tourism activities 2. FGD Tourism managers with stakeholder. 3. Planting green trees	- Governor of Central Java - Regent of Karanganyar - LH Department Karanganyar Regency - DISPARPORA Karanganyar Regency - MF Team - MF Team resource persons: UGM, Yogyakarta State University, UNIBA Surakarta - The mastermind behind Warseno Slank - Berjo Village Karang Taruna Association - Bengawan Solo River basin	- Growing leadership commitment and enthusiasm for tourism management - APBN assistance funds the development of the Village Innovation Program (PID) - APB road widening assistance - APB village fund assistance Planning a strategy model for the arrangement of facilities and the development of tourist zones - Planning and implementing night camping events and isolation centers for COVID-19 patients - Development of tourism facilities, such as water features, pavilions, public restrooms, and prayer facilities - Udaya village festival at Telaga Madirda - The Melasti ceremony that held routinely at Telaga Madirda by Hindus - Inventory of plant needs and implementation of reforestation (MF Team) - Plans to build a tourist waste processing center (MF Team)
II. Capacity Building	1. Training a. Tourism promotion innovation model and development of local cultural potential b. Souvenir making model c. Model of sorting and processing household waste d. Model of processing tourism waste	- Governor of Central Java - Regent of Karanganyar - LH Department Kab. Karanganyar - DISPARPORA Karanganyar Regency - MF Team - MF Team resource persons: UGM, Yogyakarta State	- Realization of leadership commitment and spirit of tourism management - Development of tourism zones and facilities, such as photo spots, food stalls, kiosks tourism, parking lots, and camping tents - Continuing the night tour camping event - Mutual cooperation between business actors and communities concerned with

	<p>e. Batik craft pattern pattern</p> <p>f. Institutional administration improvement model and partnership</p> <p>2. FGD eco-friendly based tourism management</p> <p>3. Green tree planting</p>	<p>University, UNIBA Surakarta</p> <p>- The mastermind behind Warseno Slank</p> <p>- Berjo Village Karang Taruna Association</p>	<p>eco-based tourism</p> <p>- Cultural village festival at Telaga Madirda attended by cultural activist from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research, and Technology Arif Nur Setiawan</p> <p>- The Solo City modeling agency community travels</p> <p>- The Melasti ceremony is held routinely at Telaga Madirda by Hindus</p> <p>- The afforestation was led by the Governor of Central Java</p> <p>- Construction of a site and procurement of machines for processing tourism and household waste. Assistance from the MF Team and the District Budget Karanganyar</p> <p>- Trial of using a machine to process waste into organic fertilizer</p>
<p>III. Empowerment</p>	<p>1. Implementation of leadership commitments</p> <p>2. Implementation of partnership/community</p> <p>3. Tourism event innovation strategy model</p> <p>4. Evaluation of tourist facilities</p> <p>5. Implementation of on-line-based tourism marketing/promo</p> <p>6. Evaluation of tourism waste processing as organic fertilizer</p>	<p>- Regent of Karanganyar</p> <p>- LH Department Karanganyar Regency</p> <p>- DISPARPORA Karanganyar Regency</p> <p>- Department of Commerce, Labor, Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises, Karanganyar Regency</p> <p>- Disperindakop UMKM Karanganyar Regency</p> <p>- MF Team</p>	<p>- The Maxi Yamaha Day Community, Central Java, DIY, attended a camping for 300 people with guest star artists The Well and Lip Sinc duo singer Jono Joni, and were welcomed by the Regent of Karanganyar</p> <p>- The Melasti ceremony is held regularly at Telaga Madirda by Hindus</p> <p>- Utilization of processed waste fertilizer for farmers</p> <p>- Maintenance of green plants</p> <p>- Security of the Telaga Madirda water source</p> <p>- Cable car procurement plan</p> <p>- Bottled water treatment plan</p> <p>- Night camping tourist attraction models</p> <p>- Involvement of various communities partnership cooperation</p>

Source: Analysis of primary data (modified from Wrihatnolo and Dwidjowijoto 2007: 33)

The table describes that the three steps that proceed through awareness, capacity building, and empowerment, as well as consistency in applying empowerment principles can find models and strategies for empowerment carried out by the managers of the Telaga Madirda tourist attraction, both through various counseling, meetings, and FGDs, both at the district, sub-district, and village levels, followed up with training and practices, such as innovative models for tourism promotion and development of local cultural resource, for creating souvenirs, for arranging and processing household waste, for processing tourism waste, models for patterning batik crafts, as well as a model for improving institutional administration and partnerships by presenting <sup>1</sup> consultants and assistants from various universities and agencies, such as the Karanganyar Regent, Karanganyar Regency Environmental Service, Karanganyar Regency DISPARPORA, Matching Fund Team from UNS, UNDIP, Surakarta University, STIE Widya Gama Lumajang, inviting speakers from UGM, Yogyakarta State University, UNIBA Surakarta, and Ki Dalang Warseno Slank. Through the presence of these parties, several activities and models of tourism development can be implemented as outputs/results of the phasing process, including the growth of <sup>1</sup> leadership commitment and excitement for managing tourism at Telaga Madirda, and also structural communication capability from BUM Desa so that Telaga Madirda receives state budget assistance, Village Innovation Program Development Fund (DPPID), received assistance from widening the road from the Karanganyar Regency APBD, received village budget assistance, prepared a model planning strategy for facilities arrangement and tourism zone development, as well as planning and implementing night camping events and isolation centers for COVID-19 patients.

Through this empowerment phase, the development of tourism facilities has also begun to grow, such as water features, gazebos, public toilets, prayer rooms, utilization of processed waste fertilizers for farmers, maintenance of plants for reforestation, security of Telaga Madirda water sources, plans to procure cable cars, plans for drinking water treatment in packaging, the development of innovative night camping tourist attraction models, as well as the involvement of various communities and partnerships. Various efforts have been made through careful planning and continuing evaluation. There are several future development plans to convince managers to continue to be optimistic about increasing

visitors by taking advantage of the momentum of economic recovery in the COVID-19 post-pandemic era.

## **2. Implementation of Empowerment Models and Strategies**

Empowerment is a way of approaching that must be the standard basis for all public and private agencies, as well as corporates, in carrying out their duties and functions to serve society, as the empowerment results will generate groups of beneficiaries. Based on the research conducted by Mardikanto (2003), three categories of community empowerment beneficiaries have been identified, namely (1) the key category consisting of the society and their families; (2) a determinant category consisting of decision makers regarding community empowerment policies; and (3) a support group, which is other community empowerment person in charge, who directly or indirectly involve in the empowerment; and those who are involved in the empowerment system.

Community empowerment efforts need to involve a strategy so that the application of the empowerment model can improve people's welfare. One strategy that is commonly used in the community empowerment process is mentoring. According to Sumodiningrat (2009: 106), mentoring is an activity that is considered capable to encourage empowerment. For BUM Desa Berjo, researchers need to analyze the implementation of models and strategies that are carried out optimally, both from an institutional standpoint and from a task implementation perspective in managing the Telaga Madirda.

In its execution, empowering through the innovative models and strategies for camping events is supplemented by deploying models for enhancing tourism services and implementing groundbreaking approaches at Telaga Madirda. This is facilitated by establishing mentoring partnerships and engaging in structured consultations with all levels of government for comprehensive tour management. In applying this design, the direct beneficiaries are destination managers, namely BUM Desa and Telaga Madirda tourism operators. Research in the field apart from finding empowerment methods through a phasing process of empowerment that is carried out consistently also found a principle of "commitment" that emerges outside the theory of empowerment. These principles suggested by Najiyati, Asmana, and Suryadiputra (2005: 54), namely the principles of (1) equity, (2) involvement, (3) independence, and (4) continuity. At the execution level, it turns out that the four fundamental basis have not yet been able to achieve maximum empowerment

targets. In fact, this research finds that in addition to dedication from BUM Desa as the manager of the Telaga Madirda tourist attraction and for assistants of various levels, it is also needed "commitment", in this case the commitment of the leaders, especially <sup>1</sup> the Head of Berjo Village. Without the leadership's commitment, whatever will be done in the program and planning through the existing empowerment principles will reduce the effectiveness of implementing the model and strategy for empowering the progress and performance of BUM Desa Berjo so that it becomes less than optimal to achieve the target. Therefore, "commitment" is a novelty finding to complement the theory of the principle of empowerment stated by Najiyati, Asmana, and Suryadiputra (2005: 54). Empowerment model with the main concept of principles and phasing process wrapped with leadership commitment. If the five principles of empowerment, namely (1) equity, (2) involvement, (3) independence, (4) continuity, and (5) leadership commitment can be employed properly through the steps of empowerment, then <sup>1</sup> efforts to implement models and strategies to strengthen BUM Desa Berjo can effectively achieve the goal of boosting visitor numbers at <sup>1</sup> Telaga Madirda amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as during the economic recovery in the after-pandemic period.

<sup>1</sup> Based on the Indonesian Official Dictionary, the definition of commitment itself is an agreement (attachment) to carry out a contract. Meanwhile, Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) viewed commitment as an attitude. According to them, people who have commitment are people who are willing to involve themselves in their organization. This person wants to donate everything inside of him for the benefit of the organization, with the intention that the organization remains in good condition (Muslim 2013: 81). In this study, commitment is constructed based on the description of leadership commitment in the organization. This is because the research location, namely the object to run the empowerment model and strategy, is the manager of Telaga Madirda, which is administratively a cross-organizational work. Therefore, leader commitment in an organization is an identification and representative of a relatively strong involvement in the organization. In a cooperative situation to achieve common goals, a leader's duty is to promote cooperation or strive for people to be willing to work in agreement through a spirit of togetherness.

This suggests that the leader's commitment to empowerment, demonstrated through the adoption of the tourism object management empowerment method, signifies <sup>1</sup> the leader's

willingness, particularly the Head of Berjo Village, to invest additional effort in enhancing empowerment procedures<sup>1</sup> and services through the tourism manager empowerment method. This enables them to fully harness innovation, subsequently enhancing the quality of events and the overall presentation of tourism, thereby expediting the attainment of desired<sup>14</sup> objectives in an effective and efficient manner. In essence, the empowerment process in managing tourism sites falls under the responsibility of the leaders and members of the BUM Desa, along with tourism stakeholders<sup>1</sup> in Berjo Village, so the leadership commitment in this case the Head of Berjo Village as the executor, will generate enthusiasm and loyalty for the chairman and members of BUM Villages and assistants, so that it is expected to increase the number of visitors. A leader's commitment is a high promise given by the leader. A leader will devote himself to attract more visitors and is determined to do it wholeheartly<sup>1</sup> under any circumstances.

The implementation of camping agenda and the advancement of Telaga Madirda will make the appearance of this tourism site more beautiful and attractive to visitors, especially since this lake's water source is still kept clean. The spring is small, but the flow never recedes in the slightest even though there was a long dry season. As a natural tourist destination, this lake is very well known because it was worked on professionally through various display innovation models, so that the charm of the scenery is very beautiful and attractive.<sup>1</sup> In its advancement, Telaga Madirda has been equipped with a number of attractions and additional service, starting from gazebos and photo spots, designed with Telaga Madirda writing as a background. This tourist spot is also one of the favorite places for the bride and groom to take pre-wedding photos. Several sites and camping spots also supported with solar free energy. There is also a small quay that is planned to be used as a port for boats, and according to future plans, this lake will be equipped with a flying fox and cable car. If this really can be applied as a means for display innovation and development of tourist facilities, Telaga Madirda will appeal more tourists, increase their local income, and prosper the people of Berjo Village.

### 3. Obstacle

Community empowerment is an advancement of fundamental basis and a phasing process that is carried out through empowering the internal factors of the community by



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society's organization and businessmen in the Telaga Madirda, meaning they are actually capable to handle the emerging obstacles, by utilizing the potential that exists within BUM officers of Berjo Village and tourism entrepreneurs, through facilitated resources. There is also human resource support from external parties, both as assistants and consultants. In the end, the main goal of empowering tourism site managers is empowering them to analyze and then solve the obstacles based on the capacity through the principles and stages of empowerment and continuously implement various programs that are made jointly and sustainably.

#### D. CONCLUSION

The results of this research of empowerment models and strategies through the principle of phasing approaches that are processed with the assistance of empowerment partners show that the empowerment model implemented through three levels of empowerment, namely awareness, capacity building, and empowerment can take place consistently and effectively resulting in a quality increase in human resources managing BUM Desa, growing leader's commitment and excitement to overseeing the Telaga Madirda destination, fostering structural communication skills from BUM Desa so that they receive government budget assistance for Village Innovation Program Development Funds (DPPID), received assistance from widening the road from the Karanganyar Regency APBD, received assistance from the Village APB, prepared a planning model for the arrangement of facilities and development of tourist zones, as well as the preparation of plans and implementation of night camping events and isolation centers for COVID-19 patients. Regarding studies related to the implementation of empowerment models and strategies, it can be concluded that the courage to implement new activities for tourist for camping and complementing tourism service, as well as the capability to establish partners and utilize community networks as promotional media, can improve the management of tourist destination. Carefully, it is conceptualized that "commitment" is a novelty finding of theory in this study, thus perfecting/complementing the theory of the principle of empowerment suggested by Najiyati, Asmana, and Suryadiputra (2005: 54). Empowerment model with the main concept of principles and phasing process wrapped with leadership commitment. If the five principles of empowerment, namely (1) equity, (2) involvement, (3) independence, (4)

continuity, and (5) leadership commitment can be applied properly through the stages of empowerment, through the steps of empowerment, then efforts to implement models and strategies to strengthen BUM Desa Berjo can effectively achieve the goal of boosting visitor numbers at Telaga Madirda amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as during the economic recovery in the after-pandemic period. Meanwhile, some of the obstacles that occur because of implementing empowerment models and strategies for tourism site managers are more dominantly found as the internal factors in BUM Berjo Village as the manager. Operationally, this can still be overcome by applying the empowerment model consistently. Nonetheless, conflicts were found due to the difference standpoint between BUM Desa officers and businessmen at tourist sites. Researchers provide suggestions to immediately facilitate the interests of these parties to reduce differences in perceptions that sometimes cause frictions between members of the BUM Desa and business actors, so that everyone would support the execution of the programs for the advancement of Telaga Madirda tourism and can increase the excitement of village tourism managers. Hopefully the replacement of the new operational management at BUM Desa Berjo will be able to establish communication between parties to always coordinate to find the best way and remain consistent in managing the Telaga Madirda destination in a professional, advanced, and prosperous way for BUM Desa members, while at the same time improving society's well-being of Berjo Village.

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