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Article

Conservation Of Tendrils In Kepuh Village, Ngawi Regency As An Ecotourism Destination

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ABSTRACT

Tendrils garden is a park located in Kepuh Village, Ngawi Regency. It is called Tendrils garden because in this garden there are many tendril plants. This study aims to determine the conservation of tendrils in Kepuh Village. Data collection was carried out by direct interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted with managers and visitors. Observation was carried out to find out the condition of the Tendrils garden. The data that has been obtained is then analyzed using qualitative descriptive. The results showed that the treatment of tendrils was placed in a bright but shady place, planted with clay, not watered too much, fertilized every 2 weeks, and pruned every 3 weeks. Tendril plants need to be cared for because they have benefits, namely helping to filter toxins in the air and reducing mold. The existence of tendrils park makes a positive contribution to improving the quality of life of the surrounding community, both in terms of the environment and society.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that has abundant natural resources. Natural resources have a fairly important role in human life. Along with the development of the times and the rapid population growth and accompanied by the advancement of science and technology, the demands of human needs are increasing, which causes environmental damage and pollution that leads to environmental damage (Hamidi et al., 2022). This can be overcome by conserving the environment. Conservation is an activity carried out to maintain or preserve various kinds that are considered important for human life, for this reason the community is expected to be able to overcome the above problems by conserving the environment around them based on tourism to improve the economy.

One of the leading tourism in Indonesia is eco-based tourism or commonly called ecotourism. Ecotourism is a sustainable nature-based tourism activity with the main focus being management with an understanding of nature (Suryajaya & Adikampana, 2019).

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Ecotourism is a form or concept of special interest tourism because it can be said to be the opposite of mass or conventional tourism (Aliman, 2019).

In the management of this ecotourism, nature and its environment are the main resources that must be carefully regulated (not consumptive and controlled) so that their usefulness is maintained (Suryajaya & Adikampana, 2019). The elements or characteristics that build ecotourism that have been widely used are nature (nature-based tourism attractions that focus on pristine ecosystems), education (there are things that can be taken or learned) and sustainable (there is planning and management to realize sustainability) (Hafizhan, 2022). The development of ecotourism in Indonesia itself has been regulated and determined by the central government with the issuance of the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 33 of 2009 concerning Guidelines for Ecotourism Development in the Regions. In general, the products of this ecotourism include potential, attractiveness, facilities and accessibility (Suryajaya & Adikampana, 2019).

The application of this ecotourism concept is usually carried out in areas with abundant natural resources or rich landscapes such as villages or suburban areas (Ramdani Harahap et al., 2021). The implementation of the ecotourism concept focuses on how to manage an object as best as possible and provide education or understanding so that damage or pollution does not occur, both in environmental, social and cultural aspects of the local area. In its development, community involvement and participation is one of the keys to the success of this ecotourism activity (Modestus Ziku, 2015). Ecotourism can provide many benefits, such as funding sources for conservation areas, protection of conservation areas, alternative sources of livelihood for local communities, options for promoting conservation and encouragement of conservation efforts in particular. Thus, ecotourism is very appropriately empowered in maintaining the integrity and authenticity of the ecosystem in a natural environment (Arida, S.2017).

The many benefits of ecotourism have made several regions interested in developing their regional potential as ecotourism, one of which is in Ngawi Regency. Ngawi Regency is a Regency located in East Java Province. Ngawi Regency has a lot of potential that can be developed and makes the sector one of the driving sectors of the economy in Ngawi Regency. One of the potentials that can be used as a driver of the economy in Ngawi Regency is the tourism sector. Ngawi Regency also has a diversity of tourism spread across several sub-districts in Ngawi Regency, tourism is in the form of natural tourism, historical heritage tourism, religion, culture, special foods and cindramata. (Bafadhal, 2018). Ecotourism does not demand the availability of modern, luxurious or excessive accommodation facilities. Everything is adjusted to the conditions and ecosystems that exist in nature. The implementation is also simple, which is the selling point in ecotourism, namely the authenticity of the environment, fauna and flora, the maintenance of traditional cultural arts of the community, the creation of tranquility and the creation of a balance between human life and nature completely (Yoeti, 2016).

Interesting conditions in Kepuh Village RT. 02 RW. 05, Gerih District, Ngawi Regency when the community began to try to manage tendril plants which were initially abandoned into ecotourism areas. The selection of the ecotourism concept for the Kepuh Village Area is because the concept of ecotourism has the characteristic of prioritizing conservation in tendrils. Not only tendrils can be used as photo spots or just to see tendrils that have been varied, but this tourist spot also presents several games such as swimming pools, archery, horseback riding and so on, which visitors can enjoy while on this tour. This is what attracts a lot of attention from tourists and becomes a place for tourism studies for elementary school students and others (Kuncoro, 2019).

With the implementation of ecotourism activities, biodiversity conservation can be maintained because activities are supported and also environmentally friendly in addition to

helping to improve the welfare of local residents (Modestus Ziku, 2015). In the end, ecotourism has a positive impact on the preservation of local culture, local wisdom, and the environment (Baskoro, 2017). The tendril tourism in this village is preserved by Kepuh Village which of course is inseparable from the help of the surrounding community and also visitors, it is recommended to maintain the cleanliness of tourist attractions and its surroundings. This study aims to determine the preservation of tendril plants in Kepuh Village, Ngawi Regency.

METHODS

This research is a type of qualitative research with a research design in the form of a literature study, where the data collection does not refer to existing theories, but focuses on facts obtained in the field. Thus, data analysis is carried out objectively based on these facts, which can then be developed into a hypothesis or theory. This research was carried out in October-December 2022 at Tendrils garden, Kepuh Village, Gerih District, Ngawi Regency. Data collection was carried out by interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted with managers and visitors. Interviews with managers to obtain data regarding the Tendrils garden management system and interviews with visitors to find out visitors' perceptions of Tendrils garden. Observations were carried out to determine the condition of Tendrils garden. Data analysis according to Miles and Hubermen.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tendrils garden is one of the tourist attractions located in Kepuh Village. More precisely, it is located in Kepuh RT Village. 02 RW. 05 Gerih District, Ngawi Regency. People usually call it Tendrils garden because in this location there are many tendril plants that have been arranged and shaped very beautifully so that they become the icon of this tourist attraction (Figure 1.). This Tendrils garden was built on land owned by KH. Sholikul Hadi (familiarly called Abah Sholi), who is also the caretaker of the Ash Sholikiyah Islamic Boarding School which is adjacent to the Tendrils garden. Its construction began in 2015. Now, Tendrils garden has been widely known by the community. Even on holidays, many visitors from outside the city come to this Tendrils garden.

Figure 1. Tendril Plants

This Tendrils garden was built so that the potential of the region can develop properly and can lift the economy of the surrounding community. The management of the Tendrils garden is carried out by students from KH. Sholikul Hadi and the community around Tendrils garden. The things behind the development of Tendrils garden ecotourism are that at the beginning of the construction of Tendrils garden, the gate was less attractive, but when KH.

Sholikul Hadi traveled to Surabaya he stayed at the hotel where President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was interested in the tendrils on the walls of the hotel, so he asked for the stems of the tendrils to be used as decorations at the gate of the Tendrils garden which is now a tourist attraction that is in demand by many visitors. The impact of the development of Tendrils garden for the community in Kepuh Village, Gerih District, Ngawi Regency is that it can make Tendrils garden an affordable entertainment tourist attraction to relieve fatigue and as a business opportunity to improve the economy.

The tendrils (Cucurbitaceae) are a spiral-shaped part of the plant that has the ability to entangle the objects it touches, the tendrils function as a support for the plant so that it can go up. Tendrils come from modifications of plant organs such as stems and leaves. Tendrils can be found in several families of plants, namely, Fabaceae, namely ercis beans (Pisumsativum), Vitaceae, namely grapes (Vitis vinifera), Cucurbitaceae pumpkin (Cucurbita moschata), Passifloraceae passion fruit (Passiflora edulis) and Bignoniaceae (Sousa-Baena et al., 2018).

Based on NASA research, this tendril plants can help filter toxins in the air and reduce mold. In addition, the tendrils also have an interesting shape like a hanging rope. This plant has many benefits as an ornamental plant, environmental cooler, and as a medicinal plant to prevent poisoning, reduce swelling, and anesthetic drugs.

The management of tendrils is generally by placing them in a bright but shady place, planted with clay, not too much watered, fertilized every 2 weeks, pruning tendrils including hanging tendrils and earthen tendrils/worms. The two tendrils are climbing tendrils but because they are not attached to the fence, they turn into hanging tendrils or worm tendrils that cannot produce fruit. So the two tendrils are only removed/pruned regularly. This pruning was done 3 times. The first pruning is done when the plant has grown to 6-9 books (5-6 months old after planting), prune at a height of 25-30 cm from the ground level (above 2 books that have been firmly attached to the tajar). The second pruning is done when the plant has grown to 7-9 books (±12 months), that is, when the books do not produce fruit branches. The third pruning is done when the plant is 24 months old (plant height ±2.5 m), so that a pepper plant skeleton will be formed that has many productive branches/fruit branches.

Supporting facilities in the Tendrils garden such as swimming pools, fish therapy consisting of pangolin fish, complete playgrounds such as swings, Seesaws, prosotan and so on, adequate mosques, bathrooms, several plants planted neatly such as green sawfly trees and manila sawfly trees planted facing different leaf colors so that they can be used as photo spots.

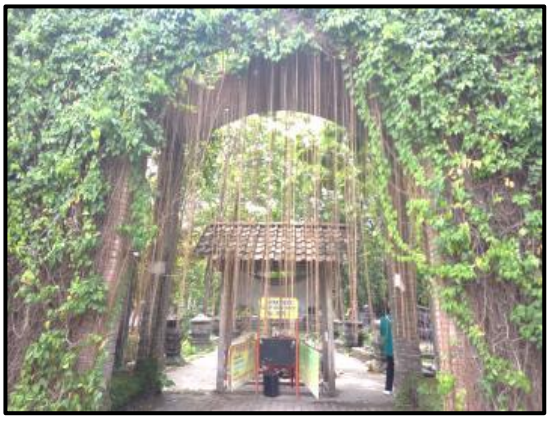

Figure 2. Entrance to the Tendrils garden

The potential for biodiversity is an attraction that can be used in the implementation of ecotourism activities. The potential that Tendrils garden has is that there are many facilities such as a swimming pool which is drained every day and the pool water has no additional chlorine, every Saturday and Sunday there are horseback riding and archery rides around the

front yard of Tendrils garden, also providing various food shops tourism activities of Ngawi Regency are also supported by the existence of culinary and souvenirs typical of Ngawi Regency. The potential of this Tendrils garden can be an attraction for tourists to travel there.

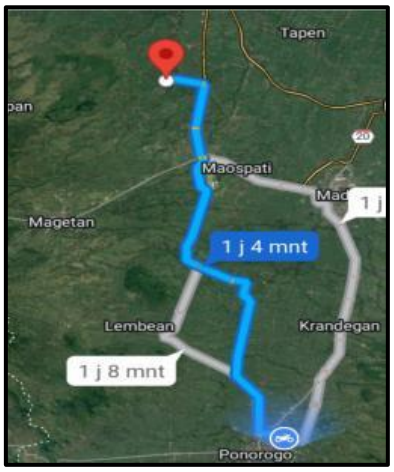

Figure 3. Access to Tendrils garden

Access to the location of the Tendrils Park from the Ponorogo area is through the Ponorogo-Madiun Highway to the Madiun-Maospati Highway then through the Ngawi-Maospati Highway until it reaches the destination of the tendril plants observation, namely Kepuh Village.

Figure 4. Entrance Counter of Tendrils garden

To enjoy the beauty of Tendrils garden and the facilities in it such as swimming pools, fish therapy pools, and children's playgrounds, visitors are required to buy tickets at the counter near the entrance of Tendrils garden for Rp 5,000 and a parking fee per vehicle of Rp 2000.

Figure 5. Equestrian Rides

The cost of horse rides is charged at a rate of Rp 20,000 for two rounds. In this horseback riding accompanied by officers. Safety for horsemen is inadequate because they only wear protective vests and helmets. Meanwhile, according to Nurgraha, B A and Syamsudin Raidi, the safety attributes of the horsemen used should be complete such as helmets, protective vests, boots, hand and foot protection. Meanwhile, horse equipment is in accordance with standards such as horse bases and saddles, harnesses and whips (Nurgraha, B A, 2022).

Figure 6. Fish Therapy Pond

There are also facilities that visitors can enjoy, namely fish therapy. This fish therapy is free of charge and visitors do not need to queue for therapy because the pond provided has 3 fish ponds that are quite spacious. The type of fish used for therapy is tilapia mangut. Fish therapy has many benefits especially to smooth, clean the dead skin on the toes, improve blood circulation, remove scars, calm the mind, reduce body fat, and make the leg muscles more comfortable.Not only that, this treatment can also be used as a simple therapy that is effective to remove dirt on the skin of the feet. In addition, for the health of the body and for visitors who want to relax while waiting for their children to finish swimming or others for body health and for visitors who want to relax while waiting for their children to finish swimming or others (Alam et al., 2023), the maintenance of fish therapy ponds is by draining the water and brushing the walls of the pond.

The response from visitors to Tendrils garden is quite good because the entrance ticket price is very affordable and the facilities are adequate so that they are satisfied on holiday there. However, there is no accommodation to stay at if you want to take a long holiday, so visitors cannot enjoy their holiday for too long. This could be an opportunity for local communities to build accommodation as a business opportunity for them. Apart from that, the attraction of

Tendrils garden can attract tourists so that it can increase people's income through providing services such as lodging, food and local products. Another function of the tendrils garden for the local community is that they can volunteer as spokespeople in explaining how to conserve tendril plants there because by educating visitors about the importance of environmental conservation, the tendrils garden helps preserve biodiversity and the local ecosystem. Apart from that, the community can also be involved in managing and maintaining the Tendrils garden. Tendrils garden can provide space for cultural, artistic and recreational activities, increase tourist attraction and strengthen community identity so that the culture in Ngawi can be famous internationally. By integrating these elements, Tendrils garden not only becomes a tourist destination, but also contributes to the economic and environmental displacement of local communities.

How to manage the Tendrils garden in the park there are swimming pool facilities which have a depth of 0.5 m, 1 m, 1.5 m and 2 m, in the maintenance of the pond which has a depth of 0.5 m and 1 m is drained every day while those with a depth of 1.5 m and 2 m are drained every 3 days. There is also a fish therapy facility where the water is changed once a week, and there are bathroom facilities that are cleaned every Friday and the garden is swept daily by the students. The mosque facilities are cleaned every day because they are used by the students to recite and pray. The uniqueness here is that after the adhan will usually chant praises, but the students will chant their memorization then iqamah.

Conservation management of tendrils such as once a week is pruned and tidied up, each location there is a tendril plants that can be used as a photo spot. In addition, there are several plants such as guava, ketapang trees, cocoa trees, teak trees that are preserved by grafting.

The management of the Tendrils garden itself wants to develop tendrils to make it an ecotourism and preserve the tendrils so that they do not die.The Tendrils Garden at Kepuh Village has high ecological value, serving as a natural air filter that helps reduce pollution as well as supporting biodiversity with the use of local plants. Maintenance of the park is done without chemicals, including the water in the swimming pool and fish therapy ponds which are chlorine-free, thus maintaining water quality and the natural ecosystem. In addition to recreation, the park contributes to ecotourism by providing environmental education for visitors, strengthening awareness of the importance of nature conservation.

This is in accordance with Dowling's expression which states that ecotourism can be seen based on its relationship with 5 core elements, namely being ecologically sustainable, natural, benefiting the local community, the environment is educational, and creating tourist satisfaction (Seliari & Ikaputra, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the preservation of tendril plants in Kepuh Village, Ngawi Regency, East Java. By transforming an abandoned area into an ecotourism site, the community has successfully revitalized the local environment and economy. The Tendrils Garden, as it is known, offers a unique blend of natural beauty, recreational activities, and cultural experiences. The ecotourism approach adopted by the community has proven to be effective in conserving the tendril plants while providing sustainable benefits. The garden's management practices, including regular maintenance, pruning, and the use of natural methods, contribute to the preservation of the local ecosystem. The study highlights the positive impact of ecotourism on the local community, including economic opportunities, increased awareness of environmental conservation, and the promotion of local culture. By attracting visitors and providing educational experiences, the Tendrils Garden has become a valuable asset to the region. However, challenges remain, such as the need for improved infrastructure and visitor management. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the ecotourism initiative, it is crucial to

continue to involve the local community in decision-making processes and to seek support from government agencies and private sector partners.

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