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# REVITALIZATION OF TOURISM AWARENESS GROUPS (POKDARWIS) BASED ON DIGITAL COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOP TOURISM VILLAGES IN MADURA

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#### **Abstract:**

Villages in Indonesia, especially in Madura, have the potential to be developed into tourist villages that can become tourist destinations for tourists. For this reason, the role of tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis) is very important because they are the spearhead that connects villages with potential tourists. Pokdarwis must be able to carry out their functions properly so that revitalization becomes a necessity. Of course, the revitalization that is adapted to the current environmental changes is the use of digitalization in every activity, including communication. Therefore, this study aims to: 1) describe the ability of Pokdarwis in utilizing digital communication technology and 2) describe the profile of Pokdarwis in terms of the various elements that support their performance. By using qualitative descriptive research and data analysis using the Miles and Hubberman model, the results of the study indicate that the ability to utilize Pokdarwis digital communication technology as measured by five aspects of ability that reflects digital literacy is still not optimal. Revitalization by providing training or counseling such as digital branding training makes it possible to realize the development of a superior and resilient tourist village

Keywords:

Revitalization, Pokdarwis, Tourism Village, Digital Communication Technology

#### 1. Introduction

Indonesia is famous for its fascinating natural, cultural, historical, and religious tourism for domestic and foreign tourists. Some of the world-famous tourist attractions are the Borobudur temple with the nearby city of Yogyakarta (historical, cultural, educational, and natural tourism), Mount Bromo (nature tourism), the tomb of Wali Songo (religious tourism), etc. Almost every village in Indonesia has tourism potential that can be developed from culture to nature tourism which can be used as a promising business concept. Currently, tourists prefer to travel with rural nature that is still natural and beautiful (Nur, Mariantha, & Mariantha, 2018). By taking a trip to the village, tourists can interact directly with the village community and can see firsthand the socio- cultural activities of the local community. Rural tourism relies more on natural charm and local culture. This of course has consequences for better management of tourist objects, from planning to developing more fascinating tourism so that the village becomes a tourist destination and is known as a tourist village. A tourist village is

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a rural area that has unique and special characteristics that offer an overall atmosphere that reflects the authenticity of the countryside both from socio-economic life, social culture, customs, daily life, has a typical village architecture and spatial structure, or unique economic activities. and attractive and has the potential to develop various components of tourism, such as attractions, food and beverages, and other tourism needs needs (http://www.ampta.ac.id/desa-wisata).

East Java, especially on the island of Madura, has a lot of potential for tourism villages that can be developed. Tourism in Madura is actually no less interesting than other areas outside Madura. There are several tourist areas in the Madura region that have been managed by the private sector and by local government agencies. And in some areas, the tourist attractions are managed independently by the village. For example, in Bangkalan district, there are several tourism objects managed by village communities that have the potential to be developed as natural and religious tourism villages; in Pamekasan district there are three unique villages that have tourist attractions. The villages are Bajang Village in Pakong District and Kertagena Daya Village and Gagah Village in Kadur District Meanwhile in Sumenep district there are two tourism villages that have the potential to be developed (Harun, Diana, & Haris, 2018). The process of forming a village that has the potential to be developed into a tourist village stems from the strong desire of the village community. People who care about their village and are aware of the potential of the village become an added value when the nature of their village is used as a tourist area. Starting from this, the community in several villages that have the potential to become tourist villages formed a group called the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) in the area. Tourist attractions managed by Pokdarwis are relatively new business units and become a challenge for the village concerned to be able to give hope to the village community to be economically independent.

Pokdarwis as a village business institution that is managed by the community and village government in an effort to strengthen the village economy and is formed based on the needs and potential of the village, assumes a fairly heavy duty and responsibility because it must be able to increase tourist visits in the midst of competition between tourist villages and even more so in the future. the current Covid-19 pandemic. The extent to which the existence of Pokdarwis in the Madura area is able to carry out their duties and responsibilities in optimizing the potential of the tourist villages they manage so that they can develop the economy of the community in the tourist village object area is something that stakeholders need to pay attention to. These tasks and responsibilities will be completed properly if the existence of Pokdarwis is revitalized based on mastery of digital communication technology. Pokdarwis revitalization based on digital communication technology needs to be implemented immediately because it is to respond to changes in community behavior due to technological advances. Currently there is a shift in people's behavior patterns where people spend a lot of time surfing the internet and social media. Digital communication technology provides wider opportunities for Pokdarwis to reach local and national markets. This is actually a big opportunity that Pokdarwis must capture to attract them to visit their village through virtual promotion.

Based on this description, the objectives to be achieved from this research are: 1) describe the ability of Pokdarwis in utilizing digital communication technology and 2) describe the profile of Pokdarwis in terms of various elements that support their performance. The profiles of Pokdarwis studied included age, level of formal education, level of non-formal education, length of joining Pokdarwis, age, tourism village products offered, level of motivation, and assessment of the function of digital technology. From here, it is hoped that this can be the

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basis for revitalizing Pokdarwis based on digital communication technology. This study modifies the indicators developed by the Educational Testing Service (Bycio & Allen, 2007) to measure the ability to utilize digital communication technology which includes the level of capacity to access information resources, manage, evaluate, create, and communicate information.

#### 2. Research Method

The research was conducted in tourist villages located in three districts on the island of Madura. The selection of this location was done purposively with the consideration that in addition to having formed Pokdarwis, the three districts also have villages that have the potential to be developed into tourist villages because they have their own uniqueness and are different from one another. Among Pokdarwis and tourist villages, there are several that have received management and technical assistance from various institutions and companies, such as from the local district government, banking industry, and other companies as part of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activities. In addition, among those who were appointed as informants were the Pokdarwis administrators who determined their informants based on the snowball technique.

The types and sources of data used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through field observations, in-depth interviews with informants. Secondary data is obtained from data that is already available in related agencies, articles or literature related to the topic of this research. The data processing and analysis method consisted of a qualitative descriptive analysis with the initial step of checking the validity of the data before it was analyzed. To check the validity of the data, credibility test techniques were used (extension of observation, increasing persistence, triangulation, using reference materials, or conducting member checks), transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The data that is checked for validity is sourced from primary data obtained from informants (in this case there are 4 informants representing each Pokdarwis both from natural and religious tourism villages). While the Pokdarwis as the target sample were 7 groups spread over 3 districts in Madura. Data analysis uses the Miles and Hubberman model, namely through a three-step process starting from data reduction, then data presentation, and finally verification.

#### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Results

The reason for the need to develop a tourist village is due to the following three factors. First, rural areas have natural and cultural potential that are relatively more authentic than urban areas, rural communities still carry out local traditions and cultural rituals (one of which is due to homogeneous population) and a fairly harmonious topography. Second, rural areas have a relatively pristine physical environment or have not been polluted by many types of pollution compared to urban areas. Third, at a certain level, rural areas face relatively slow economic development, so that optimal utilization of the economic, social and cultural potential of local communities is a rational reason for developing rural tourism (Andayani, Martono, & Muhamad, 2017).

However, the development of tourist villages is lacking or even unsuccessful when stakeholders, especially Pokdarwis who are given the mandate, duties, and responsibilities, cannot carry out their roles properly for various reasons, including for reasons of education, lack of training, not having communication hardware (smartphones). , computers/laptops),

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etc. For this reason, it is necessary to revitalize Pokdarwis by first looking at the profile of Pokdarwis from various revitalization sub- variables. The profile picture of the Tourism Village Pokdarwis is shown in the following table

Table 1: Profile of Pokdarwis

Indicator	Lowest	Highest	Average
Age (year)	19	55	37 (young)
Formal education (year)	9	16	13 (high)
Nonformal education (quantity)	1	5	3 (low)
Membership length	1	8	4 (long enough)
Possession of communication tools (quantity	1	2	
The sophistication of the communication tools owned (score)	1	4	
Motivation level	3	5	4 (high)
Assesment of digital communication technology function (score)	6	10	8 (high)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the average education level of Pokdarwis members is 13 years in the high category because this means that they have formal education (from elementary school to college) for 13 years. This is possible because in every district on the island of Madura, there are schools up to university level. Meanwhile, when viewed from non-formal education, it appears that on average Pokdarwis members do not participate in many non-formal education such as training, counseling. Meanwhile, if it is related between non-formal education (training) - communication tools - the sophistication of the communication tools they have with the roles, duties, and responsibilities as Pokdarwis can be said to be quite low so that they are less than optimal in carrying out their roles or duties as Pokdarwis. Whereas on the other hand, if viewed from the motivation possessed by Pokdarwis to carry out the tasks entrusted to them, it is in the high category. That is, they have a very good spirit to be able to carry out their roles and duties as Pokdarwis who are responsible for being able to improve the economy of the tourism village community and popularize their village. This good spirit has a positive correlation with their response to the functions of digital technology which they rate very highly. That is, they view that in the current era of industry 4.0, it is very important to have digital communication technology as a means of promoting their tourist villages and attracting tourists to visit there. This is because digital communication technology has a broad, efficient, practical, and effective coverage for conveying messages to the public.

Meanwhile, if you look at table 1 above, the indicator of the length of Pokdarwis membership varies from 1 year to 8 years, so the average is about 4 years. This shows that they are not bored to devote themselves to Pokdarwis and as shown by this indicator there is a positive correlation with their motivation to join Pokdarwis.

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Table 2: Device Type and Application Usage by Pokdarwis

Device Type and Application Usage By Pokdarwis	Frequency	Percentage
Communication device:		
1. Smart phone	24	0,85
2. Hand phone	4	0,14
3. Laptop and desktop computer	7	25
Application:		
1. Telephone	28	100
2. SMS	27	0,96
3. WhatsApp	21	0,75
4. Social media (facebook, instagram, twitter, etc)	6	0,21

N = 28

Table 2 above describes the types of communication devices and applications used by Pokdarwis. It can be said that 100 percent of Pokdarwis members already have a communication device called a cell phone (HP). Around 85 percent have smart phones (smartphones) while the remaining 25 percent only have regular cellphones. This shows that most Pokdarwis members already know the benefits of having a smart cellphone which has many advantages over ordinary cellphones, including more applications that can be installed on smart cellphones than on ordinary cellphones. While those who have a computer (PC) or laptop are only about 25 percent of the total Pokdarwis members who are used as informants. This shows that for communication purposes they prefer to use HP. According to them, computers are not practical for communication. Members who have computers used for work (processing and analyzing data).

Meanwhile, if you look at the applications used for communication, the most widely used by Pokdarwis are telephone (100 percent) followed by SMS (96 percent) and WhatsApp (75 percent). The phone is the most widely used because it is easy to operate, no need to type. While the use of the SMS application under the phone because according to them the use of SMS is not practical because they have to type. What might be interesting to observe is the use of the WhatsApp (WA) application, which only 75 percent of all Pokdarwis members have smart phones. According to them, WA is almost the same as SMS, which has to be typed but is a little more complicated because there are certain features that they must be able to master when sending documents. While the applications that are rarely used by smart phone owners are social media applications (facebook, twitter, instagram, etc.) which is only about 20 percent of Pokdarwis members. The reason is the operation of this application is the most difficult. In fact, if they know the benefits of social media applications, it is very important to support the smooth implementation of work and friendships when sending documents (photos, videos, and other documents) with a large capacity.

#### 3.2. Discussion

Tourism is one of the sectors driving the regional and national economy that needs to be given more attention by the government and the community in order to develop properly. In Indonesia, the tourism sector is currently experiencing very rapid growth. This can be seen in the increasing number of tourist attractions offered by each region. Each region tries to create

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a unique tourism model that is expected to be able to attract tourists. The tourism sector is one sector that provides promising market opportunities because it can improve the community's economy. Tourism that grows in an area will not only have implications for economic improvement but also the popularity of an area. One concept of tourism development that is quite successful today is related to tourism development that is carried out together including "building with the community" so that tourism development can provide economic, social and cultural benefits to the local community. The objectives of tourism development that involve the community include 1) empowering the community through tourism development, 2) increasing the role and participation of the community in order to obtain economic, social, and cultural benefits from tourism development, 3) providing balanced opportunities for all. community members, both male and female (Munawaroh, 2017).

Based on the reason that the tourism industry has great opportunities, especially in tourist villages, to develop tourism that has a multipler effect on improving the economic welfare of villagers, Pokdarwis revitalization is important to do. Pokdarwis revitalization is an effort to re-vitalize the existence of Pokdarwis which was once vital/existed, but then experienced a decline/degradation of its role. The Pokdarwis revitalization process includes improving knowledge, skills and behavior aspects. The knowledge aspect relates to the ability to understand the use of digital communication technology which includes knowledge of web creation, blogs, etc. While the skill aspect concerns the ability to operate the device, make repairs, etc. Then the behavioral aspect relates to the ethical use of digital communication technology, including ethical ways of communicating on social media and others.

The revitalization of Pokdarwis based on digital communication technology is not something that is only oriented to physical completion (in the sense of having a smartphone communication device, for example) but must also be equipped with an increase in the economy of the community and the introduction of the existing culture. This requires community involvement. The involvement in question is not just participating in supporting the formal aspects (maintaining the safety of tourists, for example) which requires community participation but also non-formal aspects (friendly). In addition, the community involved is not only the community in the environment, but the community in a broad sense (Munawaroh, 2017).

With the support of the control/control mechanism, the revitalization plan must be able to raise strategic issues that arise in the tourist village, both in the form of socio-economic activities/activities as well as the physical character of the village. The design of the tourist village is a directing and controlling device to realize a superior and resilient tourist village. Digital communication is a technological process that reduces text to something that can be easily fragmented, processed, linked, and distributed, making it possible to deliver it through networks, multimedia, collaboration and interactive communication (Kaul, 2012) (Scolari, 2009). On that basis, in this study the author uses the concept of 'digital communication'. The use of digital communication is felt to be closest to the community because every day, every time cannot be separated from digital communication for various purposes. From just friendship through social media (Whats App, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to work matters (email, google meet, zoom, etc.).

The main difference between digital and analog communication technology lies in the ability to condense large amounts of information in small devices that can be easily stored, carried, opened, and exchanged. The digital communication device that is the object of this research is a smart cellular phone (smartphone) and various communication applications that

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can be installed in it using the internet network. This is because Pokdarwis use smart phones more in their daily lives. Meanwhile, when viewed from the distribution of internet users in Indonesia by occupation, it shows that Pokdarwis is a group of workers who are at the bottom in the use of ICT (Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, 2015). Based on age group, where Pokdarwis members are aged around 24-44, around 50 percent of users are in the age group of 19-34 years and almost 30 percent are in the age range of 35-44 years.

Aspects that need to be implemented for the development of tourist villages are aspects of human resource development, aspects of natural resources, aspects of promotion either through information media or word of mouth, aspects of transportation facilities, and institutional aspects, both government, private, and community (Astuti, 2014) (Budiarti, Suwarto, & Muflikhati, 2014). Meanwhile, the emerging social problems related to information technology are the digital divide, which includes not only ownership of digital devices but also the mastery of skills and funds to access information.

The ideals of the village community to turn their village into a tourist village are certainly not without reason. First, the potential possessed is very supportive for the achievement of these goals. The potential for stunning natural beauty that is owned by tourist villages in Madura such as heavy waterfalls, stunning cliffs, beautiful beaches, to tourism on Gili Iyang which is famous as the island with the second best oxygen content in the world, located in Sumenep district. Second, the hospitality of local residents is a big capital for tourism development in the village. Another potential that tourist villages have in Madura is the abundance of agricultural products (in the form of fresh fruits during the harvest season, such as guava, sapodilla, etc.).

These ideals can be realized as long as Pokdarwis and other stakeholders work hard together to carry out various strategic steps for implementing the prepared programs, including evaluating the achievements so far. Based on the evaluation plans and programs are drawn up. Based on the description of the research results above, it is deemed necessary to revitalize Pokdarwis based on digital communication technology.

Generally, Pokdarwis administrators have received training on Sapta Pesona, basic management of tourist villages, development of processed products and services, processing of business permits, and management (marketing) training. Sources of training are usually from relevant agencies in the district and/or provincial governments, as well as from universities. Several stakeholder offices that provide training to tourism village managers include the Department of Culture and Tourism, the Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Cooperatives, the Department of Agriculture and Food Security, the Department of Animal Husbandry, the Office of Communication and Information Technology, and the Department of Industry. Although Pokdarwis have attended training, what needs to be considered is their ability to record and apply the results of the training. The ability to use Pokdarwis digital communication technology is measured through five aspects of ability that reflect digital literacy. The results of this study indicate that the level of ability of respondents to access, create information and evaluate information in the medium category. The distribution of respondents' ability to manage and communicate information is in the high category as presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Ability of Pokdarwis in Utilizing Technology

Variable	Range score	Average	Category
Access of information source	8 – 16	13,60	Enough

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Managing Information	5 – 10	8,91	High
Creating information	4-8	6,67	Enough
Information evaluation	5 – 10	7,90	Enough
Communicating information	6-12	10,95	High

The average ability of Pokdarwis in accessing information is in the medium category. These results indicate that they are quite capable of accessing information resources using applications and digital communication devices. The research of Witteveen, Lie, Goris, & Ingram (2017) showed the same results, so his team developed a digital learning application for farmers based on the field school curriculum in Sierra Leone.

The respondent's ability to manage information is measured by the ability to store and classify information obtained through digital applications. The capacity of farmers to manage information is in the high category so that they are able to find information again when needed (this is supported by their age who is still under 50 years old so that their memory is still good). Under these conditions, they become more competitive in their work and continue to be encouraged to improve their skills (Garrido, Sullivan, & Gordon, 2010).

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The ability of Pokdarwis to create information is in the medium category. This is because most Pokdarwis members have not been able to summarize and process the information that has been obtained to others. They are only able to pass information on to other people or Pokdarwis online groups. Some of them have been able to take photos and record sounds related to tourism village promotions to be distributed to other Pokdarwis members. Their capacity to evaluate information is in the moderate category. Pokdarwis members still need to learn to differentiate between entertainment and business information. In addition, they also need better ability to get feedback or input

The success of village tourism management by Pokdarwis in its implementation is strongly influenced by three main pillars/components, namely:

- 1) The government, through regulations (rule & law), provides capital (funding), and provides assistance (supervision) to pokdarwis.
- 2) Management, through planning, management and monitoring and evaluation.
- 3) The community, through empowerment in Pokdarwis and the willingness of the community to be directly involved in improving it.

Therefore, the development of the Village Economic Institution (LED) through Pokdarwis or other institutions in the village must collaborate with the three main pillars/components above, namely the government, managers and the community actively according to needs (potential for local wisdom) so as to be able to present a climate that can guarantee the achievement of goals. The existence of Pokdarwis itself is able to improve the economy of rural communities, increase Village Original Income (PADes), increase village potential and increase business opportunities for rural communities (Yulistyono, 2017).

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The revitalization that has been carried out by researchers is in the form of digital-based training, including training on Digital Branding and its implementation strategy; web management training and socialization. The result is as shown in the image below

Figure 1: web management socialization

Figure 1 above describes the level of understanding of the respondents towards the socialization activities carried out by the research team in order to revitalize Pokdarwis based on digital communication technology. The results of the analysis show that the level of understanding of the informants towards website management has increased by 35%. This is indicated by the answer "Yes". Before socialization only 0% and after socialization by 35%. In addition, Pokdarwis has also succeeded in creating a website for the tourist village it manages, as shown in the following picture:

% TINGKAT PEMAHAMAN RESPONDEN

Figure 2: one of the tourist village websites



Another result of the revitalization of Pokdarwis based on digital communication technology is that Pokdarwis has succeeded in creating and promoting virtual tour packages, which are served by the tourist villages it manages. This result is as shown in the image below

Figure 3: Promotion of Village Tour Packages by Pokdarwis



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Digital branding is an effort to build the name and image of a brand or product in the digital world. Digital branding is seen as the most effective and efficient way for branding and increasing the potential of village tourism considering that nowadays people in their daily lives cannot escape the grip of sophisticated communication tools (smart phones). The focus of digital branding is more on building close ties between certain tourist villages (as brand owners) and the community (potential tourists) but they don't seem too "sell". Example: presenting a website that is comfortable to use by the whole community.

#### 4. Conclusion

Some things that can be concluded from the results of this study are:

- 1. In order to build and develop tourist villages to become tourist destinations, the revitalization of Pokdarwis based on digital communication technology is a breakthrough that must be done in this current era. Why Pokdarwis? Because this group is the spearhead that connects tourist villages with tourism candidates. Therefore, to increase the role of Pokdarwis there needs to be an effort to revitalize it based on digital communication technology.
- 2. The ability to use Pokdarwis digital communication technology as measured by five aspects of ability that reflect digital literacy is still not optimal. The results of this study indicate that the level of ability of respondents to access, create information and evaluate information is in the medium category so that they still need to improve their ability to utilize digital communication technology through training or counseling.
- 3. Ownership of communication devices and use of applications still needs to be improved by replacing old-school devices that cannot download and store large-capacity applications.

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