

The Empowerment of Setabelan Tourist Village Based on Culture and Locality

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Abstract: Tourism sector has grown into superior sector with rapidest growth in the world and been a locomotive of economic growth. Kelurahan Setabelan of Surakarta City is attempting to develop culture- and locality-based tourist village. Using action research method and John Friedman's community empowerment theory, this research aimed to describe the process of empowering the villagers conducted in participative manner and involving stakeholders. The result of discussion showed that community empowerment process was conducted through the production of citizen's knowledge on village's history, potency, need, and problem. The result of knowledge production was used as the data to design workshop for citizens through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) mechanism. Workshop series has been implemented because the community interested in packaging the village's cultural potency as tourist attraction. The citizen's culture potency is packaged in the form of village profile book, village diary, documentary video, village sketch, Open Street Map (OSM) and infographic published through website and social media that are accessible widely. Thus, empowering the village through the potency it has in cultural context will give shape to knowledge, belief, understanding, and custom and habit or ethic guiding human behaviour in living within his community.

1 INTRODUCTION

Since late 1990s, most developing countries have focused their economic development on tourism sector. This strategy is a part of an attempt of reducing those countries' dependence on natural resource-primary product export, so that tourism can contribute significantly to national income (Scheyvens, 2011). Tourism sector has grown into a superior sector with rapidest growth in the world and been a locomotive of economic growth in the world and has been the locomotive of economic growth. Even tourism sector can evidently contribute by 9.5% to global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Yahya, 2015). Furthermore, Asia Pacific countries successfully put tourism to be the contributor of more than 50% of total national income (Jeyacheya, 2013; Royle, 2001). Tourism is also evidently pro-populace economic development. Through Community Based Tourism (CBT), tourism can encourage the rural people's economic advance by means of, among others: (1) improving community's income; (2) creating job opportunity; (3) improving the opportunity of establishing business; (4) improving local people's ownership and control over village resource management; (5) improving government's income through tourism retribution and etc (Hermawan, 2016).

Tourism sector development in Indonesia has evidently contributed significant foreign exchange. Republic of

Indonesia's Minister of Tourism, Arief Yahya explains that tourism sector should contribute by 8% to national GDP in 2019 with foreign exchange of IDR 240 trillions, create job opportunity for 13 million people, and attract 20 millions foreign tourists. In 2015, this figure was projected to be 4% with IDR 155 trillions foreign exchange, creating job opportunity for 11.3 millions people, and in 2016 it was projected to contribute by 5% with foreign exchange of IDR 172 trillions, creating job opportunity for 11.7 millions, and attracting 12 millions foreign tourists (Magz, 2015). It indicates that the optimism of development in tourism sector is so high.

Decentralization gives a broader local autonomy space to develop its potency in tourism sector. It refers to the Law No. 25 of 2005 confirming the development of community's economic activity through an attempt of optimizing tourist potency and policy to preserve, to develop, and to appreciate local wisdom values as the city/regency citizen's self identity and as the tourism foothold in region all at once. Surakarta City implements such commitment in Local Long-Term Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Daerah, thereafter called RPJPD 2005-2025) document including city development, spirit to restore the city to the one with culture (tourism) identity that becomes a collective spirit thereby can activate trade, service, and education beat. Such the scheme can be accomplished through the commitment to

release Local Regulation No 3 of 2005 about the Organization of Tourism Business.

Surakarta city has a variety of strategies to restore the city to the one with culture and tourism identity that becomes a collective spirit, with a variety of assets including history, destination, agro- and spirituality that can attract tourists. A variety of touristic events in various segments have been created to stimulate touristic visit: art, culture, performance, conference, and meeting. The revitalization of city's assets have been conducted in the attempt of repacking and conserving to reinforce the stakeholders in order to be a part of collective work to promote city's tourism. All of these agenda are in line with citizen's enthusiasm in participating actively in the tourism development process. Therefore, a Travel Awareness Group (Indonesian: *Kelompok Sadar Wisata*, thereafter called *Pokdarwis*) is established through Surakarta Mayor's Decree No. 556/08/1/2011.

Considering the data of tourist visit in 2011, it can be seen that there are 1,732,273 tourists in 2016, increasing significantly by 70.41% from 1,016,496 tourists in 2015. Meanwhile, in relation to meeting, conference, and exhibition during 2015-2016, there are 4,055 activities, increasing by 10% compared with that in previous year, 3,686 activities. For that reason, Indonesian Tourism Promotion Agency of Surakarta launches the targeted visit of 2.5 millions increasing from 1.07 millions in 2011 (Solopos, 23/3/2012). Therefore, the existence of *Pokdarwis* becomes a strategic attempt of providing participative space to citizen. Considering the formulation above, this research aimed to describe *Pokdarwis* empowerment process in developing cultural tourist village based on local knowledge and information system in Kelurahan Setabelan of Surakarta City. Through tourist village and *kampung*, tourism also evidently improves social welfare of local community, improves environmental care, and motivates the community to be more proud of its cultural identity (Hermawan, 2016).

Community empowerment in developing tourism sector becomes a strategy in the attempt of supporting local autonomy. It is in line with John Friedman's empowerment theory stating that empowerment is a collaborative process (Friedman, 1992). Empowerment process puts community to be a competent actor or subject that can reach sources and opportunities. Community should see themselves as an important agent that can affect the change. Community should participate in their own empowerment, objective, way, and result formulated by themselves because awareness level is the key to empowerment. Empowerment involves access to sources and ability to use effectively. Meanwhile, empowerment process is dynamic, synergic, ever changing, and evolutionary in nature so that it can be accomplished through personal structures and economic development in parallel.

2 METHOD

This research was conducted in Setabelan Village of Surakarta City attempting to develop cultural tourist village. Using action research method (Reason, 1994), this research was conducted through inter-individual cooperation of community members to develop a progressive problem solving method. Scholars define action research as an action as the form of self-reflection collectively involving a series of daily activities. This action research involves a series of activities: (a) building access and network, (b) producing the citizen's local knowledge, (c) organizing follow-up plan, (d) building consensus and priority scale based on citizen's local knowledge, (e) reproducing village's knowledge and workshop, and (f) joint monitoring and evaluation by stakeholders.

Cohen and Manion (1980) in Mikkelson (2010) define action research as small scale intervention with action in real world and thorough examination on the effect of such action intervention. So, it can be stated that action research is conducted based on study, diagnosis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation by community.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Surakarta City is a long-traditional history-based city. *Keraton Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat* or Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace (1746) became the node of city's history establishment involving colonization in East Indies. Surakarta grows in modern dynamic with the past investment. Such transition process runs along with a variety of resistance-conflict forms and leaves paradoxical economic, political, and cultural relations. Past artefact and tradition remain to be present in urban citizen's daily fragments that have adopted modern culture as well, to which the city moves following it (Setiawan, 2010). All historical notes become the asset to city development as a tourism, educational, and cultural city.

Empowerment process starts with the wish to contribute to the very rapid change of city. The concern with the change occurring in the city and leaving its citizens with helpless situation generates an idea to contribute to the city in creating a cultural tourist village. Awareness of ever-changing city, threatened village locality, and wish to put youths along with their locality to be the new subject of knowledge and information on city are then connected to other stakeholders' agendas to create a Travel Awareness Group (Indonesian: *Kelompok Sadar Wisata*, thereafter called Pokdarwis), the institution of which can be found in all villages (*kelurahans*) in Surakarta, including Setabelan. This process allows for a more intense connection, in which youths/college students have direct access to citizens through Pokdarwis' facilitation.

After the access and the network have been established, brainstorming process enables citizens to understand better the agenda that has been designed jointly. Citizens are encouraged to produce knowledge on their village's history collectively by emphasizing on locality aspect and citizen's local knowledge. In addition, the exploration of village's potency, need, expectation, and problem is also conducted based on citizens' knowledge from various social structures and classes. It is intended to make the collected knowledge representing all existing interests. Facilitated by youths and Pokdarwis as the key actor, the knowledge production process can be conducted more naturally and participatory.

Documentation procedure and process are conducted by youths in group. In practice, these groups are distributed to some points in the village that will be documented. This process also initiates two approaches to access the village: firstly, the targeted village is the youth actor-based one and secondly, the target village is the Pokdarwis access-based one. The scheme is designed to ensure that the process and the result of documentation will return to the citizens (ownership), as the form of their knowledge on their own village. Documenting village is expected to be a community media, the one present in certain community environment and managed by and intended to certain community members (Pawito, 2007).

The next step is to discuss the result of knowledge production through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) intensively with the social community groups relevant to the topic. Through FGD, citizens make discussion to formulate the follow-up plan of the knowledge production

process jointly and in equal relation. The follow-up plan is arranged based on priority scale by considering citizen's potency and need. Considering the result of consensus between citizens, the village's potencies and needs can be obtained in relation to an idea of developing a cultural tourist village. The potency the citizens have is typical village culinary potency that has been well-known widely and owned by most women in home industry. Other potencies are traditional art group including gamelan for all ages and sexes, dance group, *kethoprak*, and other art crafts becoming the typical characteristics of Solo city. Unfortunately, those diverse potencies have diverse conditions as well; some of them run actively, some others have not been organized well, and still some others are inactive. These diverse conditions of tourist potency need a design to be repackaged and managed into the potential cultural tourist village.

Furthermore, some workshop plans are designed based on the grouping of some tourist potency conditions existing and priority scale is arranged to be realized. This workshop is arranged periodically and held along with citizens and involving stakeholders. Based on citizen's social, economic, and cultural potencies, the result of knowledge production is packaged into village profile in the form of narrative, photograph, sketch, Open Street Map (OSM)-based digital map and documentary video. These knowledge production outputs become citizen's collective data to design follow-up plan and joint agenda, and to build consensus about village empowerment activity and program. The result of knowledge production is also presented through infographic map and sketch of potency, need, and problem accessible to all citizens. This process puts the citizens to be the subject and serves as the social learning all at once enabling them to identify their village using their own perspective.

Media expansion to promote and to empower the village is conducted intensely in city village documentation scheme with village diary video documentation project, arranged and distributed in page <http://youtube/kampungnesia>. In addition to social media, it is also developed through <http://facebook/kampungnesia> and <http://twitter/kampungnesia> to establish an interactive process between media and to create an opportunity of public participation in internet media (citizen participation). All of those processes portray the youths with an ability of producing and creating content creation as a media to promote the village. The material developed through publishing the result of village documentation using information technology so that it is accessible widely to the public, thereby building public information awareness (Liliweri, 2009).

Information network that has been constructed at least can be the bridge of information on city village in Surakarta. The distribution of information on village is expected to play its function as the community media emphasizing on the material containing some pressures (Pawito, 2007). Thus, the process of empowering villagers can be conducted gradually based on locality and local knowledge present as an alternative tourist destination in Surakarta City.

A variety of touristic events have been created in many segments to stimulate touristic visit including art, culture, performance, conference, and meeting. Such commitment should be supported with the willingness to develop first the pre-existing facilities, to reinforce the stakeholders later in order to be the part of collective work in promoting a community-based city tour. Thus, the effectiveness of development will get reward with the region's bravery to conduct local development, to manage, and to revitalize the local asset to be a tourism strategy later.

4 CONCLUSION

The attempt of empowering cultural tourist village still runs continuously. The choice to develop a variety of events and cultural potency packages shows off its effect gradually and surely. Agenda is established to develop the village's ability of providing feasible and standardized facilities and amenities and to keep all main and supporting attractions attractive either qualitatively or quantitatively. Therefore, empowering village through the potency it has in cultural context will give shape to knowledge, belief, understanding, and custom and habit or ethic guiding human behaviour in living within his community. Community in villages has character in communal relation pattern that is exclusive to an area's community as the communal property resource and as local knowledge system.

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