

## TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS: A TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION FOR CULTURAL INHERITANCE

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### ABSTRACT

*This research intended to describe how the traditional and local festivals contribute the cultural inheritance for the next generation. The research held in Sinar Resmi Village, Sukabumi District, West Java, Indonesia. The festivals have lured visitors and played as an important role as tourists' attraction. This research used a qualitative approach by doing an in-depth interview to some key informants. The result shows that the traditional festival and events have become a tool for inheriting the local wisdom to the next generation at the local community. The importance of parents and children relationship and habituation in the living the culture within daily activities contributes to the inheritance to be practiced voluntarily. Thus, it implies that the tourism development could enhance its role to environment sustainability.*

Keywords: cultural inheritance, traditional festival and events, tourism development.

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### Introduction

There are so many reasons that motivate people to travel outside their usual places to a destination. Their travel generates economics activities for local people at the destination. The people have effort to suffice and cater to the needs of the tourists or visitors on their journey. Thus, the community could increase their income and welfare. Not just having a contribution to economics, tourism activities also encourage the local values sustainability. The cultural motivation consists of participating in traditional festivals and events, experience the community daily routines, observing artifacts and architecture, and others. Thus indirectly, the community encourages conserving their culture and inheriting the values to the next generation.

The paper discussed how local indigenous people at Sinar Resmi Village at the Sukabumi District; West Java Province held the "Seren Tahun" or Thanks Giving Festivals after rice harvesting. The festivals consist of many traditional art performances such as dancing, puppet show, *angklung* (bamboo music instruments), *debus* (traditional Acrobat), and other musical and dancing performances. The local community manage the festivals themselves. This paper would explain the festivals that generated by the traditional agriculture system, as well as, describing the cultural inheritance for the next generation.

### Literature Review

#### Cultural Events in Tourism

Events become an important role in attracting visitors to come a tourism destination, as many destinations put events on the marketing plan. There are many benefits of an event for the region, such as economic, community-building, and cultural development to fostering the national identity's plan (Getz, 2008). This paper emphasizes the discussion on the cultural events or community festivals that is arranged by the community to celebrate a part of their achievement in certain time. The aims of their events are creating the variety of programs that can foster their civic pride and cohesion (Getz, 2008), as well as, keep or sustain their culture ((Quiroz, 2011). Janiskee (1980: 97) explained that festivals and events as 'formal periods or programs of pleasurable activities, entertainment, or events having a festive character and publicly celebrating some concept, happening or fact'. Indonesia is an agricultural country; there are many festivals and events that come from their rituals in cultivating the land. This notion is also explained by Rolfe (1992) that the cultural events were often allied to the rhythms of agricultural society.

Visitors are attracted to see the events that sometimes have proximity with their culture or even new culture and values, which are not known before. McKercher (2002), explained that this was the notion of cultural distance that influenced the people's interest in consuming traditional events. Mc Intosh and Goeldner (1990) indicated that visitors from different cultural background and values tend to find deeper experiences, whereas, the visitor from the nearby region tried to find a more entertainment oriented experience (as cited in Guachalla, 2016).

Cultural events are usually taken place in a landscape or natural setting of the local community settlement. The landscapes include the tangible sites and intangible spiritual beliefs associated with natural places (Zeppel, 2010). Tangible sites on cultural landscape consist of monuments, ruins, tools, and archeological remains. Intangible values are those that enrich 'the intellectual,

psychological, emotional, spiritual, cultural and/or creative aspects of human existence and well being (WCPA, 2000, cited in Zeppel 2010).

### Cultural Inheritance

Inheriting the culture could be motivated by developing and participating in cultural events. The community develop community festivals and events to celebrate things. Thus, cultural events and festivals have also played as an important role as a mean of social change, the reproduction of place and tradition, and the role of communities as producers/consumers (Quinn, 2009). The values of their culture are published to community, as well as, the visitors. When community organizes the event, they involve the local people to perform arts and culture, as well as, cater to the needs for the visitors. Accordingly, there will be a cultural engagement of the people. Engagement within the local people acts as a culture keeping. According to Smith & Robinson (2006) in Quiroz (2011), culture keeping refers to maintain culture and cultural tourism has played as an access to keep the culture for the people. The form of cultural tourism is products, events, geographic arts, ethnic festivals, and other related cultural tourist's attractions. Quinn (2006) has also stated that based on the anthropological literature, tourism sometimes has become an agent of change to give rise for declining cultural authentic. Thus, the cultural value could also be passed for the next generation on the local people, as well as, the visitors. Hence, the tourism activities could give a contribution for the culture conservation and its sustainability.

Conway et al. (2005), as cited in (Jobson & O'Kearney, 2008), discussed about autobiographical remembering. The elaboration of people to remember their root of culture could also be motivated by engaging on the cultural events. Matheson (2005), as cited in Quinn (2009) stated that festivals and events encapsulate identity, in terms of the nation state, a sense of place, and the personal and heterogeneous identities of people. Those things become an autobiography that develops identity. Thus, cultural festival and events could become a tool for the next generation to understand their ancestors' culture and values.

### Research Metod

This is a descriptive research that used a qualitative approach. The data are explored by in-depth interview to some key informants who consist of the cultural leader, the local government representative, the art performer and his wife. The number of informants were quite small, and it becomes an obstacle for the data validation because although the key informant has been chosen, but there could be bias (Maxwell, 1996). However, the information could strengthen and add value of data obtained from the desk research and observation that is also used in this research.

### The Village And Agricultural Wisdom

This research were conducted at Sinar Resmi village, at the Sukabumi District, West Java Indonesia. It is located on 6° 48' 54" East Longitude dan 106° 33' 3" South Longitude. It lies under the Halimun Mountain and become a place to live for indigenous people that comes from ancient Padjadjaran, a big kingdom, in West Jawa. Most of the people works as farmers, some of them creates handicrafts from bamboo, wood, and iron (blacksmith). As farmers, the people has a strong agrarian culture. Their farming systems consists of preparing the land until the resting the land and every stage has a series of traditional ceremonies or rituals.

The people start to cultivate the land by observing the stars. They have local genius from observing the astrological sign. The first sign is called '*kerti*', usually it appears during the dawn when the sky is clear and there are some small stars gathered / grouped shown at the eastern part of the sky. It usually appears in July – August. When the local community see this star they will told to the blacksmith to prepare shovel or other iron farming equipment to cultivate the land. After two weeks, the '*kidang*' signs usually appear in the sky and it means that they should finish preparing the iron farming equipment and start to prepare and working at the farm. '*Kidang*' appears for almost four months. The people should be careful at the early fifth month during '*kidang*' signs, because they should already do the harvest. After '*kidang*' sign there would appear sign of '*kungkang*' or insects that could harm the farms. The people do not use chemical fertilizers or pesticides during the farming because it is not allowed the ancestors. They use organics fertilizers and depend on the astrological signs to maintain the farm. So, they do the harvest at the end of the '*kidang*' sign. Then after harvest, they do some post harvest activities such as drying the rice and put in at the rice bank called '*leuit*'.

Each stage of the agriculture activities, the people conduct the rituals through festivals and events. That rituals has been inherited by their ancestors. The rituals contain pure cultural arts performance that use a traditional musical instruments called "*dog-dog lojor*". The name was derived from the word "dog-dog" as it is the sound of that made from large bamboo called *Awi Gombong*. The length of the bamboo is approximately 1.24 m; the rear hole diameter is 15 cm; the face hole diameter is 20 cm, and covered by a skin of goat or sheep skin. Rattan rope and stake are used to tie the skin with the bamboo. The stake also functions as a regulator of sound of the instruments. *Dog-dog lojor function* as a kind of command to the other musical players that consists of 4 pieces of ancient angklung, 1 piece drum called Gendang, 1 piece of goong, 1 piece of tambourine (*kecrek*); and 1 piece os Sundanes harp called *Kecapi* (Sariyun, 1992).

Angklung is made of the smaller bamboo than those that is used for dog-dog lojor. The player should vibrate the angklung to produce the sound and it plays as a rhythm in the music show. The drum is made of wood jackfruit or rambutan wood or mahogany. The both holes of the drum is covered by the goatskin or cowhide. Rattan is also used to tie or bind the leather with the wood. Goong or kempul made of iron or bronze, spherical concave. Its function is to add harmony to the sound of drums and songs. The tambourine is made of thin iron to add splendor to the drumming. *Kecapi* or the Sundanes traditional harp is

composed of 7 to 26 strands of wire, with the resonator of wood. Its function is as a carrier melody or counterpoint. *Dog-dog Lojor* becomes the musical instrument of traditional song that contains spiritual advice for the people to live in harmony with God, the nature, and the other people.

The biggest and prominent festivals was annual harvesting rituals, called “*Seren Taun*”. Not like ordinary farmer that could make paddy harvest for up to three times a year, the local people at Sinar Resmi only harvest the rice for only once a year. The background of this custom is based on the people value to respect the land as the mother nature. Their philosophy is that ‘*Ibu bumi, bapak langit, tanah ratu*’ or “the earth as the mother, the sky is the father, and the soil/land as the queen”. This philosophy means the community should maintain the life harmony of the earth and all its contents so that the natural balance is preserved. This value is inherited from their ancestors. By practising regularly in some performances, indirectly the next generation will understand the value and sustain the culture.

There are two kinds of purposes during the during the “*Seren Taun*” festivals. The entertainment for celebrating the harvest and the ancient rituals to thank God for the harvest. The entertainment consists of the fusion of traditional and modern musical or dancing performance, such as perform puppet show called “*wayang golek*” that contain local story about how the evil and the goodness exists in this world, ‘*Lais*’ or ‘*debus*’ as the traditional acrobatic activities. They also perform “*pong-dut (jaipong-dangdut)*” the dance that combines with Indonesia songs called dangdut, and so on. Sometimes, the entertainment is sponsored by cigarettes, coffee, or other convenience goods company. Many people come to this events, mostly local people. After the entertainment was over within 2-3 days, then it is continued by the ancient rituals that was carried out by the older people at the community. They played the ancient song that contain advice and cultural values to the local community.

The visitors who come there mostly are local people at the neighborhood area. However, there are also some foreign visitors who come there and stay for more than a month to understand the real living culture of the people. This notion shows that the local people who has proximity with the culture of people at Sinar Resmi tend to find the entertainment or celebrative purposes motivation, but people with long cultural distance usually come to find the deeper experience (Goldener, 1990; McKercher, 2002; and Guachalla, 2016).

### Cultural Inheritance

Inheritance or passing the value for the next generation are conducted in the family. Based on the interview, if the father at the family observed the astrological signs to see the time to prepare and work on the farm, they will take their child to observe. So the children will understand the sign, as well. In performing the arts, the inheritance is not just on the way they teach their children in performing the dance or music, but also in producing the musical instrument such as ‘*angklung*’ and ‘*dog-dog lojor*’. The parents usually do not force the children to play or practice the performance. However, as the children see their fathers perform the arts, they are interested in learning and practicing the arts. The effort was based on the aims to make the children conserve and preserve the value on the voluntary basis. The process of cultural inheritance or enculturation depends on parents since they play a prominent role in their children cultural learning even when the children do not aware that they actually have learnt a lot from their parents (Reisinger, 2009).

Performing traditional arts by the local people become their source of economics activities. This research has interviewed a family with two sons. Both of the children tend to imitate their father ability in performing traditional acrobats called ‘*debus*’ and ‘*lais*’. The key informant name was *Pak Lotod*. He was not only able to perform the acrobats, but in the community, he played an important role to manage festivals especially the visitors, the outside musical or arts performance, and the job division of the local community who caters the need of the visitors.

He arrange the place for the performance, as well as, conducting the the management of homestay for the visitors. *Pak Lotod* will arrange the distribution of the visitors to stay in local community’s home. They do not set the price for the the stay, as well as, the food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner that are served at the Village Leader’s house. However, if the visitors want buy their personal needs or eat outside the village leader house, they could buy from the local community or other food vendors who sell those needs in the area.

*Pak Lotod* did not only play acrobats during ‘*seren taun*’ festivals, but also when there was a request from other people outside the community. He and his team will perform the acrobats for other celebration or events outside their region. His first son was in senior high school. Her mother said that he always went with his father to perform and he was already skillful in performing the acrobats. Although, his parents sent him to formal school, but it was obvious he was tend to follow his father occupation in becoming traditional acrobat player. The second son on this family had just 7 years old. However, he had shown a great interest in playing an acrobat, event for dangerous technic. The parents urge that no one force the children to follow what their father does, all of they do that based on the voluntary basis. This notion was similar with situation explained by Emran, Shilpi, & others, (2008) that studied about the gender differences in the role of cultural inheritance in intergeneratioal occupation. The study was held in agricultural community setting in Nepal. The result show that the female children have a strong tendency to inherit their mother occupation. However, male children tend to have their genetic endowment inheritance (ability and preference) from their father. But, this research has limitation, that it does not cover the relationship between female children and their mother.

### Conclusion

Traditional community festivals and events could be used as the source of tourism potentials, since it has the ability to attract visitors. The festivals are not only consumed by the local community but also to other people. The philosophical background of the traditional festivals and events enriched the values to the local community and could be the source of cultural inheritance for the next generation. The interaction between parents and their children in managing and performing arts the festivals also played a dominant role in cultural interaction.

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