

UDC 332

## **LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN MARINE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY AT GILI LABAK TOURISM, SUMENEP REGENCY OF INDONESIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Gili Labak Island is one of the marine tourism that is located in Sumenep Regency, Madura. The presence of local community participation is expected to contribute to the success of tourism development in Gili Labak Island. The local community in this matter is the host of the private properties. This study is descriptive research using a qualitative approach. There are two problem formulations in this study, namely: (1) What are the participation of local communities in developing the tourism on Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency? and (2) What are the inhibiting factors and driving factors for local communities to support the development of tourism on Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency? The data were obtained from informants, observations, documents, and documentation. Based on the results, it is known that active participation only provides supporting facilities and maintains the tourism objects and potential in the tourism development. Whereas, passive participation means only following what is ordered by the superiors. The local people also tend to rely on community group known as Pokdarwis on Gili Labak Island. Moreover, the inhibiting factors in this study are age, lack of experience, low level of knowledge, and lack of socialization and support from the Village Head. On the other hand, the driving factors include caring, motivation, and several economic motives from the community.

### **KEY WORDS**

Local community, participation, tourism, development, Gili Labak Island.

Tourism is one of the industries that can act as a locomotive (driving force) for the economic growth of a country or a region. Tourism is said as an industry due to a group of companies that specifically provide services (products) for consumers (tourists). In addition, the term tourism industry is basically also used to convince people that tourism will have a positive impact for the economy of a country or certain regions, particularly in the impact of multiplier effects (Yoeti, 2008). Multiplier effects mean that the tourism industry becomes one of the instruments (tools) to mobilize business sectors and activities related to regional development, regional equity, and community empowerment, especially for those who live in remote or rural areas to cope with poverty (Sunaryo, 2013).

At present, there are many developed countries and developing countries including Indonesia that make tourism as one of the industrial sectors. This has drawn many attentions from various parties because, apart from the oil and gas sector, tourism is considered as one of the sectors that provide enough contribution to a country's foreign exchange. The existence of the tourism industry also can be used as an alternative to expand employment, encourage and equalize regional development, as well as improve the welfare and prosperity of the people (Pitana, 2009).

One important thing that becomes the main basis when developing tourism is the tourism potential that can later be developed into a tourist destination object. In addition to the availability of tourism potential, other supporting things that also needed in developing tourism are the availability of facilities and infrastructure supported by the role of tourism stakeholders. One of the roles of tourism stakeholders is associated with the support or participation of local communities to develop attractive tourism objects, to create a pleasant atmosphere in a tourist area, and to maintain sustainable tourism objects (Media Center, 2018).

Community participation is described as an action in the form of participation from the

community in the process of identifying problems and potential that exists in the community as well as selecting and deciding some alternatives to solve and deal with the problems (problem-solving). It is also defined as community involvement to evaluate the changes in the society (Adi, 2007). Besides that, local community participation is known as the involvement or participation of the community to actualize the willingness and ability of the community in planning, drafting, and implementing a tourism development program (Adisasmita, 2006). Based on the opinion above, it can be concluded that the participation or support of local communities can be used as the main foundation in tourism development. This is because the community is the host of tourism objects which are developed in the area (Jamal, 1995). Society is also stakeholders; without the support from the community, tourism development will not continue optimally (Byrd, 2007).

Today, the tourism development does not only occur in advanced and well-known cities or districts. Sumenep Regency, one of the regencies located on the eastern end of Madura Island in East Java Province, also starts to develop its tourism. The tourism development in Sumenep Regency can be proven by its total visitors which currently ranks 5<sup>th</sup> among the 38 Regencies or Cities in East Java next to Surabaya, Malang, Batu, and Banyuwangi ([seputarmadura.com](http://seputarmadura.com), 2017). The Department of Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sports (Disbudparpora) of Sumenep Regency also been doing a mapping to some tourism locations in Sumenep Regency. One of which is Gili Labak Island that becomes one of the three leading destinations in Sumenep Regency. Gili Labak Island is chosen as the mascot in "Visit Sumenep 2018" program ([newsmadura.com](http://newsmadura.com), 2017).

Gili Labak Island or better known as *Wisata Gili Labak* (Gili Labak Tourism) is one type of marine tourism located on a small island in Madura. Gili Labak Island has now begun to be developed in Sumenep Regency due to pretty good potential for reef growth. It requires a lot of effort from many parties to develop the tourism in Gili Labak Island until it now becomes an attractive object of a tourist destination ([portalmadura.com](http://portalmadura.com), 2017).

Based on the results of research observations and interviews conducted by the researchers, it is explained that Gili Labak Island back then was only a small island used to be known as *Pulau Tikus* or Rat Island because it is used to be a nesting place for rats which is still a mystical story on the island. The difficulties in developing the tourism on Gili Labak Island are the remote location that is quite difficult to reach, the lack of facilities and infrastructure to support the tourism activities, the lack of tourism knowledge of the people, as well as the lack of support from the community leaders (in this case is the Village Head) as the person who is obliged to lead and regulate the local community. There is another problem that is the lack of self-motivation from the people of Gili Labak Island to make changes towards a better direction and the emergence of various problems caused by several parties in the community (Disbudparpora and Regency Government) related to the land rights that will be used for the development.

The problems above are the factors that raise the lack of active participation from local communities to support tourism development in Gili Labak Island. Therefore, it can be said that the tourism on the island has not been utilized and developed optimally and thoroughly by related parties. However, with the potential in Gili Labak Island such as the natural beauty of the sea and coral reefs, the tourism stakeholders continue to take initiatives and work together in developing the island of Gili Labak to be a more attractive tourist destination for domestic and foreign tourists.

Based on the description and problems above, it can be concluded that the role or participation of local communities on Gili Labak Island tourism development is still very much needed in order to maintain and preserve the destination on the island. Therefore, to know about the role or participation that the local communities have contributed to Gili Labak Island tourism development and the readiness of the local community to welcome tourists, a deeper analysis concerning the participation of local communities in Gili Labak Island is required. Based on these reasons, researchers are interested in conducting research entitled "The Analysis of Local Community Participation in Tourism Development of Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency".

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Development is an action, process, effort, things or ways to make things more advanced, good, perfect, and useful (Poerwadarminta, 2007). The reasons that become the basis of development are as follows (Yoeti, 1997):

- Tourism development is closely related to the development of the regional or national economy;
- Tourism development tends to be non-economic, meaning that one of the motivations of tourists in visiting a tourist destination is to watch and see natural beauty, historical places, temples, ancient buildings, plantations, and so on. Therefore, all of which require a significant amount of money for maintenance and preservation that in the future will advance the tourism as an industry. The large costs of that matter can be obtained from the revenue of the tourism activity;
- Last but not least, to eliminate the narrowness of thinking, to reduce misunderstanding, and to determine the behavior of visitors, especially for local communities. The exchange of thoughts and interactions between tourists and local people will open the eyes of the surrounding community in many ways and with the development of tourism, different opinion, interpretation, and misunderstanding can be removed.

The importance of the role or participation of local people in tourism development will support the success of the tourism industry in the long term; this depends on the level of acceptance and support from the local community. This is because, the local community will play a role in welcoming the tourists and at the same time, providing services needed by tourists (Suswanto, 2004). The position of the community as one of the stakeholders also has a function and role as a host and the subject of development that is actively involved in giving the role and contribution in the process of tourism development decision-making (Sunaryo, 2013). Community participation itself can be interpreted as the involvement of community members in a development process where the society involved in the planning and implementation of the development programs/projects carried out in the local community. Community participation can also be regarded as an actualization of the willingness and ability of community members to sacrifice and contribute to the programs/projects implementation (Adisasmita, 2006).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the community is one of the important actors in tourism development and must be able to actively involve in the planning and implementation of tourism activities programs. Apart from being the subject of development, local communities also able to receive significant economic benefits in developing tourism activities as well as increasing the quality of their lives and their social, economic, and cultural welfare. These are the three main reasons which stated that community participation is a very important element in a construction plan or development (Conyers, 1991):

- Community participation is a tool to obtain information about the conditions, needs, and attitudes of the local community which without their presence, the implementation of development programs will not be optimal;
- The community will trust the development program more if they are involved in each stage or process starting from planning, implementation, control, and monitoring. By that, the community will know more about the ins and outs of the program and will have a sense of ownership of the program;
- It is a democratic right if the community is involved in development. They have the right to participate in deciding and planning the type of development that will be implemented in their region.

Suswanto (2004) proposed that there are two forms of community participation in the implementation of tourism development, namely:

- Active participation, the direct role or support from the community both individually and jointly who consciously helps the government programs with the initiative and

- creation in tourism development activities through the sense of ownership building;
- Passive participation, the role or support of the community that is indirect. The community tends to simply follow orders and support the preservation of natural resources. It raises the awareness of not carrying out activities that could disturb or damage the natural environment.

This following section explains the process of increased active participation of the community in the process of tourism development (Sunaryo, 2013):

- Planning stage. At this stage, the involvement of local communities is mainly related to the identification of problems, potential development, analysis and forecasting of future environmental conditions, and the development of alternative plans and facilities;
- Implementation stage. This stage shows the existence of community participation which is mainly related to community participation in the implementation of a development program as well as objects or businesses management that are related to tourism activities;
- Monitoring and evaluation stage. There is a form of community participation manifested in the role and position of the community in the monitoring and evaluation stage. Through this stage, the value of economic and socio-cultural benefits which have an impact on improving the social, economic, and cultural welfare of the local community also can be obtained.

The inhibiting factors, as well as the driving factors, will arise related to people's views on tourism development. If the community has a positive perception of the tourism activities, it will automatically become a driving force for the community to support tourism development. Besides that, the awareness of the local community about the potential benefits of tourism activities will be a driving factor that can influence the community to increase the participation in tourism activities (Wang *et al.*, 2006).

In addition to that, the driving factor for local communities to participate in tourism development is the emergence of various kinds of needs that are hierarchical in nature, such as (Maslow dalam Minderop, 2010):

- Basic Physiological Needs (Physical). Physiological needs are a set of basic needs that must be fulfilled because it is related to the sustainability of human life. The fulfillment cannot be delayed because it is the most urgent needs; clothes, foods, water, shelter, sleep, and so on;
- Psychological Needs. Psychological needs. A need that is sought or fulfilled by humans (the need for security, love and belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization) if the basic physiological needs have been met. If the basic physiological needs are fulfilled, humans will have the motivation to move towards higher needs.

Tosun (2000) also identified three main things that become the inhibiting factors of community participation in the process of tourism development in the context of a developing country, namely:

- Operational limitations, this includes the concentration of public administration in the field of tourism as well as the lack of coordination and information;
- Structural limitations, that is about the lack of expertise, appropriate regulations, adequate human resources, and funding sources;
- Cultural limitations, which consists of the limited capacity in the lower-class community as well as the low apathy and awareness in the local community.

## METHODS OF RESEARCH

This study is descriptive research which used a qualitative approach. This study was done on Gili Labak Island, Sumenep Regency, Madura. The focus of the study is as follows:

- The participation of local people in developing tourism on Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency was reviewed from: the process of increasing community

participation (planning stage, implementation stage, monitoring, and evaluation stage); the form of passive society participation; the form of active society participation;

- The inhibiting factors and driving factors of local communities to support the development of tourism on Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency were reviewed from: the factors that burden the community to not participating in Gili Labak Island tourism development; the factors that motivate the community to participate in the tourism development on Gili Labak Island.

The data sources used in this study are primary data obtained from direct observation in the field as well as interviews with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Youth, Sports (Disparbudpora) of Sumenep Regency, especially with the parties that are related to the development of tourist destinations on Gili Labak Island such as the local community group known as Pokdarwis (*Kelompok Sadar Wisata*) or Tourism Awareness Group, community leaders, the local community or the tourism business actors in the area who is the people around the island and the tourists who visit the island. Meanwhile, the secondary data were obtained from journals, newspapers, personal documents or official documents such as statistics on tourist visits obtained from the Disparbudpora of Sumenep Regency and the internet.

The data collection techniques used by researchers in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. On the one hand, the sampling techniques were carried out by non-random sampling or non-probability sampling method. The research instruments used in this study were independent researchers, interview guidelines, and supporting devices. Whereas, the data analysis was conducted with qualitative-descriptive analysis. The process of analyzing the data with descriptive analysis in this study covers data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. The data validity technique was tested using source triangulation.

## RESULTS OF STUDY

Based on the phenomena that occur in the field related to the process of increasing the role or participation of the community in tourism development, it can be concluded that age, experience, and knowledge really influence the community not to get involved. There are also people on Gili Labak Island who are active because they are motivated by themselves. However, there is something wrong with their active participation in the tourism development as for examples, individualism, the lack of cooperation with others, and monopoly of service that is opened because it has sufficient capital (funds) to support development. This case is still seen unfair by Pokdarwis because this means that there is no opportunity for other people who are not active and do not have capital.

In addition, passive participation of the local communities on Gili Labak Island shows that the people only follow the orders from superiors (Disbudparpora and Pokdarwis). They are only involved in meetings because they are directed by the community leaders of the island. They do not have the courage to speak or give their opinions regarding the development carried out. The local people on the island also tend to rely on the community group which is known as Pokdarwis.

This passive participation is caused by their lack of knowledge and experience about tourism activities and the low motivation in themselves to make a good contribution to tourism activities. Moreover, this also happens because the average people on Gili Labak Island still not familiar with tourism and not guided by the village head as someone who should be responsible for providing better people's lives. The village head of Gili Labak Island should be able to provide encouragement to the community and not just neglect the community to be given to one party. Therefore, this causes people to just give in and follow what is directed from Pokdarwis. This happens because they feel they cannot afford to be involved in the tourism development before they did not understand it.

The phenomena that occur in the field explained that the things which prevent the people from participating in the tourism development of Gili Labak Island are the lack of

ongoing socialization from the superiors and the lack of support from the village head who acts as a coordinator on the island. Sometimes, the lack of ongoing socialization makes some people (especially elderly and general people) confused about what should be done to contribute to the tourism development activities. These issues inhibit the society to involve in the tourism activities on Gili Labak Island because of their lack of knowledge about tourism development.

Secondly is the issues of structural limitations (the lack of expertise, appropriate regulations, adequate human resources, and funding sources). Structural limitations in Gili Labak Island occurred due to the factors of age (50 years and above), lack of experience, remote areas, and low level of knowledge. The people are very unfamiliar with the changes that began to occur because of the development. The lack of motivation and unfamiliarity of the local people to contribute to the development can provide a big gap for the people outside Gili Labak Island to come and look for a good source of income. As for examples, the active role of various people from outside Gili Labak Island in the form of tour packages offered through electronic media or WOM (Word of Mouth) which in this case, travel agencies. The local people of Gili Labak Island do not aware that they are only acting as supporting facilities of the main actors (travel agencies) who promote Gili Labak Island and obtain greater economic benefits than them. This has caused the economic growth on Gili Labak Island to not increase significantly. This occurs because there are many factors that make the local people not to dominantly involve in developing the tourism on Gili Labak Island.

Last but not least, there are cultural limitations which consist of the limited capacity of the lower-class community as well as low apathy and level of awareness of the local communities. In general, there still no motivation in the community of Gili Labak Island. However, there are some people who actually aware and understand enough to get involved based on socialization but prefer to leave it entirely to Pokdarwis (as youth who are considered capable in development activities).

Based on the results, community participation in the tourism development of Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency is still strongly supported because of the motivation of some people who want to change this small island to become an attractive Tourist Destination Object (*Objek Daerah Tujuan Wisata* or ODTW). It is expected to generate a good economic turnover for development. The tourism development on Gili Labak Island is also a factor that has triggered some communities to improve the quality of life to be better. Basically, the factor that triggers some local people on Gili Labak Island to participate in the development is the motives of basic needs from several communities who want to improve the economic conditions. However, community participation which is the driving factor for contribution is only limited to supporters. It has not been able to play a role as the main actor who is able to obtain economic benefits that have significant growth.

This motive is able to encourage the community to contribute to any tourism activities carried out. There is also a concern that because of this tourism development, the active community feels that the environment is getting better and well-preserved. Besides basic needs, another factor that encourages the people to participate in tourism development is the expectation of Gili Labak Island community to have a more advanced island. For examples, this is in terms of fulfillment of facilities and infrastructure to support the needs of the community as well as tourists, clean water, electricity, educational facilities for the sons and daughters, adequate health facilities, as well as other supporting facilities that make the lives of local people in Gili Labak Island more prosperous.

## **CONCLUSION**

The participation of local people in developing tourism on Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency is still not optimal when compared to the previous research which in general has been quite optimal. This happens because of several things as follows:

- The participation of the local community in increasing the role or active participation in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation is still carried out or focused on Pokdarwis and Disbudparpora. While the rest of the community still seem to be

apathetic;

- The active participation of the local community to have a contribution in Gili Labak Island tourism development is shown through the provision of visitor's needs carried out by some people in the island (food and beverage stalls, toilets, musholla, lodging, and tourist attractions);
- The passive participation of the local community in tourism development can be demonstrated by a large number of people who still rely on superiors in carrying out the tourism development activities (mutual assistance, coral reef planting, facilities construction and maintenance, and programs planning).

There are inhibiting factors and driving factors that motivate the local communities to either participate or not participate in the tourism development of Gili Labak Island, including:

- The low quality of human resources (lack of knowledge and experience, low level of education, and factor of age) as well as the lack of motivation to change;
- The lack of sustainable socialization from several parties, the low support from the village head to manage the community involvement, and the poor communications between the community and the public service agency such as Pokdarwis and the people and the community with the community;
- The basic motives from the community to improve the economy and the expectations to make Gili Labak Island able to have proper economic growth for the community and organized environmental conditions. Besides that, it is expected that there is a fulfillment of facilities and infrastructure to support the needs of local communities and at the same time, tourists.

## SUGGESTIONS

For the Village Head of Gili Labak Island in Sumenep Regency, a figure of the community that is responsible for the village and all levels of society, it is suggested to:

- Provide optimal guidance (socialization) and responsibility to all levels of society and able to motivate the community to have a contribution to the tourism development on Gili Labak Island. The socialization can be done by cooperating or establishing a good relationship with Pokdarwis to mobilize the people to have an active role in the development. This also can be realized in collaboration with Disbudparpora to provide socialization and training that specifically related to development.
- Provide training related to the development of human resources to sharpen the expertise to all levels of society. The training can be carried out in stages through collaboration with Pokdarwis to guide the community to be more creative and rational in thinking about the tourism development on Gili Labak Island. Moreover, this can also be done by forming a community group to make souvenirs and giving training for the people to become the main actors in tourism activities. As for an instance, by making a tour package.
- Village head should be able to play a more active role in the tourism development, manage the PAD (*Pendapatan Asli Desa* or Locally-Generated Revenue in village level) better, and responsible in the ticket sales. The PAD can be managed fairly for the needs of the local community and also for the needs related to the maintenance and development of Gili Labak Island.

The suggestions for Pokdarwis of Gili Labak Island as the group that is quite aware of tourism and trusted to mobilize and motivate the community to be involved in the development are as follows:

- Conduct regular optimization and evaluation on each field that is related to tourism development especially in terms of safety, comfort, and labor for all visitors. This can be done through deliberation or discussion with all parties in order to improve each related party if the parties have not carried out their responsibilities well;
- Continue to make better strategic programs or plans related to the tourism development in Gili Labak Island. As for example, this can be done by maintaining the

sustainability of the tourism potential and conducting regular cleaning activities (2 times a week) to keep the cleanliness of the tourist environment. Besides maintenance, Pokdarwis also made plans to promote Gili Labak Island through several media such as electronic media and printed media as an effort to keep this promotion activity from the people outside Gili Labak Island;

- Try to always standby in the respective fields especially in terms of maintaining the security. This is because Gili Labak Island is a small island that is quite remote and very prone to bad actions from some visitors.

To realize the ambition to improve economic benefits through the development of tourism on the island, the local people of Gili Labak Island is suggested to:

- Increase the self-awareness to get involved in the tourism development which can provide economic benefits in the future;
- Capable of motivating oneself to think more rationally about the changes that occur and not just relying on the situation;
- Learn to be able to see opportunity in the changes that occur because it will possibly change the fate of the people;
- Keep trying to be actively involved in the tourism development even if it is very unfamiliar. Seen from various offers that have been carried out by several parties, this happens because some people did not even respond and always fear to take a step. By that, awareness and motivation in the community are very important to be improved.

For academicians, it is suggested to conduct the same topic of research because of the limitations and many shortcomings in this study. It is expected and suggested that the next researcher(s) can do better and deeper research related to community participation in tourism development.

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