

The Strategy of Cultural Poverty Alleviation Based on Empowering Local Genius

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Abstract: Poverty is a global issue which is interesting and up to date to be discussed, because it involves the very strategic humanitarian. Especially if the problem occurs in tourist areas of the world, such as in the mountainous tourist area of Kintamani, Bangli, Bali that is also famous for the Global Geopark. The local communities should not be poor because they are as the owners of the region, however it is still found a relatively large number of poor people which reach 6.80% above the provincial rate of Bali. This research aims at presenting cultural poverty alleviation strategies based on local wisdom, *Tat Tvam Asi*. This study utilized Prototypical studies the type of Development Research Paradigm combined with Reflective Analysis method. The techniques used to collect data were participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, document studies, and Focus Groups Discussions (FGD). The obtained data were analyzed by utilizing descriptive qualitative analysis. The results indicated that (1) The cultural poverty is caused by the cultural values of communities which are difficult to be alleviated, such as, resigned to fate, family circumstances which were indeed from the beginning has been poor hereditary, low education level, the profit of the tourism sector that is distributed unequally as the result of weak bargaining power and political access to the local government, (2) Cultural poverty alleviation strategy is conducted by carrying out activity programs through the functionalization of social institutions and the local culture, government, private sector, and the poor community in synergy, (3) Strategy and direction of the implementation are improving the fulfillment of basic needs of the poor community, improving access, the fulfillment of safety, expanding employment opportunities and ensuring gender equality, (4) The strategy applies continuously within the principles of togetherness can develop positive character building to come out of poverty.

Keywords: Tat Tvam Asi, strategy, alleviation, and cultural poverty

1. Introduction

The mountainous tourist area of Kintamani is one of the tourist destinations of Bali province and world attraction that is very famous for natural panorama of the Global Geopark and culture, the beauty of the caldera and mount Batur, as well as the culture of burial put under the tree without buried. As the tourist areas are usually marked with a *jingling dollars*, but in reality there are still group of people living in zones of poverty with relatively large which reach 6.80% above the provincial rate of Bali or 6,293 people (Bappeda Bangli, 2011; Data PPLS Bali Province, 2011).

Amidst the hustle and bustle of the tourist industry and *jingling dollars* for most of the Balinese people in general but particularly in Kintamani, the reality is still encountered people as the *owner* of Kintamani tourism area live in poverty. The representation of the poor in the mountainous tourist area of Kintamani appears as the following figure.



Figure 1: Profile of the Poor on the Slopes of Mount Batur
(kertaadhi,doc)

The mountainous tourist area of Kintamani is *enjoyed by the region* but the local communities relatively do not benefit the result of the beauty of natural scenery that is sold in package of tourism industry. There are 27 indigenous villages inhabiting in this area, however there are only 5 villages that benefit the impact of the tourism development while 22 villages only limited support and the region of tourism trajectory that relatively have not felt the impact of the tourism development in the region (Lasmawan, 2008; Inten,2010).

The communities in tourism area of Kintamani are as a social phenomenon that represent the majority of regional development phenomenon and tourist destination which currently occurs in Indonesia. The development of the tourism industry with different zones and supporting infrastructure have not been evidently able to touch the basic problem of community poverty.

Various structured policy have been carried out by the government of Bangli district and the provincial government of Bali, however the reality of the poor people have not been able to optimally escape from poverty bandage, because it is influenced by certain cultural factors. The data of Public Welfare office of Kintamani district (2016) indicated that the data targeted households receiving *Raskin* or rice for the poor are still relatively high which reach 4754 RTS-PM (Household Target-Poor). According Lasmawan (2009a; 2009b), there are several factors that cause unproductive formal policy of decentralization, specifically (1) contrary to the habits of the local community, (2) contrary to the culture adopted, (3) no direct economic impact, and (4) arrogance regional and or community selfhood.

As a loyal followers of Hindu with culture that has been passed on from generation to generation, indeed the local community hold the values of local wisdom which are valuable and specific. The character of the local community with the customs and culture that have been embraced need to be considered in order to reduce poverty in the community by adopting and elaborating the values of local wisdom into a poverty alleviation strategy.

2. Literature Review

Poverty problem has existed long ago, because it occurs in communities which can not fulfill the basic needs adequately. It happens due to natural and artificial factor. Natural poverty occurs as a result of limited natural resources, the use of low technology, and natural disasters. Artificial poverty occurs because the institutions that exist in the communities cause some communities members are not able to master the economic means and various other facilities which are available (Weiss, 2009). According Kasim (2006) the root causes of poverty are multidimensional, not only just economic factor but also social, cultural and political factor.

World Bank (2008) distinguishes poverty into three, namely absolute poverty, relative poverty and cultural poverty. A person is classified as poor in absolute if the revenue is under the poverty line so it is not enough to fulfill the minimum needs of life which includes food, clothing, health, shelter, and education. While relative poverty is a poverty rate in relation to the ratio of absolute poverty line or proportion of income distribution or welfare that is unequal or uneven.

In the views of revenues, Fukuyama (2008) divides into the form of absolute poverty and relative poverty. In the process of alleviation, it is required specific interventions, specifically (1) absolute poverty alleviation can be reached with approaches that are social rehabilitation, emergency, cash program, and the economic empowerment, (2) poverty has taken with efforts to improve income distribution and the diversification of cultural values of local communities.

Cultural poverty is poverty caused by lifestyle, behavior, or the culture of individuals or groups that encourage poverty. Cultural poverty is indicated in the lavishly living behaviour, incompetence work, and low saving rate, as well as their resignation towards the poverty environment. This model of poverty has a correlation with the culture of *accepting* poverty which occurs and even not responding to the efforts of others that help out of poverty. Changing lifestyles, behavior or culture is not easy and takes a long time. Culture in society is something that has developed over time and run into the process of inheritance between generations. Cultural poverty alleviation strategy utilizes educational development of nature and character which aims at providing a critical awareness of poverty as well as developing new productive values to improve the welfare of the poor through the internalization of positive values whether through formal, informal and non-formal ([https:// anggorocahyadi](https://anggorocahyadi)).

Lewis (1966) states that cultural poverty emerge as a result of the cultural values embraced by the poor, specifically

laziness, surrendering to the fate easily, lack of work ethic, etc. Cultural poverty is a domino effect from the shackles of structural poverty that descends the community over long, or indirectly indicates the relationship between structural poverty with cultural poverty that makes people apathetic, resigned, and believe if something that happens is destiny (Rahmatullah, 2013).

The character of the local communities with the customs and culture which have been embraced need to be considered in poverty alleviation efforts in the tourist area of Kintamani based on local wisdom (Arganta, 2009; Lasmawan, 2009b). Weiss (2009) recommends the concept of poverty in which poverty alleviation should first include all of poor community on all target groups, all sectors and areas of life as well as in the whole region, with a measure of value and different needs, so it can not be equalized as that have often carried out by the government. Characteristically integration means that policy and its handling in every field and sector of the economic does not stand or run by itself but it is holistic-mutualism.

On the other hand, poverty alleviation programs also must focus on communities empowerment through the strengthening of the organization or local communities institutions, and accommodating the non-economic basic values of the communities. Therefore, the implementation of alleviation activities based on the communities in order to encourage participation and self-reliance in poverty reduction and not the fulfillment of temporary interest which is more purely economic.

Tat Tvam Asi is the moral teaching of Hinduism, which is identical to humanity in *Pancasila*, the official philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state. *Tat Tvam Asi* means that you are, you are that, and all creatures are equal purposed to create living in harmony. It teaches that people always love others or love other creatures. The philosophy contained on this teaching is how we can empathize, feel what is being felt by the poor people near us. The importance of solidarity in society so as to form a prosperous community life (Henderson, 2013).

The phenomenon of cultural poverty that occurs in the tourist area of Kintamani needs to be studied deeply. It includes finding the main factors causing the communities becomes poor, and developing strategies for poverty alleviation based on local wisdom through the elaboration the values of *Tat Tvam Asi*, strengthening social institutions and cultural communities based on sublime religious values and local culture. This strategy is regarded as a new step for the communities because during this time the approach carried out by the local government in the form of material aid and sporadic more dominantly, so it is relatively less effective to lead the local communities out of the poverty zone.

3. Research Method

This research was conducted by utilizing a type of development research paradigm Prototypical Studies combined with Reflective analysis method, namely RRA and PRA (rapid rural appraisal and rapid appraisal

participant) (Akker, 1999; Nieveen, 1999; Plomp, 2007). The data were collected by using the techniques of participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, study documents, and Focus Groups Discussions (FGD). The analysis data were conducted with qualitative descriptive analysis. The researcher was as the main instrument in order to obtain a structured innovation related to the model of poverty alleviation by elaborating the values Tat Tvam Asi through functionalization of social institutions and the local culture.

4. Result and Analysis

According to the Bali Provincial Regulation No.16 / 2009, Kintamani is stated as *Objek Daya Tarik Wisata Khusus (ODTWK)* or the object of speciality tourist attraction located in Bangli district. Mount Batur is also acknowledged as the first *Global Geopark* in Indonesia announced by UNESCO on its official website on September 22, 2015. Kintamani as *ODTWK* is visited by many tourists with the number of visiting tourists that are relatively increase every year. This evident appears towards the number of visiting tourists to Kintamani in the last five years (2010-2014) with the average of 11% (Bali Provincial Tourism Office, 2015). The beautiful panorama of mount Batur can be seen in the following figure.



Figure 2: The Beautiful Panorama of Mount Batur. (kertaadhi.doc)

The development of the tourism industry in the Kintamani tourist area is only enjoyed by five villages which are famous for the term *Bintang Danu* or *Stars of the Lake*, namely the village of Kedisan, Buahon, Songan, Trunyan, and Batur. The other villages are just as *the supporters* and *the regional tourism trajectory* which have not relatively felt the impact of tourism development in the region. One of them is Abang Songan village with an area of 4,250 km² that has population of 1,251 people. This village is one of the supporting village of Kintamani tourism area, however, it has not felt the proper contribution of Kintamani tourism productivity, hence the number of poor people in this village are relatively high which reach 105 RTS-PM (The Data of Kintamani Head Office of Public Welfare, 2016). It happens because there is contradictory with the culture or customs of society. This condition is further strengthened by the uneven distribution of *the profit of tourism industry* that aggravates purchasing power and income levels of the community. Inequality of tourism industry profit is as the impact of weak bargaining position and political access to local government (Lasmawan, 2009a).

The great issue is the local communities have lack of capacity and expertise in the field of tourism, such as foreign language skills, innovation of local product, and the ability to sell the products caused by the low level of education (primary education). Nowadays, the attention of government and related agencies is still very low to involve the street vendors known as *pedagang acung* in managing and developing the attraction. Hundreds of local people work as *pedagang acung* that sell or peddle their wares, such as trinkets, sculptures, clothes and fruits potluck shown in the following figure.



Figure 3: Pedagang Acung Sells Fruit (kertaadhi, doc)

Generally, there are several factors that stimulate the emergence of the poverty of the people that live in the mountainous tourist areas of Kintamani, such as natural factors, geographical conditions, economic injustice, social or political that they experience both on formal governance structure, and the constellation of the local community. The local government both the district and the provincial of Bali have attempted to carry out a variety of programs and policies to reduce poverty, such as the program *Gerbangdesigot* (*gerakan pembangunan desa dengan sistem gotong royong*) or movement of rural development with the system of mutual assistance, *GGG (Gerbang Gita Santi)* or the program aimed to encourage the community to participate in developing the area independently, *bedah rumah* or the efforts to realize decent housing for the poor people, *Bantuan Langsung Tunai (BLT)* or Direct Cash Assistance, and capital assistance through *Gerbangsadu (Gerakan pembangunan desa terpadu)* or integrated rural development movement. However, the reality of the poor in tourist area of Kintamani districts have not been able to optimally escape from poverty bandage. It can be seen from the data of the Office of Public Welfare Kintamani Head (2016) which states that the data of target households that receive *Raskin* (*beras miskin*) or rice for the poor are still relatively high reaching 4754 RTS-PM (Rumah Tangga Sasaran- Penduduk Miskin) or household target-poor.

Based on the data analysis, it was found that the major factors which lead to cultural poverty on the people in the mountainous tourist area of Kintamani are cultural values that are difficult to be alleviated of poverty, such as resigned to fate, family circumstances which were indeed from the beginning has been poor hereditary as well as low level of education, and the profit of the tourism sector that is distributed unequally as the result of weak bargaining power and political access to the local government.

To overcome the cultural poverty in the tourist area of Kintamani, it is developed cultural poverty alleviation strategies empowering the values of local genius, namely Tat Tvam Asi which means *that you are, you are that, and all beings are equal* hence when we help others means we help ourselves. The doctrine of Tat Tvam Asi is a basic concept of life with basic values of humanity, so that it will trigger social adhesive power and personal dependence on society. Concrete form of these teachings can be observed in everyday life and behavior. In this context, people need to know and implement a sense of togetherness, so how severe problems faced, it will be lighter, whatever happens, togetherness is everything.

Target strategy is the poor community in Kintamani tourism area by empowering or strengthening social institutions and culture inspired by the values of Tat Tvam Asi, like indigenous and official village with staff, Regional Development Planning Agency, the agency of the youth, *Lembaga Perkreditasi Desa (LPD)* or Village Credit Institutions, Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia District, office of Rural Community Empowerment, community leaders, and social groups and other local cultures. Their involvement in the implementation of customized models with the duties, powers and functions of each institution.

Alleviation strategy is formulated in the form of programs inspired by the values of *Tat Tvam Asi*. Through empowerment or strengthening of socio-cultural institutions to be more empathetic to help the poor people, thereby it is developed a positive character to get out of cultural poverty. Strategy and direction of cultural poverty alleviation policies carried out through several program activities implemented by all components with poor communities, such as in the following table.

Table 1: The Strategy and Poverty Alleviation Policy Direction based on Empowering Local Genius in the Mountainous Tourist Area of Kintamani

No	Strategy	Policy Direction
	To fulfill the needs of food endurance of poor families.	a. Providing direct food assistance to poor families.
		b. Ensuring adequate food for poor families.
		c. Increasing the incomes of the poor.
	To fulfill the health care of poor families.	a. Providing health care for poor people.
		b. Providing health insurance for the poor.
		c. Providing health care of poor people in public health center and its network
		d. Improving knowledge of the poor people in relation to prevention of infectious diseases, environmental health, nutrition and healthy behavior.
	To Fulfill educational service for poor families.	a. Increasing the participation of the poor people in the levels of nine-year compulsory education.
		b. Lowering the illiteracy rate in poor communities.
		c. Providing non-formal education services for the poor people.
		d. Providing opportunities for the poor

		children to continue education to secondary and higher education
	To fulfill the efforts to expand employment opportunities and businesses for poor families.	a. Developing institutions for the poor people in improving their bargaining position and business efficiency.
		b. Improving the ability of poor people in business and work.
	To improve the housing quality of poor families.	a. Improving the skills and knowledge of poor people in building good and healthy house.
		b. Developing participation of the poor people in residential delivery
	To fulfill the needs of clean water for the poor community.	a. Developing water supply system that is pro-poor
		b. Improving the access of poor families.
		c. Improving knowledge of the poor people towards the importance of clean drinking water and safe and basic sanitation.
	To fulfill the need for land to the poor.	a. Providing protection area of land to the poor.
	To Improve the access of the poor to manage and utilize of natural resources and the environment	a. Popularizing information and knowledge about management environment that pro-poor.
		b. Managing the environment that guarantees and protects the access of the poor in utilizing natural resources and the environment.
	To fulfill the security for the poor community.	a. Developing a system of social protection.
		b. Increase the empowerment of community institutions in creating a sense of security, and address the problem of conflict situations and cockfight gambling
10	To Expand opportunities for poor people.	a. Improving the opportunities of the poor to participate in the development process.
		b. Providing information for the development of poor communities.
11	To guarantee gender equality for the poor.	a. Developing data collection system that is able to capture the gender imbalance in poor communities.
		b. Developing policies to improve the quality of women's life.
12	To increase access for the poor in developing the tourist area of Kintamani. To develop the coastal areas to the prosperity of the poor in coastal tourist area of Batur	a. Improving access to premises and office space for the poor.
		b. Improving the welfare of coastal communities, especially fishermen and small fish breeding.
		c. Enhancing business security for fishermen and farmers

5. Conclusion

The mountainous tourist area of Kintamani as a tourist destination of Bali province and the world is very promising for the welfare of society as *the owner* of the area. Moreover, the number of tourists continue to increase with the average of 11% every year in the last five years. This should have an impact on increasing revenues as the following effect but the fact indicates the opposite, most of people are still poor with the level of poverty that reaches 6.80% above the provincial rate of Bali. The local

government both the district and provincial government have carried out the efforts to alleviate poverty through various programs, such as Gerbangdesigot (gerakan pembangunan desa dengan sistem gotong royong) or movement of rural development with the system of mutual assistance, *GGS (Gerbang Gita Santi)* or the program aimed to encourage the community to participate in developing the area independently, *bedah rumah* or the efforts to realize decent housing for the poor people, *Bantuan Langsung Tunai (BLT)* or Direct Cash Assistance, and capital assistance through *gerbangsadu (gerakan pembangunan desa terpadu)* or integrated rural development movement. However, the reality is that the communities have not been able to escape from poverty bandage. This is due to the cultural values which makes them difficult to be alleviated of poverty, such as lack of motivation, resigned to fate, family circumstances which were indeed from the beginning has been poor hereditary, low education level, and the profit of the tourism sector that is distributed unequally as the result of weak bargaining power and political access to the local government.

Therefore, poverty alleviation strategies need to be applied in this tourist area based on empowering local genius by elaborating values of Tat Twam Asi through functionalization socio-cultural institutions, government, tourism institution, and the poor in synergy. They are involved in implementing the strategy and direction of the policy activities program which have been designed in real activity, thereby building the positive character in order to alleviate cultural poverty through the fulfillment of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter), the needs of education, health and improving access to social, economic and political gradually, equitably, equally and sustainably.

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