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Community Participation In Rural Tourism Development: The Experience Of Wanayasa, Purwakarta

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Abstract

Rural tourism has been quite a favourite form of alternative tourism in Indonesia over the last few years. Beeton (2006) defined rural tourism as a various activities that take place in nonurban settings, ranging from natural or manmade attractions, amenities and facilities, transportation, marketing to information system. People want to experience the indigenous culture and natural environment that settled in rural landscape. Many scholars have argued that the success of tourism development in rural areas depends on the collaboration in Indonesia using a case study of Wanayasa, Purwakarta. It assesses the level of community participation, limitations to community participation in tourism development and community's commitment to participate in rural tourism development. To accomplish the main objective of this study, the qualitative approach was chosen as a research method. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion with 21 informants selected which comprises representation from 3 different group namely local authorities in Purwakarta region, representative of local community, tourism institution.. The data were analysed using qualitative content analysis to set priorities and alternative strategies. The results of this study indicated that local people is highly enthusiastic about tourism development in Wanayasa. Community's commitment to participate in the rural tourism development is to contribute to the provision of access and infrastructure, organize cultural events, and preserve both cultural and natural environment independently. Local community is also interested in building mutual partnership to develop tourist destination, build businesses and promote its tourism to potential markets. However, the level of community involvement in Wanayasa is still at the stage of participation with material incentives and functional participation. While limitations of cultural, structural and operational are also challenges that must be anticipated, to bear on society engagement and mobilization in the development of tourism.

Keywords: *community participation, rural area, rural tourism development, rural tourism planning, Wanayasa*

Abstrak

Wisata pedesaan telah menjadi salah satu wisata alternatif favorit di Indonesia selama beberapa tahun terakhir. Beeton (2006) mendefinisikan bahwa wisata pedesaan sebagai bentuk kegiatan yang berlangsung di daerah yang dilur perkotaan, mulai dari wisata alam atau buatan manusia, akomodasi dan fasilitas, transportasi, pemasaran untuk sistem informasi. Banyak wisatawan yang ingin mendapatkan pengalaman tentang budaya adat dan lingkungan alam yang ada di lanskap pedesaan di Indonesia. Para ahli berpendapat bahwa keberhasilan pengembangan pariwisata di daerah pedesaan tergantung pada kerjasama di Indonesia, dengan menggunakan studi kasus Wanayasa, Purwakarta, hal ini menganalisis tentang tingkat partisipasi masyarakat, keterbatasan partisipasi masyarakat dalam pembangunan pariwisata serta komitmen masyarakat untuk berpartisipasi dalam pengembangan pariwisata pedesaan. Untuk mencapai tujuan utama dari penelitian ini, pendekatan kualitatif dipilih sebagai metode penelitian. Data primer dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan diskusi kelompok

terfokus dengan 21 informan yang dipilih yang terdiri perwakilan dari 3 kelompok yang berbeda berwenang yaitu komunitas lokal di wilayah Purwakarta, perwakilan dari masyarakat setempat, lembaga pariwisata. Data tersebut dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis kualitatif dengan menggunakan prioritas dan strategi alternatif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat setempat sangat antusias dalam mengembangkan pariwisata di Wanayasa. Komitmen masyarakat untuk berpartisipasi dalam pengembangan pariwisata pedesaan adalah untuk berkontribusi pada penyediaan akses dan infrastruktur, mengatur berbagai acara budaya, dan melestarikan lingkungan baik alam dan budaya secara independen. Masyarakat setempat juga tertarik dalam membangun hubungan kemitraan dengan para pemangku kepentingan untuk mengembangkan tujuan wisata, membangun bisnis dan mempromosikan pariwisata ke dunia. Namun, tingkat keterlibatan masyarakat dalam Wanayasa masih pada tahap partisipasi dengan insentif material dan partisipasi fungsional. Sementara keterbatasan budaya, struktural dan operasional juga merupakan tantangan yang harus diantisipasi, untuk meningkatkan pada keterlibatan masyarakat dan melakukan mobilisasi dalam pengembangan pariwisata.

Kata kunci: *community participation, rural area, rural tourism development, rural tourism planning, Wanayasa*

INTRODUCTION

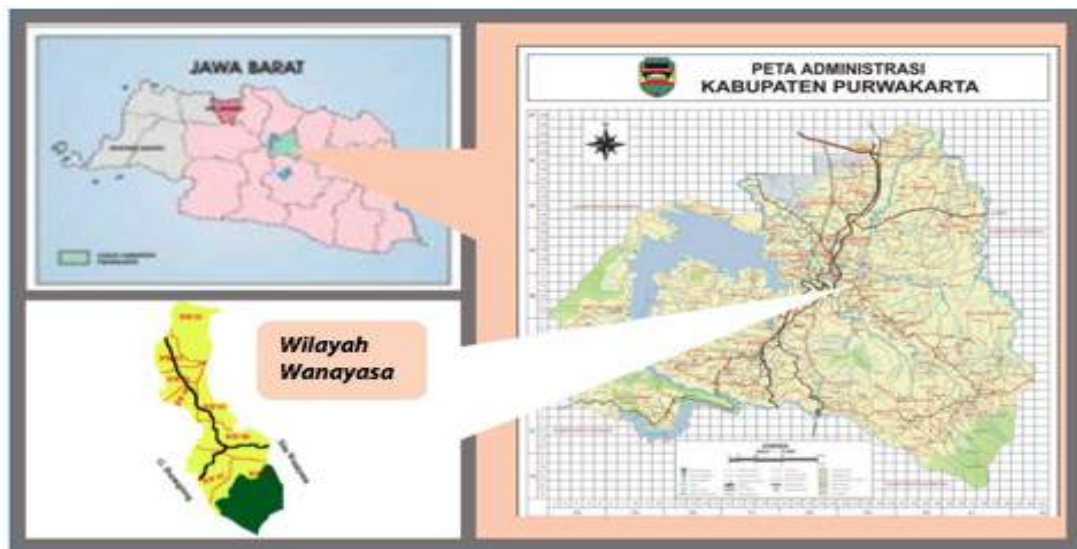
In many countries, tourism is well known for its importance as a driver of regional development due to the positive economic impacts of the industry. It reflects on the effectiveness of tourism planning authority and the role of tourism to contribute to regional development and planning (Shone & Memon, 2008). Beeton (2006) defined rural tourism as a various activities that takes place in nonurban settings, ranging from natural or manmade attractions, amenities and facilities, transportation, marketing to information systems (Aref, 2011). The concept of rural tourism was developed a few decades ago and contributed a new impulsion to the adjustment of tourism as a strategy in regional planning and development. It is believed that while rural tourism will bring economic to the society by generating employment and multiplier effect, it will also bring social benefits by developing educational, social and cultural values (Aref, 2009). Therefore, rural tourism has attracted many stakeholders such as governments, private sectors, NGOs and other organisations (Ghasemi & Hamzah, 2014).

However, there have been many debates whether tourism development was a blessing or a blast. Researches have shown that although tourism brings many positive impacts, it can also causes the loss of sustainability in terms of economic, environmental and social value of the site, especially if it is not properly planned (Adamson & Bromiley, 2008). While tourism can revitalise local economies and strengthen local identity in some areas, it can change economic structural, damage local tradition and social relations between one region to other regions. Therefore, it can damage the viability of local community and environment in such rural destinations.

Studies conducted by scholars have explained that in order to anticipate detrimental impact of tourism development in rural areas, the involvement of local community is essential (Tosun, 2000 & Reid, 2003). The role of community participation in planning

and development is defined as a partnership built on collaboration among various stakeholders through which the opinion of local people are considered and appreciated deliberately (Reid, 2003). In the context of rural tourism, community participation is seen as an active involvement of local communities to solve problems and to control over rural tourism development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect their quality of lives or the lives of others (Chifamba, 2013). Therefore, community participation is a crucial determinant in tourism planning and development.

Wanayasa is tourism development area (TDA) in the Purwakarta Regency which is living rural landscape area with enormous potential of natural and cultural resources. It is a district comprising three *Desa* or villages, which are Desa Kiarapedes, Desa Wanayasa and Desa Bojong, The main priority for tourism development is Desa Wanayasa and followed by Desa Bojong and Desa Kiarapedes. According to Tourism Master Plan of West Java, the tourism development in Wanayasa is geared towards nature tourism, ecotourism and health tourism.



Gambar 1. Peta Wanayasa di Kabupaten Purwakarta, Jawa Barat
Sumber: diolah dari www.purwakartakab.go.id dan berbagai sumber.

Figure 1. Map of Wanayasa

Source: purwakarta.go.id

Wanayasa also has high potential to be developed as a cultural tourism which is considered based on its historical places and strong local identity. The local community in Wanayasa is highly enthusiastic to develop tourism in the region. It can be clearly be senn from their great effort in building and operating tourist facilities independently. Despite of the community's high enthusiasm for developing tourism, the community has not yet received their benefit from tourism. Regarding to this condition, the local authorities has made master plan for tourism development in Wanayasa. However, the question has arised that to what extent local community can contribute to participate the tourism development? Did the local community give a major contribution to the process of tourism development in their rural area? Therefore, the aim of this paper is to examine the level, the barrier and the commitment of local community to participate in tourism development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discusses a theoretical model that relates to tourism regional development, rural tourism, and community participation.

Regional Tourism Development Planning

Regional development planning can be defined in many ways. According to World Bank (1975), regional development relates to a process of growth, renewal, and improvement (Ajala, 2008). While Tosun and Jenkins (1996) stated that regional planning is an effort to plan for regions in a country that the best potential location of industry is guaranteed and economic gap among regions may be minimised. The main focus of regional planning is to solve the problems of the regions and to embed their plans into the national development plan of a country.

Many researchers argue that tourism and regional development are closely linked. WTO (1983) defined regional tourism development plan as a specialized plan for the development of tourism at the regional level, while Fletcher (1993) stated that regional tourism planning deals with detailed issues which bring impact to a sub-national area (Cooper et al, 1993). Gunn (1956) made a more specific model for regional tourism development planning. Based on the model, the main elements for regional tourism development planning are: a definable regional boundary, access from markets and an internal circulation corridor, community attraction complexes, a non-attraction hinterland, and critical entrances to region (Tosun & Jenkins, 1996).

In most developing countries, a product of central planning is the development of its tourism sector. It is because the regional tourism development can, under certain conditions, drive economic growth of a region by creating a new dynamic. However, some rules for development must be asserted firmly in order to protect resources, assure complementarity between areas and characterise tourism poles, which may not concur with administrative boundaries.

Rural Tourism Development

According to ROUTES (www.vioregio.sk), rural tourism can be defined as:

"Rural tourism is defined in the overall economy of tourism as the economic use of the countryside, natural resources, cultural heritage, rural habitat, local tradition and local produce through certified products and services illustrating regional identity. It responds to the needs of consumers for accommodation, catering, leisure activities, entertainment and other services. It supports local sustainable development and meets the leisure demands of modern society through a new social solidarity of town and country."

Irshad (2010) also mentioned the diversity of attractions included within rural tourism is ranging from heritage tourism or cultural heritage tourism; nature based tourism, agritourism, as well as partnership-based approaches, such as scenic byways and heritage areas. Heritage tourism in here refers to leisure travel that has as its primary purpose the experiencing of places and activities that represent the past.

In the rural tourism context, the “progress” of regional development is the transformation of the stagnating circumstances of people in the countryside to a lively and exciting one (Ajala, 2008). Lele (1979) explained that development is needed to improve living standards of the majority of the low-income population living in the rural areas, create a self-sustaining development and retain productive population. Studies conducted by researchers have found that many rural communities have adapted their local economy to tourism for poverty reduction and socio-economic development (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006 & Prabhakaran & Ramachandaran, 2014). It also indicates economic restructuring in order to fulfill the fundamental needs of the community and to encourage individual to participate in the process of development (Ajala, 2008)

However, the unplanned rural tourism development can be disheartening the local community and clearly make them want to stop the tourism development (Adamson & Bromiley, 2008). Thus, in order to obtain optimal benefits of rural tourism development and prevent the negative impacts of unplanned rural tourism, the community participation in rural tourism development and planning is necessary.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

A great deal of research has determined the support of the host community for tourism development, which is concentrated on the degree to which these communities are involved in tourism (Lee, 2013). Authors such as Tosun (2000) and Wilis (1995) agreed that the view of the locals must be taken into consideration in the early stage of regional tourism development and planning. This is because the involvement of the community in the tourism provides more opportunity for the host residents to benefit from tourism activities and to participate in tourism development by managing their rural resources, preserving their local culture, defining their own needs, and making their own decisions.

Askew (1989) defines community participation is a process of education and empowerment to people in the form of a partnership with the parties capable of directing or helping to identify problems, needs and responsibilities independently, and afterwards, planning, managing, controlling and evaluating the collective action that is considered important (Tosun, 2000). While in the perspective of tourism planning, community participation is “a process of involving all stakeholders (local government officials, local citizens, architects, developers, business people and planners) in such way that decision-making is shared” (Haywood 1988) in (Kamarudin, 2013). The process in gathering people from several disciplines together with each of them participating by sharing ideas and knowledge, according to Wilis (1995) therefore encouraging local communities to struggle in coping with the other stakeholders and improving the professionalism that determine success in participation – which will balance the power distribution and prevent manipulation in the public participation process.

Types of Participation

There are various ways through which local communities can participate in the decision-making process. Leksakundilok’s typology (2006) of community participation categorised seven types of participation, which are: manipulative participation, passive

participation, participation by consultation, participation for material incentives, functional participation, interactive participation, and self-mobilisation (Kamarudin, 2013). It is important to note that the difference between each level of participation is determined by the varying degree of inclusion in the decision-making process to be exercised by local communities (Michael & Backman, 2013). Each type of participation can be seen in Tabel 1, ranging from passive to active, from participating to no participation, and from being represented to holding a referendum.

Table 1. Typology and Characteristic of Community Participation

| Typology | Characteristic |
|--|--|
| Manipulative Participation | Tourism development projects are generally developed by some powerful individuals, or government, without any discussion with the people or community leaders. The benefits go to some elite persons; the lower classes may not get any benefits. This level applies to most conventional community tourism areas. |
| Passive Participation | Limited participation by getting orders of what to do, the community response is not taken into account. Information held by professionals/experts outside |
| Participation by consultation | Community's participation is through consultation with local residents. Community's opinions are considered but there is no obligation to implement it |
| Participation through material incentive | Communities participate by contributing resources which will then in return be given food, money or other material incentive. Often referred to involve the community but not its subject and this activity is temporary |
| Functional Participation | Communities participate by forming groups to achieve objectives related to the project. Involvement can be interactive but tend to arise after key decisions taken. Institutions are formed tend to have a dependency with an external facilitator |
| Interactive Participation | Communities participate by forming groups to achieve objectives related to the project. Involvement may be interactive but tend after key decisions taken. Institutions are formed tend to have a dependency with an external facilitator. Citizens participate with their own initiative to the external institution or system changes. |
| Self Mobilisation | Community to develop contacts with external institutions for advice and resources, but still control the use of resources. Independent mobilization and collective action may have problems when there is a distribution of power and wealth that is not fair. |

Source: Leksakundilok (2006 in Kamarudin 2013)

However, based on a study conducted by Tosun (2000), the level of self-mobilisation is rarely applied in many rural areas of developing countries because community involvement in the decision making process are limited. The main barriers to participate in tourism development are divided into operational, structural and cultural limits. The operational barriers are usually associated with the operational procedures of the task. It is often caused by lack of coordination between related stakeholders and also lack of information to the local people of the tourist destination.

Structural barriers usually happen due to the institutional, power structures, legislative and economic systems. These problems are often associated with lack of expertise, low-skilled workers in tourism, economic-elite domination, relatively high cost of community participation, and lack of financial resources. On the other sides, cultural barriers are caused by limited capacity of poor people to handle development effectively and also the low level of awareness in the lower income community, which function as obstacles to emergence and operationalisation of participatory tourism development approach. In order to anticipate those barriers, it is best to develop a program which is aimed on education and preparing local community to be the main actor in tourism development (Tosun, 2000).

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

The data used in this research were obtained through both primary and secondary data collection. The research was conducted between January and August 2013 in Desa Wanayasa. For the secondary data collection, Jawa Barat Tourism Development Master Plan (RIPDA) is the source that researcher used to collect needed information about the regulation of Purwakarta Government towards the dissemination of tourism potential from every aspects in Desa Wanayasa, such as the social and physical characteristics, also information about facilities which both directly and indirectly effect tourism development in the destination.

The primary data collection were conducted in qualitative approach, which involved in-dept interview and focus group discussion methods with related stakeholders and some groups of community. This study requires stakeholders and local community whose interests, importance, and influence are the key to develop the rural tourism. In-depth interview were conducted to 21 informants which comprises representation from local authorities in Purwakarta region, representative of local community, tourism institution. Whereas, the involvement and participation of local people was known by their opinion, perception and aspiration towards tourism development in Desa Wanayasa with participation on project identification, planning process, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Finally, all the information from local community were gathered, confirmed and compared with the information from the other stakeholders in focus group discussion. The focus group discussion were conducted in order to get more comprehensive information about local community aspiration towards tourism development in Desa Wanayasa.

Data Analysis

A qualitative content analysis was chosen to analyse many words of texts, which are transcribed from in-depth interview and focus group discussions. Content analysis is a technique for compressing large amounts of data from the interviews, field notes, and various types of sources into systematic and fewer categories of text which is based on specific rules of coding (Steve, 2001). Many previous studies have shown that content analysis can be a useful method for allowing researcher to discover and describe the focus of individual, group, institutional, or social attention (Mayring, 2000). In this study, the crucial process in content analysis is categorising some key words from the given texts into certain themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result reveals some factors related to the description of community participation which consists of: local community's perception of tourism impacts, level of community involvement in tourism development, main barriers for community to actively participate in tourism development, and the commitment of local community to participate in the development of Wanayasa tourism.

The Local Community's Perception of Tourism Impacts in Desa Wanayasa

Generally, the model of tourism development in Desa Wanayasa is referring to community based tourism. The development of community based tourism emphasizes the importance of optimizing the involvement of community in planning process, implementation and evaluation. In order to identify the model of tourism development in Desa Wanayasa, this study attempts to reveal the output of destination development from every approachment, and then identify the main factors which will be the focus on destination development.

According to Table 2 (see table below), there are some important factors for the foundation of tourism development in Desa Wanayasa:

- a. Give more education to local community to maintain moral and ethic
- b. Preserve local culture through the development of art and culture
- c. Involve local community in tourism activities to raise local income
- d. Develop an integrated partnership through Public Private Partnership (PPP) and local community
- e. Build joint commitment to minimize the potential social negative impact of tourism development

Table 2. The Factors Affecting The Development of Tourism In Desa Wanayasa

| No | Positive Impacts | Total | No | Negative Impacts | Total |
|----|---|-------|----|--|-------|
| 1 | Increased local revenue | 10 | 1 | Moral degradation | 12 |
| 2 | Generate new employment opportunities | 8 | 2 | Loss of local identity and values | 8 |
| 3 | Create new investment opportunities | 7 | 3 | Quality degradation of local environment | 4 |
| 4 | Business diversification | 6 | | | |
| 5 | High awareness among young people to preserve local culture | 6 | | | |
| 6 | Good environment quality maintenance | 3 | | | |
| 7 | Assist destination development | 1 | | | |

Source: Data Analysis, 2015

The Level of Community Participation in Desa Wanayasa Tourism Development

The desire to develop tourism in SKW 3 Wanayasa is the aspirations of people who want to improve the well-being and quality of life. However, when projected on the typology of community participation submitted by Aref (2001), the position of the people still at the stage of participation for material incentives and functional participation. According to most informants, people tend to participate in tourism development activities mostly if material incentives offered. However, because of good vision and leadership of the community's leaders, the community participation in Wanayasa TDA leads to functional participation, as these people established forest community and tourism development's working group in the district level. The community is also very active to seek help from external facilitators such as from campus, private and public sector to develop certain agriculture and tourism sector. If the motivation endures and they get suitable support and assistance, the level of community participation in tourism development could lead to the level of active community participation and mobilization which means they can contribute, actively involved and empower themselves in rural tourism development.

It is also highly suggested that the local community make collaboration with campuses, public and private sectors to develop tourism. Together, community should actively participate in tourism development planning; improve the capacity of human resource and community organization in tourism development, and the use of structured development methods. This is a very important process so that people have the knowledge and skills to be able to empower themselves to build tourism, allocate and manage resources for tourism development independently.

The Barriers to Community Participation in Desa Wanayasa Tourism Development

Understanding limitations of rural tourism is important when a local people is getting coordinated for engagement in tourism activities (Aref & Gill, 2009). As suggested by literature reviews in earlier section, the barriers to reach the stage of self-mobilisation in community participation are divided into cultural, operational and structural limitations. After conducted both in-depth interview, observation and in the latter confirmed by FGD with community representatives, it has been found that the barriers in Desa Wanayasa are more concerned on structural and operational. The structural limitation is seen by the limited number of highly-skilled workers, the unsupportive stakeholders particularly the professionals and restricted budget. The operational limitation is due to a lack of coordination between stakeholders. More description of each barrier can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. The Barriers in Community Participation in Desa Wanayasa

| BARRIERS | EXPLANATION |
|-------------------------|---|
| Cultural Limitations | The capacity of the poors is very limited, while individual readiness (cultural aspect) in the communities is considered ready for Wanayasa TDA. It is as most people have realized the importance of tourism development in the region to improve their welfare. The communities have also realized that they need to go hand in hand to develop tourism. |
| Structural Limitations | Structural limitations in encouraging community participation in the development of tourism in Wanayasa TDA remain an obstacle. It is because there are certain professionals, especially government agencies who act and answer to all problems of development. In addition, the elite is still dominating the development of tourism. Legal systems are also still inadequate to support the development of interactive tourism. Wanayasa TDA has still not yet possessed the ability or expertise to develop a rural tourism area (lack of expertise) in addition to the well-trained human resources limitations. Furthermore, the funding aspect is still very limited. |
| Operational Limitations | In Desa Wanayasa, public administration in tourism sector is still centralized in Purwakarta region. It results in a long bureaucratic process, and lack of coordination among stakeholders to develop tourism, while there is limited and inadequate tourism information. |

Source: Data Analysis, 2015

Collectively, the people in Wanayasa and Bojong districts have already been at the stage of program implementation. Pasanggrahan tourist village, moreover, has entered the stage of stabilization because the existing programs have already operated and stabilized.

The collective readiness (structural approaches) of the communities in Kiarapedes district is at the stage of pre planning and preparation, but because of the strong leadership of the opinion leader, it is expected that the implementation process can be realized very fast. On the other hand, local government and tourism related associations also tend to be less supportive in community-based tourism development. The main problem of the community participation in tourism development is because of the lack of knowledge and skills of the community, as well as the lack of funds available to build local tourism. Based on the institutional readiness (operational), in general, shows low community readiness in both institutionally and operationally as the result that public does not yet have sufficient knowledge and expertise to build the tourism professional or business expansion plan.

The other constraint comes from social conflicts that occur due to vertical conflict between community and the government and the horizontal conflict within communities. Vertical conflict in the Wanayasa district, mostly due to people perception that government policies are less in favor, the lack of government support and equitable development, while the horizontal conflict encountered because external cultural influences that do not fit with local culture, the influence of TV and entertainment events that led to brawl and drunkenness. In Kiarapedes district, horizontal conflict is negative cultural influences such as drunkenness, criminality due to unemployment and the brawl after a football game. Vertical conflict that often occurs is the perceived lack of government attention to this district.

The Commitment of Community To Participate in Tourism Development

According to the results of in-depth interview and focus group discussion, there are three main forms of activities which are related to local community participation in Desa Wanayasa. First, the contribution of local community which can be seen by their commitment and initiative to participate in tourism development, ranging from developing infrastructure and transportation to improve accessibility to tourism destination, maintaining local tradition by held some cultural events, and also preserving the natural resources. Second, the establishment of Kompepar is a local community organisation, to increase community's leadership and capacity to promote an improvement in tourism development. It is done by preparing Kompepar as an organisation to manage tourism destination and conduct local scout association to produce high quality workers in tourism industry, to be the centre for tourism research and technology in the destination, and also to encourage the local SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprise) to actively participate in developing culinary and souvenir business.

The last form of community participation in Desa Wanayasa is community empowerment, which encompasses a range of activities: encouraging the local community's commitment to take on active participation in tourism development process; preserving the local cultural traditions and creative industries; developing local SMEs in tourism destinations; conserving the local environment; promoting tourism destination to potential customer; and establishing partnership with private sector and tourism industry.

CONCLUSION

Local community is very enthusiastic to tourism development, and they are willing to participate in the planning process and implementation. They also have a high interest to invest in the development although their capital is very limited. Despite their interest to develop their area as tourist destination, they have a high concern. As there are high concern from the local community that tourism development must not damage natural environment nor cause moral degradation, while also could preserve the local culture, then adequate knowledge and training to participate in the conservation and preservation should be taken into account.

Currently the level of community participation in Wanayasa TAD tourism development is still in the participation by material incentives, although it has shown tendency to a functional participation level. With adequate knowledge, training and encouragement, the level of community will be fast turning to the functional and interactive participation. The community is still facing limitations in structural and operational level. It is highly expected that through partnership with multi stakeholders and some assistance, the limitations could be minimized and they will have a knowledge how to develop tourism through networking and mutual partnerships. The local community of Wanayasa TAD has a spirit and commitment to become independent, contribute and participate actively in tourism development in their region. If this motivation endures the local community, they could mobilize themselves.

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