

## Identifying Local Community's Empowerment in Developing Sustainable Tourism in Pahawang Island, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province

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### Abstract

Nowadays, the concept of Tourism Planning is more focused on sustainable tourism development. Many approaches have been offered in the direction of sustainability. One of the alternative approaches used is the Cittaslow philosophy. This study aims to identify the local community's empowerment and involvement in tourism sector in Pahawang Island, Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province, Indonesia. The local community involvement and empowerment are the main aspects of Cittaslow's philosophy implementation. In line with the implication of those two aspects in tourism sector, this study is intended to determine which sustainable tourism is better conducted. This study uses the qualitative method, that is, a case study of Pahawang Tourism in Pesawaran Regency, Lampung Province, Indonesia. The result reveals that, local community's empowerment in Pahawang has been built since 1996, when there was assistance from NGO Mitra Bentala to preserve and build their livelihood. In short, it can be stated that when sense of belonging of their environment has been built, the other aspects will tend to improve too, such as social, psychological, political and economic empowerment. Unfortunately, the local community's empowerment itself is not enough; the support from the government is highly needed in planning the tourism toward a sustainable one. The more effective collaboration among stakeholders (government, local communities such as businessman and residents) is the more chance for sustainable tourism to have.

**Keywords:** *Sustainable tourism, community involvement, community empowerment, Pahawang, Lampung Province, Indonesia*

### I. Introduction

The concept of sustainable planning has been popularly used recently. Sustainability approach focuses on three ideas: (1) Thinking about environmental impacts, and economic resources in the long term, (2) Considering the social advantage of communities, and (3) 'Participatory' spirit: the process creates and promotes cooperation among stakeholders for mutual benefit in the long term [3]. The general goal of sustainability in tourism development is not to harm but to benefit the environment and local communities economically, socially and culturally. Therefore, local community is the part that should not be neglected in tourism planning.

The strategic location of Lampung has made the region highly potential coastal area to develop a sustainable tourism. Surrounded by the Hindia Ocean in the West, and Sunda strait in the East, Lampung Province has potentially numerous tourism destinations because it has a rich ecotourism, e.g. beaches, waterfall, and mountains. In the Strategic Plan of Tourism and Creative Economy Department, Lampung Province, 2015-2019, it has been stated that Lampung Province has seven tourism places which have been declared by the government as their Leading Tourism Destination. Unfortunately, the lack of tourism management in the region has become a common issue. As a result, many tourism destinations have not given optimal contribution to the regional income, as well as the local community's welfare.

This study uses Cittaslow Philosophy in determining the criteria for community’s empowerment and involvement. Cittaslow Philosophy is used because it motivates and supports the sustainable tourism derived from its community-oriented philosophy and practice that encourages the participation of local communities in the development of a town with a high quality of life [1] [2]. Community participation has three benefits: first it fosters a sense of belonging to review their own places, next helps empower individuals of the wider community, and finally assists the forging of individuals and groups identities. And in its turn, the active participation of local citizens in tourism planning and management is essential for sustainable tourism. Hierarchically, community empowerment is at the top of the participation ladder and ensures more viable implementation of sustainable tourism at a destination level [3].

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to identify the Local Community's Empowerment in Developing Sustainable Tourism in Pahawang Island, Pesawaran Regency, and Lampung Province. The objective above was done by using some concepts of the Cittaslow Philosophy and Practice related to enhance local community involvement and empowerment in relation to tourism development and management from a local perspective. Although many aspects related to local community empowerment, the current study is mainly focused on the following aspects psychological, social, economic, and political empowerment because these aspects are more potential in Lampung Province.

## II. Research Methods

The primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with stakeholders who were considered to have a lot of experience and knowledge related to the development in Pahawang. The interviews were conducted for four stakeholders i.e. Local Government Tourism Officer, NGO, Local Community Leader/ Activist, Local Tourism Observer /Academician. The Interviewees were determined using purposive and snowball sampling method. The results of the interviews were transcribed verbatim to determine the internal validity. Then they were sent back to the interviewees to be confirmed whether their answers had been conveyed correctly according to the transcription made.

The analytical method used in this research is the Qualitative Content Analysis, which consists of emphasizing some emerging categories, and recognizing the significance for understanding the meanings. There are four steps that have been taken to analyze the interview-based data: (1) identifying initial themes and constructing an index; (2) labeling the data; (3) sorting the data; and (4) summarizing or synthesizing the data [5] [6].

## III. Finding

Pahawang Island is one of formerly isolated villages in Lampung Province. Based on the explanation of the interviewees, there was much environmental degradation occurred in Pahawang, as a result of mangrove illegal logging, bombing, blast fishing, toxifying and trawl nets using, consequently many coastal ecosystems were damaged. Pahawang Island is located in Punduh Pidada District with area about 113.19 km<sup>2</sup>, and according to BPS (2015), the total population in 2014 reach 13.317 and population density of the district reaches 117.65 people / km<sup>2</sup>. Located in Lampung Bay, Pahawang Island has six sub-villages: Suwakbuah; Peligatahan; Jelarangan; Kalangan; Pahawang; and Cukunyi.

Table 1 Summary of Identifying Themes And Indexing

No	Verbatim/items	Themes	Disempowerment/ Empowerment
1.1	Do their own	1. Indifference	Social

No	Verbatim/items	Themes	Disempowerment/ Empowerment
	business	and	Disempowerment
1.2	No real engagement	disharmony	
1.3	Little engagement between them		
1.4	No cohesion or connection between council and resident		
1.5	indifference towards environment		
2.1	Not invited		2. Lack of encouragement
2.2	Seldom/hardly encouraged		
2.3	No input from the community		
3.1	No idea about the committee members	3. No recognition of tourism committee	Political Disempowerment
3.2	No idea about potential of tourism		
4.1	Taking their own decision somewhere else	4. One-way decision making process	
4.2	No real power		
4.3	Not given any power		
5.1	Meet regularly with meetings		5. Respectful, collaboration between the stakeholders
5.2	Listening to the community		
5.3	Started to build a strong relationship with council		
5.4	Really/indeed encouraging internal community		
5.5	started attention from government/council		
5.6	community know what they really wants		
6.1	A lot of cohesion and connection		6. Social harmony & community cohesion
6.2	A huge community involvement group		
6.3	Grow together		
6.4	Brought all their experiences		
6.5	There is volunteer taking part for		

No	Verbatim/items	Themes	Disempowerment/ Empowerment
	assistance		
6.6	Members working together		
6.7	[Like to] get involved		
6.8	Now contributing		
6.9	Put something back into the community		
6.10	Draw together for support		
6.11	Not to make money / Not all for money		
7.1	Improving public services	7. Community Development	
7.2	Education program		
7.3	Encouraging local produces		
8.1	Promoting balance	8. Quality of life	
8.2	Buy locally		
8.3	Quality of life		
8.4	Mindset and lifestyle		
8.5	Promoting the values (of Pahawang)		
9.1	Being proud of their place	9. Self-esteem and community pride	Psychological Empowerment
9.2	Positive idea involved		
9.3	Proud to be part of Pahawang		
9.4	A good talking point		
9.5	Taking pride and ownership		
9.6	Very enhanced in our pride		
9.7	Self-esteem		
10.1	Buy locally	10. Long-term economic benefit	Economic Empowerment
10.2	Financial benefit (for a long-term)		
10.3	Benefit the region (next target)		

The Table 1 shows the result of interviews with stakeholders which have been classified by theme and an index. Based on the Table 1 above, several points are obtained:

(1) Sustainable tourism through empowering and strengthening the role of local communities in Pahawang can be achieved by means of knowledge of the concept of the facility based on the needs and local knowledge of the environment. According to the interviews, before Pahawang was famous for its tourism, there was intervention by NGO Mitra Bentala, which had given intensive assistance to the local communities on Pahawang Island who were not concerned with the environment where they lived. At meantime, the local community had social disempowerment, which was categorized as an indifference and disharmonious attitude. They tended to concentrate on their work, without much attention to the environment. Moreover, at that time,

the local communities had a political disempowerment. It was shown from the lack of encouragement in decision making related to their livelihood, as mentioned in the Table 1 numbers 2 through 4.

Based on the interviews, after the intense assistance from the NGO, Mitra Bentala, from 1996-2009, the local community had been able to be aware of protecting their environment, especially the community who lived in the coastal area of Pahawang. (See the summary of the interviews, Table 1 points 5 through 10). After they have been able to and aware of the importance to preserve the mangrove habitat and coral reefs around them, they give higher value to the use of their neighborhood.

(2) Community plays an important role in deciding the final decision-making related to the improvement of the quality of life and the environmental dimension. It can be shown from the Table 1, initiation of local community in discussing issues relating to the improvement of their quality of life will make them internalize and respond quickly to the fulfillment of their needs. As a result, slowly but surely, they become economically empowered, such as being able to buy local products, produce their own products, introduce their gastronomic tradition, and create their traditional homestay that are appropriate for tourism facilities. Furthermore, some points shown in the Table 1 reflect that self-esteem and community pride have been increasingly built. After their sense of belonging of environment has been built, the communities play their roles in preserving environment and making it more valuable for them. That aspect becomes important especially when facing conditions of the low attention or slow response from the local government in responding to the community's needs.

(3) Based on the data obtained, it has been found that there has been a weak coordination between the local communities and the government. Table 1 describes the data of Political empowerment of the community after being given the assistance by Mitra Bentala. Unfortunately, according to the interviews, political empowerment just occurred in internal community itself and the NGO. Good collaboration only happened between two stakeholders so far, the local community and the NGO. The lack of government attention still becomes an issue so far. The fact that the government plays an important role to help the community fulfilling their infrastructure needs and support for policies related to tourism areas in Pahawang cannot be put aside. Although they have tried to communicate with the local government concerning with their environment as a tourism destination, the local government does not pay attention seriously.

Moreover, based on the interviews, it has been found out that there has been an absence of strong regulations from the government regarding the implementation of a friendly environment of tourism or ecotourism. This happened because of lack of collaboration and trust from the local government to the community of Pahawang. Even though there have been so many activities that have already been done by the community to show that they are capable of making their environment more valuable as a tourism destination, the government remains not to make any good collaboration with the community to develop their tourism. The community leaders have made appointments several times with the government to have some discussion about Pahawang tourism and ask for help, but unfortunately the local government responds very slowly. In short, political empowerment that community has already built internally must be in line with the strong collaboration with the government in order to implement sustainable tourism development in Pahawang.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the local community empowerment in Pahawang Island has been running for a long time, (since 1996), and with that power they have built their environment to be a decent one as a marine tourism and conservation area in Lampung. Unfortunately, the spirit of the community to build their region into a region of sustainable tourism is hampered by the difficulty of convincing the local government to support the tourism they built, in terms of policies. The government remains to act sporadically and not pays attention to the issues given by the community when implementing the programs to support tourism in Pahawang. It occurs because of the lack of coordination and communication with the local government. The role of government is crucial for the preparation of local regulations that provide rules for the implementation of the three pillars of sustainable tourism development: economic, social, and environmental.

Broadly speaking, the summary of this study can be described in the following points:

- The process of community involvement and empowerment such as the social, psychological, political, and economic empowerment may become a driving force toward sustainable tourism.
- The Local community empowerment itself is not enough to support the sustainable tourism planning. It needs the other parties to participate in developing the ecotourism. The roles of government are highly needed

especially to provide policy to preserve the ecotourism. Lack of the government's role to facilitate the policy in managing the ecotourism area is the major constraint of the potential sustainable tourism development.

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