

**PRESERVING “BATIK VILLAGE” CHARM
AND ITS LOCAL WISDOM
(Case in Gemawang Village, Semarang Regency)**

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Gemawang is a vocational village located in Jambu district, Semarang Regency, Central Java. Most of people in this village make batik fabric and clothes for their daily so that this village is famous as “batik village”. This village has been developed since 2009 by Kelompok Sadar Wisata (Pokdarwis), a group that has shaped in vocational villages in Semarang regency. Because of its unique, this village is become tourism village and visited by domestic and foreign tourists for buy products, attend training of batik production, and other events.

The data of this paper is collected by interview to the chairman of Pokdarwis and homestay organizer in Gemawang and also from literature studies. The data were analyzed by referring to theories. There are innovation diffusion, social exchange, and social learning.

The other unique of this village is its local wisdom that still available there. The tourists that come to Gemawang will warmly welcomed by the hosts, and if they stay for nights there, the hosts will give traditional food and services. This paper discusses the interaction between Pokdarwis, the citizens of Gemawang, and the tourists who come to a village that famous of its batik and aims to reveal how the people of Gemawang make

success in changing their village from common village to tourism village and make identity as “Batik Village”

Key words: batik, village, tourists, group, local wisdom, traditional, interaction

INTRODUCTION

Gemawang is a vocational village¹ located in Jambu district, Semarang Regency, Central Java. This village is famous for its batik products and other cultural activities. The batik is made by the Gemawang people. They make batik fabric and clothes as their livelihood so that this village is famous as “batik village”.

Gemawang as a batik village has been developed since 2009 by *Kelompok Sadar Wisata* (Tourism Awareness Group), shortened to *Pokdarwis*, a group that has shaped in vocational villages in Semarang Regency that aims to optimize sources for supporting tourism in the territory under its control.

Because of its unique, this village is become tourism village and visited by domestic and foreign tourists for buy their products, attend training of batik production, and other events. Gemawang frequently visited in holiday moments, such as school and college holiday, and long week end.

This research discusses the interaction between Pokdarwis, the citizens of Gemawang, and the tourists who come to a village that famous of its batik. All these activities will be explained in communication way because this paper is based on communication science. The issue is how they communicate to manage their village from mediocre village in the past and now it become tourism village. Of course it was all required hard effort to make it happen.

¹ Rural area where it villagers can receive vocational and entrepreneurial skills training.

The results of this study can be used as a recommendation to local people and government to develop their village to be better. This paper will also enrich the research on the communication concerning about people and community.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Previous Research Review

There are two previous researches that can be reference for this research. The first research is titled “The Success of The Vocational Program For Community Empowerment In Gemawang Village, Semarang Regency”². This study aims to reveal the perception the success of vocational to community empowerment about: (1) Implementation; (2) Results; (3) The impact; and (4) supporting and inhibiting factors of the program.

The methods of this research is descriptive qualitative. This research was held in September 2012 until August 2013 at Gemawang Village. The subjects is development team members of vocational village from Pusat Pengembangan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Nonformal dan Informal³ (P2PAUDNI) Regional II, the headman of Gemawang, the chairman of vocational village program and the learners / program participants.

The results of the study tell that vocational village program conducted by various step, they are (1) the selection of locations (2) socialization; (3) the establishment of management; (4) identification and the formation of study

² Abdul Malik and Siti Irene A.D, “*The Success of The Vocational Program For Community Empowerment In Gemawang Village, Semarang Regency*” from *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat* Volume 1 Number 2, accessed from <http://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/jppm/article/view/2683/2236>

³ Government-owned institutions researching and developing early childhood education for non-formal and informal

groups by the board program; (5) election of the chairman of the group, (6) the implementation of the training consists of batik, catering and Alat Permainan Edukatif⁴ APE, (7) meetings between groups vocational carried out every three months. So the learners of the program are separated in 3 groups, namely batik, catering, and APE. This program is expected to increase the skills of the participants which will increase the potential for Gemawang village.

This research conclude that implementation of the vocational village program consists of component inputs and processes. First, the input. The learners of the program consisted from participants in batik and culinary group who have early ability in batik and culinary, whereas APE does not have the basic ability. The speakers are experts in their respective fields, manager/program committee composed of representatives from community leaders, village officials and youth figures. Second, the process consists of several stages include: selection of place, and many more that has mentioned above.

Village vocational programs generate learners who gain experience improvement of vocational skills and development of business groups which is batik groups, catering, and APE. Vocational village programs are expected to have the impact on economic improvement, social status and cultural changes. Economic improvement is defined as the increase of income.

Researcher found some differences between the previous study with this research. The previous research is focused on the ability improvement of Gemawang people. It describes how they got trained from the planning, grouping, and the execution. That was all the beginning process of how Gemawang people develop their region until it become a tourist village.

It has a correlation with this study, where research focuses on how Gemawang people run their village as a tourism village. The people already have certain capabilities that the process is studied and described in the previous paper.

⁴ Plaything tools for early childhood, which can optimize the development of the children, which can be adjusted by the user according to age and developmental level of the children

Theory

In discuss about changing phenomenon in a society, the relevant theory is innovation diffusion (Rogers, 1983). Innovation diffusion explain how new idea, things, or concept delivered to a society in certain time by communication channels for being adopted. This theory assumed that innovation's characteristics that considered by people in a society determine how the rate of adoption.

This case also related with social exchange and social learning. Social exchange (Homans, 1958). Homans said 'all actions did by someone, more often certain actions get benefits, so that person have more tendency to do the action'. It refers to people in Gemawang. They make batik, craft, food and get benefits from that. More often they get good impacts, more often they do the action. Social learning (Bandura, 1977) is learning process with observe, do and rise expertness from imitate or learning from action of other people. This theory explain how Gemawang people learn about making product and interact with tourists since their village become famous.

Related with interaction, this paper will discuss about the communication between Pokdarwis, Gemawang citizens and tourists who come there. The communication can be analyzed with organization communication (R Wayne Pace, 1998). This concept tells how communication occurs in organization and how it should happen.

Methodology

This research is conducted with qualitative approach with method. Data of this paper were collected by interview to the chairman of Pokdarwis, Abdul Kholik Fauzi. The questions are about how Pokdarwis told to the people about making tourism village with batik as identity. Researcher also observed some

events in the research location. The data is fitted with other sources, such as newspaper articles, blogs and so forth. The research is held in July, 2016 about a week.

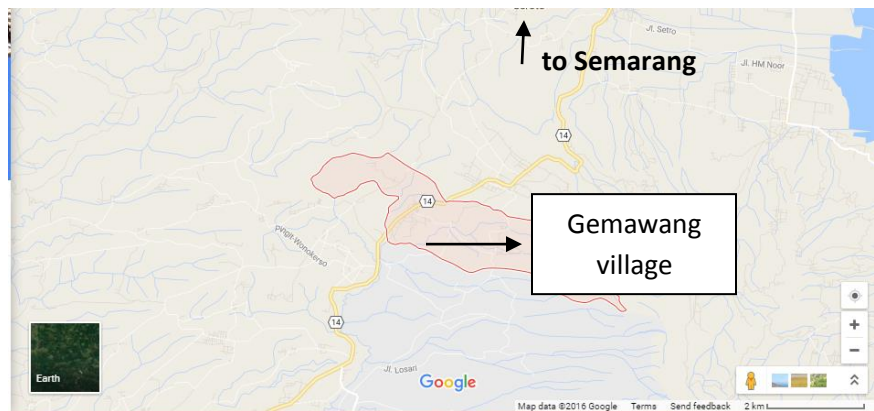
The collected data were analyzed by referring to the theory of innovation diffusion, social exchange, social learning, and organizational communication. The research also refers to the related previous research.

The results of this research will be presented by dividing the results by some subjects. They are (1) Explanation about Gemawang, (2) Explanation about Pokdarwis, (3) Activities in Gemawang as a tourism village, and (4) Interaction between Pokdarwis, Gemawang people, and tourists.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

About Gemawang

Figure 1. Gemawang map



Gemawang is the first vocational village in Indonesia. People in Gemawang are majority work by making batik products and as salesman. They make many homemade products especially food and snacks. In Gemawang, there are many snacks made from cassava, such as chips, lanting, and emping. That is

make Gemawang also developed in *Usaha Kecil Menengah (UKM)* – Small Medium Enterprise (SME).

Gemawang have many programs in tourism that they develop it recently, Besides making batik, craft, and traditional food, they also held event and sometimes become host of international event. In 2010, Gemawang became host for international literacy day celebration which in that day there were 35 regencies representative in Central Java attended. They also have annual program like celebrating independence day.

Figure 2. Chairman of Pokdarwis in a gallery



Talking about *Usaha Kecil Menengah (UKM)* – Small Medium Enterprise (SME), Pokdarwis raise them in marketing side. They told to people that tourists who come to Gemawang give big market potential. This are not easy because majority Gemawang people work in traditional business flow, they sell goods in traditional market, such us chips in many variants. They are regularly selling in the market and stalls. That is tried to be changed by Pokdarwis. There are several people who already started trying. At least they display their products in their house and offer it to guests who come.

About Pokdarwis

Pokdarwis is voluntary based organization. This group is aims to drive Gemawang citizens to have tourism awareness in their own village. After the

administrator made concept for sustainability of the organization, there comes the problem, it is communicate to other people about vision of Pokdarwis. If they had given understanding in heroics, they will disrespect because it seems unrealistic for them, so better approach them economically.

That's all is taking more time. The head of Gemawang village have been tried to socialize to Gemawang people for 11 years and still have no good result. By seeing it, Pokdarwis try to approach people in informal way, such as chatting with several people for many times in relax situations.

Pokdarwis in the very beginning consisted of 9 people, in second period have 28 members. Now the target of Pokdarwis to take care of Pokdarwis is the youth. The old generation can't be abandoned but Pokdarwis also need activator for their organization. The youth came from all subvillage in Gemawang except Selo. The central is in Banaran. Pokdarwis now have 18 administrators that divided into several units with each functions, such as exhibition, homestay, and public relations.

In the past, Pokdarwis members are also organizer/administrators. Now along with increasing of amount of members, not all members are also administrators. In several subvillages, there are sub pokdarwis. Gemawang people on their own initiative make Subpokdarwis, one of them are who live in Gunung Batu (natural tourism object around Gemawang). They clean up Gunung Batu on behalf of Pokdarwis voluntarily. Pokdarwis help out the food/logistics. Krajan is also have subpokdarwis, they made 'Kelompok Seni Desa Wisata' (Art Village Tourism Group), they arrange budget and event themselves. The event is under their control. For those who join in main Pokdarwis, they also join the event.

Every group is allowed to make event, either intern or invite foreigners, as long as the event is supporting tourism, Pokdarwis will support them.

Pokdarwis is also supported the training for the people in the beginning of making batik village as explained in previous research.

Gemawang Tourism Activity

Figure 3. One of batik producers in Gemawang



For supporting the tourism activities, Gemawang make several programs. Below is tour package/programs in Gemawang:

1. Training to make batik
2. Culinary art training
3. Visit the process of making traditional educational game (APE)
4. Watching Reyog show (this show is played by Karang Taruna – a youth group in Gemawang with cost 750 thousand rupiahs in every 2 shows.
5. Gunung Batu (Batu Mount) natural tourism
6. Visit the process of making coffee (start from selecting coffee beans by expertise)
7. Visit the process of packing honey

8. Visit Taman Baca Masyarakat (TBM) – Public Reading Park

The visitors usually came for get trained of making batik. The visitors must be called Pokdarwis before come to Gemawang and then Pokdarwis ask permission to village government. Beside that, people still often visit Gemawang for doing community service program from college, internship, government tourism people has also come frequently.

- **Budget and income**

Village government give official budget for Pokdarwis, for this year is 9 million rupiahs, and it is managed by Pokdarwis because Pokdarwis is under village government program.

All income is managed by Pokdarwis itself. All activities will be accounted to the government. Homestay is pure business. The organizers just have to give cash to Pokdarwis. If there are any events held by subpokdarwis on behalf of Pokdarwis they usually give part of their income to Pokdarwis. Pokdarwis is also sponsored by many UKM. After UKM held exhibition or selling they give a part of their income to Pokdarwis and also help out in events directly. Those UKM majority are snacks.

- **Pricing**

Figure 4. Batik gallery in Gemawang



Several years ago, there is no stated cost to get tour in Gemawang. It is caused by Pokdarwis so in regard with people in higher or better position so they feel hard to decide a strict price. They also have to fit the price with visitors' financial capability.

Pokdarwis just lately make price for Gemawang tourism. It is because Pokdarwis have not focused on *UKM/ SME* marketing yet, right now they focused on selling products. In the near future, the activities of Pokdarwis will be directed to there. Pokdarwis have not focus entirely on overcharge because now they still promote, so if there are many people come to Gemawang, it's indicate good performance.

- **Homestay**

Homestay in Gemawang provided by Gemawang people for welcoming and accommodating visitors, both they who visit for leisure, attend batik training, government events, community service program from college, and so on. The background of the establishment of homestay is there are overload guests in several events held in Gemawang.

There are 25 houses as homestay in Gemawang that located in Banaran and Krajan, two of sub villages in Gemawang. Every house generally can accommodate 4-10 persons. The guests usually stay for 2-3 days and for them who attend long duration programs, they could stay for weeks or months.

Homestay is now still active but not as huge as before. In a company near Gemawang, there are many interns who work there for months and they need place to stay. Homestay is also used by researcher and visitors who are willing to learn batik production.

Interaction between Pokdarwis, Gemawang people, and Tourists

Gemawang citizens is very respectful to guests/visitors. They give their best reception by provide whatever they have. The hosts will do everything to satisfy their guests. If there is guest stay overnight in Gemawang and they grab some food in grocery shop, it is show that the guest didn't get enough care from the host. That will make the host feel embarrassed. People in Gemawang is still applied their local wisdom. They often provide guests/visitors with traditional food.

The sense of togetherness in Gemawang is really great. At the time Reyog show will be held, the youths who got called to play the show often come with additional persons because of their spirit to help the show. That is will affect to their revenue. They just happy to help and didn't care about the money.

Pokdarwis is like a bridge between Gemawang citizens, tourists, and also government. With the non-professional method that applied by Gemawang in directing people, it's make the situation easier, because if we work in informal flow, there are no bureaucracy, and disinclined feeling. People are like doing that because it is felt relax and feel like work with friends with no level.

- **Innovation Diffusion Process**

Since 2011, Pokdarwis approached Gemawang citizens one by one. They tried to find the suit method to give understanding to them about tourism awareness. It is because previously the government failed in persuading them in formal way.

Pokdarwis approached the opinion leaders and youth first, then come to others. They communicate directly with no media in interpersonal and organizational methods and do that in a long time (over than a year).

Those activities show applied innovation diffusion (Rogers, 1983). Pokdarwis is the innovation giver which will be adopted or rejected by a society. People of Gemwang is a society that will adopt innovations given to them, there are also change agents: youths, and opinion leaders.

Related to the previous research, this is also become one of the process in empowering people to make their village better and become batik village.

- **Social Learning and Social Exchange Process**

Gemawang now become a tourism object that famous of its batik. Their understanding process of people in Gemawang is called social learning. They got persuaded by Pokdarwis about the importance and benefit of making tourism activity in their hometown area. They learned that and also doing that.

Some people of Gemwang is adopt the idea early than the others. The others citizens will start to see them. Saw their circles making innovation to sell their products, they start to do that also. The greater change that happened in their social environment, the stronger they get learned and affected. That is how social learning work.

It also related with social exchange theory. People who will do something considered what they will get from doing that. Citizens of Gemawang thought that by making innovation and seeling and promoting their local group will gain bigger income so they do that.

CONCLUSIONS

The culture in Gemawang is very viscous, especially its citizens. Gemawang people still applied traditional way to service their tourists/guests. That is make Gemwang is full of local wisdom.

In collaborate with Pokdarwis to make programs and events, Gemawang society is more successful when get persuasion with simple ways according to their experience and beliefs.

The business of Gemawang as tourism village have not developed professionally yet because of its local wisdom that still enforced in Gemawang. There should be a proper management to make Gemawang bigger and become one of leading tourism object in Central Java.

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