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**RURAL TOURISM COMMUNITY  
EMPOWERMENT BASED ON LOCAL  
RESOURCES FOR IMPROVING COMMUNITY  
WELFARE: Case on Pentingsari Village, Yogyakarta,  
Indonesia**

— *Review of* —  
**Integrative  
Business &  
Economics**  
— *Research* —

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**ABSTRACT**

Yogyakarta is the second tourist destination in Indonesia after Bali. It offers rural tourism as alternative tourist attractions in a natural and cultural heritage scheme which has been the mainstay of the local government . Rural tourism offer the tourist experience into a new way with direct involvement in the daily life of the rural community. The rural tourism is managed by the rural community itself (called as CBT-Community Based Tourism). This study aimed to measure the success of community empowerment through the rural tourism based on local resources to improve the community welfare. In addition, it introduces a combination of variables that define the economic, social and environment aspect. The study takes place in Pentingsari Village, which has a unique nature and society as a main source of their rural tourism . The quantitative and qualitative empirical research measured based on local resources from the economic, social and physical environment point of view. The method used to explore the changes before and after a rural tourism development.

The result clearly demonstrate that the community empowerment came from themselves based on local wisdom and that the community could change the limitation of their village location become the advantage of their welfare.

Keywords: *Community Based Tourism (CBT), local wisdom, multi discipline research*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The development gap between rural and city area resulted in various problems not only in rural but also in the city. The pace of infrastructure development, employment, industrial development that occurred in the city resulted in the development of urbanization issues (Soetomo, 2009). From definition of the urbanization itself, it is clear that the problems caused by urbanization not only in the city, but also occurred in the rural area. A lot of efforts have been done to overcome the problems that occur in the city. However, with all limitations, efforts to improve conditions in the rural area are complicated.

Since the ability of local governments are very limited, the approach can be used in developing rural areas is to involve all stakeholders to improve the economic status of the people in a sustainable manner. Their focus is on the improvement of the people's economy, because it could affect the improvement of the social welfare in general. Condition of rural society need development policies based on economic determinism, among others, the indicator is the increase in per capita income. To carry out the business of economic improvement of rural communities, the alternative is through the efforts of rural economic diversification. One form of diversification of the rural economy, namely tourism (Barlybaev, 2009).

Recently tourism activity has shifted from mass tourism to a small group of tourism, which emphasizes on the experience with nature and local culture (Fandeli, 2000). It called eco-tourism or sustainable tourism, which develops rural-based tourism on the natural environment that relies on an agrarian lifestyle as one of the tourist attractions. Eco-tourism is a relatively new kind of tourism developed in Indonesia, although internationally since October 1999 the World Tourism Organization (WTO) have issued a Global Code of Ethics for Tourism as an encouragement to the countries in the world to develop sustainable tourism.

Yogyakarta as the second tourist destination in Indonesia after Bali also offers the form of activity-based tourism or eco-tourism, spread over four districts of Yogyakarta. In 2012 the number reached 80 rural tourism, and 50% of it or 38 villages is located in

Sleman district (Dinas kebudayaan dan Pariwisata, Kabupaten Sleman, 2012). Various competitions and awards for the rural tourism were held by the government. It shows the tourist interest and encouragement of the government to the development of rural tourism. The goal of The transformation of agriculture-based village into a activity-based tourism village is an interesting phenomenon that needs to be examined on an ongoing basis to evaluate the increasing of rural communities welfare.

The goal of rural area to be a greater economic value is in line with the demands of rural areas as a tourist destination who look at the meaning of rural tourism as a tourist destination through five different focus, namely life cycle, contingent value, travel experience, quality goals, and the image of the destination (Royo - Vela , 2009). Rural tourism strongly associated with 1) the object of daily life in a typical rural, 2) rural typical values are interesting to learn, 3) different forms of experience traveled to other destinations, 4) the quality of the tour contains more elements of education, 5) rural image of itself that is associated with the beauty of the place and the distinctive culture and image of a peaceful, clean , and full of hospitality (Puswira, 2011 and 2012). Along with the improvement of the local economy, it will be followed by such diverse forms extensive modernization built environment, the number of rooms used as homestay increases, and the quality of the space in terms of shape, structure, and meaning will change according to the perception of modernity. The purpose of present study is to measure the success of community empowerment through the rural tourism based on local resources to improve the welfare of community. The study makes an additional contribution to the entrepreneur research literature by exploring rural entrepreneurs.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Aspects of Rural Tourism**

Tourism is an activity that people engage in various activities in the society. In the context of rural tourism, the rural community as a provider of travel services involving humans with very diverse activities ranging from travel agencies, transport services, accommodation services, food services, tourist souvenir sales services, services to tourist attractions. All of these activities are related one to another in a social system called systemic linkage (Soekadirjo, 1996).

To discuss the aspects of tourism as a major factor influencing the rural transformation means seated rural tourism as a spatial mobility (Soekadirjo, 1996). In the rural tourism context, the daily life of agrarian activities is main tourist attraction such as plowing paddy field, planting, and harvesting, or playing the tradisional musics. This attraction needs to be promoted that requires marketing to

be known by tourists as one of the alternative products that could be chosen. Tourist itself will need to be able to access the destination. Those four elements which are tourist destination, marketing, tourist, and transportation (Soekadirjo, 1996) have to be considered. But there is another version of four key elements to be thought (Cooper, 1998) which are demand, destination, industry and government organizations, and marketing. Those elements are interrelated to each other, so talk about one of the elements will also offend other elements.

Aspects request (demand) connected with the purpose element (destination) forms the type of tourist attraction and tourist motives. Rural tourism linked to cultural motives travelers considering not only the rural tourist came to watch and enjoy the attractions but they usually do a research culture in the local rural area (Puswira, 2011). Therefore the village which could be a tourist destination is the rural villages that have a unique point of view according to travelers with cultural motives (Tim Puswira, 2010a, 2010b). In the other hand the aspect of industrial and governmental organizations related to the demand stands as the formal institution that gave infrastructure towards rural tourism. Infrastructure and tourist transportation is a minimal facilities needed for a tourist attraction accessible for the tourists. But if it is associated with a cultural motives, the provision of infrastructure sometimes influence tourist attraction offered. Thus the aspect of access is also an important physical aspect to be identified as characteristic of rural tourism. .

The aspect of marketing is the actualization aspect of tourist destination. Tourism in rural area needs to be recognized, but marketing strategy should not be interfere toward unique cultural authenticity (Royo - Vela , 2009). Associated with the identification of the characteristics of the tourist village, the marketing aspect is one aspect that will affect the speed of change in the rural area.

From the supply side of the rural tourism, the main aspects that must be considered regarding tourist attractions, accommodation and other services related to hospitality are tour guides, souvenir sellers, culinary diversity. (Tim Puswira, 2010, 2010a , 2010b, 2011, 2012). Tourist attractions present rural cultural attractions as the main object although it may also be associated with other attractions such as natural attractions (natural rural environment), historical attractions (historical buildings and the remains of the past or the environment, and artificial attractions are often also complement the original natural rural attraction (Royo-Vela, 2009). For accommodations in rural tourism houses normally utilize the facilities of accommodation (homestay), while other facilities depending on the potential that exists in every village.



On the other hand, the role of the rural community as a provider of tourist attractions in this very strategic. Rural communities used to perform both the agricultural activities and non-agricultural activities in order to increase revenue Friedman (1988). Therefore, the readiness of rural communities in developing tourism activities is easier, in fact they spontaneously adapt to this new activity.

## **2.2. Community Empowerment of Sustainable Rural Tourism**

The paradigm of rural tourism is trying to involve the local society for their own (Fagence, 1997). The involvement also boosted the local society to wilded their local object, which is manage by themselves to increase their income from tourism. This pattern is based on some criteria which are (1) infrastructure preparing and monitoring by local owner, (2) local society entrepreneurship, (3) increase the local agriculture and other income, (4) a potential structure to actuate the local society development also boost their local justice and mutual understanding.

The local tourism alternative principle also described (Fandeli, 2000) as (1) make do all the infrastructure owned by local community (2) increase the local community benefit (3) simple to make a light a mutual relationship among local community (4) involving local community (5) apply the responsible tourist ethics (6) keep the service quality control. Based on all the principle explained above, there is only one related with the tourist need. But empirically in Indonesia, tourism management is related with top down government policy and passive local society involvemen, and it doesn't meet the community needs (Fandeli, 2000). So, the result from this policy has impact on environment degradation, social problems and community discrepancy. On the other hand if sustainability becomes the focus of rural local tourism then it has to be the meet point of all aspect, social, economic and environment. (Campbell, 1977; Tim Puswira, 2010b, 2011).

The importance of community involvement to carry on the local economic wheel is very clear, but its relation with environment aspect has been contradiction. The important variable to be examined is community attachment to each other and to their place (rural area) in responding with the idea of rural tourism, although the the result is still debatable, some researcher found a positive evidence but some other had the opposite result (Okech, 2012). It demonstrates that the concept of community attachment to each other and to the place is a local context. Therefore, the community in relation with the place is one of the focuses of the rural tourism studies in local context such as Indonesia.

Now adays, the concept of development has shifted to the concept of community empowerment. The shift of paradigm encourages the change from the concepts,

theories, values, methodology, even to its implementation. Empowerment is not just giving people the opportunity to use the resources and construction costs, but also the attempt to encourage people to look for ways to create freedom from the existing structure (Sutrisno, 1999 in [www.pemberdayaan.com](http://www.pemberdayaan.com)). Another concept of empowerment has two meanings: 1) to develop, to be independent, and to strengthen the bargaining position of the lower layers of society against the suppressive forces in all areas and sectors of life, and 2) to protect, to defend and to side of the weak to prevent unequal competition and the exploitation of the weak (Priyono and Pranarka, 1996).

Community empowerment basically contains three main elements (Pitana, 2004). The first is capacity building or community potential. Second is enabling setting. And the third is the political and social support. By using analogy in art, first element is to teach the community how to dance, second element is to set up the stage so that the dancers could have the opportunity to show their skill, and the third element is the power of protection from inedible by competitors, especially in a capitalistic free competition.

When the development of rural tourism is placed on community development framework, then the community is as the host, as the executor / subjects in tourism development. And they also will receive the benefits of tourism development. Thus, the existence of this rural tourism ensure the sustainability of the environment, culture, and culture is maintained, and for the benefit of the community itself (Goodwin and Santilli, 2009).

### **2.3. Management of Rural Tourism Throught Rural Tourism Entrepreneurs**

One important thing is the role of local communities in tourism development. As recently re-activated in Indonesia the program of establishment the tourism consciousness called "Pokdarwis", which is a group of community having attention the development of tourism in their place. So the issues of security, and cleanliness of tourist destinations become responsibility of the community itself. The local community must take a leading role in the discipline and maintain a healthy and clean environment, not only for the sake of tourism, but especially for the health and safety of the community itself. Local communities must also be able to attract the positive benefits of tourism development efforts to increase employment opportunities and income generation. If not, then the local people will just be spectators and not benefited from economic growth in the region. In other words, it is time to encourage the entrepreneurs power of the community called "Pokhawis" which is a part of "Pokdarwis".

One approach to realize "pokhawis" is by entrepreneurship education, which is accompanied by training and mentoring on an ongoing basis. Entrepreneurship education needs to be implemented due to the notion that being entrepreneurial is something that is "descent" or activities of "the gentry" and capital-intensive. Various parties (stakeholders) involved in the field of tourism course are expected to promote the establishment of entrepreneurship education among the local people.

#### **2.4. Improvement of Community Welfare through the Rural Tourism**

The benefits of tourism development is usually only felt by owners of big capital (investors). Travelers staying in hotels, eating and drinking in restaurants, buy souvenirs in the gift shop, and guided by a tour guide from a travel agency. However, with the concept of community empowerment in the development of the rural tourism, the community will receive the benefit of the rural tourism. The consequences of it, the community have to be ready to receive tourists. Community has to learn hospitality, to prepare his house to be a homestay (Pudianti, 2009), to set up an interesting attraction, to compile attractive tour packages, and to maintain a comfortable environment for tourists. The benefit will flow to the villagers itself. Thus, there will be an improvement in the community's economy.

Increasing the community's economy can be seen from the changes before and after setting up the rural tourism. Such changes can be seen from the everyday activities of people, infrastructure changes or rural natural environment, social change, and economic development (Permanasari, 2006 and 2011). The improvement of local economy can be seen from the increase in people's income, or at least the addition of revenues from income outside the main livelihood. Improvement of community welfare can be viewed in terms of the physical environment, the economy, education, improved access to health, and social (Permanasari, 2011). The physical environment includes the home and the surrounding environment. Meanwhile, economic improvement can be seen from the increase in income, economic activity and employment opportunities. Education can be seen from the formal and non-formal education. Furthermore, in the social side could be measured from the increasing of social networking and access to health care and public health.

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study was taken in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta Province (called Yogyakarta), which is the second highest of urbanization in Indonesia after Jakarta. Yogyakarta is well-known as the cultural city, the center of Javanese Culture. The city was chosen because of the tradition of Javanese people that

emphasizes environmental sustainability. This city represents the local context in developing the concept of livability in traditional milieu.

The case of rural tourism was conducted in isolated location of Pentingsari Village with limited access to the village, where the main attraction is on natural green village and local cultural heritage. In fact, the concept of environmental preservation in the village is very visible with the award received in national rural tourism competition for the category "Unique Natural and Cultural Heritage" in 2009, and also an award from the United Nations for the category "Nature and Culture" in 2011.



Figure 1. Map of Yogyakarta and the location of case

The data collection techniques that include (1) In-depth interviews with members of the group guides, homestay group, group interests, consumer groups, farmers' groups to determine their involvement in the activities of a tourist village; (2) Maps or social resource folder, through observation and interviews to identify and obtain: a) map the distribution of tourism and homestay, b) maps of natural resources, c) maps of human resources, d) culinary potential maps, souvenirs, cultural (traditional events), art and history, e) map infrastructure: roads, tourist facilities, and f) Map the physical changes the houses and land utilization; (3) Wealth ranking; help researchers to determine the social and economic status of each household after being involved in activities in the tourist village where the indicator can be prepared in accordance with the findings of fact during the study. Increased prosperity that occurred in the village community Pentingsari seen among other types of housing, income per month, ownership of motor vehicles, electronic goods. This process is obtained by using a questionnaire as a data collection tool; (4) Key informant interviews; informant thought to have a decisive role in the community. The information provided by the key

informants may be issues / problems that are already known to the villagers, but the key informants and know more in detail. Information obtained from key informants is necessary cross checks with other villagers. Among other key informants of the village board travel: travel packages and innovation, human resource and financial management, networking, marketing, and technology utilization.

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Pentingsari started as a rural tourism in 2008, and until the year 2014 it has increased economically. According to Mr. Tony Siswoyo (one of the originators Pentingsari Rural Tourism) after becoming a rural tourism, which was once the people's economy limping along better now, and that was to be felt by the public directly.

Based on a reservation list for the Pentingsari Rural Tourism 2014, scheduled from January to June, travelers have booked derived from a number of schools ( junior high school ), universities, and a number of companies/institutions from the region of Yogyakarta itself, Jakarta, Bandung, Tasikmalaya, Bekasi, even from Malaysia, and Germany. They plan to do camping, live in, as well as a field trip. The number of tourists in groups are 150 people on average, but some are up to 400 people.

A good relationship exists between the administrator of travel gods Pentingsari occur either directly with potential tourists or through travel agents both from within and outside the country.

From the questionnaires distributed to villagers Pentingsari showed that residents earn extra income since their village became rural tourism, although it's less than 1 million dollars per month(95.7%), but some of them could earn an additional 1-3 million/month (4.3%). Nevertheless it is quite meaningful to people because now at least they can have saving.

Besides the advantage of saving, most important things is they have pride of their village and proud to be the part of rural tourism with their respective roles, namely the host of homestay (83%), as a tour guide (25.5%), guides and actors arts (12.8%), a part of food industry (17%), a part of handicraft industry (6.4%), and catering arranger (16.1%). This involvement shows residents participation, and they also get employment opportunities to generate additional revenue. Even if they do not have any skills, at least they can get involved as a homestay host.

From people involved in the activity of the rural tourism, they already have a primary job which earned 40.4% less than 1 million Rupiahs per month, 42.6% earning 1-3 million Rupiahs per month, and only 8.5 % who earn more than 3 million

Rupiahs per month. Their primary job are as a civil servant (23.4%), private employees (4.3%), self-employed (17%), breeders (2.1%), housewives (4.3%), farmers (23.4%), retired (23.4%). Income derived from the main job as much as. Although residents have had major work, they could also have productive activities in their spare time especially the retirees. In addition to having a major work in the formal sector, citizens also have side jobs as farmers (59.6%), breeder (12.8%), entrepreneur (8.5%) and artisans (2.1%). For some residents who have income from the main job, and still have a second job, so they are still getting extra income from involvement in the rural tourism.

Based on the interview with the key informan, there are still people who oppose such rural tourism activity. Some issues also often arise because of jealousy whenever homestay used is only a part of the rural area. It happens because of the potential tourists request with their own criteria of homestay. Due to increase the attractiveness of their home as homestays, residents then improve the condition of their home into a cleaner, more organized, and some of the later increase the number of rooms.

Land is a very precious inheritance and sold very easily when people need cash. It is common in Indonesia especially in the rural area to sell their land in order to provide funds for important occasion such as daughter's and sun's wedding ceremony, higher education and any other social ceremonies. Eventhough Pentingsari is in the isolated location, there is an attractiveness of this location from it's soil fertility, the less poluttion and good quality of life. But the trends of selling their land to outsider could be prevented. People choose to keep their land in the inner circle of the family rather than sell it to others. The ownership of land is on the average of 1.750m<sup>2</sup>/household, with the widest land of 7.000 m<sup>2</sup>. This indicates that people still want to maintain its ground because it can be a source of income through agriculture, plantations and other land uses. This fenomena are clearly shown in Tunggaksemi Group, which is a group of women who are concern in agriculture and plantation. They manage "pos kopi", which is part of a tourist attraction shows the way of processing coffee to the tourist, and this group also utilizes yards from one of the members to be a vegetable garden and also for fish farming. Those activities can be shown and applied for the tourists activities. This kind of manner gives benefit for the rural tourism and also for themself to adding nutrients to the family.

Enhancing the welfare of the villagers Pentingsari also be seen from the changes in its house. A total of 74.5% have been using cement brick, 19.1% use a brick, and only 2.1% are still woven bamboo walls or stone. As for their home flooring, already 70.2% using ceramic floor, 12.8% using cement floor, 8.5% using

tile and only 2.1 % are still using dirt. Most of the improvement of flooring material happened in line with the transformation to be rural tourism.

Increased well-being is also characterized by the possession of electronic equipment. All the people involved in the tourist village activities already have a television, 61.7% have a radio, 66% a refrigerator, 44.7% are already using a washing machine as a tool, 63.8% are already having mobile phones, 19.1% own a computer and 14.9% have a laptop. Ownership of electronic equipment allows citizens access to the latest information from the mass media, and also facilitate the daily lives of citizens.

Other indication of enhancement is the ownership of means transportation. The villages in Indonesia are identical with limited means of transportation. Stretching the changes in the village can be seen with its Pentingsari motorcycle (85.1%), passenger cars (10.6%), car transport (8.5%), and bicycles (10%). Motorcycle become one mode of transportation that has become a mainstay for the villagers to be able to travel to different places, so as to increase the possibility to expand horizons.

Improved well-being clearly visible from the increase of family income and physically, the increase in home conditions and environment. But there are other benefits to society in Pentingsari personal development, namely the growth of leadership, innovator, self-confidence, community participation. For example the retirees with experience and knowledge he has become the driving agent of some innovation activity in the tourist village. More over at first many villagers are still shy or not confident when meeting with people from outside of their region, but after being rural tourism now they are easier to get along with the settlers/travelers. The existence of a rural tourism was also providing impartial role in the community of men and women to participate. More women are involved in the provision of homestay, catering and food industry. While male citizens more involved in the activities of tourist guides, and many other tourist attractions. They also use their network with people outside of major cities to increase the chance of their family members when they need to be in town for education, employment, information.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Referring to Permanasari (2006) that the increase in the community's economy can be seen from the condition before and after becoming a tourist village, it also happened in the Rural Tourism of Pentingsari. Such changes can be indicated from the presence of the additional revenue that they obtained from their involvement in

the tourist village, so residents can spend the income to purchase electronic equipment and adequate transportation.

Physical environments are also more organized, including the condition of the houses are more conducive to becoming a homestay. Social life is also more organized community associated with the roles they should take to get involved in the rural tourism. Women become more apparent involvement in supporting the continuity of tourism industry. In addition, the public is increasingly easy to adapt to new people and also have networking with institutions outside their village. The transformation of rural agriculture to be rural tourism empowers people to face their village obstacle become the advantage of their welfare.

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