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HORSE RACING EVENT AS A STARTEGY IN IMPLEMENTING COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM

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Abstract

This study describes horse racing as one of the tourist attractions that has cultural value and economic potential in Jeneponto Regency, South Sulawesi. The tradition of horse racing has long lived and developed in the local community, not only as an entertainment event, but also has great potential to be developed as a tourism product based on local wisdom. This study specifically emphasizes the importance of implementing community-based tourism (CBT) as a strategic approach in managing and developing horse racing as a tourist attraction. Through the application of the CBT approach, the active involvement of local communities in every stage of tourism management from planning, implementation, to evaluation is expected to improve the quality of life of the community while maintaining the sustainability of local culture. To identify opportunities and challenges in developing horse racing as a tourism product, this study uses a SWOT analysis to describe the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced in managing horse racing events. In addition, this study also aims to formulate a basic strategy that can be used as a reference in the implementation of effective and sustainable community-based tourism. The main objectives of this study are: 1) to describe the various challenges and opportunities in organizing horse racing events as a tourist attraction; and 2) to formulate a horse racing event management strategy that can support the optimal implementation of CBT. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through direct observation in the field, in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders, and documentation of horse racing practices and traditions that have been carried out for generations in Jeneponto Regency. The results of this study are expected to provide a real contribution to the development of local tourism based on community participation, cultural preservation, and environmental and social sustainability.

Keywords: cultural tourism events, community-based tourism, community empowerment, tourism implementation strategy

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as an archipelagic country has abundant natural resources with various cultures, customs, and religions where its natural resources can be used in the tourism sector as a commodity sector that is very good for the economy and as a foreign exchange earner of the second country after oil and natural gas (Farhani, 2022). Since 1978, the government has continued to strive to develop tourism in increasing foreign exchange revenues, expanding employment, and introducing culture. Coaching is carried out by developing tourism in paying attention to the preservation of national culture and personality. For this reason, it is necessary to take more targeted steps and arrangements based on integrated policies, including in the field of promotion, provision of facilities and quality, and smooth service (Suni & Herianto, 2019: 14).



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Community-based tourism (CBT) is an approach to developing tourism, both natural, cultural, and man-made tourism, both directly and indirectly involved, which emphasizes the active role of local communities (Andriani et al., 2020). Community-based tourism is one of the important things for the government to do for regional development, including in the tourism sector. The tourism sector is one of the industries that has a fairly important role in national development. The development of community-based tourism is often referred to as an alternative to mass tourism and a tourism approach to becoming sustainable tourism. If this tourism is developed properly, it can be a mechanism that can reduce poverty and access to improve the quality of life, as well as greater economic benefits (Dodds et al., 2018).

This study utilizes previous research as a reference to deepen understanding of the aspects studied and avoid overlap in terms of research location. The results showed that although there were some similarities in the titles, no similarities were found in the study locations. based on research conducted by Maulana et al., (2023), it is stated that the function of the maen jaran tradition in Sumbawa has changed due to the development of the times and cultural acculturation. This shift was also influenced by the commercialization of culture, which made it an economic commodity. The researcher divides the essence of this traditional function into three categories: primary, secondary, and tertiary functions.

Based on research from Junaid and D'Hauteserre (2017), the Indonesian government uses festivals, such as the A'rare Festival in Jeneponto, to attract tourists and promote the potential of the region. Innovation and strategies are needed to make the festival more global. Local governments must also collaborate with various stakeholders for optimal tourism development. Meanwhile, this research focuses more on the opportunities and challenges of horse racing events as a tourism product. In addition, the aim of this research is to increase tourism through festivals, while community-based research aims to preserve traditions and improve the well-being of local communities through involvement in horse racing.

Based on the problems above, the author is interested in taking the title Horse Racing Events in the Implementation of Community-Based Tourism. This research is expected to: 1) analyze various challenges and opportunities in the implementation of horse racing as a tourism product; and 2) provide recommendations for appropriate strategies in the management of horse racing events to support the implementation of community-based tourism. This research is based on a problem formulation that includes the identification of challenges and opportunities in horse racing events as a tourism product, as well as the formulation of effective strategies in its management to strengthen the concept of community-based tourism.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Event as Tourism Products

Tourism products can be defined as any form of goods or services that can be offered and traded to consumers. This product is produced through a combination of various production factors that include the attractiveness of a destination, the uniqueness of local culture, and the holding of various cultural festivals. Consumers are interested in the experiences offered by a place, both in terms of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and events that reflect local identity. Thus, tourism products are not only limited to physical tourist attractions, but also include experiences and interactions with the culture and traditions of the local community (Sinaga & Kurniati, 2019).

Tourism events serve as effective promotional tools for tourism destinations, governments, and industry players to attract visitors. These events are designed to generate interest and provide unique hands-on experiences, such as cultural festivals, art exhibitions, music concerts, and sports competitions. Through


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these events, the main attractions of a destination can be introduced, for example a culinary festival that promotes typical foods or a sports event that showcases the beauty of the local nature (Kurniawan et al., 2024).

Tourism events play a role in shaping a positive image of a destination, which ultimately provides economic benefits, encourages more equitable development, and is able to attract domestic and foreign tourists (Higgins, 2018). In addition, according to Pakarti et al. (2017), tourism events also influence the factors that determine a person's decision to visit.

2.2 Community-Based Tourism

Community Based Tourism (CBT) is a tourism development concept that makes local communities the main actors in the development and management of tourist destinations. This approach aims to ensure that the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the tourism sector can be felt directly by the local community. Based on research conducted by Budiatiningsih et al., (2024), CBT emphasizes the active involvement of the community in the decision-making process and tourism management, so that they not only act as objects, but also become the main subjects in tourism activities.

Based on research conducted by Wibowo and Belia (2023), community participation in tourism planning and implementation plays an important role in efforts to preserve natural resources and cultural heritage. With this involvement, the community not only gains economic benefits but also contributes to preserving their environment and culture. However, the implementation of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) does not always run smoothly. Obstacles such as limited managerial capacity, lack of resources, and resistance to change are often challenges in implementing CBT. Putra et al., (2023) emphasized that training and mentoring for local communities are needed to improve their skills and insights in managing the tourism sector. Therefore, collaboration between the government, academics, and the community is a major factor in the success of implementing CBT.

Overall, the concept of Community-Based Tourism offers an inclusive and sustainable approach to tourism development. By placing local communities at the center of development, CBT not only improves economic well-being but also ensures cultural and environmental preservation. However, successful implementation of CBT requires commitment, collaboration, and adequate capacity from all stakeholders. Important aspects in implementing community-based tourism (CBT) include paying attention to community involvement, human resource development (HRD), and environmental conservation (Yachya et al., 2016).

2.3 Community Participation in Tourism Event Management

In developing a tourism destination, there are three main stakeholders who have crucial roles, namely the government, the private sector, and the community (Sari and Sitorus, 2021). To accelerate the progress of the tourism sector in Indonesia, Arif Yahya proposed a concept known as "pentahelix". This concept continued to be developed during Arif Yahya's tenure as Minister of Tourism (Syahrial, 2020). To strengthen the "pentahelix" concept, the government stipulated it in the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia (Permenpar) Number 14 of 2016 concerning Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism Destinations, as a strategic step in accelerating tourism development in Indonesia.

In organizing an event, a good governance system is needed. Event management is an effective and responsible management process. There are three main stages in event management, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation, also known as pre-event, during-event, and post-event (Haries et al., 2021). Event management aims to bring together individuals or groups in an activity that includes planning, implementation, coordination, communication, and supervision (Zenmira, 2022). The purpose of



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organizing a tourism event is to facilitate the community in presenting attractions and unique local cultural traditions to bring tourist visits to an area (Dirgantara, 2022).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is research used to investigate, find, and describe the quality or characteristics of social influences that cannot be explained through a quantitative approach (Saryono, 2024). Meanwhile, Sugiyono (2024), stated that qualitative research is a method based on the philosophy of post-positivism, which is used to examine the conditions of natural objects. Sampling was carried out purposively and snowball using inductive data analysis. Sutikno, M, S., and Hadi, P (2020), stated that qualitative research as one of the methodologies in research that does not yet have a standard definition and is generally agreed upon for use. However, the definition can be concluded more comprehensively-integratively through tracing complete definitions.

Qualitative research in the field of tourism focuses on collecting data or information related to various activities, events, and behaviors that take place in a social context. This approach aims to gain a deep understanding of individual or group actions, problems that arise, and social processes that occur in society, especially those related to the tourism sector. Through this research, researchers can explore the social, cultural, and economic dynamics that influence the development of tourism, as well as understand how these factors interact with each other in a given environment (Junaid Ilham, 2016).

This study uses a qualitative or naturalistic method because it is conducted in natural conditions. The researcher acts as the main instrument and must have a broad theoretical understanding to ask the right questions, analyze, record, and describe social situations clearly. To obtain a comprehensive understanding, triangulation techniques are used, namely a combination of various data collection methods. Data analysis is inductive, where specific findings are used to draw general conclusions (Sugiyono, 2018).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 General Description of the Research Location

Jeneponto Regency is one of the regencies in South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. This area borders Gowa Regency in the north, Takalar Regency in the west, Bantaeng Regency in the east, and the Flores Sea in the south. Jeneponto has an area of approximately 749.79 km² and administratively consists of 11 sub-districts, 113 villages/wards. Jeneponto Regency is an area with a large horse ecosystem. Horses in Jeneponto are one of the local culinary specialties, which in Makassar language are called "Gantala Jarang". Gantala is rarely a characteristic at every family celebration for Jeneponto residents. Horses are also a source of food for other typical culinary dishes, namely 'konro kuda' and 'coto kuda'.



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Figure 1 Map of Jeneponto District Area
Source: Wikipedia.com

Traditional horse racing known as "pa'lumba jaran" is part of a cultural heritage that has been going on since the era of the Gowa Kingdom. Initially, this tradition emerged from the habit of people using horses as a means of transportation and a form of entertainment, which then developed into a racing event. Until now, this tradition continues to be preserved and has become an inseparable part of the lives of the Jeneponto community.

The people of Jeneponto Regency are known to like to do horse spur attractions. Most of the people are adept at spurring these animals with the ability to run fast. Horse racing has become a tradition for the local community, this horse racing event is routinely held every weekend and the participants come from inside and outside South Sulawesi. The horse racing center in Jeneponto Regency is a complex of equestrian sports activities in which there are three equestrian activities, namely sports, training and recreation (Wasilah et al., 2018).

In addition, horses can also be used as a potential alternative as a source of meat, in addition to their function as a food source such as beef cattle, and can be used for competitions, such as races. According to Patel and Williams (2018), horses have a very close relationship with humans and play an important economic role, from transportation (such as trains and horse riding) to shipping goods. In some areas, horses are also kept as a source of energy and animal protein through meat and milk.

The tradition of horse racing has existed since the era of the Gowa Kingdom, although until now there is no official record regarding the exact year the horse racing tradition began, its existence which has been going on since the era of the Gowa Kingdom shows that horse racing has been an integral part of the culture of the Jeneponto community for centuries. This tradition is still preserved today. At that time, horses played an important role in people's lives, used as a means of transportation as well as a symbol of social status. Over time, horse riding activities developed into a form of community entertainment known as traditional horse racing or "Pa'lumba Jarang".



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Figure 2 Event Horse Racing
Source: Authors, 2025

Horse racing is generally held routinely every year. Based on information from various sources, including articles published by ANTARA Foto, there is photo documentation published from 2016 to 2024. The people of Jeneponto Regency make horses a regional symbol, because this animal has various functions for local residents, including in horse racing activities.

The location of the horse race in the context of community-based tourism is located in a coastal area in the south of Sulawesi Island which is known for its cultural richness. This area has a distinctive landscape, in the form of hills, grasslands, and a wide coastal area, very suitable for horse riding activities. This location is also crossed by the main route connecting various districts in South Sulawesi, making it easily accessible to domestic and out-of-town tourists. Adequate road infrastructure also supports the implementation of major events such as traditional horse racing. The lives of the people in this area are also closely related to agricultural and livestock activities, which are part of the attraction of community-based tourism.

Horse racing is held in an open arena that is specifically built and managed for the event. The arena is surrounded by residential areas that also play an active role as actors and spectators in the traditional event. The location is not far from the center of economic activity of the residents, so it is easy to reach and becomes a magnet for the surrounding community. In addition to being used as a place for competitions, the racing area also functions as a place for training and entertainment, so it has a multifunctional value in social life. These geographical and social conditions make the location of horse racing an important part of tourism development efforts that directly involve the community.


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Figure 3 Horse Racing Arena, in Kampala Village
Source: Authors, 2025

This area is also known for its rich local customs and wisdom that ar
e still strongly preserved to this day. Horse racing activities are a symbol of identity and pride of the local community that is passed down from generation to generation. The environment around the race location is also often used as a place to promote culture through festivals, bazaars, and traditional art performances. Efforts to preserve culture through holding horse races are in line with the principle of community-based tourism that places local residents as the main actors. Thus, this location not only functions as a center for traditional sports, but also as a vehicle for preserving culture and driving the community's creative economy.

4.2 Challenges and Opportunities of Horse Racing Event as Tourism Products

Horse racing events in Jeneponto Regency have great potential to be developed as a leading tourism product, especially because of the richness of local culture that is strongly attached to the tradition. Horse racing is not just a sport, but part of the identity of the Jeneponto community, especially in Makassar culture. By packaging horse racing as a cultural and sports tourism attraction, Jeneponto can attract local and foreign tourists, and contribute to the growth of the sports tourism sector in Indonesia.

This potential is even greater if supported by the local government through the provision of infrastructure, promotion, and cooperation with tourism industry players. In addition, this event can be a driver of the local economy through the involvement of UMKMs, such as culinary traders, craftsmen, and transportation and accommodation service providers. Promotion through social media and collaboration with influencers or travel bloggers is also a great opportunity to increase the appeal and exposure of this event nationally.

In addition, the development of horse racing as a tourism product can also strengthen cultural identity and increase people's pride in local heritage. This tradition is not just entertainment, but also full of historical and philosophical values that can be an educational attraction for tourists. Through documentation and packaging of the story behind the horse racing tradition, tourists will get a deeper and more meaningful experience. The involvement of the younger generation in preserving this tradition is also important so that cultural values remain alive and relevant to the times. Thus, horse racing is not only seen as an attraction, but also as part of an effort to preserve sustainable culture.

However, the development of horse racing as a tourism product in Jeneponto also faces several challenges. One of the main challenges is the limited supporting infrastructure such as road access, accommodation, and other public facilities that are still inadequate for tourists. In addition, the promotion



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of this event is still limited and has not reached a wider market, especially through digital media. The management of the event that is not yet professional and sustainable is also an obstacle in itself, especially if there is no fixed agenda every year.

Other challenges include potential criticism from parties concerned with animal welfare, if management does not pay attention to ethical aspects. To overcome these challenges, an integrated development strategy is needed, such as making horse racing an official annual event for the district, combining it with other cultural festivals, and building partnerships with travel agents and local communities. With the right approach, the Jeneponto horse racing event can become a proud and sustainable tourism icon.

One of the main challenges in making horse racing a community-based tourism product is the limited capacity of local management and human resources. Many actors at the village or community level do not have experience in managing large-scale tourism activities, including in terms of service, security, and cleanliness. The lack of training and assistance from related parties means that the organization of the event is not optimal in meeting tourist standards. On the other hand, direct community involvement is very important so that cultural values are maintained and the community obtains economic benefits. Therefore, cross-sector collaboration is needed to strengthen local capacity.

Despite the challenges, this event still has great potential in creating economic opportunities and preserving culture. This activity is able to revive the village economy, starting from the transportation sector, accommodation, to regional culinary specialties. In addition, this event can be a medium for cultural education for tourists who want to get to know the lives of the Jeneponto community better. This opportunity will be even wider if the activity is packaged in the form of a thematic tour package that combines elements of nature, tradition, and adventure. That way, this area will not only be a stopover, but also a major tourist destination.

Support from various parties such as the government, private sector, and community greatly determines the sustainability of the event. The government can play a role in providing regulations, infrastructure, and promotion through the tourism office. Private parties such as sponsors and travel agents can help with marketing and professional implementation. Local communities have a strategic role in maintaining cultural values and providing authentic experiences to tourists. Harmonious cooperation between these three elements is the key to ensuring that tourism development does not only have a momentary impact, but also provides long-term benefits.

To strengthen the position of this event as a tourist attraction, an approach that emphasizes active community participation is needed. Training, empowerment of MSMEs, and digital-based promotion are strategies that can be run in parallel. The preparation of a fixed calendar and integration with other local festivals will also provide continuity and certainty for tourism actors. In addition, an emphasis on ethical values and sustainability, such as protection of animals and the environment, will be an added value in attracting the socially conscious tourist segment. With these steps, this activity can grow as a symbol of community and cultural collaboration that lives within the framework of tourism.

In accordance with the opinion of Qalby (2024), “The challenge is that there must be adequate provision of public facilities, and there must also be a clear and targeted concept of community-based tourism. The opportunity is great as long as the local government has a clear framework regarding the provision of public facilities and a concept of community-based tourism that is in accordance with the theme of horse racing”.



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4.3 Horse Racing Event Management Strategies to Support the Implementation of Community-Based Tourism

The horse racing event management strategy in Jeneponto Regency in supporting the implementation of community-based tourism (CBT) needs to be designed in a participatory, sustainable, and inclusive manner so that it can provide direct economic, social, and cultural benefits to the local community. One of the main strategies is the active involvement of the local community in the entire planning process to the implementation of the event. The local community can be empowered as organizing committees, service providers, and micro-business actors such as traditional culinary, handicrafts, and local tour guides. That way, this event will not only be a spectacle, but also a place for empowerment for the community.

Furthermore, event management needs to prioritize a collaborative approach between local governments, traditional leaders, horse lover communities, and tourism industry players. Local governments can facilitate training and mentoring for the community in terms of hospitality, event management, digital marketing, and cultural conservation. In addition, there needs to be a permanent annual agenda so that horse racing can be part of the regional tourism calendar. This will facilitate promotion and attract wider tourist interest.

Another strategy is to integrate horse racing into thematic tourism packages, for example through cultural festivals that include traditional art performances, local culinary bazaars, and education about the history and philosophy of horse racing in Jeneponto. With this approach, tourists can gain a more in-depth and authentic experience, while the community benefits directly economically and socially. Promotion through social media, tourism platforms is also very important to reach a wider target market, especially the younger generation.

Finally, sustainable management strategies must also consider aspects of cultural and environmental preservation. All activities in the event must strengthen local identity, respect traditional values, and not damage the surrounding environment. By implementing the principles of community-based tourism, the horse racing event in Jeneponto is not only an interesting attraction, but also a means to strengthen the independence and welfare of local communities in a sustainable manner.

The application of the principle of community involvement is one of the main approaches in managing horse racing activities to provide real benefits to local residents. This activity can be used as a means of learning and capacity building for the community through training in the fields of event management, tourist services, and local product management. Villages, traditional institutions, and youth groups can be the driving force that ensures the representation and sustainability of activities. In addition, local economic empowerment can be focused on improving the quality of products sold during the event. This will increase the competitiveness and sustainability of activities in the long term.

Cross-sector partnerships are an important step to strengthen the event implementation ecosystem. The involvement of educational institutions, business actors, and local media can encourage innovation and expand promotional networks. Support from the private sector can be given in the form of sponsorship, provision of facilities, to digital cross-platform promotions. In addition, the presence of public figures or tourism ambassadors from Jeneponto can increase the attractiveness of activities at the national level. The involvement of these cross-actors will ensure the participation and sense of ownership of various parties towards the activity.

The preparation of a fixed calendar and adequate location is also an important part of careful planning. Consistent time and place determination will make it easier for tourism actors to design travel packages. This also provides space for local business actors to prepare themselves better. In addition, supporting infrastructure such as parking lots, public toilets, and access routes must be improved to ensure visitor


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comfort. Consistency in implementation will make this activity an annual attraction that tourists are waiting for.

In an effort to strengthen local cultural values, preserving traditions that accompany horse racing should be part of the overall concept of the activity. Dance performances, regional music, and folklore related to the history of horse racing can be presented to enrich the tourist experience. This is also a means of educating the younger generation and visitors about local values. Strengthening local narratives through documentation, digital content, and cultural exhibitions is an important complement. Through this step, the cultural diversity of Jeneponto will be more widely known.

In order for the management of activities to take place sustainably, it is important to implement a participatory evaluation and reporting system. Each event needs to be evaluated together with the community to identify weaknesses and potential improvements. Activity reports can be prepared openly as reference material for subsequent activities. In this way, horse racing activities will continue to develop and be able to meet the needs of the community and tourists. Transparency and accountability are the foundation for building trust and continuity of activities in the future.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The horse racing tradition in Jeneponto Regency has long historical roots, starting from the Gowa Kingdom and is still preserved by the local community. This activity is divided into three main forms, namely as a sport, a means of training, and a form of recreation. In addition to these functions, horses also play an important role in the culinary culture of the Jeneponto community and are a characteristic of this area, making it a strong symbol of local identity.
2. Despite having high cultural value, the development of horse racing as a tourism product still faces various obstacles, especially in terms of infrastructure. Limited access to adequate roads and minimal public facilities are the main obstacles. In addition, the less than optimal marketing strategy also contributes to the low level of tourist visits to the event.
3. However, the potential for horse racing as a tourist attraction is very large when viewed from the perspective of cultural preservation. This tradition, which is continuously maintained by the local community, can become a tourist magnet if packaged in an attractive and professional manner. In this context, the community-based tourism (CBT) approach has begun to be implemented. The Jeneponto community plays an active role in organizing horse racing events, which shows collective participation in encouraging the development of local tourism.
4. To support the sustainability and development of this activity, the role of the government is very necessary. A clear and comprehensive framework is needed to provide various facilities that support the implementation of horse racing events optimally.

6. RECOMENDATION

Based on the conclusions above, there are several recommendations, namely:

1. The results of this study are expected to be a useful source of information for local governments in implementing the concept of community-based tourism in horse racing activities in Jeneponto Regency. With this approach, the preservation of horse racing traditions can be maintained sustainably.


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2. For researchers, these findings contribute to broadening horizons and increasing knowledge about the potential of horse racing as a tourism product, especially in the context of community-based development.
3. For local communities, it is necessary to provide guidance and increase awareness of the importance of maintaining and preserving culture, as well as providing good service to tourists. In addition, attention to environmental cleanliness, especially waste management around the horse racing arena, is also important in order to create a comfortable and sustainable tourism atmosphere.

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