

Strategies for the Development of Ecotourism Based on the Local Wisdom Intangible Heritage

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Abstract--Ecotourism has positive implications for the improvement of the economy of the local people, a better understanding of natural and cultural phenomena, and the preservation of both the nature and culture themselves, so that Bali tourism which is heavily reliant on culture will not die out. Balinese cultural characteristics and heritage covering the symbols, signs, artistic and literary forms of expression, language, way of life, ritual system, traditional knowledge, and myths handed down by the Balinese predecessors have such appeal to the world of tourism. Changes and shifts in the lifestyle, culture, and ritual system in the society are inevitable. This is a reflection of a culture that is flexible and open to other cultures and global development of technology. These shifts should not be a problem if the character and identity of the Balinese people consistently reflect the cultural heritage left by their predecessors. If tangible heritage can be restored when it is damaged due to acts of nature, what about the intangible cultural heritage? Collection of relevant data in this research was carried out through: (i) observation (field observation) and (ii) document study. The theory used in studying the problems in this research is the correlation theory of space, man and culture. This research identified the essence of the preservation of Bali's intangible cultural heritage and the concept of governance of Bali's intangible cultural heritage along with the dynamics of global cultural development by conducting a comprehensive study of the object, the process of its establishment, and its benefits for the people locally, nationally, and internationally. It is important to have a concept of governance that is supportive and directive so as to achieve the preservation of the ideal and sustainable cultural system in Bali. The benchmark for the cultural heritage preservation is not only focused on the manifestation of the cultural heritage itself, but also takes into consideration various factors surrounding the cultural heritage in an in-depth, structured, and systematic fashion.

Keywords: governance, preservation, intangible heritage

I. INTRODUCTION

Balinese local wisdom has grown and developed from generation to generation, originating from the predecessors of the Balinese people with a lot of philosophical ideas about life in Bali. Soebadio (1986)

defines local wisdom as a cultural identity or personality of a nation.[1] Local wisdom as cultural heritage is transferred from one generation to the next as an identity of a particular community.

Bali is one of the regions in the world with attractive cultural heritage, drawing millions of visitors to come from year to year to see, learn, and even practice the culture of the Balinese people. These international travelers coming from all corners of the world bring with them their own culture which influences the inherited culture of the Balinese people.

There is a tendency for the mixed culture between the Balinese and foreign cultures to be considered more convenient to be practiced by the people within the Balinese community for several factors. They view the different languages and lifestyles as more modern and useful in that they make it easy for the local people of Bali to interact with foreign tourists with similar cultural concepts. If this mix of cultures becomes increasingly more interesting to be practiced by the next generations, the identity ties with the older generations will die out and, overtime, be forgotten.

The problem of the shifts in the new generations' behaviors and their disinterest in cultural heritage seems simple, yet fundamental. It is necessary to have a concept of governance of cultural heritage that can cover more elements of intangible cultural heritage preservation.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research adopted a qualitative research method, and data validation was developed through dialogs and special interviews, taking into account the social phenomena in the society, with the researchers as the main instruments. Collection of relevant data in this research was carried out through: (i) observation (field observation) and (ii) document study. Dialectical interactions between the researchers and respondents to interpret, compare, and reconstruct reality were examined by using qualitative methods such as participant observation.[2]

The approach used in this research is the analytical and conceptual approach, by which all problems were examined based on concepts, theories, principles, and the applicable laws and regulations. This research used secondary data as preliminary data, and further used primary data which were obtained through field studies.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. *Philosophical Study of the Essence of Intangible Cultural Heritage Preservation*

Science which is continually developing and investigating the truths has a distinguishing characteristic, which is that it always rests on the three pillars of scientific development, namely ontology, epistemology, and axiology.[3]

Ontology talks about what reality is found in the universe, epistemology talks about the methodology, validation, and validity of knowledge, and axiology talks about values and goals. A research that analyzes based on philosophical elements should meet the requirement of using the three pillars of science so that the results can be of value and can be tested for their validity.[4]

Ontology discusses what we want to know and how much we want to know, or, in other words, is a study of the theory of "being".[5]

The object of this research is intangible cultural heritage. Ecotourism development method is a process of validating knowledge so that this knowledge will be able to give benefits to the community in the time to come.

Van Peursen defines culture with the correlation theory of (natural) space, man and culture, including the process of change that occurs in the natural space, as a result of both human's reactions to nature and nature's and human's behaviors.[6]

A long time ago, the Balinese people received a legacy of wisdom (philosophy) about perfect wellbeing that is rooted in the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*, which is a concept of balance between humans, between humans and their God, and between humans and nature. This concept interrelates humans, nature, and culture.

Human culture is inherited from the previous generation of humans to the next as the identity, personality, and sign of the existence of a society, in this case the Balinese society.

Being preserved means staying in the original state, unchanging, enduring, and perpetual.[7] Preserving cultural heritage is important as an effort to maintain the ties of identity between the past and the present generations. Preserving environmental harmony and balance means keeping the environmental harmony and balance unchanged or lasting.[8]

Harmony is a relative and subjective matter. The preservation of intangible cultural heritage as the object of this research is defined as follows:

The preservation of the cultural heritage now covers the non-physical cultural heritage, which includes the signs and symbol passed on by oral transmission, artistic and literary forms of expression, languages, ways of life, myths, beliefs and rituals, value system and traditional knowledge and know-how.[9]

The preservation of Bali's cultural heritage is strongly supported by the concept of ecotourism, which was defined by The Ecotourism Society in 1996 as responsible travel activities in pristine areas or areas that

are managed based on natural principles, which not only aim at enjoying the natural beauty, but also involve education, understanding, and support for nature conservation efforts and improvement of the welfare of the local people living in the area of the ecotourism destination.[10]

The concept of ecotourism should ideally maintain the integrity of the intangible cultural heritage so that it can be passed down to the next generations to prevent loss of identity of the Balinese people.

The essence of intangible cultural heritage preservation is to maintain the balance and harmony of ideas, wisdom, and customs that are already established, including the signs and symbols passed on by oral transmission, arts, languages, ways of life, myths, beliefs and rituals, value system, and traditional knowledge and know-how.

2. *The Concept of Governance for the Preservation of Bali's Intangible Cultural Heritage Along with the Dynamics of Global Cultural Development*

A concept means an idea or an understanding abstracted from concrete events. The object of thought has to be real or takes a factual form. As a concept, preservation of Balinese culture constitutes the activity that recognizes, respects, and values the historical and cultural rights of the people.

The problem in the preservation of Balinese culture is marked with the shift in the behavior among the new generations, which shift becomes increasingly clear over time. The concept of governance of intangible cultural heritage has to be applied from very early on among the new generations, namely by:

- 1) Increasing public knowledge of the essence and function of intangible cultural heritage through print media and social media, and intensifying the *dharma wecana* (religious lectures/discourse) activity regularly and consistently across all regions.
- 2) Incorporating local content in the education curriculum, which includes different Balinese cultural products such as the Balinese language, Balinese dances, *gamelan*, Balinese culinary tradition, and Balinese mythology, at international elementary schools which are now very popular among the middle-upper class society.
- 3) Re-establishing art-supporting activities (traditional Balinese dances, *gamelan*, and other Balinese art activities) and rituals in Puri (palaces) and Jero (royal residences), and reviving traditional dance studio activities in ecotourism areas.
- 4) Develop regular collaborations with the associations in Bali tourism industry such as the Indonesia Tourism Industry Association (GIPI) of Bali and all relevant stakeholders to carry out disseminations on the importance of ecotourism based on the local wisdom, particularly the

intangible cultural heritage, to international elementary schools in Bali.

Based on the informal interviews conducted by the researchers with several international elementary schools in Bali, the delivery of the local content subjects being taught to the students is not yet optimum or consistent, for the following reasons:

- 1) There are types of international elementary schools that do not include any Balinese culture local content program in their art subjects or in the extracurricular programs;
- 2) There are types of international elementary schools that schedule the local content program of traditional Balinese dance and *gamelan* only on certain holy days;
- 3) There are types of international elementary schools that have already incorporated different types of Balinese culture local content into their teaching and learning programs with a different type of local content in each semester.

There is clearly no uniformity and commitment among the international elementary schools in Bali concerning the preservation of intangible cultural heritage through the incorporation of local content, which is why there will not be optimum outcomes as expected by the predecessors of the Balinese people.

If the international elementary schools which do not incorporate any local content program in their learning process increase in number, then Bali's cultural heritage, especially the intangible heritage, will soon disappear. This is especially true since there has been an increased interest among the middle-class society in enrolling their children in international elementary schools. Many of these children are even on a waiting list for years before they can be admitted as students in such schools.

IV. CONCLUSION

The essence of the intangible cultural heritage preservation is to maintain the balance and harmony of the ideas, wisdom, and customs that have been established, including the signs and symbols passed on by oral transmission, arts, language, ways of life, myths, beliefs and rituals, value system and traditional knowledge and know-how.

The concept of governance of intangible cultural heritage adopted based on the facts in the society should be applied by increasing public knowledge from early on of the intangible cultural heritage, such as the local languages, arts, culinary products, mythology, Balinese *gamelan*, by re-establishing traditional dance studio activities in the palaces, royal residences, and ecotourism areas, and by collaborating with the tourism industry to disseminate the importance of local wisdom-based ecotourism consistently, especially among international elementary schools in Bali

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