

Strategy for developing the potential of palm sugar in Malati village as a tourism destination in Naringgul district, Cianjur regency

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ABSTRACT

Malati Village, located in Naringgul District, Cianjur Regency, possesses significant local economic potential through its sugar palm production. This commodity serves as the main livelihood for most residents; however, its management remains suboptimal due to limited firewood availability, the use of traditional tools, and a lack of product promotion. The study focuses on assessing current realities and outlining strategic steps for advancing sugar palm as a key local product, employing the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach in the process. The process involved the Village Head and sugar palm artisans as key participants in reflection and action-planning activities. Data were obtained through on-site observations, detailed interviews, and documentation carried out collaboratively with participants. The results indicate that sugar palm processing in Malati Village continues to rely on traditional techniques, beginning with sap collection and ending with manual molding. Despite its simplicity, the process holds considerable economic and cultural value for the community. Through the PAR stages, reflective discussions were conducted to determine development initiatives, including capacity-building for artisans, improvements in production methods, and product promotion through visual documentation facilitated by the researcher. Collaboration between the village government and sugar palm artisans through a participatory approach produced development strategies that are contextual, sustainable, and rooted in local wisdom.

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ABSTRAK

Desa Malati di Kecamatan Naringgul, Kabupaten Cianjur, memiliki potensi ekonomi lokal yang menonjol melalui produksi gula aren. Komoditas ini merupakan mata pencaharian utama bagi mayoritas warga, tetapi pengelolaannya masih belum maksimal akibat keterbatasan ketersediaan kayu bakar, penggunaan peralatan yang masih sederhana, serta kurangnya upaya promosi. Kajian ini bertujuan mengidentifikasi kondisi aktual dan merumuskan strategi pengembangan gula aren sebagai produk lokal unggulan dengan memanfaatkan pendekatan Participatory Action Research sebagai dasar pelaksanaannya. Kegiatan dilakukan dengan melibatkan Kepala Desa dan para pengrajin gula aren sebagai aktor utama dalam proses refleksi dan perencanaan aksi. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi lapangan, wawancara mendalam, serta dokumentasi kegiatan partisipatif. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa proses pembuatan gula aren di Desa Malati masih dilakukan secara tradisional, mulai dari penyadapan nira hingga pencetakan manual. Meskipun sederhana, aktivitas ini memiliki nilai ekonomi dan budaya yang tinggi bagi masyarakat. Melalui tahapan PAR, dilakukan diskusi reflektif untuk menentukan langkah pengembangan, meliputi peningkatan kapasitas pengrajin, perbaikan proses produksi, serta promosi produk lokal melalui dokumentasi visual yang difasilitasi oleh peneliti. Kolaborasi antara

pemerintah desa dan pengrajin melalui pendekatan partisipatif mampu menciptakan strategi pengembangan yang kontekstual, berkelanjutan, dan berbasis kearifan lokal.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism villages represent an innovative rural development approach that optimizes natural, social, and cultural resources as tourism attractions to improve the quality of life of local communities. The development of tourism villages has been shown to generate significant social and economic benefits by encouraging changes in community perspectives and behaviors toward the sustainable management of local resources (Jazilatur, 2024).

Putra (2019) emphasized that a community-based agrotourism approach is an effective strategy for integrating educational, economic, and recreational components within an inclusive tourism village development framework. Similarly, (Mayasari, 2022) argued that tourism village development plays a crucial role in improving rural livelihoods by promoting innovations based on local resource potential. One form of tourism village development is agrotourism, which integrates educational, economic, and recreational elements (Andari, 2021; Agrotourism extends beyond recreational activities by promoting environmental conservation, enhancing community capacity, and strengthening local wisdom (Budhi et al., 2020; Rahmiati et al., 2023).

Mulyadi (2023) argued that community-based tourism villages supported by local entrepreneurship can enhance regional economic competitiveness through the establishment of independent local institutions. Likewise, (Satyo et al., 2024) found that fostering entrepreneurial capacities among local business actors based on local wisdom is a key factor in ensuring the long-term sustainability of tourism villages. Malati Village, located in Naringgul District, Cianjur Regency, has considerable potential to be developed as a tourism destination that highlights local agricultural products, particularly palm sugar. According to the 2024 village government data, approximately 75% of Malati Village residents depend on palm sugar production as their primary livelihood. This activity serves as the community's main source of income and reflects substantial local economic potential that could be further developed into an educational tourism attraction. However, this potential has not yet been fully utilized due to the absence of an integrated management system and the limited participation of local communities in tourism activities (Agung et al., 2025; Mirajani et al., 2024). One example is the *Pasar Leuweung* program initiated by the village government, which was eventually discontinued because of inadequate supporting facilities and weak coordination among community members.

Similar conditions have also been observed in several tourism villages across Indonesia, where community participation and institutional sustainability remain major challenges (Nina, 2023). Penelitian (Fitria et al., 2023) demonstrated that the effectiveness of tourism village development is closely associated with the implementation of the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) approach, which positions local communities as the primary actors in tourism management. Furthermore, (Elok et al., 2024) explained that policy strategies implemented through Village-Owned Enterprises (*Badan Usaha Milik Desa* or BUMDes) can strengthen tourism governance, expand access to financial resources, and increase community participation in local tourism development. Other studies have similarly emphasized the importance of cross-sector collaboration among local communities, government agencies, and local institutions in establishing sustainable tourism villages (Agung & Satyo, 2025). Community empowerment through training, improved access to information, and supportive government policies can enhance rural economic independence while fostering a stronger sense of ownership toward tourism development initiatives.

Moreover, agricultural product-based tourism programs in several regions frequently encounter challenges due to inadequate planning, limited promotional activities, and insufficient community participation in tourism management (Andari, 2021). A similar situation occurred in Malati Village, where the *Pasar Leuweung* initiative was discontinued because of limited infrastructure and weak community coordination. Despite possessing strong local economic potential through palm sugar production as the primary source of household income, this resource has not yet been developed into a productive and educational tourism attraction.

This study adopts a community-based empowerment approach to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how local resources can be developed into tourism attractions that contribute to improving rural livelihoods (Sari et al., 2022). Specifically, this research seeks to develop the local potential of Malati Village as a model for educational agrotourism based on agricultural products that can be replicated in other rural areas.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method to develop a community-based strategy for managing local potential in Malati Village (Haryono & Inayah, 2025). PAR was selected because it facilitates the active involvement of local communities in identifying local potential, reflecting on existing challenges, and formulating development strategies for agricultural product-based tourism. In this study, community members served not only as sources of information but also as collaborative partners in developing educational tourism centered on palm sugar production.

The use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) is appropriate because it enables community members to actively participate throughout both the research process and local development initiatives. According to (Macdonald, 2012), PAR is a participatory, collaborative, and action-oriented research approach that promotes social change through continuous cycles of inquiry, reflection, and action. Similarly, (Liebenberg et al., 2020) emphasized that PAR positions community members as active collaborators throughout the entire research process, including problem identification, critical reflection, data analysis, and the formulation of development strategies.

The research was conducted through several sequential stages. The first stage involved problem identification through field observations, interviews with palm sugar producers and village officials, and documentation of existing production activities and tourism potential. The second stage consisted of participatory reflection sessions with community members to identify the challenges and opportunities associated with developing palm sugar as an educational tourism attraction. The third stage focused on action planning through collaborative discussions regarding promotional strategies, capacity building for palm sugar producers, and the development of palm sugar-based tourism initiatives. The final stage involved a preliminary evaluation of community and village government responses to the proposed development strategies. All stages were implemented collaboratively to ensure that the resulting tourism development strategies reflected the actual conditions, needs, and aspirations of the Malati Village community.

Study Area and Research Participants

This study was conducted in Malati Village, Naringgul District, Cianjur Regency, West Java, Indonesia (figure 1). The research site was selected because Malati Village possesses significant potential in palm sugar production, which serves as the primary source of livelihood for approximately 75% of its residents. The study participants included village officials, palm sugar producer groups, local youth, representatives of the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes), and community leaders who were directly involved in the village's economic and social activities.

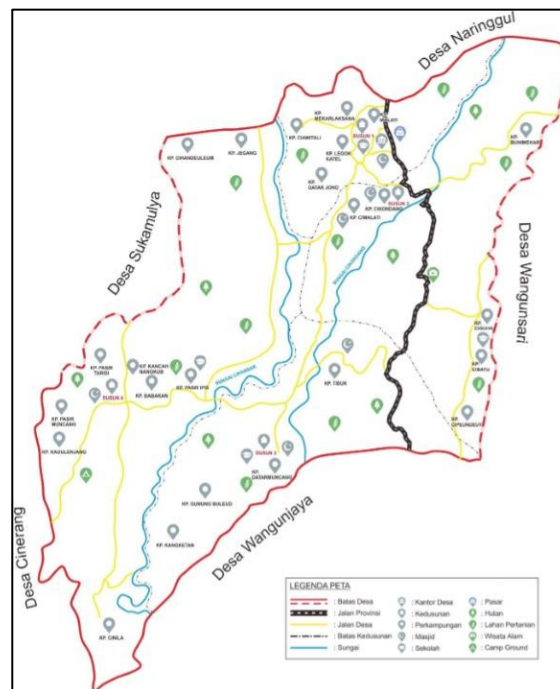


Figure 1. Location Map of Malati Village, Naringgul District, Cianjur Regency, West Java, Indonesia

Research Approach

This study employed the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach to actively engage the local community in the development of Malati Village's palm sugar potential. The research was conducted through field observations, interviews with village officials and palm sugar producers, and participatory discussions to identify the village's potential, existing challenges, and opportunities for developing palm sugar-based educational tourism. Through this process, community members and the village government collaboratively formulated development strategies that were tailored to local conditions and community needs (Sitepu et al., 2021). Data were collected using three primary techniques: field observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Field observations were undertaken to directly examine palm sugar production activities as well as the social and economic conditions of the local community. In-depth interviews were conducted with the village head, village

officials, palm sugar producers, and local youth to explore their perspectives on local potential, existing constraints, and opportunities for developing tourism based on local resources (Huda, 2024). In addition, documentary evidence served as a secondary data source, including village profiles, photographs of community activities, and archival records of previous development initiatives, such as the *Pasar Leuweung* program implemented by the village government.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data reduction stage, the collected information was organized, selected, and summarized according to the objectives of the study. The data were subsequently presented in narrative and tabular forms to facilitate interpretation and analysis. The final stage involved drawing and verifying conclusions through a process of critical reflection on the research findings to develop participatory and sustainable tourism development strategies.

To enhance the credibility of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from palm sugar producers, community members, and village officials regarding palm sugar production, the level of community participation, and the development of educational tourism initiatives. According to (Vera Nurfajriani *et al.*, 2024), source triangulation involves cross-checking information from multiple sources to improve the credibility and trustworthiness of research data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Malati Village Profile and Existing Conditions

Administratively, Malati Village is located in Naringgul District, Cianjur Regency, West Java, Indonesia. The village was established in 1984 following its separation from Naringgul Village. Geographically, Malati Village covers an area of approximately 1,240 hectares, consisting of rice fields, plantations, residential land, and forest areas. It is bordered by Naringgul Village to the north, Wangunjaya Village to the south, Cinerang and Sukamulya Villages to the west, and Wangunsari Village to the east. The village is characterized by a hilly topography that supports the agricultural activities of the local community. As of 2025, Malati Village had a population of 3,837 residents comprising 1,259 households, with the majority of the population employed in the agricultural and plantation sectors.



Figure 2. Geographic Conditions and Landscape of Malati Village

As illustrated in Figure 2, Malati Village is characterized by a landscape of rolling hills and fertile valleys. These geographical features play a significant role in shaping the village's economic activities and the livelihoods of its residents. The hilly terrain is less suitable for intensive vegetable cultivation, leading local communities to utilize naturally growing sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*) trees surrounding their settlements. This geographical setting has influenced the community's dependence on natural resources, particularly palm sugar production, as their primary source of livelihood.

The village's leading agricultural commodities are rice and palm sugar, with sap tapping and palm sugar processing representing the main sources of household income. In addition to its agricultural potential, Malati Village possesses valuable cultural assets, including the traditional martial art *Pencak Silat Sinar Raga Kencana*, as well as natural tourism attractions such as Mount Pabeasan and the surrounding pine forest, which are currently managed on a limited scale by the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes).

Overall, Malati Village is classified as a self-sufficient village with an agriculture-based typology and is currently undergoing further development. Educational facilities include four elementary schools, two junior high schools, and four early childhood education centers (kindergartens). Public facilities comprise the village office, a traditional village market, and fifteen sports facilities. The village is supported by approximately 9.5 km of paved roads that provide access to district-level transportation networks. Social conditions are generally stable,

supported by thirty-three neighborhood security posts (*pos kamling*) and the Community Empowerment Institution (*Lembaga Pemberdayaan Masyarakat—LPM*). With its strong agricultural character and abundant natural resources, particularly palm sugar production, Malati Village has considerable potential to be developed as an educational agrotourism destination. Nevertheless, limited community participation and inadequate tourism infrastructure remain major challenges that require participatory and sustainable development strategies.

Local Economic Potential: Palm Sugar as the Village's Leading Commodity

Based on interviews with a village official, palm sugar production serves as the primary driver of the local economy in Malati Village. The village's geographical characteristics, dominated by hills and fertile valleys, have encouraged residents to utilize naturally growing sugar palm trees rather than engage in intensive vegetable cultivation. This natural advantage has made palm sugar production not only the principal source of household income but also one of the village's most valuable local resources with strong potential for tourism development.



Figure 3. Traditional Palm Sugar Production Activities as the Local Economic Potential of Malati Village

The observations presented in Figure 3 indicate that palm sugar production in Malati Village is still carried out using traditional methods, relying on firewood as the primary fuel source and simple production equipment. These production activities not only generate economic value but also reflect the community's indigenous knowledge and cultural traditions that have been passed down through generations. Nevertheless, palm sugar producers continue to face several production constraints, particularly the limited availability of firewood and the use of basic production facilities. One of the producers explained: "*When firewood becomes difficult to obtain, palm sugar production also declines.*" (Informant B, Palm Sugar Producer, 2025). These findings suggest that the development of palm sugar-based educational tourism requires not only the promotion of local products but also greater support for sustainable production practices and natural resource management. Strengthening the sustainability of palm sugar production is essential to ensure the long-term viability of educational tourism initiatives while maintaining the economic benefits for local communities. Previous studies have shown that transforming local agricultural commodities into educational tourism attractions can increase product value while expanding economic opportunities for rural communities (Rianto, 2024). From a sustainable tourism perspective, however, the development of local resources should balance economic, social, and environmental dimensions to ensure long-term sustainability. Accordingly, the development of palm sugar as a tourism attraction should not focus solely on increasing community income but should also consider social well-being and environmental conservation (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006). Similarly, Restrepo (Restrepo Rico & Peterek, 2024) argued that sustainable tourism development must balance economic, social, and environmental benefits, while (Ramaano, 2025) emphasized that local resources can serve as the foundation for rural tourism development when they are managed sustainably.

Field documentation presented in Figure 4 shows that sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*) trees grow naturally across the hilly landscape of Malati Village, making the primary raw material for palm sugar production readily available to local communities. The abundance of sugar palm trees highlights the village's significant potential for developing value-added products based on local natural resources. Beyond their economic importance, sugar palm trees also provide ecological benefits by contributing to environmental conservation and maintaining ecosystem stability in hilly areas. Their continued preservation represents an important asset for rural tourism development, as the sustainability of natural resources is a fundamental principle of sustainable tourism development (Yanan et

al., 2024) This finding is supported by the statement of a village official: *"Most people in this village depend on palm sugar production as their primary source of income."* (Informant A, Village Official, 2025). The consistency between the observational findings, interview data, and field documentation confirms that palm sugar is a key economic commodity supporting the livelihoods of the Malati Village community. These findings indicate that the village possesses a strong resource base that can be further developed into an educational tourism attraction. Previous studies have suggested that local commodities generate greater economic benefits when transformed into value-added products and supported by a distinctive village identity as a tourism destination (Rahmat et al., 2025). Similarly, (Sutresna et al., 2019), mphasized that local communities play a fundamental role in creating authentic tourism attractions, while (Sapkota et al., 2024) argued that the effective utilization of local resources strengthens community participation in community-based tourism development.



Figure 4. Sugar Palm Trees as the Primary Raw Material for Palm Sugar Production in Malati Village

Challenges in Developing Local Potential

The findings from field observations indicate that the development of palm sugar potential in Malati Village continues to face several challenges, particularly in terms of community participation and production management. Many community members remain passive and tend to wait for direction from the village government before becoming involved in local economic or tourism development initiatives. This observation is supported by an interview with a village official, who explained that residents are generally willing to participate only after witnessing tangible evidence of success achieved by others: *"People usually get involved once they can see tangible results. If the outcomes are still uncertain, they tend to hesitate to participate."* (Informant A, Village Official, 2025). These findings suggest that community participation remains largely reactive rather than being driven by collective local initiative. Such a pattern may hinder the long-term development of community-based tourism, as active community involvement is widely recognized as a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable tourism development. In the context of Community-Based Tourism (CBT), local communities are expected to play a central role not only as beneficiaries but also as decision-makers and active managers of tourism initiatives. Consequently, limited community participation may undermine the sustainability of tourism development because community engagement is considered one of the key determinants of successful and sustainable tourism development (Fong & Lo, 2015).



Figure 5. Limited Household-Scale Facilities for Palm Sugar Production

The field documentation presented in Figure 5 shows that palm sugar production in Malati Village continues to rely on basic facilities and traditional production equipment. The use of firewood as the primary fuel source, open-air production spaces, and manual processing tools limits production efficiency and the community's overall production capacity. One of the palm sugar producers stated: *"If we had better production facilities and more complete equipment, we could produce much more palm sugar."* (Informant B, Palm Sugar Producer, 2025). The consistency between the observational findings, interview data, and field documentation indicates that inadequate production facilities remain one of the primary constraints to the development of the palm sugar industry in Malati Village. These findings suggest that improving production infrastructure and providing appropriate processing equipment should be considered strategic priorities to enhance productivity and support the long-term development of palm sugar-based educational tourism.



Figure 6. Traditional Palm Sugar Production Workspace in Malati Village

The observations presented in Figure 6 indicate that most palm sugar producers continue to carry out production activities in household kitchens with limited space and inadequate ventilation. These conditions reduce the efficiency of the sap boiling process and may pose health risks due to prolonged exposure to smoke from firewood combustion. In addition to production-related constraints, the interview findings revealed that local institutions, particularly the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) and the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), have not yet played an optimal role in promoting palm sugar-based tourism development. At present, BUMDes remains primarily focused on basic financial services, while Pokdarwis has yet to establish structured programs for the development of educational tourism. As one village official explained: *"At the moment, BUMDes is still focused on savings and loan services, and there are no specific programs for palm sugar tourism."* (Informant C, Village Official, 2025). These findings indicate that the development of Malati Village's palm sugar potential requires not only improvements in production capacity but also the strengthening of local institutions and sustained community participation. Effective institutional capacity is essential because sustainable tourism management depends on the integration of economic, social, and environmental dimensions through collaboration among multiple stakeholders (M. Ghoochani *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, from the perspective of Participatory Action Research (PAR), continuous facilitation, collaborative reflection, and community engagement are fundamental to fostering collective awareness and strengthening local capacity in managing the village's tourism potential.

Strategies for Developing the Palm Sugar Potential

The initial stage of developing the palm sugar potential in Malati Village was carried out using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, involving the Village Head and palm sugar producers as the principal partners in identifying local challenges and formulating development strategies. The activities presented in Figure 7 illustrate the direct engagement of the researcher, the Village Head, and palm sugar producers during field activities. This process represents the implementation of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, which emphasizes collaboration and the active participation of all stakeholders in understanding the actual conditions of palm sugar production. Field observations and participatory discussions revealed that palm sugar production remains a traditional practice and continues to represent an essential component of the economic identity of the Malati Village community. The interactions documented in Figure 7 demonstrate a genuine form of participation characterized by open and informal collaboration. Rather than acting solely as an observer, the researcher participated as a collaborative partner in understanding local conditions and jointly planning strategies for developing the village's palm sugar potential. This reflects the fundamental principles of PAR, which promote collaborative relationships and shared awareness between researchers and community members to facilitate

context-specific and sustainable social change. During this stage, the researcher, together with the Village Head and palm sugar producers, engaged in reflective discussions regarding the existing production process. Based on field observations and interviews, the entire production process remains traditional, beginning with the tapping of sap from naturally growing sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*) trees, followed by boiling the sap over firewood until it thickens, and finally molding the palm sugar manually. Although these methods remain simple, they produce high-quality palm sugar with a distinctive flavor that has become one of Malati Village's unique local products. The Village Head expressed strong support for promoting palm sugar as the village's signature local product. According to the Village Head, palm sugar producers possess considerable potential to increase the economic value of their products through improved packaging and promotional strategies. The participatory discussions also revealed a growing awareness among both community members and the village government of the importance of promoting palm sugar as part of Malati Village's local identity. This objective can be supported through systematic documentation, visual promotion, and the development of promotional narratives highlighting the uniqueness of the traditional production process.



Figure 7. Participatory Discussion Between the Researcher, Village Government, and Palm Sugar Producers within the Participatory Action Research (PAR) Process

These activities demonstrate the practical implementation of Participatory Action Research (PAR), which emphasizes collaboration among community members, the village government, and researchers in designing local development strategies. The involvement of multiple stakeholders in the planning process confirms that local resource development is more effective when communities are engaged not merely as sources of information but as active partners in decision-making processes (Gibbon, 2002). The collaborative reflection process further indicated the emergence of community awareness regarding the importance of managing palm sugar not only as an economic commodity but also as a potential educational tourism attraction rooted in local culture. This finding suggests that participatory processes contribute not only to identifying local resources but also to encouraging communities to actively recognize the opportunities and challenges associated with local development (Datta *et al.*, 2015). The results of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) process demonstrated an important shift in the perceptions of both community members and the village government. Initially, palm sugar was viewed primarily as a household economic commodity. However, through participatory discussions and collective reflection, stakeholders began to recognize its broader potential as a cultural and educational tourism attraction. Furthermore, documentation and promotional activities undertaken during the initial stage of the research fostered greater awareness of the importance of product packaging, visual promotion, and strengthening the village's local identity. Reinforcing local identity through product storytelling and digital promotion has also been recognized as an effective strategy for enhancing the attractiveness of experience-based and educational tourism (Wahyu Indro Widodo & Profita Aznam, 2025). The collaborative reflection process also highlighted that the development of palm sugar-based tourism cannot be achieved through individual efforts alone. Instead, it requires active community participation, continuous support from the village government, and stronger local institutions such as the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) and the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis). From the perspective of Participatory Action Research, these findings demonstrate that participatory approaches are capable of fostering collective awareness and strengthening the community's capacity to manage local resources in a more sustainable manner. Likewise, (Pyrch, 2007) argued that participatory approaches reinforce community collaboration through shared learning processes that encourage collective action in addressing local development challenges.

CONCLUSION

Malati Village possesses substantial local economic potential through palm sugar production, which serves as the primary source of livelihood for the majority of its residents. This potential is supported by the

village's geographical characteristics, where sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*) trees grow naturally across the surrounding hilly landscape. However, the findings reveal that the development of this local resource continues to face several challenges, including limited production facilities, dependence on firewood as the primary energy source, low levels of community participation, and the underutilization of local institutions in managing the village's tourism potential. Through the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, this study demonstrates that participatory discussions and collaborative reflection involving the village government, palm sugar producers, and community members can foster initial collective awareness of the potential to develop palm sugar as a local educational tourism attraction. The participatory process also highlights that local resource development should extend beyond economic objectives by emphasizing the preservation of traditional knowledge, cultural heritage, and the strengthening of the village's local identity. The findings further indicate that the sustainable development of palm sugar-based educational tourism in Malati Village requires continuous support through enhanced community participation, improved production capacity, effective promotion of local products, and stronger institutional roles for the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) and the Tourism Awareness Group (*Pokdarwis*) in managing community-based tourism initiatives. Therefore, palm sugar has the potential to become not only the village's flagship product but also a distinctive educational tourism attraction capable of contributing to sustainable rural economic development.

The Malati Village Government is encouraged to provide continuous support for palm sugar production by improving production facilities, including the establishment of shared production spaces, the provision of appropriate processing equipment, and capacity-building programs for palm sugar producers. These initiatives are expected to enhance both the quality and quantity of palm sugar production while promoting the sustainable management of the village's natural resources. Furthermore, the promotion of local palm sugar products should be strengthened through collaboration with external stakeholders, such as cooperative agencies and tourism authorities, to increase market recognition and enhance the product's economic value.

The findings of this study reinforce the relevance of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach in the context of rural community empowerment, particularly in the development of local economic potential based on natural resources. The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on collaborative approaches between researchers and local communities in designing participatory development strategies that are responsive to the social and geographical characteristics of rural areas.

Future research is encouraged to broaden the scope of investigation by involving additional stakeholders, including the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes), the Tourism Awareness Group (*Pokdarwis*), and local market actors, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the palm sugar value chain and its market development opportunities. Further studies may also focus on evaluating the long-term economic and social impacts of implementing participatory development strategies on community welfare and the sustainable development of rural tourism destinations.

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