

Research Article

COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM MODEL FOR NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS

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ABSTRACT

This paper addressed the formulation of a model of community-based tourism in natural protected areas. This model can encourage ecological tourism as a strategic tool to improve the quality of the conservation areas and the quality of life of local communities. The formulation of the model used a qualitative approach. This approach could reveal a phenomenon based on the experiences and views of local communities and the management of conservation areas in West Bali National Park (TNBB). The results showed that ecological tourism is an instrument for linking various interest groups that initially opposed the adjustment of perception and initiative of each of the parties to change the perspective and practice of interaction in order to obtain a productive relationship. In the context of the development of tourism in TNBB, it can be concluded that the community groups of Manuk Jegeg, which serve as a medium of joint activities between the local communities and the government, is a model that encourages the participation of the local communities in the development of ecological tourism.

Keywords: local communities, ecological tourism, model, protected area

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is believed to be one strategy to improve quality of life of the community. This belief caused by tourism is a non-extractive industry which is able to create economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits for local communities (Eagles & McCool, 2002) The benefits of tourism for the community will further encourage active participation of the local communities in the development and tourism management (Tosun & Timothy, 2003)

Public participation in development and management of tourism activities can at least be done in two ways, namely participation in decision making and participation in the distribution the benefits of tourism (Garrod & Bruce, 2001; Tosun & Timothy, 2003) Participation in decision-making means that the community has the opportunity to voice hopes, desires and fears of the development of tourism, which can then be used as an input in tourism planning process. While taking a role in the distribution of tourism benefits supports the notion that the public should have the opportunity to gain environmental, socio-cultural, and financial benefit of and the linkages with other tourism sector (Tosun & Timothy, 2003) The higher the level of community participation, then the greater the support, acceptance and community tolerance for tourism. According

to Murphy tourism is a community industry, so that the sustainability of tourism is very dependent and determined by receptions and community supports for tourism (Murphy, 1985)

Implications of tourism as community industry is that tourism should not only involve people who directly benefit from tourism, but also people who do not directly contribute to continuity of tourism. Dealing with such matters, Pretty (1995) divide community participation into seven types, namely: manipulative participation, passive participation, consultation, intensive material participation, functional participation, interactive participation, and self-mobilization (Mowforth & Munt, 1998)

Acceptance and support will be formed when tourism is more sensitive and responsive to the various needs of the community. Often the cause of the emergence of issues in tourism development is because of the neglect of the needs of the community. People tend to justify a variety of ways to meet the needs of their lives, even though it is against and counter-productive to sustainability of tourism development. This certainly can lead to conflicts of interest in the communities, the tourism agency and the government as a policy maker of tourism development.

Conflicts of interest are also visible in the development of ecological tourism in West Bali National Park (TNBB). TNBB is a coastal and tropical forest conservation area. In it, there is endemic habitat White Starling (*Leucopsar Rothschildi*), rural areas, and as one of the popular natural tourist destinations in Bali. The emergence of the conflict is caused by low awareness of conservation of the local communities around TNBB i.e. Sumber Klampok community in supporting the TNBB function as a conservational region support and ecological tourist destinations. Livelihood of rural communities still depends on the utilization of natural resources in the conservational area. This dependence can be minimized if the community was involved and participate in TNBB ecological tourism development. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a research to formulate a model of participation of the local community in the development of ecological tourism. The existence of this model is expected to optimize ecological tourism as a strategic tool for improving the quality of environmental services and quality of life of the people residing around the eco-tourism destination.

METHODOLOGY

This study about the participation model of local communities in the development of ecological tourism used

qualitative approach. This approach is a way to reveal the phenomenon more deeply based on experience and the views of the local community and the Park West Bali National (BTNBB). The technique of collecting the data was done through observation and Interview. Interviews were conducted with informants chosen for their knowledge and their importance as figures. There were eight people serving as informants consisting of the chairmen and members of the community groups (Pokmas) of Manuk Jeggeg, village leaders as well as facilitator of BTNBB. Information that was unearthed was associated with each perspective especially informants of Pokmas of Manuk Jeggeg and BTNBB over development ecological tourism. Information collected was further interpreted and presented descriptively.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Interaction of the Local Community with BTNBB: from repressive to persuasive Observations and interviews found some interesting facts. Individuals or groups that mutually interact in the tourism sphere of TNBB can be grouped into two, which directly and intensively interact. The two spheres are the BTNBB represented by forest rangers and people giving forestry extension and local

community groups, especially the ones in the Village of Sumber Klampok.

The combination of the two spheres is a unique dynamic. As if it had become a fact that the relationship between BTNBB and local communities often find themselves diametrical and opposed to each other because each has stereotypes, resulting in exclusive grouping: «us» versus «them». The BTNBB, as a formal and legal institution has the power in the conservation and protection of biodiversity, tends to promote repressive approach when interacting with the local community. Implicitly, this approach is based on prejudice that the community located in the area of BTNBB is destroyers and looters of natural resources and biodiversity. Although conceptually, regional arrangement of BTNBB is based on function and designation to provide opportunities for social, cultural, and economic activities, especially outside Core Zone and Wilderness Zone. But in reality, the utilization of BTNBB area for local community is very limited, thus triggering a conflict actualized through arresting activities. While Local communities themselves have the opposite point of view, tending to regard BTNBB's presence even deprives the rights of forest areas that they have utilized for generations. Local community certainly does not take it for granted when the BTNBB's presence even makes the local communities

as the guilty party and get the stigma associated with a conservation effort.

This relational system having a nuance conflicts experienced a turning point in 2008, when BTNBB sought to change a perspective or perception of the local community. Stereotypes of the people began to be revamped slowly in the mindset of the rangers and people providing forestry extension who have interacted directly with the local community. Through a series of training, seminars, and workshop programs, within BTNBB area which aims to initiate approaches of the empowerment of local communities, the pattern of repressive approach began to be abandoned, replaced with a persuasive approach.

The BTNBB initiative to change the relationships between stakeholders in the TNBB region can be traced since 2010. The intensive approach undertaken by rangers and people providing forestry extension to involve local communities in managing zone utilization jointly in the TNBB region initially got the apathetic response. This is understandable when relations that have been built this time are based on suspicion, which departs from the presumption of vested interests. Through a series of informal meetings, it starts creating intensive communication and is slowly growing a sense of mutual trust. The interaction built through attendance at

informal forums is seen quite effective, when compared with previous interactions in the form of a formal meeting.

Local communities themselves make no efforts to change the stigma attached over the years. Previously community groups have been formed based on profession; such as a group of fishermen and group of farmers. Although the formation of community groups is still a top-down approach, in the sense that it is not yet a pure initiative from the community itself, but it is still associated with the initiatives of the government. A smart idea to bring the two interests, between conservation interests and interests to change the negative image of the villagers of Sumber Klampok arise when development of ecological tourism or ecotourism started to be taken into consideration. Activities of ecological tourism which are under way have not been optimizing the participation of the local community, only managed exclusively by BTNBB and the natural tourism enterprises. The access of local community to participate in the development of ecological tourism is still limited, both in decision-making and sharing of the benefits of tourism.

The spirit of collaboration is increasingly reinforced with environment awareness in the local communities. Based on a series of informal meetings between BTNBB and local communities, come the idea

to form a group people who have economic activities without damaging natural resources in accordance with the existing potential of the local community. The community groups were named Manuk Jegeg. As the name implies, Manuk Jegeg aimed at safeguarding White Starling conservation as TNBB endemic, which is on the verge of extinction. Preservation is done by giving permission for breeding the birds and then the release of the wild ones for local community. Apart from the conservation objectives, Manuk Jegeg also has the objective of economic development for community through a distribution license (White Starlings are merchantability after fulfilling the particular rules) as well as alternative tourism products for tourists who visit TNBB.

Community of Manuk Jegeg becomes strategic, because it is a communication forum that bridges the combination of the interests between local communities and BTNBB in the context of public participation in the development of ecological tourism. It can be said there has been an agreement that ecological tourism is the answer to problems of interaction during this time. The spirit to change the image on both sides is so clear, when the villagers submit a proposal to BTNBB to provide White Starlings for breeding, and the provision of enclosures are fully prepared by the local community. That is,

there has been termination of logic of granting aid in a caritative way, which is sometimes not fully the need of the community and not paying attention to aspects of sustainability. This aid model has proved unsuccessful and is generally practiced by government institutions.

Breeding activities of White Starlings performed by Manuk Jeggeg are relatively successful, and have two important meanings, i.e. from conservation perspective as a preservation attempt of White Starlings which are on the brink extinction, and from a tourism perspective as diversification of product components of ecological tourism. Breeding activities and the release of wild white starlings have become the best tourist attraction and will even be planned as a tourist village. Now the community group has introduced and organized ecotourism products to the market or tourists. From 2010 to 2013 the Village of Sumber Klampok had been visited by tourists coming from Japan and the United States. Besides tourists from Japan and the United States, this alternative tourism product also attracts tourists coming from Europe (France, Germany, and the UK). The attractions sold are of course the breeding of White Starlings and the thrill experiences of rural life. Even local community also has accommodation facilities and culinary by utilizing their houses as homestays.

With the community Manuk Jeggeg, it can be said that participation of local communities in the development ecological tourism in TNBB is categorized into the functional participation. Some indicators which indicate the existence of functional participation in the local community are:

The existence of the interests of external parties; BTNBB has the interest to implement conservational functions and development of local communities. From the chronology of the creation of an interactional pattern between BTNBB and the local community, the information was obtained from both parties that early initiative initiated by BTNBB to include the local community in development ecological tourism.

The formation of community groups as representation of interests; in the case of Sumber Klampok, Manuk Jeggeg community was formed as an institution manifestation that unites the interests of both parties.

Community involvement in decision-making; there is a process of decision-making, local community starts to involve actively. This is conditioned when the BTNBB functions as facilitator in absorbing community aspirations.

Follow-up of the program of external parties; as the manager of conservational area, BTNBB has a program which aims to maintain environmental quality and quality of

life. Manuk Jegog formation also serves as a medium to implement the programs.

The co-optation of the community by the external parties; the opportunity of BTNBB to do the possible co-optation, because in this type of functional participation, local community has not yet fully separated from dependence on external parties. Limitations in terms of facilities, knowledge, and source of funds for tourism operations by local community made their position not fully independent.

From some of these indicators, it can be stated that the participation of local communities in the development of ecological tourism is not entirely a community initiative. The condition is more due to the fact that this type of participation is facilitated and a follow-up of the program of the development of ecological tourism from external parties, i.e. BTNBB. This shows that there are still challenges and obstacles experienced by local communities to optimize its potential involvement in the development of ecological tourism in BTNBB.

Challenge of Local Community Participation in Ecological Tourism

Participation of local communities in the development of ecological tourism in TNBB if it is associated with the presence of community group of Manuk Jegog can be said to belong to the type of functional

participation. This matter is indicated by the presence of the role of external party i.e. BTNBB as a facilitator of Manuk Jegog formation, with the aim for effectiveness and efficiency of conservation programs in the TNBB area. Some indicators showing types of functional participation of local communities in the development of ecological tourism are:

1. The formation of community groups as the representation of interests. In the case of Sumber Klampok, «Manuk Jegog» community was formed as a manifestation of institution combining the interests of both parties (the government and local communities).

2. Community involvement in decision-making. In the process decision-making, local communities began to be actively involved. This matter is conditioned when the BTNBB more serves as a facilitator in absorbing people's aspirations. However, it remains most of the discourse comes from the BTNBB.

3. Follow-up of the program of external parties. As a manager of a conservation area, BTNBB has a program which aims to maintain the quality of environment and quality of life in a conservation area. Formation of Manuk Jegog community group also serves as a medium to implement programs that has been previously planned.

It can be said that Manuk Jegog has not yet fully been independent and capable

of mobilizing all resources or capital owned to achieve goals set by the local community. There are 3 (three) reasons that justify the non-independence or relative persistence of the dependence of local communities on BTNBB in development of ecological tourism:

The interests of external parties; BTNBB has an interest to carry out the functions of conservation and economic development of the local community. From the chronology of the creation of a pattern interaction between BTNBB and the local community, the information was obtained from both parties that the initiative of forming community group Manuk Jegeg was made by BTNBB. BTNBB interests in the Manuk Jegeg existence is putting to a minimum the illegal captures of White Starling by also involving unscrupulous perpetrators of looting in community groups. BTNBB views that the individual perpetrators of the looting are people who have an understanding of white starling behavior especially in the wild. In addition, by providing a distribution license or trafficking right of White Starling if meeting certain requirements to the members of these groups, they will be able to improve the socio-economy of local communities which on the majority is still relatively low. The economic value of Jalak Bali (white starling) which is quite high in the market of course can be

used as an alternative additional income of the local communities. The impact expected to occur when social economic community in the TNBB area increases is the rise in conservation awareness and can be part of a system of early prevention of various forms of looting activity in the conservation area.

Co-operation of the local community by external party; BTNBB opportunities to do cooptation is possible through the mechanism of granting distribution license and operating licenses in the tourist village in BTNBB. The rules are strict and complicated especially in maintaining distribution license for community group Manuk Jegeg causes to date the right to peddle copies of Starling White yet none are owned by members of community groups. This situation raises issues in maintaining the existence of the community group Manuk Jegeg, because most of the group members' expectation is to have a certified distribution license. Besides organizing rural-based tourism in conservation area is constrained by zoning rules, whereas tourism activities are essentially an activity that is borderless.

The existence of a conflict of land ownership; land which is for generations utilized by the local community turns out to be the government asset. It's been long enough for the local community making an effort so that the land becomes theirs, but these efforts

are still unsuccessful too.

Local Community Participation Model in Ecological Tourism

The formation of the community Manuk Jegeg as the institution that brings together the government and public interests preceded by a series of informal meetings conducted between BTNBB and some local community leaders. The title leader in this context is the one that is always involved in a series of meetings. Community leaders referred to here are the office village heads, indigenous village heads, religious figures, farmer groups and fishermen, as well as some members of the public considered to have critical thinking, both the indigenous villagers and newcomers to the village.

The initial meeting between BTNBB and the local community discusses mapping problems, the planning and establishment of programs or activities. The agenda discussion of the meeting is based on the potential owned by local communities regarding some things such as resources or capital owned, and existing institutions and norms. At this point then history becomes an important historical basis discussed to formulate a model of community participation in ecological tourism development.

As noted before, in relation to BTNBB, the local communities have a disharmonious

history. Image as looters made the interaction anti and counterproductive. Both BTNBB and the local community have the right and legitimacy in using the forests in BTNBB. Local communities depart from logic thoughts of customs and traditions, while BTNBB rests on the logic of thoughts representing the government. Departing from the historical consciousness like this, further efforts are made to minimize disharmony.

Based on the mapping problem, it can be identified that the biggest problem is the disharmonious relation between the BTNBB and the local communities. From this then appears the creation of the atmosphere of unproductive relationship. This problem departs from lack of a common perception of both parties in exploiting the conservation region. The conclusion in discussion of the mapping problem is the need for joint activities in order to terminate the disharmony, by utilizing the conservation area especially in the utilization zone for tourism activities.

Planning is then performed to set goals that can be used as a guide to the common use of the conservation area. By exploring the potential of the community which includes natural resources, human resources, existing organization (profession groups), as well as the prevailing norm, then the idea of creating tourism activity in

the conservation area was relegated to the formation of community groups that facilitate the joint activities. Then later community group Manuk Jegeg was formed in 2010, which has two objectives, namely:

1. Breeding and release of wild white starlings which are Bali endemic animals. With the breeding and release, it is expected that the birds which are now threatened to be extinct can be preserved back. This effort becomes strategic when the conservation issues of white starlings are now intensively conducted; so that conservational efforts expected can go hand in hand with tourism activities to be developed.

2. Getting the economic benefits of the conservation efforts, namely by making captivity and release of white starling part of the attraction of ecological tourism villages, as well as the fight for a distribution license

so that the local communities can sell white starlings in a limited and legal manner.

At the empirical level this can obtain interesting findings that tourism can be an instrument bringing together the various interest groups who are initially in opposition to one another. Building the same perception and initiative of each party changes the perspective and practice of interaction in order to obtain a productive relationship. In the context of the development of tourism in BTNBB, it can be concluded that the presence of the community group Manuk Jegeg, which acts as a medium of communication and activities with the community and government is a model that is able to encourage the participation of local communities in the development of ecological tourism.

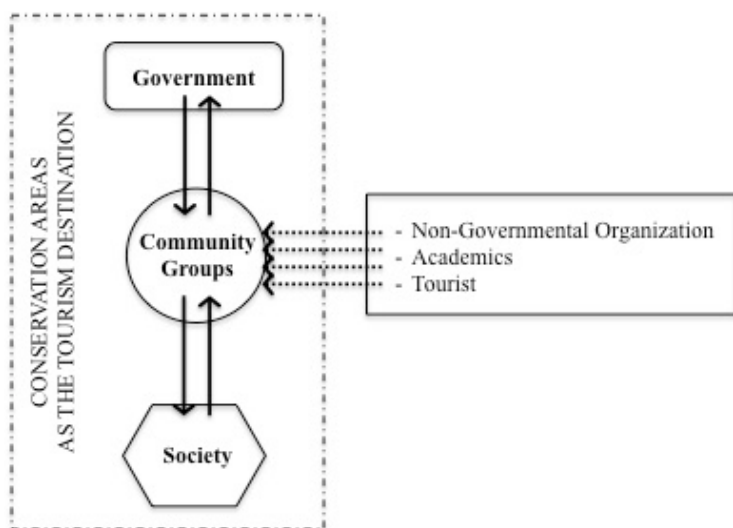


Figure 1 Model of local community participation in the development of Ecological Tourism

Discussion

Building models of local community participation in the development of ecological tourism consists of four main components, namely the government, the community group, the community, and the volunteer.

Government; in this model, which includes the category of government is the provincial government of Bali, Jembrana and Buleleng Regency Government, Grokgak District Government, Village Government of Sumber Klampok, Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA) and BTNBB. The local governments from the provincial level to the village level are the administrative rulers on the development of ecological tourism. Their role is badly needed by the local communities in facilitating diverse related matters that may arise in the management of tourism among various interest groups. Also, the role as a regulator is expected to bottom-up in nature, as a representation of the wish of the local community. BKSDA and BTNBB represent other government representatives, who have the power over the management of the conservational area. The role of these two institutions is very strategic, namely the provision of White Starling distribution license and tourism activities in the utilization zones of BTNBB. The government is included in this model framework to address the incoordination issues among the government

agencies both structural-vertically (central government), and coordinative-horizontally (between provincial governments and/or regency governments). The relation system among government agencies it becomes important to get more attention, especially in facing regional autonomy, which sometimes bring egoism of power exclusively and elitely in the local governments in their respective regions, without thinking holistically for the benefit of broader community.

Community groups; community group is the central point of the models built. This group has strategic significance as a pioneer and simultaneously a driving force for local community-based eco-tourism. It is this group who pioneered TNBB productive activities which used to be «raiders» but now becomes tourism creators, so the stigma of local communities in the TNBB region is slowly eroded. As a driving force, these community groups do their activities proactively starting from organizing the initial meeting for the initiation of tourism that will be created, the formation of institutions to directly involving in the operation ecological tourism. This community group is Manuk Jegeg, which is the meeting point institution for the diverse thoughts, aspirations, and figures the productive utilization of the conservation region. These communities are also a vector of aspiration to the villagers and

the government. What has been pioneered by Manuk Jegeg is expected to stimulate the formation of other community group that will support the tourism built. With the emergence of diverse community groups on the basis of profession or equal interests will increase the number and the kind of attraction that are offered to travelers and the growing «sense of belonging» among them, so that tourism is not interpreted as something of which the benefits are solely owned and enjoyed by certain groups.

Society; tourism operation should be able to improve the life quality of the local communities through community participation in tourism development. In the context of ecological tourism development in BTNBB, participation of the local communities in Sumber Klampok is seen in community group Manuk Jegeg, both in the decision-making process and sharing the benefits of eco-tourism. If the Village of Sumber Klampok interpreted as space tourism, coordination is necessary between official village (government) and the indigenous villages. Coordination is essential as part of efforts to overcome one of the issues in tourism development in Bali, namely dualism of office villages–indigenous villages. Such dualism

often causes problems in division of functions and roles in organizing an activity in rural areas. In the context of tourism operation in the village of Sumber Klampok, these problems will be overcome with the construction more concrete coordination between both institutions at the village level. On the tourism model built, a rule is recommended that is jointly agreed and binding to be obeyed by all rural communities and tourism agencies. If deemed necessary, custom rules will be created or transculturalism-based awig-awig (rules), so that the systems for interaction especially in ecological tourism activities become more synergistic. Coordination between the office villages and indigenous villages become urgent, in drafting collective agreement of which the results will be producing common rules for the creation of conducive atmosphere for the organization of sustainable ecological tourism. Institutions built can be a communication forum involving various decision makers, so the rule would be socialized and adhered together. This communication forum was set by village regulations as well as regulations issued by indigenous villages.

Volunteer; included in this group are parties originating from non-governmental

organizations, academicians, and tourists. Volunteer position as a party to be asked about opinions, advice, and consideration for strengthening community groups and ecological tourism developed in Sumber Klampok. Hopefully, with the input of volunteers, local community can mobilize their own participation in the development of ecological tourism.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A model of community-based tourism can be serve as a medium to encourage the participation of the local community and the government.

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