

Indigenous People, Culture, And Traditions: A Catalyst For Ecotourism Development In West Java

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ABSTRACT:

Culture and tradition are inherent in rural communities, both of which are the focus of indigenous people who have always been the center of attention of their communities, especially in the conservation of sacred ancestral heritage sites. Ecotourism is a form of tourism that combines tourism with ecological and cultural preservation. This type of tourism is believed to be the solution of mass tourism activities that have many negative impacts on the environment. This research highlights the role of culture, tradition, and local community's participation which can be used as a catalyst in encouraging the development of ecotourism by case study approach. The results showed that the indigenous people of the Banceuy traditional village still preserved the customs inherited by their ancestors, which also attracted many tourists because they could provide authentic cultural experiences. Although modernization enters the rural environment, the preservation of culture and tradition and the participation of indigenous people can encourage the development of ecotourism that has a positive impact on people's welfare, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. This study recommends that facilitators who develop tourism in an area such as professional planners, consultants, local government, or non-profit organizations really need community participation to achieve success.

Keywords:

culture, ecotourism, indigenous people, tradition.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector can be classified as the largest industry in the world and is an economic sector that has a very fast growth as a provider of employment. Tourism activities can support a broader spectrum of development fundamentals in countries where the tourism sector has well developed. This sector can be a tool for poverty alleviation, sustainable development, and increase the economic prosperity of society (Adom, 2019). Tourism development activities should not only be interpreted as a factor in leveraging the nation's economy, but also as a lever of preservation and conservation of national culture. Tourism also does not only stop at the meaning of human activities for fun, but more broadly as an effort to make sense of life through one's travel experiences.

Traveling for the purpose of increasing experience and knowledge is the goal of many people to travel nowadays. One form of experience that tourists want to feel is cultural experience. Tourists want to experience living in a different environment, and it turns out there is a unity of society that has an interesting living culture and passed on to generations. The way to inherit culture in several places in

Indonesia, majority still uses the method of oral cultural inheritance.

Tourism activities can bring negative impacts on the environment, most of these impacts are related to the construction of public infrastructure such as roads, resorts, hotels, restaurants and increased waste production. Negative impacts on the local population also often occur where the local population begins to be evicted and marginalized if the development of tourist areas does not favor them. If tourism development is not done carefully, it can damage the environmental resources on which tourism depends. To minimize the risk or negative impact of tourism activities, it needs to be developed in accordance with the uniqueness and condition of the region, namely avoiding by simply imitating or replicating the tourism industry from other places. The concept of tourism development based on the uniqueness and condition of the region can be developed by implementing ecotourism tourism development.

Tourism is not only fun activities that have a negative impact actually, but also tourism is an industry that can have many positive effects. Tourism that has many

positive impacts is known as sustainable tourism, and ecotourism is part of sustainable tourism concept which is based on three tourism activities at once, namely rural tourism, nature tourism and cultural tourism (Wood, 2002).

The successful implementation of tourism activities that are environmentally friendly and in accordance with the conditions of the local area can be measured through a sustainable socio-cultural process, natural resources and a sustainable environment; and economic processes that can provide sustainable benefits. If an ecological and sustainable tourism approach is applied well, the tourism industry has the potential to have positive impacts that benefit the community and the environment. This paper highlights how culture and tradition and the participation of local communities especially indigenous people can be used as a catalyst in encouraging the development of ecotourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ecotourism

Ecotourism is a term that connects ecological or natural sustainability with tourism, ecotourism is believed to provide high expectations as a solution to the conflict between economic development and environmental preservation (Hsu, 2019). This can be the reason for the many studies of literature and journals related to ecotourism, and make it a major field for tourism studies. Countries in Asia are the most diversified regions in the tourism and ecotourism sector due to climate diversity, unique physical features, and population density (Weaver, 2008). Asia is also in a different stage of economic development, therefore tourism planners face different obstacles, understanding the concept of ecotourism is urgently needed.

The concept of ecotourism is recognized to describe all forms of tourism activities that do not interfere and can protect nature (Adom, 2019). The concept of ecotourism is a term that links ecological or natural sustainability with tourism (Bushell, 2001). Cultural practices such as traditional festivals that are directly related to protected sites and promote their preservation are also included in ecotourism studies (Adom, 2016). Ecotourism also deals with responsible travel that does not interfere with natural sites including the conservation of natural resources (Cobbinah, et al, 2017), cultural education (Mbatiany, 2016) (Maseleno et al., 2019), recreation and relaxation (United Nations, Sustainable Development of Tourism, 2001), as well as helping in the preservation and expansion of traditional ecological epistemologies that preserve biodiversity (Regmi, & Walter, 2016).

Indigenous People, Culture and Tradition

The involvement of indigenous people in tourism development will guarantee the sustainability of tourism development (Sakata & Prodeaux, 2013; Salazar, 2012; and Idziak, Majewski, & Zmysłony, 2015). Community support in tourism planning and development also has an important role in destination marketing and branding, because the interaction between tourists and the community will affect the moment of truth and the experience of tourists in tourism destinations (Chen & Dwyer, 2017).

Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to others, and to the environment (UNDP, 2019), Indigenous People have distinctive cultural traditions that are still practiced (cultural survival, 2018). The phrase “indigenous people” is a little like the term “native” in colonial usage (Be´teille, 1998).

Indigenous people have a habit that is reflected in the knowledge, actions and results of his work as a social creature that is used to understand the environment and become guidelines for his behavior to achieve peace and well-being of his life which is called the concept of culture (Sibarani, 2012: 93). Furthermore Schwartz (2006: 139) explains that Cultural values emphasize shapes and justify individual and group beliefs, actions, and goals. Institutional arrangements and policies, norms, and everyday practices express ordering cultural value emphasis in societies. For example, a cultural value emphasis on success and ambition may be reflected in and promoting highly competitive economic systems. Cultural value orientations evolve as societies confronting basic issues or problems in regulating human activity. People must recognize these problems, plan responses to them, and motivate one another to cope with them.

The types of tourism activities that can be developed based on their uniqueness are cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is an activity where the main motivation of visitors is to learn, discover, experience and consume tangible and intangible cultural attractions in tourist destinations (Richards, 2018). Rural areas as a man-made environment, is a life order that contains physical elements of spatial planning as a space of activities, non-physical elements in the form of values and accumulation of community activities (Vitasurya, 2015). Currently, tourism world is closely related to cultural activities and it is used as an instrument to promote tourism village (Astawa, Sukawati, & Sugiarta, 2018). Rural tourism has been recognized as a key approach to rural development and poverty alleviation. Rural tourism has the basic feature of employing rural residents, involving recycling and restoring infrastructure and heritage resources as accommodation and tourist attractions (Gao, Wu, 2017).

The concept of tradition literally from the Latin meaning "something handed over," in slowly changing societies was almost equivalent to inheritance. Tradition was both the means of making a living and the symbols, stories, and memories which gave one both identity and status. So we can say that even in situations where society stayed almost the same from generation to generation, "tradition," or whatever people of that society might have called it in their own language, was something pretty central or important (Graburn, 2000).

METHODS

This research was conducted in an area that is developing a nature and cultural based tourism village, namely Banceuy traditional village located in Subang Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. This research was conducted with a qualitative approach to uncover the meaning of research results (Ritchie, Burns and Catherine; 2005) with case study techniques. Case study research is one of the qualitative approaches identified by Creswell (2007: 37,73) in which researchers explore one or more systems that are bound from time to time through various sources of information to gain a detailed understanding of individuals and communities in their natural settings. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources collected during two field investigations: a three-day period in August 2019 and a two-day period in October 2019. In the first period the Banceuy traditional village held a Ruwatan Bumi celebration and in the second period there was a cultural festival that featured some traditional arts. This research was conducted in natural conditions, is a discovery and researcher is key instruments.

Data collection techniques implemented by observation of participation are a way to observe the behavior of a community by becoming directly involved in their activities (Creswell, 2017: 24). Interviews were conducted with cultural actors and community leaders of the Banceuy traditional village who understood cultural heritage, indigenous people, and tourists who were conducting tourism activities. Informants were chosen purposively and snowball sampling was used. The sampling process will continue until sufficient information is obtained that is accurate and can be analysed to draw research conclusions. The results of the data search are then processed qualitatively and described in a descriptive form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The traditional village of Banceuy is located in Subang Regency, about 32 kilometers from the city of Bandung, the capital of Indonesia's West Java

Province. The traditional village of Banceuy has the potential of a tourist attraction mainly derived from the diversity of culture and nature. The indigenous people still preserve the Sundanese traditional and cultural traditions, therefore the Banceuy traditional village has been designated as a traditional village site by the local government.

Traditions that are still carried out by Banceuy residents include traditional ceremonies. One of the most famous traditional ceremonies is Ruwatan Bumi which is a ceremony to reject reinforcements as well as a form of gratitude to the Creator for the blessings of their crops. Community rituals that grow from agricultural cultivation are manifested in traditional ceremonies and native traditional arts passed down from generation to generation. At each ceremony the Banceuy indigenous people performed many traditional dances and arts.

Some traditional ceremonies performed by Banceuy residents can be a tourist attraction that attracts many visitors and provides cultural experiences from indigenous people lives. The indigenous people run their daily life has attracted many tourists to visit their region. Experiencing the local indigenous cultural has also become the tourists' motivation to visit the destination. Hence, the interaction between the tourists and the people in the destination will raise some impacts in the social, cultural, and economical aspects for the indigenous people. A native community member explained that although the shape of the house building was quite modern, the indigenous people of Banceuy still upheld their ancestral customs, so that the Banceuy Traditional Village was called Kampung 1001 Adat.

Besides being famous for its cultural tourism, the traditional village of Banceuy has natural beauty that holds amazing natural tourism potential. Among them has a waterfall (Curug Bentang) and currently being developed is Leuwi Lawang. Leuwi Lawang is in the river that passes through this village. Leuwi means deeper part of the river and Lawang means gate. But even though it is called leuwi, only a small portion of the river body has deep water, most of the water level is only feet to knee-deep adults.

The Banceuy traditional village community is open to visitors, and is now visited by tourists, students and cultural researchers. In the first period of data collection, during the Ruwatan bumi event, many visitors came from researchers, students who learned about culture, and tourists who wanted to gain authentic cultural experience. During the second data collection period when the cultural festival was held most students came to learn Sundanese culture and experience the life of rural communities. A cultural leader said that the cultural traditions in Banceuy have survived to this day because of the concern of their citizens. Cultural art has always been introduced to

generations of Banceuy residents since childhood and involved all members of the community to participate in every traditional event. It is very important to instill a sense of pride in their culture so that they love their own culture more.

Visitors who come to the Banceuy traditional village usually when there are traditional activities, often also come in groups from schools, agencies, and companies who want to enjoy the beautiful nature by carrying out various activities such as participating in community gardening or hiking. They usually stay at local resident's homes, this is what requires residents to provide accommodation and food and drink needs. The existence of tourism activities in a destination can certainly bring economic benefits to the community and can improve the welfare of the local community. The forms of local participation began to be seen in tourism activities as tourism information service providers, arts performers, arts regulators, visitor arrangements, accommodation service providers, and transportation.

Tourism development can be used as a life strategy for local people. People make a living from natural resources, while the number of areas remains the same, the number of population increases. Therefore, they need to think about other types of work to make a living and tourism activities have proven to be an economic generator for the community. Unfortunately the readiness of local residents to provide for tourist needs while doing tourism activities is still very limited. This condition really needs assistance in improving good services so that tourists feel comfortable and satisfied without losing the atmosphere of everyday rural life that is usually done by indigenous people. Community empowerment in developing tourism is crucial, it needs to be done so that people can develop tourism in a balanced manner, especially in anticipating the negative impacts of tourism and optimizing the positive impacts of tourism development. In line with Siregar (2019) stated, that the role of local community can develop people for an inclusive social responsibility, community building and community development.

The people of Banceuy traditional village highly respect nature, local customary leaders state that humans remain as part of nature, unable to declare themselves to be rulers. This shows that humanity is faced with a process of interaction and adaptation to the surrounding natural environment that can balance their lives. Besides that, the indigenous people of Banceuy can be said to have high social capital, this can be seen from their harmonious, mutual cooperation, mutual assistance, and mutual trust. But it still does not escape from other problems it faces, among others: the inclusion of cultural influences from outside, the number of migrants so the people are no longer homogeneous, and the lack of human resources

in providing tourism needs. If this problem is not resolved immediately, then this tends to marginalize indigenous communities by migrants: those who do not obey the existing values, are less willing to preserve their ancestral traditions, and tend to ignore the existing social order.

A tourist from Japan with an academic background stated that with the large number of visitors who come and the interaction between residents and tourists can have a negative impact on native people's behavior, it was further explained that the value of authenticity and the sacredness of customary traditions could also be contaminated if too many outsiders visited. Therefore the role of indigenous people is needed to always maintain local traditions and culture, and tourists who come must also respect nature and culture. At present the current trend shows that domestic and foreign tourists prefer this type of special interest tourism. The development of environmentally friendly tourism attractions is an alternative tourism that pays great attention to the preservation of tourism resources. Sarah & Claire (2013: 28) revealed that eco-tourists choose their destination in accordance with the types of products offered; generally they are looking for specific experiences they cannot reach in other areas. Therefore providing a high value product and services is very important.

Social ties that are built up among members of indigenous communities who still hold to strong values, norms and customs make them able to survive in various of changes. They interact with each other and work together in a social relationship based on a shared need and purpose. It appears that the norm governing relations between fellow Banceuy indigenous communities is to uphold an attitude of peaceful living and avoid conflict. They must maintain the best possible relationship with others. The norms that govern the lives of members of the Banceuy indigenous community are highly upholding traditional and religious values. The presence of traditional leaders in the lives of community members is central to their lives, therefore customary leaders must become physical and spiritual role models for their citizens. This principle shows the harmony of life in relation to the Creator. Live a good life, reasonable, and not excessive

The existence of traditional leaders who are respected and obeyed by the local community and good social ties can be believed that the presence of tourism activities that began to grow in the traditional village of Banceuy is able to make a change in mindset, way of thinking, and action way of society. Society can respond to change without falling over and being carried away by its negative influences. Community participation in tourism includes preserving local culture, exploiting economic opportunities, and preserving the natural environment. Therefore culture,

tradition and local communities' participation can be used as a catalyst in encouraging the development of ecotourism.

Culture and traditions that are still carried out by local communities can be a potential for the development of ecotourism-based tourism, and ecotourism activities can be used as a medium for the conservation of cultural values and community traditions. The relationship between culture, tradition, indigenous people and ecotourism is a symbiosis of mutualism. Therefore, ecotourism-based planning must ensure the conservation of cultural values and traditions by actively involving the local community in the planning and implementation of ecotourism activities.

Ecotourism is an alternative tourism considered as one way to improve the economic life of rural communities because it can provide employment opportunities, business opportunities, and improve the development of business ability (Scheyvens, 2000). Also can provide greater opportunities to control the use of natural resources in certain areas as one of the assets of ecotourism activities (Ashley & Roe, 1997) and tourism could be a solution to the misuse of natural environment, brings about socio cultural and economic benefits to the members of the village (Ernawati, 2018).

Researchers recognize the need for deeper and more active involvement of local communities, this creates the concept of community-based tourism or community-driven tourism (Iorio & Corsale, 2014; Gascon, 2013; Hwang, Stewart, & Ko, 2012), where local people can support and participate in protecting their cultural identity and natural environment, and providing economic and social regeneration to their communities (Russell, 2000).

The community-based tourism development model (CBT) makes the community a key player, and encourages the creation of harmonious interactions between resources, local residents and visitors (Prasiasa, 2013: 98). Therefore facilitators who develop tourism in an area such as professional planners, consultants, local governments, or non-profit organizations really need community participation to achieve success. In relation to the involvement of local communities, tourism development with a community-based approach involves the community in planning, construction, maintenance, and managing all aspects of its development (Harwood 2010).

One strong factor that can be used as a basis for people to be involved in tourism development is their attachment to a place or sense of ownership. A sense of love for the region raises the spirit to care for, utilize, and preserve the area. Furthermore, it can be used as a sustainable tourist attraction, it will affect its actions to provide the best work for the area it lives on. Environmental preservation can only be achieved by involving people who live and rely on the area to be

developed as a tourist destination and make them partners in the tourism development.

The implementation of ecotourism is an important economic activity that provides an opportunity for tourists to gain experience about nature and culture and understand how important conservation of biodiversity and local culture is. At the same time ecotourism can provide income generation for conservation activities and economic benefits to the people living around the ecotourism area.

CONCLUSION

The traditional village of Banceuy has the potential of a tourist attraction mainly derived from the diversity of culture and nature. The indigenous people still preserve the Sundanese traditional and cultural traditions that appear from various traditional ceremonies which are carried out as a form of gratitude. Traditional arts are presented by residents in every traditional activity. The existence of waterfalls and river flows that are still natural can also be a tourist attraction. The existence of natural and cultural conditions that are still well maintained has been able to bring in many tourists and cultural researchers. The large number of migrants and the intensity of interaction between Banceuy's native people and visitors can influence the behavior of indigenous people, but the social ties that are built up between indigenous people who still hold strong values, norms, and customs, make them able to survive. The existence of traditional leaders is central to their lives as a good role model for their local community. Therefore, the existence of a strong native community holding culture and tradition can be a catalyst in the development of tourism based on the uniqueness and potential of community. Indigenous people as key players can encourage the creation of harmonious interactions between resources, local residents and visitors. Therefore, ecotourism-based development planning must ensure the conservation of cultural and traditional values by actively involving indigenous people in the planning and implementation of ecotourism activities.

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