Understanding Community Participation within Sustainable Rural Tourism Development (A Case Study in Kalibiru Village, Yogyakarta Special Region, Indonesia)

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ABSTRACT

The development of rural tourism is estimated can led to a new dimension of sustainable development. The government of Indonesia has made some efforts to realize the target of increasing the country's foreign exchange income with digital tourism, rural tourism homestay, and air connectivity. Regarding this target, community participation is needed to become the main subject of rural tourism. However, the development of rural tourism in Indonesia still encounters various obstacles such as lack of promotion and innovation in programs. Using qualitative method, author explore the barriers, facilitators and how to overcome challenges within the sustainable rural tourism development in Kalibiru village, Yogyakarta Special Region, Indonesia.

INTISARI

Pengembangan desa wisata diperkirakan dapat mengarahkan ke dimensi baru keberlanjutan pembangunan. Pemerintah Indonesia telah melakukan usaha untuk merealisasikan target peningkatan devisa negara dengan pariwisata digital, homestay desa wisata, dan konektivitas udara. Berdasarkan target tersebut, partisipasi masyarakat desa wisata diperlukan sebagai subjek utama desa wisata. Meskipun demikian, pengembangan desa wisata masih menemui berbagai kendala diantaranya terkait kurangnya promosi dan inovasi pada program. Menggunakan metode kualitatif, penulis mengeksplorasi hambatan, pendukung dan bagaimana mengatasi tantangan dalam keberlangsungan pembangunan desa wisata di desa wisata Kalibiru, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

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1. Introduction

The development of rural tourism has gained considerable attention from all over the world. It is estimated that rural tourism will be able to rejuvenate the concept of tourism and led to a new dimension of sustainable development (Aref & Gill, 2009). Stated by Nuryanti, rural tourism is defined as a form of integration

between attractions, accommodation and supporting facilities presented in a community life structure that blends with the prevailing rules and traditions (as cited in Dewi, 2013).

Rural tourism as one of the development options began to be considered a panacea to improve the economic level of marginalized areas, stimulate social regeneration and improve the living conditions of rural

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communities (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). Moreover, rural tourism can be an essential job opportunity for residents and believed to be an essential force to develop disadvantaged rural areas.

Sustainable tourism demands both the sustainable growth of tourism's contribution to the economy and society and the sustainable use of resources and the environment (Liu, 2003). Furthermore, sustainable tourism development meets the needs of host regions and tourists, preserving and evolving the possibilities for the future.

There are studies on the development of rural tourism which confirm that community involvement is an essential requirement for ensuring sustainability. (Bramwell & Lane (2000:272); Bramwell (2010:239); Bramwell, 2011; Salazar (2012:12); Sakata & Prideaux (2013:s1). So, the emphasis is placed on maximizing community involvement in tourism development, aside from social, economic, and environmental issues (Sakata & Prideaux (2013:4); Saufi, O'Brien, & Wilkins (2014: 801).

In Indonesia, the tourism industry is undergoing rapid development. In 2015, Indonesian tourism contributed to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) amounting to USD 12,225 billion. In the same year, foreign exchange from tourism was the fourth most significant contributor to the country's foreign exchange income, after oil, gas, coal, and palm oil (CPO). This ranking showed an increasing trend since 2011 when it was only in the fifth rank out of 11 commodities that contribute to Indonesia's foreign exchange income (Ministry of Tourism, 2016). Moreover, as shown in Figure 1, according to the Government Instance Performance Report (LAKIP) of The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy in 2017, tourism projected as the most significant contributor to foreign exchange income in 2020.

Figure 1 The Projection of The Indonesian Foreign Exchange in 2015 – 2019

Source: Ministry of Tourism, 2017a

The Government of Indonesia through the Ministry of Tourism has made some efforts to realize the target of increasing the country's foreign exchange income with digital tourism, rural tourism homestay, and air

connectivity (Ministry of Tourism, 2017a). The target proves that rural tourism is one of the leading tourism products that contribute to the country's foreign exchange income. Furthermore, the Ministry of Tourism collaborates with the Ministry of The Village, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration to map the potential of a village to be transformed into rural tourism, build infrastructure, and pack local traditions and culture as a tourist attraction.

The target number of rural tourism in Indonesia from 2015 to 2019 according to The Ministry of Village, Development of Disadvantaged Area, And Transmigration are 4000 rural tourism. From the target mentioned, there 1902 tourist villages have the potential to be developed (Ministry of Tourism, 2017bs). The target shows that the tourist village in Indonesia still has a great opportunity to become one of the potential tourist attractions that can be seeded.

Of the many rural tourism in Indonesia, the author chose Kalibiru village as research location. The reason is that the Kalibiru village has had quite encouraging developments since it was launched in 2008. However, the development of rural tourism in Indonesia, especially in Yogyakarta Special Region still encountered various obstacles. In fact, several tourist villages had been closed down and it happens quite frequently. The cause is related to stewardship, lack of innovation in programs and tourist attractions and lack of the promotion of rural tourism.

Indonesian Law No. 10 of 2009 mentions that tourism is empowering the local community. The community is entitled to play a role in the development process of tourism with an obligation to safeguard and preserve tourist attractions; to help create a safe, orderly, clean, polite, well-behaved environment; and maintain the environmental sustainability of tourism destinations. Community participation is also described explicitly in the same law. The law stated that the development of tourism is needed to promote the equalization of opportunities and benefits for the residents as well as being able to face the challenges of the ever-changing way life of the locally, nationally, and globally. This paper is exploring the motivation, barriers, and facilitators to community participation. Further, this research analyses how to overcome challenges in community participation to achieve sustainable rural tourism development.

2. Theory

2.1 Sustainable Rural Tourism Development

Sustainable rural tourism development can be described as the application of sustainable tourism development to rural destinations. Sustainable tourism is in high demand due to mass tourism which was

insensitive to its social, cultural, economic, and environmental conditions of tourist destinations (Fiorello & Bo, 2012). As a result, sustainable tourism is used to avoid the adverse effects of tourism on local destinations (Dolnicar, 2006).

Sustainable rural tourism development has been defined as tourism which focuses on the appropriate policies and strategies that could guarantee the benefits while restricting its negative impacts of rural tourism in a rural community (Ertuna & Kirbas, 2012). There are four dimensions of sustainable rural tourism development, namely social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability (Timur & Getz, 2009). Hence, the following sections discuss the four dimensions of sustainable rural tourism development:

a) Social

Murphy (1985) explains tourism using a sociocultural event for all the stakeholders. However, the development of tourism in rural areas has led to some changes in the structure of the community in positive (Lankford, 1994) and negative ways (Ap & Crompton, 1993). Hence, it is crucial that the social impacts of tourism should be considered through the planning process so that benefits can be enhanced (Brunt & Courtney, 1999).

b) Cultural

The cultural impact resulted from the fact that tourism has a long-term effect and will cause changes in a society's values, beliefs, and cultural practices, especially in rural tourism destinations (Brunt & Courtney, 1999). Therefore, the cultural impact of tourism should be considered throughout the planning process of all rural destinations.

c) Economic

A positive economic feature of the development of rural tourism increased employment opportunities and economic growth (Akkawi, 2010). On the contrary, rural tourism development can bring negative economic impact such as increasing the land prices of the destinations of rural tourism (Ap & Crompton, 1998). Benefits accrued to a minority of the host population will lead to negative attitudes and perceptions among the stakeholders. Hence, equality in benefits distribution is essential for local communities to have positive perceptions towards rural tourism in their community.

d) Environmental

In today's society, food safety and environmental friendliness are the most common reasons used as essential motives in influencing tourists to see a destination (Widyasari & Haryanto, 2010). However, mass tourism influences the natural resources of a community. Consequently, local communities seem

reticent and discontent with the tourism development projects (Mason & Cheyne, 2000).

Thus, local communities' involvement and relationship quality are crucial if rural tourism is to be sustainable (Fun, Chiun, Songan, & Nair, 2014).

2.2 *Community Participation in Rural Tourism Development*

Increasing community participation in tourism is a significant issue that needs to be faced by governments. (Lekaota, 2015). Local communities should be encouraged and expected to participate in the planning, developing tourism, and controlling government support. Particular attention should be given to including indigenous people, women, and minority groups to ensure equitable distribution of the benefits of tourism (Hoda et al., 2016)

The participation of local people in tourism can be seen from two sides; from the perspective of the decision-making process, and from the tourism benefits. The participation of the community in the decision-making process is essential, but in many cases, their participation may be limited to voice their thoughts on matters relating to the development of tourism in their area. This procedure is referred to as community tourism. A term used to define an approach to tourism in which the needs and views of inhabitants are combined in the planning and development process is referred to as community tourism.

The participation of the community in tourism is not without any barriers. There are some obstacles to public participation in tourism activities. Community involvement can be seen as a course in which the inhabitants of a community are given a choice and allowed to voice their opinion to participate in issues affecting their lives. Whether a community participates or not is determined by many factors. The constraints include the following: absence of community participation in development policy; lack of knowledge and awareness; power disproportions between governments and local communities; segmented and complex institutional arrangements; and lack of financial.

There are two arguments as to why the involvement of local communities in tourism development is often difficult (Scheyvens, 2002). The first is that communities are heterogeneous (Blackstock, 2005). A society comprises of many different kinds of people, frequently with different positions and different aspirations. This situation leads to an unequal opportunity for community members to participate in tourism activities. Higher status community members are more to be expected to participate in tourism development and will not always act in the best interests of other community members. The question that thus remains is who and how many people

in the rural community should participate (Tosun, 2006). The second challenge identified is that societies frequently lack information, resources, and powers (Schreyvens, 2002). This difficulty makes it especially challenging to reach the potential visitors or market. The community is thus reliant on other stakeholders and is then vulnerable.

Other research related to community-based rural tourism (CBRT) deliberates barriers to sustainable CBRT participation beneath two different sides; that is from those of the host communities and the government. This research attempts to develop a conceptual model of community participation for sustainable rural tourism development by integrating Kamarudin's (2013) barrier on community participation adapted from Aref and Redzuan (2008), Dunn (2007), and Dukeshire and Thurlow (2002).

Figure 2 Conceptual Model

Source: Adopted and modified from Aref and Redzuan, 2008; Dunn, 2007; and Dukeshire & Thurlow, 2002

3. Research Method

This study used a qualitative approach in a single case study design. Qualitative research involves fieldwork as it aims to describe the exact nature of community participation within sustainable rural tourism development in Kalibiru Village, Yogyakarta Special Region, Indonesia. Data were collected through field observation and in-depth interviews with ten community participants and five key stakeholders. Data were

analysed using content analysis using following steps: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Triangulation of data collection techniques and data sources from a variety of rural tourism stakeholders to clarify the gap between reality and ideal public participation in achieving the objectives of sustainable rural tourism development.

4. Results and Discussion

Kalibiru tourist village is located in the protected state forest area in Hargowilis, Kokap, Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta Special Region. This tourist village is a sub-unit of community forestry activities managed by Kelompok Tani Hutan Mandiri (A Group of Forest Farmers). The formation of community forestry is done to improve the welfare of the people around the forest while maintaining the sustainability of the forest. Starting from the community forest, the contribution and the participation of the community in the rural tourism is more clearly visible.

4.1 The motivation of Community to Participate in Sustainable Rural Tourism Development at Kalibiru Village

a) Economic Motivation

The motivation of Kalibiru Village communities in the development of rural tourism is to eradicate poverty and create job opportunities in their area. According to the interview with the Kalibiru manager, before the establishment of rural tourism, The Kalibiru village is located on a barren plateau area. Their main livelihood is farming and looking for firewood in the forest. The Kalibiru community never imagines that their village would be rural tourism as it is today. Therefore, they strive to develop and maintain their tourist villages to keep earning from working at it.

b) Social Motivation

Social motivation owned by Kalibiru community is to provide social and financial support to the under privileged community members by conducting some home improvement activities, giving a donation to orphans and nursing home residents, as well as assisting in the construction of a mosque.

Other than that, with the existence of a tourist village, it is hoped that the interaction between the community members can be more harmonious because they have to work together to build Kalibiru. Moreover, it is expected to shape the mindset of young people in that area to become hardworking and diligent as well as empower them to support the development of the tourist village.

c) Cultural Motivation

Although there are not many, Kalibiru tourist village has some art and culture activities that they want to preserve, including art Jathilan and Angguk. At the beginning of the formation of the tourist village, the art was quite often performed for tourists, but lately, it is rarely done because the manager is more focused on the tourist object in the form of photo spots.

d) Environmental Motivation

The development of this tourism object resulted from the anxiety of the community. The Mandiri Forest Farmer Group manages the forest due to the alteration of its status from a production forest to a protected forest. Protected forests are forest areas that have the primary function of protecting life-support systems to regulate water, prevent floods, control erosion, prevent seawater intrusion, and maintain soil fertility as well as improve the air quality. As a protected forest, the utilization of Kalibiru forest is insufficient, i.e., only for environmental activities, non-timber forest products, and other land utilization that do not change the structure of the forest. Therefore, people who have planted hard plants such as mahogany, sonokeling, and teak cannot take wood forest products. Kalibiru Village was built to maintain the income of the community and preserve the forest. In addition to that, Kalibiru people want their tourist village to stay clean and beautiful. Therefore, they are trying to manage waste by sorting waste according to its type. (see figure 3).

Figure 3 The trash can in Kalibiru village

Source: survey result, 2018

4.2 Barriers and Facilitators of Community Participation in Sustainable Rural Tourism Development at Kalibiru Village

The community in Kalibiru village has experienced different conditions regarding community participation. Kalibiru village community has several barriers to participating. One of the obstacles is the lack of public understanding of the rules regarding rural tourism. Even though the regulations related to the development of rural tourism have been applied by the government, in practice, people still do not understand the regulations.

4.2.1 Barriers of Community Participation in Sustainable Rural Tourism Development at Kalibiru Village

a) Barriers of Community Participation in Host Community

There are four barriers to participation faced by Kalibiru communities, such as:

1) Lack of Innovation

From observations made by the author, Kalibiru rural tourism lacks innovation regarding attractions and accommodation. This tourist village only has several spots to take pictures as the main attraction.

2) Lack of Representation in Decision Making Process

The lack of representatives in the decision-making process is the main problem in community empowerment. It is shown by the absence of the local community leader or rural tourism managers from Kalibiru Village in several deliberations of development plans (*Musrenbang*) organized by villages, district or regency government. They usually missed the meeting because they are too busy with their activity in rural tourism.

3) Lack of Relationship with Government

As previously mentioned, regarding the lack of representation in the decision-making process, the relationship between the Kalibiru tourist village community and the Kulon Progo government is perceived as lacking. According to the interview with one of the officers in the Tourism Office Kulon Progo Regency, the government has been in touch with the community only through coaching-related services such as culinary training, and how to entertain guests. Special tourism programs for rural tourism do not yet exist. Kulon Progo Regency Government has only emphasized the empowerment of the community, but not trying to maintain the concept of rural tourism.

4) Lack of Understanding in Policy Process

Regarding participation, the Kalibiru village may be called as independent rural tourism with very high community participation. However, the findings on the location proved that the Kalibiru community, especially the managers of tourist villages, still do not know how the policies related to the tourist village should work. The informant from Tourism office of Kulon Progo Regency also added more information that as far as they (Tourism office) know, the majority of tourists often prefer to stay in the cottage (provided in nature tourism site) rather than in a community homestay. According to the government itself, the

concept of rural tourism is to experience “live in” in the village and doing some activities with the rural community. In Kalibiru, there is a confusion that occurs among the people about whether they want to be a tourist village or they want to turn their village into mass tourism in general that carries the concept of nature.

- b) Barriers of Community Participation in Government
There are two barriers to participation faced by government, especially Kulon Progo Regency government, such as:

1) Lack of Funds

Tourism has not been a priority in the vision and mission of Kulon Progo Regent. Therefore, both the program and budgeting have not favored the tourism sector. When they are compared with the other Regencies and City in Yogyakarta, the contribution of the tourism sector for the District Own Source Revenue (PAD) of Kulon Progo Regency is very small, only one percent, therefore the government of Kulon Progo Regency has not made the tourism sector as the leading sector contributing district own revenue (PAD). Supported also by one of the informants from the Tourism office of Kulon Progo who stated that tourism in Kulon Progo Regency is currently not a priority, he added that it has not received adequate funding support.

2) Lack of Structural in Government

The government knowledge, in this case, the staff of Tourism office of Kulon Progo Regency about the tourist village is very diverse; as a result, there is no standard approach when giving assistance and coordination to the tourist village. The mindsets of Kulon Progo Regency Tourism officers about tourism, especially the rural tourism is still very limited to the definition that a tour is a picnic or an excursion. They do not think about the regulation and the definition of the tourist village itself. Also, the lack of staff in charge of assisting village tourist becomes a significant obstacle. In the Tourism office of Kulon Progo Regency, there is only one special section that handles the tourist village, namely the Human Resources section, which only has two staff members and one of them is in the process of completing a study after getting a scholarship from the government. Consequently, at the moment, there is only one person who handles rural tourism activities, which is apparently not enough.

4.2.2 *Facilitators of Community Participation in Sustainable Rural Tourism Development at Kalibiru Village*

- a) Facilitators of Community Participation in The Host Community

1) Natural Resources

Kalibiru has developed into a tourist village that is in high demand by tourists. Its location adjacent to the Sermo reservoir, therefore, it allows tourists to visit two tourist destinations at once. The beautiful nature becomes the trademark for this rural tourism. The combination of Kalibiru's natural beauty and the local tradition of the society, such as agriculture, farming, and culture can form an exciting new destination called rural tourism. Kalibiru has managed to attract tourists who want to capture the beautiful scenery from the hills, enjoy the cool temperature and experience the hospitality of the villagers. In addition to that, Kalibiru tourist village also offers other attractions such as outbound and tracking.

2) Human Resources

For the people of Kalibiru rural tourism, human resources are the main capital in the management of their tourist village. All elements of society have supported the development of a tourist village after its function was altered from publicly managed forests. When Kalibiru is transformed to become a tourist village, not only it becomes a tourist attraction, but also generates jobs for the residents in that area. As expressed by the Kalibiru rural tourism manager that the workers in Kalibiru are all locals. There are 250 personnel involved in Kalibiru tourism. Almost 75 percent of the population is absorbed in the tourism sector. There are about 76 employees who work full-time. They are also paid with a minimum wage of workers there around IDR 1.8 million to IDR 2 million per month. There are also 30 freelance employees. The employees who work there have different educational backgrounds, from only elementary school graduates to university graduates. The majority of them, who owns a bachelor's degree, return to their village to promote the tourism sector in the region. During holidays and long holidays, personnel can increase to 1,500 people. This is done so that the tourists can be served well. The employees not only work in the tourist area, but also along the road that leads to the site.

b) Facilitators of Community Participation in The Government

1) Regulations from Government

Although the rules related to rural tourism have been included in the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (RIPPDA) in Regional Regulation of Kulon Progo Regency Number 9 the Year 2015, they are not yet maximal. In the RIPPDA, it is clearly stated that Kalibiru tourist village is included in the Regional Tourism Strategic Region of Kulon Progo Regency. The development of tourist village and the development of tourism facilities to support the development of Kalibiru tourist village are mentioned in Article 17 and Article 21 of the local regulation.

4.2.3 *Strategies to Overcome Challenges of Community Participation in Sustainable Rural Tourism Development at Kalibiru Village*

a) Network Organizations

Kalibiru village communities also voice their aspirations and inputs through the deliberation of the village development plan (*Musrenbangdes*) up to the phase of the district development plan (*Musrenbangkab*). Usually, the managers get the duty to be the representation of the village.

b) Access to Information

In Kalibiru rural tourism, the managers have provided several Wi-Fi spots for visitors so that they can still be active on social media during their visit. These Wi-Fi spots are necessary because the network reception of almost all mobile phone operators is very limited in Kalibiru, because this place is located on top of a hill situated in a relatively remote area. Also, with the support of access to information and the internet, it will be easier for managers to promote tourist village via the internet.

c) Horizontal Initiatives

The cooperation established between Kalibiru tourist village with the Government as well as private parties have been quite good. It can be seen from some of the programs that have been implemented, such as:

- 1) Cooperation with the Government realized through training, trainings organized by the Tourism office of Kulon Progo Regency are culinary training and homestay operating training.
- 2) For cooperation with outside parties, Kalibiru rural tourism has done it with various private parties such as an NGO called Damar and Jeep businessmen.
- 3) In addition, there is also cooperation between the Kalibiru rural tourism with other rural tourism in Yogyakarta through Rural Tourism

Communication Forum and study tours with other rural tourism.

d) Government Initiatives Program

Some programs have been undertaken by The Tourism office of Kulon Progo Regency for the sustainability of the development of rural tourism, such as:

- 1) Provide several trainings such as culinary training and homestay standard service training.
- 2) Tourism office of Kulon Progo Regency links rural tourism to travel agents.
- 3) Tourism office Kulon Progo Regency also promotes the village tour through the official website of the Department of Tourism and tourism exhibitions outside the region.

5. Conclusion

The participation of the Kalibiru tourist village community in the development of the rural tourism is sufficient. Community contributions are manifested in various forms such as: become tourist village administrators, tour guides, and ticket guards.

The motivation of the Kalibiru tourist village community is to add more value in the community forest, and to provide income benefits for residents. Moreover, Kalibiru tourist village community wants to empower some of its members whose education level is not too high.

Barriers of the resident participation in Kalibiru tourism are quite numerous, such as lack of innovations, lack of representation in decision making process, lack of relationship with government, lack of understanding about the policies. In addition, funding issues and regulations related to rural tourism from Kulon Progo Regency are also some factors inhibiting the participation of Kalibiru rural tourism community.

The supporting factors for the participation of Kalibiru community are human resources and natural resources. In addition to Kalibiru's beautiful scenery, the regeneration of the managers of Kalibiru tourist village is not an obstacle, because their young generation has realized the results that can be obtained from the development of the tourist village. Moreover, although the promotion from the government is not maximal, it remains as one of the supporting factors in the development of tourist village.

Strategies to overcoming challenges in community participation of the Kalibiru tourist village community from the community and the government are:

- Access to information: The Kalibiru managers provide Wi-Fi in some spots because the location of Kalibiru tourist village is quite remote. Without the

Wi-Fi, it is difficult for visitors to get a mobile phone signal there.

- Government Initiated program: culinary training and promotion
- Horizontal Initiatives: collaboration with PHRI (association of hotel and restaurant of Indonesia)
- Network organizations: convey their aspirations through *Musrenbangdes* and *Musrenbangkab* (deliberations for village development plan)

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