

Alleviating poverty through community-based tourism: Evidence from Batur Natural Hot Spring Water - Bali

by I Nengah Subadra

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⁶ Alleviating poverty through community-based tourism: Evidence from Batur Natural Hot Spring Water – Bali

² I Nengah Subadra

Tourism Department, Tourism Institute of Triatma Jaya
Jalan Kubu Gunung, Banjar Tegal Jaya, Desa Dalung Kecamatan Kuta Selatan
Kabupaten Badung, Bali-Indonesia
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9499-3378
Email: inengahsubadra@gmail.com

Abstract

² Bali has many rich natural resources to be developed as tourism sites and attractions supporting the major cultural attractions as stipulated in the state rules. The research explores the significance of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water as one of nature-based tourism sites in Bali in enriching tourist experiences where they can be relaxed while engaging with an authentic and natural atmosphere, healing numerous diseases traditionally and alleviating the poverty of the locals. Current national and regional tourism policies are analysed against this backdrop, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the management of the site, local people and tourists in order to comprehend the way the management works to prepare and serve a convenient tourism site for relaxing, healing as well as empowering and alleviating the poverty of the local people.

Keywords: alleviating poverty, relaxing, healing, ⁶ community-based tourism, Batur Natural Hot Spring Water

Introduction

²⁶ Bali has been widely recognised as a cultural tourism destination due to its unique cultures that are continuously practised by the Balinese people, blended with Hinduism beliefs which attract millions of domestic and international tourists each year. In 2017 for instance, there were 5,697,739 foreign tourists visiting the island which increased gradually to 6,070,473 in 2018 (Bali Statistic Agency, 2019). Those tourists likely enjoyed the uniqueness of Balinese culture and the many beautiful natural sites as well as other newly human-made attractions that also enrich the tourists' experiences.

As Subadra (2015) noted, the official designation of Bali as a cultural tourism destination does not mean that all tourists are visiting this paradise island to visit and enjoy the local cultures, but factually, they also explore the beauty of Bali's nature and even try modern tourist activities such as rafting, ATV ride, flying fox, pin ball, water splash, swings, bungy jumping, parasailing, etc. which are widely established by creative tourism entrepreneurs in Bali. This suggests that tourism development in Bali is dynamic wherein Hindu-based Balinese "cultures" as the core tourism attractions Bali as stated in the provisions of provincial regulation have now been extended to nature-based tourism attractions to support the major attractions, and meet and exceed other alternative tourists' demands while engaging with the superb nature of Bali.

² Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is one of various nature-based tourism sites in Bali. It has been successfully internationalized by the site management with great support and



assistance from satisfied tourists visiting this particular tourism site who keep posting a number of spectacular pictures and quotes on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, twitter, etc. expressing and sharing their engagements with the attractions exist at the Batur Natural Hot Spring Water. Online word of mouth marketing is nowadays been used by the management as the most proper marketing media to promote this off-tourist-hub tourism site digitally where everyone connected to the Internet is allowed to browse the most popular tourism sites from anywhere in the globe without being physically close; and more importantly, the instant responses of their fellow friends commenting on their posts and expressing their interests on the broadcasted quotes and photographs is what ultimately attracts tourists to visit and experience a destination.

One most important advantages of the location of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is the relatively close proximity, about a-30 minute drive from one of the most popular "lunch destination" of Panelokan Village in Kintamani District, Bangli Regency, wherein tourists taking a full day Kintamani tour are directed by their tour guides or drivers to restaurants established within this village where tourists can have a buffet lunch. This is while enjoying the spectacular views of Mount Batur and Lake Batur and experiencing the fresh and natural atmosphere of Bali's North East region. Additionally, Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is also near the starting points of the Mount Batur climbing attraction which can be accessed in only about 10 minutes from these areas. In other words, being close to the popular tourism destination is certainly beneficial for Batur Natural Hot Spring Water and allows it to be quickly recognised by the tourists. Some of them are potentially interested in visiting and enjoying the spring water, rather than promoting a single destination of choice only, which needs much harder work and additional costs to be undertaken.

Furthermore, the uniqueness of the sites "hot spring water" has served as the major attraction and focus of identity of this particular tourism site, even if there are also other interesting spots to gaze at such as Lake Batur, the hillsides and the traditional village of Trunyan which is located across the lake where the native Balinese people reside today. There are activities to engage in with local people such as fishing people located near Lake Batur and there is trekking along the slope of Mount Batur and even mountain climbing tours, to see the most fascinating sunrise spot in Bali. Obviously, tourists are also able to taste local culinary delights such as fresh grilled fish, fried chicken, locally growing salads and fried noodles to enrich their visiting experience at the site. Additionally, a number of amenities have also been developed by the management to support the tourism establishment on this site, including natural hot spring pools, pool bars, a restaurant, a towel counter, a deposit counter and some gazebos (Observation 23 November 2018).

The existing natural resources such as mountains, lake and hot spring water within Batur village are now well responded to by the local people as they are economically viable when designated as a tourism site and visited by tourists (informal interview with local people, 21 April 2018). Thus, the tourists flow to their regions which they only used to look at from a distance and now they explore the Mount and Lake Batur boosting awareness of the local people as to the significance of tourism which potentially improves the quality of their lives by having better earning opportunities from tourism developed in their region. This local awareness has initiated the development of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water as one of the natural tourism sites in Bangli regency which is solely managed by the local people to allow them to gain more benefits from tourism.

The notion of local involvement is in line with the current policy of the United Nation on Sustainable Development Goals 2030 in which two of the objectives emphasise poverty



alleviation and economic growth of the local people where tourism develops (United Nation, 2019). The involvements of the locals in tourism at this tourism site aims at providing work opportunities for the local communities and boosting the economic development in the region so as to enhance the quality of life of the locals.

Research Objectives

The study aimed at giving in-depth understanding on how tourism developed at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water and offers it as a comfortable tourism site at which tourists can to relax; it also explores how it is set as a natural healing site for local people and tourists and how tourism aids alleviating poverty for the local community of Batur village.

Literature Review

Poverty alleviation is a global issue and widely campaigned all over the world to ensure any businesses including tourism enterprises play their role in combating poverty. In Indonesia, the notion of alleviating poverty and growing the local economy corresponds with the national and regional policies on tourism development. At the national level, the Ordinance of Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 has served as the legal basis in developing and designating any state resources across the archipelago for tourism purposes. This Act specifically rules the nation-owned resources such as flora, fauna, heritage, archaeological and historical remains and cultures serving as "tourism vital". In other words, those resources are liable to be used and managed to boost tourism development in each region across the nation and to support the Indonesian economy to grow. More particularly it should enhance the prosperity of the local people as their poverties are to an extent alleviated tourism. Tourism is now considered as an integral part of national development and it corresponds with the international tourism policy to use tourism as the major economic engine to alleviate poverty in destinations (Act of Republic Indonesia 10/2009; Nicolaidis, 2006; World Tourism Organization, 2019).

Furthermore, at provincial levels, the government of Bali also issued Regional Regulation Number 2 of 2012 regarding Bali Cultural Tourism to support the abovementioned Act for the same objectives. However, tourism in Bali is likely to emphasize culture as its identity rather than other resources, even if Bali is actually rich in natural resources which are potentially to be designated as tourism sites. This regional policy confirms and clearly indicates that the core of tourism in Bali is culture; while other types (nature-based and man-made) attractions just serve as supporting tourism development (Regional Regulation of Bali Province Number 2 of 2012).

To date there has not been much research showing whether tourists visiting Bali for enjoying and experiencing cultural tourism sites, natural tourism sites or the human-made ones, are doing all three in one visit to the island, since each of those attractions offers distinctive holiday experiences. This uncertainty, has made the tourist motivations for visiting Bali unclear until today. Whether they conform to or are against the governing statute that leads to "mass tourism" with its uncertain multi-axis directions following its multiple impacts as their consequences, is ambiguous.

Subadra (2015) argues that the most threatening challenges posed by the government is to minimize conversions of fertile land and green space into tourism amenities and attractions which account for thousands of hectares annually; and also, the designations of sacred sites as tourism sites which raises disagreements and even tensions within the stakeholder group i.e. local people versus worshippers, local people versus tourists, local people versus government. At this stage, the presence of the government is highly



needed in enforcing the law to ensure the development of Bali's tourism runs on the right track pursuant to the applicable acts and regulations. To some extent, government as the authorised policy maker is obliged to preserve any cultural and natural resources served for tourism and to ensure their sustainability as drawn up in the national act and regulations; on the other hand, government shall also accommodate the local people's views and intentions to gain benefits from tourism developed in their regions.

Currently, there are no long-term plans which aim at ensuring local people are being involved in tourism and benefit from it. This is also regarding steps to alleviate poverty and reduce unemployment. Consequently, the poverty in Bali remains unsolved and still exists across the island which accounted for 176 000 people in 2017 and decreased slightly to 172 000 people in 2018 (Bali Statistic Agency, 2018). On the same vein, the percentage of unemployed also declined slightly from 1.28% in 2017 to 0.86 % in 2018 which totally accounted for 763.563 people of the total population of Bali which currently reaches 4,152,800 people (Bali Regional Revenue Agency, 2019).

The significances of tourism as the world's largest economic engine has been investigated from different perspectives and involves multi – disciplines including economics, social sciences, environment, law, psychology and ergonomics. Thus, tourism is one of the most difficult words to define. As Subadra (2015) notes, scholars have defined tourism from two perspectives: first, as the subject of tourism including the people involved in the tourism area i.e. tourists and stakeholders; and second, as the object of tourism – the place visited by the tourists that is prepared by the host destinations. As such, the definition of tourism may vary in nature depending on where the scholars stand. These complexities have initiated the concept of subjectivity and objectivity in tourism. However, tourism can simply be understood as people being away or escaping from daily routines by visiting particular destinations and experiencing the existing local services for pleasure and relaxing for a day or more. This tourism definition has adopted the two aforementioned concepts: subjectivity, wherein the tourists are the people who escape and travel to certain destinations; and objectivity which means the place visited and experienced by the tourists (Ardika, 2003; Cole, 2008). In other words, the definition is connecting subject – the party being involved in tourism operation and object – the destination visited by tourists. These concepts have been set as basis for further studies on tourists' attitudes and behaviours as well as push and pull factors of tourists travelling (Nicolaidis, 2006; Kozak & Decrop, 2009; Kozak & Kozak, 2016).

Bearing in mind, the core objective of tourism from a tourist's perspective is to escape from the usual activities, the host destinations commonly prepare a number of interesting and challenging activities for tourists to enjoy and experience which may allow them to be totally relaxed and have enjoyable experiences as well as learn the nature and culture of visited sites to widen up their knowledge (Richards, 1996, Urry & Larsen 2011, Subadra, 2015). Additionally, tourists are currently also eager to take something home such as pictures and souvenirs from the destinations they visit as a special memory token to be shared with family and colleagues alike. In the case of Bali tourism, the souvenir shops sell both authentic and inauthentic artworks and textiles are not only available within the art shops located in tourism sites such as Sanur, Kuta, Nusa Dua and Ubud with bargained prices, but now extend to the city of Denpasar and Badung Regency. Nicolaidis (2014) accepts as true that tourists mainly desire authentic products and abhor fake goods -depending on their budgets. In that area, souvenirs are displayed in modern and comfortable souvenir shopping centres such as Bali Collection, Krisna, Erlangga and Dewata at fixed prices and tourists can find anything in 'one stop shopping'. This indicates that tourists' behaviours in fulfilling their needs on souvenirs in Bali have changed slightly and they now have many alternatives to buy souvenirs, whether from



the conventional art shops or the modern ones in centres, as these now co-exist on the island. Furthermore, the World Tourism Organization in its current core agenda called "THE 2030 JOURNEY" considers tourism as multi-objective including: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership which is referred to as the 5P's incorporating these notions. Fisk (2010) argues as to the significance of the business toward people, profit/prosperity and planet to ensure sustainability; Richards (2006) sees tourism as a world peace mission; and Byrd (2007) and Nicolaides (2015) as a critical partnership – the involvement of local community as tourism stakeholder which then initiates the concept of community-based tourism.

This suggests that tourism has a significant role in reaching the aforesaid SDGs which have also being adapted in Indonesian tourism ordinances at both national and regional levels, especially the notion that attempts to combat poverty in the regions where tourism developments grow. The work of Luvanga and Shitundu (2003) for instance, has found that tourism development in Tanzania has evidently aided reducing the poverty rate through community-based tourism wherein local people are involved in tourism business as ruled in the national tourism policy. This is to ensure the local people get benefits from tourism. This suggests that the government both at national and regional levels as the authorised stakeholders issuing regulations play a vital role in guaranteeing the local community involvements in tourism. This is mainly through stipulating particular provisions on involvements of local communities in tourism development. In such a way, there is no reason for the tourism businesses to exclude local people in establishing tourism-related enterprises.

Moreover, in 2015, the World Tourism Organization specifically set its long-term platform to use tourism as three major objectives including alleviating poverty, saving the planet and creating prosperity for the people across the globe by 2030. Alleviating poverty is the first and most important agenda wherein tourism is expected to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere". In this stance the involvements of tourism stakeholders such as government, international and national non-governmental organizations, tourists, companies, scholars and civil society is critical. They are encouraged to play their roles in tourism development so as to reach the said objectives (Okazaki, 2008). This research in particular looks at how tourism can be beneficial for the local people and the roles of local communities in the tourism development and management of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water.

37 **Community involvement in tourism and the benefits**

The involvements of the local community in tourism developments have been set to meet and apply the international policy on sustainable tourism development (Okazaki, 2008). Local communities play a great role in tourism developments in any regions at any development stages: planning, development, supervision and evaluation (Harwood, 2010; Nicolaides, 2015; 2006; Gumede & Nzama 2019). The involvement of local people in those stages serve as the key for the success of community-based tourism development (Devrath & Ranjan, 2016). Planning, as an initial stage of tourism development needs the viewpoints on the business intended to be established from local communities which aims at gaining access and approval from local people as well as encouraging their awareness on tourism and introducing significant benefits which may be directly gained by the indigenous people when the planned tourism business runs its course. Additionally, at the planning phase, there are a number of consultations made by tourism investors with local communities, both personal and institutional consultations which adapt the vision and mission of the local bodies such as traditional village associations, religion-related bodies and youth organisations which in some regions



served as “culture fortification”. In Bali for instance, the communal bodies play significant roles in fortifying local cultures and the environment over the rapid developments of tourism in the region. Subadra (2015) argues that the local cultural resources such as temples and other Hindu sacred sites are still consistently preserved by local people both physically and spiritually, even if they have been officially designated by the regional government as tourism sites which means that they are open for tourists in addition to their main functions as sites of worship.

Local communities do not only act as paid hosts who are formally employed in tourism-related services to be visited and experience by the tourists, but they are also involved in direct social interactions between guests (tourists) and hosts (local communities) which determine the tourists' experience quality and their behaviours in the destination (Okazaki, 2008). Thus, the more involvement the local people have in tourism, the more support is expressed by the local people for tourism developed in their regions. As Salazar (2012) claims, local involvements are also aimed at making the tourism more sustainable where local people have a sense of belonging toward the developed tourism as they are beneficiaries of tourism. Conversely, the less involvement of local communities in tourism the more developers they may be subjected to resistances and this may lead to conflicts. For this reason, the involvement of local communities in tourism is compulsory to allow them to gain benefits from tourism development through formal and informal employment provision (Rozemeijer, 2001; Subadra, 2006; Gumede & Nzama, 2019; Grobler & Nicolaides, 2016).

As Fisk (2010) notes, any businesses established shall compulsorily provide profits for the people employed in the company and also local people living nearby the establishment. This provision has actually been applied in tourism industries by giving work opportunities to the local people to gain benefits from tourism through direct employment in the tourism industries in areas such as hotels, villas, homestays, restaurants, pubs, travel agencies and spas; and also, direct employments - running tourism related businesses such as art and souvenir shops, food-stalls and bike rentals where tourism is developed. However, the tourism benefits directly gained by the local people remain insignificant as profits mostly go to the investors who need their invested capital returning back quickly and then use it for expanding their businesses (Dolezal, 2011). Subadra (2017) argues that the lack economic benefit for the local people is due to a lack of competence possessed by the locals which makes them unable to access better positions for better pay in tourism businesses. This suggests that upgrading tourism competence (knowledge, skill and attitude) of local people is vital to allow them to occupy better positions in order to earn more money. The opportunities of local people to gain direct economic impacts from tourism really depend on the qualifications owned both for soft competency – understanding the knowledge of products and services offered and the hard competency – the practical or life-skills required to accomplish the works (Subadra, 2017). The more competence people have in a particular occupation, the more work opportunities they will have and the better the position and earning they will likely get.

With respect to this demand, tourism stakeholders are challenged to prepare competent human resources to be employed in tourism industries (Nicolaides, 2015). The government of Indonesia for instance, has specifically formulated a body called the National Professional Certification Agency and issued a policy on competence certifications to meet the mounting demands. This competence certification has now been set as a primary requirement for tourism business license extension to ensure all staff employed in tourism sectors are competent on tourism and hospitality aspects. Additionally, this competency qualifications do not only allow employees to take on better



tourism work opportunities to gain a better life, but also serve as an attempt to prepare local people to be ready to become involved and play greater roles in tourism developed in their regions.

Research methodology

The research was undertaken at the Batur Natural Hot Spring Water, located in Batur Traditional Village, Sub-district of Kintamani, Bangli Regency, Bali between 2018 and 2019. This research used a qualitative method in which the primary data were collected through observations, field notes, semi-structured interviews and online tourists' reviews visiting the site; and the secondary data were also collected at the same time during the field research, using websites and academic journals as well as state documents. Observations were undertaken between February 2018 and August 2019 to investigate the detailed tourism site including the location or accessibility, layout of the site, amenities, and involvement of local people at this tourism site (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Silverman, 2005). During the observations the researcher took some notes on the observed activities that are written in the research diary and also took a number of photos to all visualization of definite case which are further elaborated upon in the discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004)

Furthermore, face-to-face interviews were conducted with authorised personnel including Batur traditional village head, Batur administrative village head and the operational manager of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water who was involved in the development and management. Open-ended questions were utilised to explore the efforts of the management in preparing the hot spring water site as a tourism attractions in this village (Gillham, 2003; Silverman, 2005). The same interviews were also conducted with the local people working at the site to investigate their roles in the business operation as well as to understand the economic benefits gained from Batur Natural Hot Spring Water. In addition, a number of reviews relating to the investigated case written publicly by the tourists on in the internet were also quoted to understand their impressions, experiences and engagement when visiting the natural hot spring water tourism site.

The collected data were verified and triangulated to understand how the management has played its roles in preparing tourism attractions which allows tourists to have a relaxing and healing natural experience as well as providing work opportunities for the local people so as to reduce the poverty and help develop the local economy while supporting the tourism development in Bali in general. Interpretations were made during the writing process based on researcher's knowledge and observations to give a meaning to the research (Finn et al., 2000; Yin, 2009).

Discussion and findings

Batur Hot Spring Water which is located on the slopes of Mount Batur – the second highest mountain in Bali of 1,717 meter above sea level, on the bank of Batur Lake, is designated by the *Desa Adat Batur* (which further termed as Batur Traditional Village) as one of the tourism sites in Bangli Regency.

The site is originally a healing site where local people and other Hindu Balinese living in conducted traditional medical practices in the temple where the source of hot spring water bubbling from the earth (figure 1) was an aid. As time went by and more and more people came to this sacred place, in 2007, the villagers extended the water source into one big pool voluntarily to accomplish purification rites more comfortably. Batur Natural

Hot Spring Water is developed and managed by Batur Traditional Village and opened for public since 2008.



Figure 1. The main pool near by the temple used for healing purpose at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water
(Source: field research 18 April 2018)

Being a dried and unfertile region due to its location too close to the mountain and within area of the Volcanic lava, Batur Traditional Village used to be known as poor village since local people cannot cultivate their land for farming like other regions of the island. The traditional village head of Batur argued:

Desa kami kering karena letusan Gunung Batur. Tidak bisa tanam apa-apa di sekitar lereng gunung. Makanya masyarakat sini pada merantau untuk mencari nafkah ... Kami hanya punya gunung dan danau di sini.

Our village is dried due to Batur Volcanic eruptions. We cannot plant anything around the slope of mountain. Thereby the local people migrated to earn a living ... We have only mountain and lake here.

(Source: Interview with Head of Batur Traditional Village, 18 April 2018)

The topography of Batur traditional village has initiated the local authority to develop the local potencies of the region such as mountain, lake, temple sacred site and hot spring water as tourist attractions to gain benefits from tourism (Figure 1). The mountain and lake in particular, have long served as the magic view for restaurants located within the region of Batur traditional village which is managed by private businessmen which offer less direct benefits to the locals as most of the profits generated from the restaurants fly to the investors to expand their businesses elsewhere. Thus, they do not contribute a lot to poverty alleviation of the local people of Batur Traditional Village.



Figure 2. The view of Mount Batur used by hotels and restaurants developed within the region of Batur Traditional Village (Source: field research 18 April 2018)

For this reason, the Head of Batur Traditional Village committed to use the hot spring water which belongs to the traditional village's property as an income source for the local communities of Batur and for it to be locally managed by locals as well as employing Batur villagers at any occupational levels within the management without involving other people from traditional villages. The implementation of this management model is aimed at gaining more profits for the local communities as well as increasing the general prosperity of the traditional village authorities who are highly respected by the people for being wise traditional village figures.

The significant role of the Traditional Village Head has successfully brought the tourism site of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water to be independently managed by the Traditional Village without involving the Administrative Village in the management. Subadra (2015) distinguishes the differences between these two villages wherein the members of the Traditional Village which is referred to as "Desa Adat" has compulsory obligations which traditionally bond preserving the territorial temples known as *Pura Kahyangan Tiga* where three God's manifestations reside namely: *Desa Temple* (worshipping *Brahma* – the creator), *Puseh Temple* (worshipping *Wisnu* – the preserver) and *Dalem Tempe* (worshipping *Siwa* – the transformer); meanwhile, the members of the Administrative Village which is referred to as "Desa Dinas" are the ones who live in a certain territory and who are administratively registered for the purpose of governmental administrations without being bonded and burdened with the three said obligations. The obligations of Batur Traditional Village's members preserving their cultures have served as primary reasons to take the benefits of the development of Batur Hot Spring Water to fund the programs as affirmed by the head of Batur traditional village:

Kami memiliki kewajiban untuk melestarikan agama dan budaya kami ... kami berkewajiban menjaga Pura Kahyangan Tiga ... kami perlu dana untuk melaksanakan kewajiban tersebut.

We have obligations to sustain our religion and cultures ... we are obliged to preserve the territorial temples ... we need fund to accomplish such obligations.
(Source: Interview with Head of Batur Traditional Village, 18 April 2018)

The traditional village leader has a great role in the lives of the local communities of Batur village. He is not only responsible for religion and tradition-related matters, but also responsible for the lives of the traditional village members using the existing assets of the traditional village to give a living wage and alleviate poverty in the region. The area where Batur Natural Hot Spring Water was established for instance, is the property of the traditional village. It used to be only used for healing purposes by local people of Batur and also other Balinese people living across the island. As tourism developed, the traditional village head considered the site as profitable for both the traditional village revenue and villagers' incomes. This suggests that awareness of the local people is essential in the early tourism object development stage so that they can observe and decide on whether the developed site is beneficial for the locals or not; and of course, at further developmental stages, local communities shall be consistently paid for their awareness on the significance tourism developed in their region by supporting any policies issued by the authorities. In such a way, local people are able to gain benefits from tourism which aim at improving their prosperity.



Figure 3. Traditional village authorities meeting at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water (Source: Field research 18 April 2018)

The awareness and commitments of the traditional village head of Batur and other related authorities do not only end up at the designation stage, but they are also active in the development stage discussing improvements on amenities and personnel developments which shall be made to attract more tourists visiting the site and provide better service for tourists visiting Batur Natural Hot Spring Water (Figure 3). This suggests that the tourism object requirements such as attraction, amenities, accessibility and ancillary aspects need to be supported with the "awareness" of local people, and for them to be involved in tourism development in their region which further add up the 4A acronym into 5A consisting attraction, amenities, accessibility, ancillary and awareness. The awareness of the local people plays a significant role in the success of tourism development. The more awareness local communities have, the more participative and roles they might play in supporting developments of tourism in their territories.

Tourist attractions, amenities and engagements

The core attraction of ⁸ Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is natural hot spring water which is divided into 12 pools. Two pools are for kids and adults are located in the main courtyard. Two pools are developed by the lake precisely on the bank of Batur Lake where tourists can view the beautiful scenery of Batur Lake and also ancient Trunyan Village – one of native Balinese village on the island which located across the lake (figure 4). The four pools are open for public and accessible for domestic and international tourists. One pool is specifically designated for the traditional village head known as *Jero Gede* (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Pools by the lake at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water (Source: field research 18 August 2019)

As noted earlier, the head of Batur traditional village is highly respected by the local people since any traditional regulations are decided and issued by the traditional village which bind the villagers with the approval of the village head. This special treatment and honour made by the locals, indicates that the traditional village head is served as a distinguished figure to be respected and imitated in their lives.

The development of this particular pool also indicates that local people of Batur do not primarily secularise the traditional village property for economic reasons by opening the site for the public to visit, but they keep respecting their leader by establishing such special bathing places so as to preserve the traditions inherited by their ancestors. In other words, the local people have been successfully staging the natural sources in their region into tourism opportunities while sustaining the cultural aspects of the site and gaining economic benefits from its development for locals' prosperity enhancement.



Figure 5. Pool designated for traditional village head with "bamboo fence and white flags" at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water (Source: field research 18 March 2018)

This practice conforms to the concept of sustainable tourism on the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development Goals which was promoted by the World Tourism Organization, wherein the tourism established Batur Traditional Village has aided in reducing the number of poverty stricken and unemployment by providing work opportunities for the locals through community-based tourism initiatives.

Bathing in the natural hot spring water is the most interesting attraction in this tourism site. Tourists may swim in the four public pools for hours while enjoying the natural atmosphere of the Batur Lake, relaxing around the pools and having some chilled drinks prepared and served by local people. Additionally, tourists are also able to have spa treatments to refresh their body and mind at affordable price around this site of tourism. No tourists shall worry about starving at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water tourism site as the local people involved in the management serve selections of tasty foods for lunch in the restaurant facing directly over the lake, surrounding hills and hot spring pools. Tourists visiting the site expressed their experiences on Google review:

Very nice hot spring bathing location directly on the lake Batur. It is very beautiful and relaxing ... I can only recommend this place, because it is unique!
(Source: Google Review, Swen Söhngen, May 2019)

Once you get here ... It's worth the visit ... The springs are clean and tidy...and the water warm and soothing. The views are to be remembered. Good place.
(Source: Google Review, Garry Smart, May 2019)

Great place to spend a few hours ... good for kids too, since there's waterslides ... can relax in the many pools while having a cocktail on a floating tray ... have bar at water level ... can order while in the pool, very nice. Food is really nice too, with all you can eat buffet and a la carte menu. There's also a spa ... Definitely a must... (Source: Google Review, Michele Peghini, February 2019)

Other foreign tourists also argue that Batur Natural Hot Spring Water impressed them much due to the surrounding atmosphere which allow them to see the



sceneries of mountain and lake simultaneously. These great impressions had initiated the tourists to visit the site repeatedly. In other words, the satisfaction gained and experienced by the tourists in the destination have evidently motivated the tourists to visit such places more often; and more importantly, recommending the site publicly on online media which has open access and which serves as a travel reference by fellow tourists. Foreign tourists argued:

A great day. My second visit to Batur Hot Springs was as great as the first. Beautiful environment with 5 separate pools. Staff were very helpful and the food was very good ... Swim up bar and magnificent views of volcano and Lake Batur ... Spend a day and treat yourself to a beautiful place with healing springs (Source: TripAdvisor, Drakey54, October 2018)

Great day outing...Long drive to hot springs even from Ubud but really worth the effort. Really enjoyed the location near the lake and after a couple of hours in the hot pools I felt relaxed and all muscle soreness gone. Next time a whole day would be better to utilise all the facilities...Beautiful relaxing scenery. (Source: TripAdvisor, Lyn B, August 2018)

For domestic tourists, the visit to Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is not only aimed at relaxing and bathing around the hot springs but also serves the purpose of being a site for spiritual and healing purposes. The hot water containing sulphur substance has been long believed in, and has been served by Balinese people as traditional medication for skin disease such as itches and acne and also for shoulder and back pains. These motives might however, not align with the scientific medication. But, they combine hot spring bathing and religious practice into a set of healing rites which are believed to be able to cure certain disease as godlike power is involved in the activities at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water. Local visitors argued:

Saya dari Badung ... Saya sudah sering ke sini untuk berobat ... saya sembahyang dulu di pura, baru mandi di sini.

I am from Badung ... I have been here many times for medication ... I prayed in the temple first, then had bathing here.
(Source: Fieldwork interview with a Balinese visitor, 18 April 2018)

Saya dari Buleleng ... Saya ke sini untuk kepentingan spiritual ... di sini ada pura. Saya membersihkan diri di tempat ini biar bersih secara spiritual.

I am from Buleleng ... I came here for spiritual purpose ... There is a temple here. I purified myself in this place in order to be clean spiritually.
(Source: Fieldwork interview with a Balinese visitor, 13 June 2019)

This suggests that the site of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water has served as a tourism site where visitors can find pleasure and relax, thus escaping from their daily routines workplaces, and also as sacred site where they can practise their beliefs in the existing temples for spiritual and traditional healing purposes. In other words, Batur Natural Hot Spring Water has two major significances namely, as a sacred site and then additionally as a tourism site in which they both contemporarily co-exist and run harmoniously without disturbing one to another.

Furthermore, looking at the tourists' intentions visiting Batur Natural Hot Spring Water, this varies in nature. Some tourists visit this tourism site purposely which means that they come there as they have planned it before or as a primary destination to visit; while some of them are also in connection with other tour arrangements such as a Mount Batur



climbing and Kintamani tour itinerary which is purchased as a part of an organised or packaged tour. Google reviewers wrote:

Went as part of a tour package. Very good here. Lockers and towel provided.
Great view! And very welcomed after climbing Mt Batur!
(Source: Google Review, Gemma Griffiths, May 2019)

The hot water is amazing especially after we hiked Mount Batur... it is located in a spot very not many tourists go...urge you to make a turn. It really is worth it and it is very cheap!
(Source: Google Review, Armand Heymans, January 2019)

Tourist Visit and Revenue

Since the designation of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water as a tourism site in Bangli, this particular tourism site has been visited by millions domestic and international tourists. In general, the number of tourists visiting the site during the last five years fluctuated (Table 1). Over the eight years since its opening, Batur Natural Hot Spring Water was visited by 84,607 people in 2014 which then increased slightly to 95,994 tourists in 2015 and continued to incline sharply until reached a peak at 116,416 persons in 2016. While in the following year (2017), it decreased gradually to 93,131 tourists and continued to decline slightly to 86,349 foreign and local tourists in 2018.

No	Year	Tourists		Total
		Domestic Tourists	International Tourists	
1	2014	50,764	33,843	84,607
2	2015	57,596	38,398	95,994
3	2016	69,850	46,566	116,416
4	2017	55,879	37,252	93,131
5	2018	51,809	34,540	86,349

Table 1. Domestic and International Tourists visiting Batur Natural Hot Spring Water between 2014 and 2018 (Source: Fieldwork 19 August 2019)

The number of tourist visits to Batur Natural Hot Spring Water effects the revenue of this tourism site. Thus, the revenue trend is similar to the tourist visit pattern as illustrated in Table 1. The main source of income of this tourism site is generated from entrance tickets purchased by tourists entering the site. Currently, the management applies different entrance ticket policies for the tourists in which foreign tourists are charged IDR 150,000 per person (adult) and IDR 75,000 (children); and domestic tourists only pay IDR 60,000 per person (adult) and IDR 30,000 (children) as illustrated in Table 2. International tourists are charged more, and the national tourists less, as they have different inclusions in their tickets.

The foreign tourist ticket includes the entrance ticket, a welcoming drink and refreshments and a gazebo where tourist can relax in the open pavilions developed nearby the pools; meanwhile, domestic tourist tickets only pay for entrance tickets without any additional services. This suggests that price effects the services offered to the tourists visiting Batur Natural Hot Spring Water. In other word, the better service offered, the higher price charged. This clarifies why entrance tickets for international tourists are more expensive than the domestic ones.



No	Year	Tourists		Total (IDR)
		Domestic Tourists (IDR)	International Tourists (IDR)	
1	2014	3,045,840,000	5,076,450,000	8,122,290,000
2	2015	3,455,760,000	5,759,700,000	9,215,460,000
3	2016	4,191,000,000	6,984,900,000	11,175,900,000
4	2017	3,352,740,000	5,587,800,000	8,940,540,000
5	2018	3,108,540,000	5,181,000,000	8,289,540,000

Table 2. Approximate Annual Revenue of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water between 2014 and 2018
(Source: Fieldwork 19 August 2019).

In general, the amount of money generated from tourism development at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is distributed into three major slots namely: management (30%), Batur Traditional Village (30%) and operating expenses (40%). More specifically, the 30% shared for the management is used for paying employees' salaries. Furthermore, the total amount of 30% shared with the traditional village is used for *prahyangan* (god-related services) such as temple festivals which accounts for 30%, for *pawongan* (human related services) such as cremation ceremonies for the local people of 30% and the remaining 40% used for new business developments. While the 40% which is proposed for operating expenses is again divided into two uses, namely, operating expenses (30%) including pools and devices maintenances and for service or donation which makes up 10% in which 6% donated to *sang meraga desa* (traditional village authorities) and outstanding issues, 4% for social activities such as youth organisation activities (including sport tournaments, anniversary, annual *ogoh-ogoh* – a giant doll parade, etc.) and also magazine publication.

The amount allocated for business development has now been successfully used in establishing a new tourism site named "Seked Batur Water Park" which is located near Batur Natural Hot Spring Water. This newly established tourism site has now employed 34 local people who are appointed in some divisions including operational, *vila* camping, restaurant, adventure activities, bar, garden and pool. This suggests that the *involvement of local communities in tourism* has also boosted the establishment of other new tourism-related businesses which offer more work opportunities for the locals. This tourism development model is so-called from locality to locality which means that the indigenous communities working in such tourism sites do not only benefit their lives and family, but they also create benefits for other local people living in the same territory.

None of the revenue generated from this tourism site is shared with the government except for the obligatory taxes, namely, hotel and restaurant tax and land water tax. This share model distinguishes the tourism site management patterns between the Batur Natural Hot Spring Water and others which have different management patterns and profit shares. For instance, the case of Goa Lawah temple in Klungkung Regency wherein the temple tourism is managed by local people (in the name of Temple Board) and the profits are shared with government to the tune of 80% and local people 20%; and this is also the case of tourism at Tirtha Empul Temp⁷ in Gianyar Regency which is managed collaboratively between government and local people (in the name of Traditional Village) and in which the profit shared with government is at 60% and the local people get 40% (Subadra 2015). These two examples show clearly that local people are the asset owners gaining less benefit from tourism developed in their regions. This suggests that the traditional village authorities have very strong power in negotiating the management patterns to be able to manage the tourism site solely to allow local communities to be gaining more profits for uplifting their prosperity.

Local Empowerments for Poverty Alleviation

8

As argued earlier in the governance section, Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is solemnly managed by the traditional village of Batur which involves local villagers. The involvements of local communities in this tourism object are divided into three employment typologies namely: management employment, operational employment and informal employment. The traditional village leader and authorities are designated as the board of directors who are fully responsible for the entire operations of the tourism site including management policy, legal aspects and the developments. Thus, they are referred to as management employees or decision makers, as they work in the top management positions of the tourism site deciding on issues and appropriately leading to its vision and mission as a truly community-based tourism development in Bali.

Furthermore, the operational employment involves local communities who are interested in working in the tourism sector and are objectively selected by the management team to be employed at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water in the divisions as illustrated in Table 3. Overall, Batur Natural Hot Spring Water employs 56 (fifty-six) local people of Batur Traditional Village wherein they receive monthly pay for their involvements on the site. The appointments and job titles are based on the interests and basic competencies of the applicants to ensure they are competent in the job offered.



Figure 6. Local people working at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water (Source: Fieldwork 18 August 2019)

The management is challenged to employ local communities in tourism development of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water. To some extent, the traditional village authorities are really eager to involve them in tourism in order to allow them to gain the economic benefits of tourism developed in their region. On the other hand, developing Batur Natural Hot Spring Water demands competent human resources. Thus, the management discounts the formal requirements (education and experience) for the local people intended to work at this tourism object. The traditional village head of Batur argued:

Kami tidak perlu pendidikan tinggi ... Kami perlu orang yang mau bekerja ... mau dilatih ... mau dididik biar bisa bekerja di sini ... dan membangun Desa Batur.

We don't need high education ... We need people who want to work ... to be trained ... to be educated in order to be able to work here ... and intend to develop Batur Village. (Source: Head of Batur Traditional Village, 18 April 2018)



The management attempted to maximize the use of local communities in its development even though they all need to be well-trained by the management based on the appointed positions in order to comply with their tasks. Such pretraining has evidently worked well and been practised by the local employees in accomplishing their day-to-day duties. However, unavoidably, they need to be continuously trained to upgrade their competencies in order to be able to offer professional services to any tourists visiting the site. The head of Administrative Village of Batur argued:

Kami ingin semua warga lokal yang bekerja di sini profesional. Mereka perlu dilatih keterampilan hospitalitinya secara berkesenambungan...Pelatihan bisa dilaksanakan di sini atau di luar...Kami sangat butuh akademisi yang bisa melatih dan mendidik masyarakat kami...Mereka perlu pelatihan Bahasa asing juga untuk berkomunikasi dengan tamu.

We want all local people who work here professional...their hospitality skills need to be continuously upgraded...the trainings can be conducted here or outside...We really need academics who intend to train and educate our communities...They need foreign language training to communicate with guests.

(Source: Head of Batur Administrative Village, 18 August 2019)

Currently, the management of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water only offers training to the local employees using internal trainers with specific competences on hospitality service and practical works for those who are in-charge in the kitchen, restaurants, front desk and spa sections. Meanwhile, other training which is related to the increase of competence and professionalism has not been offered to the employees. This suggests that collaborations with other parties such as universities or foreign language centres are essential to improve the quality of their language capabilities. In addition, other competencies on grooming, guest handling courtesy, hygiene and sanitation, up-selling and work safety and security are also important to be arranged for the local communities who are involved in tourism development in their village. The training competencies cannot be organised personally by the management, and they need to hire external trainers who are competent in required operational areas. In other words, both internal and external training are still needed by the local employees to enable them to offer better service quality to the tourists. This is in addition to the basic characteristics of the locals as naturally hard workers.

Furthermore, the management of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water also is also concerned about and considers the characteristics of the local villagers to be practised in its development. The head of Batur Traditional Village asserted:

Orang Batur pekerja keras ... Kami yakin mereka bisa mengelola pariwisata di desanya ... Kami perlu orang jujur dan bisa dipercaya ... Keahliannya bisa dilatih.

Batur villagers are hard workers ... We believe they can manage tourism in their village ... We need honest people and can be trusted ... their skills can be trained.

(Source: Head of Batur Traditional Village, 18 April 2018)

Being villagers who were born and have grown up in dry environments on the slopes of Mount Batur has forced them to mature as naturally hard workers and they work very hard to survive. The characteristics of local communities have been considered as the strength points via which to develop tourism in this region, independently of the native villagers which further served as great human capital boosters both in terms of their number and quality. Obviously, they need training and education on hospitality services in order to possess the required skills and competency covering knowledge, skill and



attitude to perform their routine tasks. This suggests that personal characteristics such as passion, honesty and trust serve as more essential considerations than their education backgrounds and employment records in deciding the use of human resource at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water.

This practice distinguishes the community-based tourism development applied in this tourism site with other common models of human resource managements which most likely consider education and work experience as vital in order to assign people to particular positions, thus referring to Indonesian National Qualification Levels in which senior high school or vocational high school Diploma II graduates occupy operation level, Diploma III graduates occupy supervisor level, Diploma IV or Bachelor Degree graduates occupy managerial level, and master to doctoral graduates occupy expert positions (President Decree Number 8 of 2012).

Contemporarily, Batur Natural Hot Spring Water has employed 56 local people from the Batur traditional village. They are appointed in several ranks of occupations in eight major divisions including operational, ticketing, bar, spa, restaurant and kitchen, pool, garden and adventure activities (Table 3).

No.	Divisions	Total
1	Operation	1
2	Ticketing	6
3	Bar	6
4	Spa	8
5	Restaurant and Kitchen	22
6	Pool	8
7	Garden	2
8	Adventure activities	3
	Total	56

Table 3. Local Employment by Division at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water 2019 (Source: Field research 19 August 2019)

These local people are formally employed under employment agreements which binds them and the management of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water. In this way, local people working in this tourism site earn regular incomes which at least equals to the current minimum regional wage of Bangli Regency of IDR 2,299,152 (US\$ 163) per month, plus irregular service charge fees collected by the management which are then shared with the employees.

In addition to formal employment, the development of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water also provides informal work opportunities for local communities. Local villagers are allowed to open shops along the carpark and path leading to entrance gate of the site (figure 7). They sell many kinds of local foods and soft drinks which are affordable for domestic tourists and also for drivers waiting for their guests bathing in this hot spring water. Currently, there are 15 local people of Batur Traditional Village who are approved by the management to open shops within the parking area selling souvenirs, coffee, snacks, soft drinks and also renting fishing poles for the tourists who are interested in fishing at Batur Lake. The involvement of local villagers in this informal sector have evidently supported the local peoples earning in the efforts to combat poverty at Batur Traditional Village. However, they still need to be educated and trained on hospitality competency in order to support the tourism development well and to avoid complaints from tourists for being messy or too aggressive as they offer their souvenirs to the tourists which commonly initiate tourists leaving the site inconveniently, as occurs in other tourism sites in Bali.



Figure 7. Local communities' shops at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water
(Source: Field research 18 March 2018)

Furthermore, the local management applied at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is also supported by international tourists and the involvement of local communities in tourism operations and management also allows the local people to gain more benefits accruing from tourism developed in their regions. A tourist argued:

Absolutely love Batur Natural Hot Spring. It is owned by the community, so all proceeds return directly to the community. (Source: Google Review, Tracy Wilkinson, August 2018)

All holiday arrangements at Batur Natural Hot Spring Water are organised and served by local people. The products and services made by the employees have raised the awareness of tourists on local people's prosperity and lifestyles in which the ownership status and local employment applied at the site are believed to improve the lives of communities living within the region, through both formal and informal employment opportunities.

Conclusion and suggestions

Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is solely managed by the Traditional Village of Batur. The village is authorised to manage properties owned by Batur traditional village including the site where Batur Natural Hot Spring Water is located. This policy has been issued pursuant to the decision of the traditional village board which aimed at alleviating the high poverty of the local community in the region that sited on the dried lava of Mount Batur – the second highest mountain in Bali and also intended for declining the number of local people migrations to the southern regions of Bali where tourism is centralised while sustaining the nature and developing some village pride.

Domestic tourists visiting the site are aiming for spirituality and healing which relate to Hindu religious rites as well as for holidays. International tourists visit the hot spring water



for relaxation and enjoying the surrounding natural sceneries of Mount Batur and Lake Batur. The development of the nature-based tourism site of Batur Natural Hot Spring Water has given lots of meaning to the local communities, domestic tourists and international tourists. The community-based management allows local villagers to be involved and gain benefits from tourism through formal and non-formal employment. In addition, funds generated from the entrance fees have also been reserved for religious and human-related rites, services for traditional village authorities as well as business developments owned by the Traditional Village of Batur.

There are many further researches can be done at this tourism site which closely link to the current research; For instances, engagements of tourists toward the site, tourists' satisfactions toward products and services prepared by the management, and managing tourists at hot spring water tourism.

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