

Culture as Tourism Attraction: Commodification and Politicization of Culture in Kembangarum Tourism Village, Yogyakarta Special Region, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims at describing the commodification processes and the form of politicization of culture used as the background of tourism village development toward several community empowerment activities. Employing a case of Kembangarum Tourism Village, Turi District, Sleman Regency, Yogyakarta Special Province, Indonesia, the commodification processes are examined in several forms of tourism attractions based on local Javanese tradition. Commodification of culture practices in Kembangarum Tourism Village are encouraged by the politicization of culture represented by several policies and events provided by local government as the background of Kembangarum Tourism Village development direction. This study finds the commodification processes as a part of politicization of culture encompassed in community empowerment agendas. There are several models of community empowerment initiated by the investor to put his capital of investment as beneficial as he wants. The development model of Kembangarum Tourism Village through investment projects by the developer results in community conflicts encouraged by the local traditions that have been privatized by the investor. This study also delivers the suggestion of development direction that will be provided by government in the future.

Keywords: *Tourism development, tourism village, commodification of culture, politicization of culture.*

1. Introduction

Tourism appears as a tool to increase regional revenue by presenting culture as a tourist attraction (Besculides *et al.*, 2002; Richards, 1996). Such condition could potentially transform culture from a community identity into an economic value in the dynamic process of development (Cole, 2007; Cohen, 1988). The addition of economic value of culture development processes cultures puts every aspect of culture, whether it is tangible or not, as a commodity (Proeschel 2012).

Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta Province is a prominent tourism destination in Indonesia (Pemerintah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 2012a) and has developed a number of cultural

tourism attractions. Several policies have been set in place to outline the characteristics of Yogyakarta tourism attractions. Along with the launching of a new national strategic plan for sustainable tourism and green jobs concerning more on sustainable basis for tourism development (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy/ILO, 2012) the tourism village appears as a suitable model comprising development of community, culture, environment aspects in tourism development practices (Nuryanti, 2009; Herawati *et al.*, 2014).

Desa Wisata Kembangarum (Kembangarum Tourism Village) is a tourism village in Turi, Sleman offering traditional Javanese cultures as its main tourist attractions. Based on the strategic

development principles of the Yogyakarta Special Region Province (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 2012), Kembangarum Tourism Village should be directed as a tourism village model concerning cultural and natural attractions as its main tourism products. The practices in which cultural aspects of community are encouraged and promoted as tourism attractions could determine commodification of culture practices resulting some important impacts received by local community (Cole, 2002). This study aims at examining the cultural commodification process as a result of tourism activities. Commodification as a process of adding economic value in the culture development, is deemed necessary to be assessed on an ongoing basis (Cole, 2002). This is motivated by the increase in amounts of tourism activities in a model where exploitation could not be controlled. This study also explains the way in which community's culture are being politicized through several development practices of Kembangarum Tourism Village.

2. Theoretical Basis

Presently, tourism is essentially one of the most important social and economic activities (Inskeep, 1991; Archer et al., 2005; Cooper, 2006). Most tourism development practices notably concern on fulfilling tourists' needs in the supply and demand context (Burns & Holden, 1995) with only few considerations of local community's wellbeing (Blackstock, 2005; Gascon, 2013; Cole, 2007) represented by several models of tourist attractions using local cultural resources as the main attractions for tourists' demand (Cohen, 1988; Aramberri, 2001). Consumption, rather than production, becomes dominant and the commodity attains the total occupation of social life (Pretes, 1995).

In developing countries context, tourism therefore appears as a major commodity that is inextricably related with consuming visual images or representations of a society or any reality, and may be unable to penetrate any underlying reality (Picard, 1990; MacCannell, 1999; Pretes, 1995). Tourists must consume the representation, the sign, or the image of touristic objects (Kadt & Mundial, 1979; Nuryanti, 1996; Urry & Larssen, 2011). These consumption activities are directed to the

experiential based consumption through expanding symbols and images creation as the main factor to constructing the experiences consumed by the tourists (Picard, 1990; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1988).

The cyclical consumption model in tourism activities locate signs as the main objects of tourist's consumption (MacCannell, 1999). Therefore, consumption pattern depends on the tourist's gaze and how that gaze constructs attractions. The signs construct the tourist gaze whereas tourism directly involves the signs' collection through enabling more invented signs to be consumed by the tourists (Urry and Larssen 2011). Signs are invented, resulting in a representation of reality that is modified through adding or subtracting several signs, constructing and reinforcing the gaze (MacCannell, 1999). The tourist gaze is visually objectified through photographs, postcards, films, and so on, enabling the gaze to be recaptured, reproduced, and redistributed (Urry and Larssen, 2011). The tourists gaze consideration and the omnipresence of digital equipment through frequent use of new technologies has influenced the shift in market segmentation from market logic to a consumer-centric approach by considering different consumption aspects such as: sociocultural, ideological, symbolic and experiential dimensions (Uriely, 1997).

Tourism Village therefore appears as a comprehensive model of delivering tourism attractions, taking into account the shift of global tourism market concerning more on the sustainability of community's culture development and green products (Hunter, 1997; Liu, 2003). The tourism village appears as a new phenomena in the development of the tourism area, which covers socio-cultural and other local resources as tourism attractions (Sampson, 2011). Moreover, present discourse of tourism village attraction development focuses on the symbolic and experiential dimensions of a place, represented by an atmosphere of authenticity which cannot be found in other sectors of tourism (Damanik, 2013).

It is no wonder then that there are several forms of cultural attractions that are offered by the village for tourist consumption. People attempt to repackage culture as a community identity and have discovered the way their culture can be used as economic resources then transforms them into cultural products which have economic value

(Proeschel, 2012). This commodification of culture practice tends to locate local cultural products as economic resources beneficial for gaining more economic benefits (Maunati, 2004). The local culture aspects are modified in response to the importance of tourism activities and responded to by subjects who are integrated with the tourism activities in Kembangarum Village. Locals are involved in the production of tourist attractions and they have received economic benefit from this production.

The commodification of culture is a model of culture politicization as the culture itself determined as new economic resources through several integrated political attempts (Wright, 1998; Yang, 2011). It implies the process in which community's cultural identity was sought to be defined by actors through using, converting, adding, or subtracting the values with a specific purpose to achieve their importance (Wright, 2002). Therefore, public responses to the products offered in the tourism village and the intervention of third parties in the development of attractions leads to the creation of a variety policies (Sofield & Li, 1998). Such policies insert the discussion of culture into the political realm (Deutschlander & Miller, 2003). Ethnicity is part of the social ideology which is constructed around the notions of culture and origin, and used as political tools by emphasizing certain changes in the competition for cultural resources (Anttonen, 2003). In this sense, politicization of community's culture could potentially create some impacts for instance conflicts within community (Deutschlander & Miller, 2003) and even community's rejection towards development agenda (Dahles, 2013; Blackstock, 2005)

3. Research methodology

This study uses a qualitative single case study methodology (Merriam, 1988) to explore bounded system of multiple cases by generating more information details through detailing data collection as essential basis to comprehensively understand people, organisations, events and experience particularly in social context (Cresswell, 1998; Veal, 2006). The major data were generated from several individuals of local community and the management of Kembangarum Tourism Village imbued with

literature studies of local government policies of Regional Tourism Development Planning of Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta Province document as a basis of regional tourism development. The data collected were generated from purposive sampling semi-structured interview using open ended questions with five tourism village management members, four local community who actively participate in tourism village activities, five local community who passively involve in tourism village activities and four local village government. The interviews took places in Kembangarum Village area to give flexibility for the respondents to deliver and share comprehensive information they find pertinent regarding interview questions. Informants were selected considering their capabilities and knowledge regarding tourism development. Therefore, selection of informants was based on recommendation of tourism village management.

Thematic analysis is employed as an analysis model in this research considering its flexibility in analysing data. This model is compatible with essentialist and constructivist paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes of analysis were determined from interview transcribes, field notes and literature related to the research topic. Therefore, the researcher employs interpretive analysis in developing narration.

4. Research Findings

4.1. Commodifying local culture as tourism attractios

The commodifications of local cultural products offered by the management of Kembangarum Tourism Village are represented in the way in which the cultural products and activities are packaged as tourist attractions. The commodification of culture includes several cultural products and activities for example the art puppets, traditional musics and traditional dances that previously appeared as cultural representation of local communities, presently are presented in touristic terms. It is possible for adding and subtracting some matters, which may not be presented to tourists. Kembangarum Tourism Village was projected as a tourism village performing traditional local culture as attractions. The local cultural products

are offered and packaged as tourist attractions by the management by categorising them into several models. The marketing coordinator of Kembangarum Tourism Village reveals that the management divides cultural attractions in several models, which make possible for adding and creating new configuration based on the consumers' needs:

“We received high number of visitation last year that the tourists are more interested in cultural and natural attractions. We have eclectic cultural attractions varied from traditional dances, games and traditional cultural activities like ceremonies, leather puppet performances and *Jathilan*. Of course, we encourage the visitors to contribute actively in each performance that the visitors could organise the performances duration, content and we will be happy to serve the attractions to visitors as we also would like to promote our traditional cultural richness.”

In the commodifying traditional dances, *Jathilan* also appears as a tradition performed in particular events and ceremonies. Previously, *Jathilan* was performed in Kembangarum Village since the ancestors' periods, particularly in celebration of harvest, celebration of birth, and marriage celebration. The main interesting point in the *Jathilan* performance is the trance that normally happened to the dancers. It is an hour performances that contributes 10-15 male dancers used Javanese attributes such as *Jarik*, *Blangkong*, and leathered horse. There are also *Wiyaga* (gamelan players) accompany the dancers to create traditional mystic rhythmic sound. A member of art and cultural group of Kembangarum Tourism Village revealed that the duration, contents and scenes in a performance depends on the visitors' willingness and several sacred parts in the performance were not be performed:

“For the tourism attraction purpose, *Jathilan* dance usually served in short duration. Each performance of *Jathilan* usually spends 10 minutes for performances that contributes 5 – 10 dancers. Because this performance held for tourism purposes, there is no trance

dancers, they just act like there is something penetrated their body and tranced upon them. The gamelan players usually also substitutes with sound from cassette or tape. This condition happens when there is no plenty budget for performance”.

In the effort creating such authentic Javanese atmosphere, the tourism village management encouraged the development of *Joglo*, a Javanese traditional house model. As revealed by the head of tourism village management that in delivering Javanese traditional atmosphere, *Joglo* is a compulsory element to encourage visitors' experience of living in traditional Javanese culture:

“We deliberately built several *Joglo* here to enhance the sense of Javanese culture in Kembangarum Tourism Village. We have five *Joglo* that can also be used as places for family or community gathering. We have modified the form of the *Joglo*, adding several modern materials such as ceramics for its floor and some ornaments. The tourists also can sleep overnight inside the *Joglo* as we provide them with portable bed and blanket.”

Essentially, *Joglo* model itself has inextricable relation with *Punden*, a model of Javanese ancient building with stackable converge and conical to the top form (Djono, Utomo & Subiyantoro, 2012). *Joglo* construction adapts a suitable model for tropical climate, whether it has been separated into three passage, *Pendopo*, *Pringgitan*, and *Dalem Ageng* (Hidayatun, 1999). Every passage of the building indicates the special value of Javanese philosophy and hierarchy (Widayat, 2004). *Pendopo* as the front passage of the building represents the public place, a place for establishing harmony between homeowners, relatives, and surrounding communities (Hidayatun, 1999). *Pringgitan* is the transitional place between public space and privat. *Pringgitan* located between *Pendopo* and *Dalem Ageng*. *Dalem Ageng* represent the privat space that divided into three passage, there are *senhong kiwa* and *senhong tengen* for man and women sleeping room, and *senhong tengah* as a sacred place for worship to Dewi Sri, goddess of fertility (Djono,

Utomo, and Subiyantoro, 2012).

In terms of commodification of cultural practices, several traditional cultural practices that previously became obsolete and successfully remains reinvented and revoked through tourism activities. The reinventing culture processes are extensively represented in several efforts of modifying local culture attractions into tourism attractions that originally are created as representation of local people believes for instances *Ledek Gogek* dance. *Ledek Gogek* is a traditional dance performed by two people wear a pair of puppets so it will look like a dancer tote another dancer but there is only a dancer wearing modified puppets. The puppets and dancers are wearing traditional Javanese attributes such as *Kebaya*, *Blangkon*, *Lurik*, and *Jarik*. *Ledek Gogek* attraction is originally from Wonosari region, created by Wonosari people to represents their thankfulness for the God's grace in their field. *Ledek Gogek* attraction is usually performed in the night before harvest period.

Ledek Gogek attraction has been packaged as a tourist attraction in Kembangarum Tourism Village mainly based on the interest of the developer, to give specification and details of Traditional Javanese culture as expected factor to be consumed by tourist. The dancers are local Kembangarum village community. Through several modifications for instances the use of eye glasses, jeans, and t-shirt to its puppets, it will only be performed depending on the tourists' demand. The package is also added with the historical stories of how Javanese people see *Ledek Gogek* performance, as their thankfulness to God's grace and celebrated the grace through a special ceremony before harvest conveyed by the MC to the tourists during its performance.

4.2. Questioning culture commodification

The touristic performance of *Jathilan* represents the new compositions are still genuine and comprising new traditions, which are "adapted to modern times" (Cohen 1988; Asplet & Cooper, 2000). In the need to give pertinent attraction to tourist demand, it has been repackaged to meet tourists' demand. There are several subtracted elements in touristic form that happened in *Jathilan* dance, particularly in duration, general form, and the essences of it. Commodification of culture directly enables the elements subtractions of cultural products and

practices. However, subtracted elements of culture performance could erode the essence of culture itself (Shepherd, 2002; Picard, 1995; Nash & Smith, 1991). This condition results in the degradation of cultural practices and social relationship along with the growth of capitalist value and consumer culture (McLaren, 1998). The sacred of tranced dancers in *Jathilan* performance as symbolic representation of human and nature harmony for instance, was disappeared and be substituted with the consumer culture, consuming not but surface of attraction to meet tourists' expectation in experiential dimension context (Wang, 1999; Stebbins, 1997; Smith, 2006).

In the effort of enhancing authentic Javanese atmosphere through providing several *Joglo*, these Javanese traditional house appear in the new model of touristic traditional house. This model is caused by the gimmicks added to create such an attractiveness of the building (Pilliang, 2003) causing chaos of the signage and presenting "simulacra" (Baudrillard, 1994). This house has been reinvented that therefore the tourists consume the pseudo reality by consuming artificial and invented cultural products (Urry and Larssen, 2011). The invented traditional house gives the interest in the past form of culture, appreciates it as precedent form of culture products of human being, duplicate the form, and pastiche (Pilliang, 2003). New tradition invented have not filled more than small part of the space left by secular decline of old tradition as might indeed be expected in societies in which the past become increasingly less relevant as a model of precedent for most forms of human behaviour (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1988). In order to give the appreciation to the past, the atmosphere in Kembangarum Tourism Village instead gives the vanished reality catered to and consumed by tourist.

The use of traditional Javanese architecture is an attempt to enhance traditional Javanese atmosphere in relation to place-making to determine the authentic experience of visitors (Hultman & Hall, 2012; Jive'n & Larkham, 2003; Perkins & Thorns, 2001). This effort is also followed by as set of marketing attempts to promote Kembangarum Tourism Village, where all the marketing media expose their Javanese traditional buildings. In other words, the Javanese architecture as a representation of life and fundamental philosophical Java community are tried to be re-presented to tourists

through tourism activities.

4.3. Politicization of culture in Kembangarum Tourism Village

Cultural tourism sites enable an exploration of the ways in which the two sides of the primitivist discourse are generated (Deutschlander & Miller, 2003). In the development of cultural tourist attraction model, local government through its policy intervenes the existing social structures, tries to exploit the resources of local culture, as one of the commodities (Davila, 2004). In this sense, repackaging community's culture into tourism attraction and inventing some new traditions through conservation and utilization activities are legitimised by labelling the importance of strengthening community identity that will eventually be consumed by tourists (Medina, 2003; Macleod, 2006). Furthermore, the whole part of commodification of culture could inextricably intertwine with politicization of culture in relation to attempts of gaining the economic benefits from the culture that has been commodified.

One example is the policy of Yogyakarta Special Region Tourism Office regulations, contained in the annex no.1 year 2012, second paragraph of article no. 12, stating that the Tourism Development Zone as the paragraph (1) of this article are as follow:

- Cultural Tourism Development Zone, the Convention and special interest includes the urban area of Yogyakarta and surrounding areas;
- Mountains Nature Tourism Development Zone and Special Interest cover Menoreh Region, Merapi Region, Baturagung Region, and Special Interest covers the Kulon Progo South Coast Region, Bantul South Coast Region and Gunung Kidul Coast Region;

Kembangarum Tourism Village, as a tourism village in the southern slope of Merapi area, Sleman, Yogyakarta, is administratively located in Sleman. Development directions for tourist attraction in Sleman are regulated in detail by the Department of Tourism in Sleman Regency. The policies are derived from RIPPDA DIY (Regional Tourism Development Planning of Yogyakarta Special Region Province). Kembangarum Tourism

Village therefore, should follow the development direction provided by the local government, where the direction of its development was stipulated in the second number of policy.

In addition, the strategic direction of tourism development in southern slope Merapi region is to develop the villages in the region of Mount Merapi as Chain of Tourism Village Region (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 2012). There are some performance indicators of tourism activities development in southern slope of Merapi region, as set out in the indicator (f) The development of the tourism village and observations of cultural activities and daily life of the local community; and to (g) Tourism development of cultural education (learning dance, puppets, batik, etc.) (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 2012).

Processes and efforts to make the local community culture as one of the tourist attractions in the tourism development puts tourism village as a vehicle with its comprehensive tourism development aspects comprising community empowerment, cultural development and ecological sustainability (Telfer, 2001; Fleischer & Tchetchik, 2005). In Sleman regency context, the tourism development direction poses tourism village as a local cultural package comprising community's socio-cultural aspects where most people live with rural culture and depend on agricultural activities. The politicization of culture initiated by the government in tourism village development context puts its main concern on the economic value of a cultural products. The cultural products deemed as the resources to increase the economic benefit of region. Based on "Rencana Induk Pengembangan Pariwisata Daerah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta" (Regional Tourism Development Planning of Yogyakarta Special Region), the main objectives of the development of tourism in Yogyakarta Special Region province is to increase the contribution of tourism sector to increase revenue mainly middle class people down and increase regional revenue (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 1999). In encouraging community development and increasing regional revenue, tourism development project proposals and external fund could not be separated as the main development generator of an area through inter-related investment projects

(Jenkins, 1982; Mahony & Van Zyl, 2002). Therefore, such investment projects will inevitably commodify local cultures and environment that extensively generate direct impacts for locals (Dwyer & Forsyth, 1994; Mbaiwa, 2008)

4.4. The investor's role in politicising local culture

The process of politicization of culture as a commodity is also represented by the large investments in tourism (Richter, 1989), particularly in rural tourism development. In Sleman regency context, large investment projects in tourism village development appears considering the potentials of tourism village as enterprises that could be seen from the proliferation of non-local fund and investment projects. Governments' openness towards investment requires legality or policy as a legal direction. Some policies have been settled in supporting investment projects as an attempt to accelerate tourism village development.

One of the policies that supports the existence of the private sector in tourism development mentioned in Regional Tourism Development Planning of Yogyakarta Special Region year 2012, which explains the direction of development of Yogyakarta Special Province tourism implemented by encouraging public and private sector partnerships (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 2012). Moreover, Chapter III of the policy and strategy development of regional tourism destination describes the area of tourism development models, then detailed in point (f); which includes the development of investment in tourism (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 2012).

Along with the development of tourism in Sleman, investment projects initiated by the government has started to enter a new phase. Investment in the development of rural tourism is a priority, due to higher markets demand for rural tourism products. Investment in the development of rural tourism is expected to provide instant solutions, accelerating the development of society that appears as subject and object in tourism activities.

Kembangarum Tourism Village development highly depends on the external investment projects as this tourism village development was

initiated by external investor. The dominant roles of the investor ranges from planning the village development strategy, management, maintenance, and marketing efforts. Public participation spaces were created, but locals' accesses to it is limited due to less capability of local human resources. As revealed by a member of marketing division of Kembangarum Tourism Village that in tourism village management, the management could not largely involve local community because the fact that locals are low educated:

“We have tried to involve local community in the early phase of development. We are still trying until nowadays and there are only few people who can manage tourism village. We are now in the decision that only selected local individuals who want to participate in tourism village development and have capabilities in managing tourism village could be work together with us.”

To meet the demand of cultural products in the effort to increase economic income, the investors have conducted a series of empowerment activities, in cooperation with Tourism Regional Government of Sleman Regency. The cooperation aimed at producing qualified and competent human resources to manage tourism activities in the village. Presently, the cooperation is carried out, especially in the need to give training or workshops related to tourism and local product management, for example, raw material processing of food.

In supporting art and cultural activities, the investor has provided a set of gamelan facilities, a place for exercise, and organised the management of *Karawitan* (Traditional Javanese Musical Instrumental). *Karawitan* practically is used as an opening for the other activities that are supported by the investor. Once after he initiated a set of Karawitan activities, variety of new creations were created such as *Rampak Salak Dance*, *Rampak Buto Dance*, and so on.

The dynamic of art and cultural activities in Kembangarum Village appears as a potential tourist attraction. Art and cultural activities are offered as tourist attractions in accordance with tourists' demand. Those activities are also promoted through brochures, website and official Kembangarum

Tourism Village social media account such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It thus implies the empowerment model that tends to encourage the economic benefits from the arts and cultural activities in the Kembangarum Village by promoting them as tourist attraction. It thus implies that the arts and culture of the local community is positioned as a commodity, with little innovation and tailored to be packaged to market demand.

Placing art and cultural activities represents the politicization of culture where culture was politicized with a specific purpose (Wright, 2002). Clearly the arts and cultural activities of local communities in Kembangarum Village, that previously are almost obsolete due to lack of facilities and the bustle of people to meet their economic needs by working outside the village, try to be presented again through tourism activities, with modifications in various elements. The investor's interest is therefore mainly based on the economic benefit received from re-activating those activities.

The politicisation of culture involves investors as the main actors, with a policy based on the investment made by the government. Such a practice indirectly puts local community along with its cultural practices as a new economic resource (Deutschlander & Miller, 2003). However, art and cultural activities reactivation will restore local community's collective memory as a form of ethnic revivals (Davila, 2004). Local community requires an appreciation as a sign of their recognition as a civilized society. Tourism enables tourists' recognition and appreciation of local community's culture through host and guest encounter in an integrated tourism village activity (Aitchison, 2001). Such a social and cultural recognition received by local community is used by the investor as a mean to obtain the economic benefits from the arts and cultural activities.

Packaging arts and cultural activities carried out by the investor refers to a model of generating economic benefits of the investment. Arts and cultural activities are reactivated, try to be promoted, and then be sold through several tourism activities where cultural excess of the arts and rural communities are high-demand products in contemporary tourism development (Sharpley, 2002; Scheyvens, 1999; MacDonald & Jolliffe,

2003). By a well-established economic calculation, the investor could maximise the economic benefits from his investment projects. In contrast, local community as the main perpetrator of the art and cultural performances will only get paid according to the collective agreement, and the investor is free in deciding attractions price for tourists. Total income of communities had decreased, while investor has constant costs revenue.

4.5. Community conflict

Tourism activities provide the arena in which profit and economic advantages offered by the tourism activity by utilizing local resources as commodities generates problems regarding community's conflict. The conflict between local community and tourism village management appeared in the early development phase when the village was granted PNPM Mandiri (National Community Empowerment Program) Tourism by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy in two periods (2009 and 2010). The conflict was caused by different perception of local community and tourism village management regarding the existence of such aid. Most local community have the perception that the aid should be distributed equally to every citizen in the Kembangarum village.

The conflicts that were happened in Kembangarum Tourism Village are totally based on the unsatisfied community who feel that they have received nothing from their participation in tourism activities using their local cultural resources. As stated by the Head of Kembangarum Village regarding the less economic benefit community received from tourism activities in Kembangarum Village:

“Honestly, locals only get nothing from tourism development in this village. The locals just work hard and there is no beneficial income for local community. The result is that there are less people from this village who want to involve in tourism activities again.”

This condition depicts the state of culture privatisation and the community gave their disappointment through their arguments. Through several organization created, to coordinate the

activities related to tourism management, the investor put himself in the central power of hegemony, control the management and the series of local community activities. Commodification process created by the investor in the tourism village development practices results in central decision making model affecting the art and culture activities of local community that are not related to tourism.

It affected community's communication, relating to day-to-day relationship of local communities. That conflict raised the gap between locals divided into two major groups, namely locals who are involved in tourism activities and people who are not participated in tourism activities. For people who are involved in tourism activities, there was a gap, due to perception of most locals involved in tourism activities who considers that the distribution of profits and job desk felt unjust. There are groups of people who dominate the division job desk giving rise to the dispute, which led to their reluctance to engage actively in tourism activities.

5. Conclusion

Utilising local culture as a potential economic asset for investors is a part of the process of the politicisation of culture by transforming the form of cultural practices into tourism attraction in culture commodification context to gain more economic benefits of community's cultural resources. Along with attempts to strengthening community identity, reproducing community's art and culture activities through enabling community's cultural practices as tourist attractions also puts an important contradiction. Investment projects in rural tourism development tend to focus on individual profit of investor generated. These investment projects thus tend to exploit local natural and cultural resources rather than improve the overall economic status of the community development he invested.

Contributing external investment projects in tourism village development as the main central development director could potentially result in community conflict. Local community gradually understand that their local cultural resources are being privatised by the investor. The conflict therefore resulted in community reluctance in contributing to tourism activities. Furthermore,

community conflict caused by the politicization of local culture through the model of cultural tourism activities could be a consideration in developing further tourism policy, particularly tourism village development-related policy that highly concerns on community empowerment aspect.

This study reveals the potential limitations of current tourism development models concerning more on external investment priority. Taking into account the commodification process, the narration regarding community responses towards commodification of culture practices could enhance a new field of tourism studies. Further studies regarding commodification of culture impacts towards local community in urban-related tourism context could enrich further cultural tourism studies.

The open space of public participation and investment projects could potentially level up regional development progress through enabling compatible policy that could accommodate each development subject's interests. Government policies appears as an important regulator to control such development integration. Policies on investment in the development of tourism, especially rural tourism, should be re-examined. Investors play a key role in providing funds for accelerating regional tourism development but it could be problematic for the social dynamics of rural villages if investors' power are uncontrolled. Initiating strategic policy regarding public participation space could encourage more equal development participation. Lastly, direct government control for each tourism development practices should be regularly done to assess each tourism development practice in micro-scope.

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