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**The Private Sector and Gunung Rinjani National Park:
An examination of
tourism's contribution to development**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
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in
Development Studies
at
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Abstract

Tourism, as a tool of community development, has been utilised in Indonesia since the early development of protected areas. On the island of Lombok, Gunung Rinjani National Park (GRNP), the private sector businesses in major are involved in trekking, which is the only tourism product developed inside the park. However, the benefits arising from tourism in GRNP have not reached many of the poor living in the surrounding areas of the park, and tourism contributions to conservation of the natural resources have not been maximised.

This thesis seeks to find out more about private sector roles and involvement in development, through research on trekking businesses operating in GRNP. Thus, the main research question explored in this thesis is:

How can Lombok trekking organisers deliver more benefits to the conservation of Gunung Rinjani National Park (GRNP) and local community development?

This research showed that tourism business players are currently ignoring social values when making business decisions about operations in GRNP. In addition, the government is reluctant to associate poverty alleviation with tourism. Businesses and government alike are mainly focussed on increasing tourism flows to Lombok. This research also highlighted that the concept of using tourism for poverty elimination is still a 'foreign' idea to those involved in the development of GRNP tourism sector. If tourism is to contribute more to development, then the willingness of the local economic players to enable tourism linkages is crucial. Lombok tourism planners would be well advised to concentrate on strengthening tourism's multiplier effects, by building direct and indirect links with various development sectors. These efforts, of course, require an enabling environment of supporting government policies, so that harmonious economical, social and environmental benefits could be delivered.

Ringkasan (Indonesian)

Sejak awal dibentuknya kawasan konservasi di Indonesia, pariwisata telah dipergunakan sebagai alat pengembangan masyarakat. Di Lombok, sebagian besar pelaku bisnis Taman Nasional Gunung Rinjani (TNGR) berkecimpung dengan trekking, satu – satunya produk pariwisata yang dikembangkan TNGR. Namun manfaat pariwisata TNGR belum menyentuh masyarakat miskin yang tinggal disekeliling kawasan dan kontribusi pariwisata terhadap konservasi sumberdaya alam belum pula terwujudkan secara maksimal.

Thesis ini berdasarkan penelitian pada para pelaku bisnis trekking yang beroperasi di TNGR untuk mengetahui lebih lanjut peran dan keterlibatan mereka dalam pembangunan. Pertanyaan utama penelitian:

Bagaimana caranya agar para trekking organiser di Lombok dapat memberikan manfaat lebih bagi konservasi TNGR dan pengembangan masyarakat lokal?

Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pelaku bisnis pariwisata saat ini ketika beroperasi di TNGR mengabaikan nilai – nilai sosial. Pemerintah Indonesia pun masih enggan menyangkutpautkan pariwisata sebagai alat dan strategi pemberantasan kemiskinan. Pelaku bisnis dan pemerintah hanya menitikberatkan peningkatan arus pariwisata ke Lombok. Penelitian ini juga menegaskan bahwa penggunaan pariwisata sebagai alat pemberantasan kemiskinan masih asing bagi mereka yang terlibat dalam pengembangan pariwisata TNGR. Apabila pariwisata diharapkan dapat berkontribusi lebih untuk pembangunan, maka kesediaan para pelaku ekonomi lokal untuk mengembangkan ‘daya kait’ pariwisata (*tourism linkages*) sangatlah penting. Pada para perancang pariwisata Lombok disarankan untuk membangun dan mengembangkan ‘daya penggandaan’ (*multiplier effects*) pariwisata, dengan membangun ‘daya kait’ langsung maupun tidak langsung dengan berbagai sektor pembangunan. Tentu saja semua ini hanya mungkin terjadi apabila pemerintah menerapkan serangkaian kebijaksanaan (*government policies*) yang mendukung, sehingga manfaat ekonomi, sosial dan alam dapat tercapai secara harmonis.

Kesimpulan dan rekomendasi selengkapnya dari penelitian ini dijabarkan di Chapter 7, ringkasan rekomendasi terlampir di Appendix 4.

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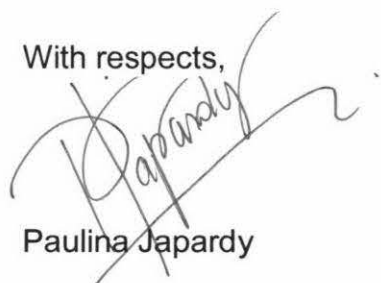
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Acronyms and local terms

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Adat</i> | Traditional practices and customs |
| ASITA | Indonesian travel agent association |
| BAPPEDA | Development Planning Board (at Provincial and District Levels) |
| BPS | Bureau of Statistic (Indonesian: Badan Pusat Statistik) |
| CBNRM | Community Based Natural Resource Management |
| CBO | Community-Based Organisation |
| <i>Desa</i> | Indonesian for village |
| DFID | Department for International Development – UK Based |
| <i>Dusun</i> | Indonesian for hamlet |
| Gol | Government of Indonesia |
| GRNP | Gunung Rinjani National Park |
| GRNPP | Gunung Rinjani National Park Project |
| Gunung | Mount |
| HPI | Indonesian Guide Association (Perhimpunan Pemanduwisata Indonesia) |
| ICDP | Integrated Conservation and Development Project |
| <i>Kabupaten</i> | District government |
| <i>Losmen</i> | Small inn |
| MoF | Ministry of Forestry |
| <i>Mulang pakelem</i> | Religious ceremony celebrated yearly by Hindunese in Bali and Lombok |
| NGO | Non-Government Organisation |
| NTB | Nusa Tenggara Barat/West Nusa Tenggara Province |
| NZAID | New Zealand Agency for International Development |
| PRA | Participatory Rural Appraisal |
| RIC | Rinjani Information Centre in Sembalun Lawang village |
| RTC | Rinjani Trek Centre in Senaru Village |
| RTEP | Rinjani Trek Ecotourism Programme |
| RTMB | Rinjani Trek Management Board |
| <i>Sasak</i> | Lombok indigenous people |
| SIMAKSI | Rinjani Trekking Letter of Permits |
| TRC | Tourism Resource Consultants |
| UMP | Indonesian provincial monthly minimum wage |
| <i>Watu telu</i> | Traditional belief system of Sasak People in Lombok |

1. Introduction

Tourism, unlike many other industries, builds on the vast links of its private sector players (Edgell, 1990), from the conglomerations of multi-billion dollar hotel chains, transportation, catering, fine wine and dining, shopping, golfing, luxurious adventure and entertainment industries, to the street-side child vendors hawking beads to passing tourists. Tourism provides a wide range of products and services and therefore a wide range of opportunities. This lucrative tourism industry is an alluring magnet to the development industry, which sees tourism as a tool for poverty elimination.

In order to understand the complexity of tourism one has to appreciate the roles of various actors, including government agencies at different administrative levels, communities and the private sector. Therefore, it is crucial not to single out tourism and disconnect its development from the development of other sectors. It is claimed that tourism's ability to link with vast and diverse products and services could be beneficially translated into a much needed livelihood source for the poor, through the opening up of various opportunities along its value chains (Roe, 2006).

However, tourism cannot be promoted as the only 'alternative livelihood' because, in doing so, practitioners will fail to recognise that rural households rarely rely on just one activity or one source of income (Rhee et al., 2004, p. 1_6). It is still a growing debate on how, or whether, tourism can truly deliver significant benefits to the poor. The questions faced today are whether this issue has gone beyond the debating forum and whether it has been implemented in practice.

Upon this pleasure-servicing industry, development practitioners are expecting to reform the private sector's performance, in order that it will make a wider contribution to society: specifically the poor. While advocates of pro-poor tourism indicate that there are several reasons why businesses may

gain from pro-poor behaviour, they are yet to convince most players in the private sector of the need to enact significant changes to their practices.

This thesis is particularly interested in the wellbeing of local people living inside and/or in the surrounding areas of Gunung Rinjani National Park (GRNP), in Lombok, Indonesia. This introduction chapter will serve to explain the aim of this thesis and provide contextual information relating to the management of GRNP and its trekking tourism actors, products and services, in order to set forward the rationale for this chosen area of study. The following chapters will also be outlined to provide a preview of discussions that take place in this thesis.

1.1. Area of study

Tourism as a tool for community development has been pursued in Indonesia since the early development of protected areas, such as national parks. Often created in the middle of an area of high population density, national parks are frequently viewed as a significant threat to the livelihood of the surrounding communities. The most common response by the Indonesian government to this criticism is the creation of community related tourism opportunities, in order to compensate the local community for their loss of access to natural resources. However, park tourism benefits, generally, do not reach many of the poor living in the surrounding areas.

This thesis will concentrate on capturing the opinions of various GRNP stakeholders, particularly the tourism private sector, in order to understand the most feasible roles that business players can take up, to answer poverty and environmental challenges in Lombok.

1.1.1. Study aim

This research aims to explore the following question:

How can Lombok trekking organisers deliver more benefits for the conservation of Gunung Rinjani National Park (GRNP) and local community development?

The notion that tourism has potential to contribute to poverty alleviation is new to Indonesia, particularly in Lombok. Thus, through my line of questioning, I intend to encourage research participants to consider whether national park tourism, conservation and community development can be tackled in a collaborative manner and in a way that will generate a win-win situation, in the long run, for all parties involved. It is assumed that all parties are capable of initiating and implementing change.

1.1.2. Management of GRNP

Gunung Rinjani National Park (GRNP) is located on the island of Lombok (4,725 km²), in the eastern part of the Indonesian archipelago, at West Nusa Tenggara province. As of 2004, the island was populated by more than 2.5 million people with a population density of 537/km².

The main aim of the establishment of GRNP was for the protection and conservation of Rinjani biodiversity. Therefore, usage of the park for extraction of natural resources is prohibited. However, the surrounding communities are continuing to use the park's resources for their daily survival: this is unregulated and illegal.

Many continuous forms of degradation, from human usage, happen daily inside the park and in the surrounding areas, for example, farming, grazing and logging. With the popularity of the national park as a tourist destination, it is also experiencing further degradation from tourism activities.

Park management, with its limited budget, few trained staff and a complex management stratum, is faced with interlocking issues that make the management of the park resources and boundary a source of many conflicts. Situated astride three districts areas (West, Central and East Lombok), the park management, which was historically controlled by the central government, experiences conflict in terms of these three districts' policies and practices. However, the recent 1998 onward decentralisation policy in Indonesia opened up the possibility of fostering much needed collaborative management planning with provincial government approval and cooperation between the three district planning departments, particularly in the areas of conservation and tourism development.

There already exist efforts to involve local communities in tourism but tourism benefits, so far, are concentrated in the hands of a few local entrepreneurs and city based tourism players, thus leaving out the majority of the surrounding communities. Tourism contributions to conservation of the natural resources are not maximised and neither are there any plans in place for long-term impact mitigation.

1.1.3. Trekking in GRNP

Trekkers inside the park falls under three broad categories: pilgrim, domestic and international trekkers. Trekking trips are organised by religious organisations for the pilgrims, whilst private trekking organisers, such as travel agents, local entrepreneurs and individuals act as mountain guides serve the adventure seekers. There are also individual trekkers venturing up the mountain either alone or in various group sizes.

Park management, to date, requires an entrance fee to be paid by trekkers at the village information centres. In 2006, the number of international trekkers, from all over the world, reached 3,222, with 1,735 domestic trekkers (these are the numbers for commercial trekkers and do not include pilgrims who trek up annually). This was a modest increase from 2,500 international trekkers in

year 2001 and a decrease from 2,001 domestic trekkers of 2,656 individuals (RTMB, 2007). Various trekking facilities are also provided inside the park, for example, shelters, toilets, rubbish bins, signage and trekking trails. However, these facilities are not maintained properly and vandalism and littering are common sights inside the park. Factors contributing to the continuation of this degradation are the lack of cooperation and clear responsibility of roles between the park management and the tourism users of the park. The park management gains a portion of the entrance fee, which is insufficient for maintenance and overall management purposes. If these conditions are to continue, not only will the park eventually lose its tourism attractiveness but the continuous degradation of natural resources will also render park management very difficult.

Trekking for adventure and leisure inside the park is normally organised by city-based travel agents and local trek organisers, who are mostly migrants and as such, they are unfamiliar with the local *adat* (customs). Although cultural information and conservation information is explained in the park's promotional brochures and displayed in the villages' information centres, the organisers normally overlook this information. These travel agents and village-based trek organisers often deliver minimal benefits to the local communities who reside in the densely populated adjacent areas of Rinjani.

This research will consider the possibilities for collaborative tourism planning, by exploring the opinions of various trekking organisers, the park authority and the district tourism and development planning agencies. I am particularly interested in determining the possible roles, responsibilities and contributions that the private sector could willingly take up, in order to achieve conservation and community development goals. This thesis should thus contribute to wider debates concerning whether the private sector, as the locomotive of the tourism industry, is playing a significant role in poverty alleviation, through their business endeavours.

1.2. Thesis outline

Following an introduction to this area of study in this first chapter, Chapter 2 provides a review of tourism, poverty alleviation and development literature. The chapter is divided into two main sections: the emergence of pro-poor tourism and the literature review on Indonesian tourism and poverty.

Chapter 3 reviews national park tourism and poverty alleviation in Indonesia. Specifically, it assesses the link between Indonesia's natural assets and people's livelihoods and the government's intention to develop ecotourism as a mitigation, community involvement and conservation tool.

Chapter 4 elaborates on the chosen methodology and methods of this research and it discusses the study's limitations and my experiences from the field.

Chapter 5 provides background information on GRNP tourism and issues facing the surrounding communities, in order to further set the context of this area of study.

Chapter 6 examines the relationship between the private sector and the GRNP, based on the research fieldwork.

Chapter 7 scrutinises whether the private sector can play a stronger role in community development and conservation of GRNP. This is followed by conclusions and recommendations.