

ECOCULTURAL CITY – HOW ACTUAL IS THIS CONCEPT IN THE ERA OF DISRUPTION OF PANDEMIC COVID-19?

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the implementation of the concept of the Surakarta ecocultural city platform in the era of Pandemic COVID-19 in two case study areas of Balekambang Park as the Natural and Heritage Park and Jayengan Jewelry Kampung (JKP) as Heritage Creative Industry-based Kampung Tourism. Ecocity is the concept to create new urban development to be more ecologically, livable and Sustainable. Simultaneously, the cultural city refers to the town, which focuses on culture and performance for branding the city. Ecocultural city is mainly related to connectivity among people, place and culture. This concept is applied chiefly in the tourism world, were to maintain this sustainably, this has to address people, business and its cultural relationship with biophysical aspects. Therefore, in the era of disruption of COVID-19, the eco-cultural based tourist destination areas are highly affected due to the loss of tourists visiting the sites. The research found that the model of People, Place, Technology and Government propose for increasing adaptability of people to the disruption condition, initiating resilient, creative, healthy and intelligent places, exhaling Technology for the added value of tourism product and improving resilience government to adapt, absorb the change, collaborating multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Keywords: *Ecocultural city, Pandemic COVID-19, disruption, Surakarta*

INTRODUCTION

Ecocity is a concept for making cities and new urban development more ecologically, livable and sustainably- which have some critical dimensions such as compact city and mixed-use urban development to limit the transportation uses; protecting biodiversity, food production area; extensive use of Technology for water management, wastewater treatment; Maximizing economic performance through innovation, creativity and the uniqueness of the local environment, culture and

history; limiting the uses of car and motorcycle and focusing of rail transportation, cycling and walking (Kenworthy, 2006). According to the scale of the ecocity project, this can be determined into a neighbourhood scaled to the city-wide and regional ecocity development. This should be considered part of the broader economic, political, and ideological context, integrating with a wider regional context (Caprotti. 2014). On the other hand, a cultural city refers to the town, which capitalized the cultural and art performance for branding the city (Evans, 2003). These can be in the form of passive attractions, such as Museum, historical building and Art Gallery, and dynamic performance such as Performing Art, exhibition, festival, etc.

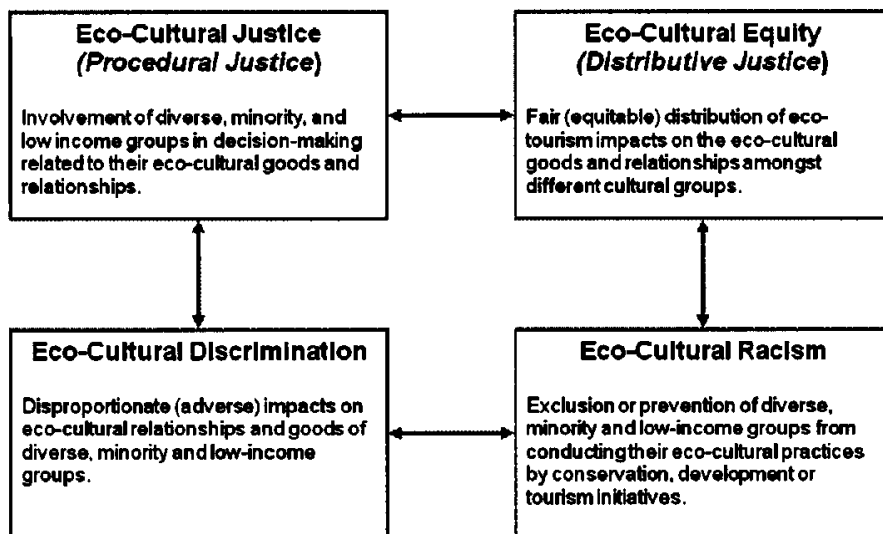


Figure 1. Preliminary Consideration for an Ecologically and Culturally Integrated Approach to Justice in Tourism
 Source: Camargo *et al.* 2008

While the terms of eco-cultural, according to Camargo *et al.*, 2008 refers to the connectivity between Place and culture, where - to discuss sustainability in tourism destinations is to address people, Place, and their cultural relationships with the biophysical world (figure 1.). The terms of cultural sustainability are critical. The cultural impact is so vital, such as the commodification of heritage tangible and intangible cultural attractions, exploitation of Place, people in the heritage district of the tourist area.

In the Era of Pandemic COVID-19, the tourism sector has been dramatically affected where most tourist destinations have been locked down. Nearly no visitors are coming to the tourism areas. Especially for a tourism destination, which based on the potency of the local people, the pandemic COVID-19 has affected the local people income and increased unemployment. Cultural tourist attraction based on the local people creativity has also been greatly influenced by pandemic COVID-19. Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) found that 44.295

Creative and art workers have been affected by pandemic COVID-19 (Mariana, 2020).

Surakarta city since the Era of the Major Jokowi 2005-2012, he has the development approach of "inclusive", people-centred development and community-based development (Astuti and Prasetyo, 2013; Paulus Wirutomo, 2014). As the cultural city, he has the vision and mission of "to improve the prosperity of the people and to develop the city based on the spirit of Surakarta as a Cultural City". Therefore, cultural Development in Surakarta has been branded the policy of Eco-Cultural City to bring cultural orientations among peoples to develop city identity. The Major of Surakarta has also got people to be proud of the traditional culture by the slogan of the future of Surakarta is the old Surakarta. (Wirutomo, 2014), The Development of eco-cultural identity in that era has been reached in the Gold Era, where most eco-cultural identity places, which has been nearly disappearing for a long time, have been redeveloped with the new style and new dynamic activities. Some of the sites and peoples developed were Balekambang, ecocultural parks, *Kampung Batik Laweyan*, *Apem Sewu* cultural tradition, Solo Batik Carnival (SBC) etc. The research question is how the eco-cultural concept of Surakarta city could adapt in the era of disruption?

THEORY / RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted in two case study areas of implementing the eco-cultural concept in Surakarta, Balekambang Park and Jayengan Kampung Permata (JKP). Balekambang Park, located in Banjarsari District Surakarta, was selected as a study area due to its popularity as the biggest heritage Park in Surakarta, with the most significant number of tourist visitors in Surakarta (BPS, 2020). Simultaneously, Jayengan Kampung Permata was selected due to its unique character of a Tourist destination based on the creative heritage industry of Jewels craft, which has been developed in the early stage of development as a tourist destination.

This research includes in the case study research with the research approach of qualitative descriptive explorative. According to the grand theory of eco-cultural, the research explored the aspects of People, Place, Technology and Government as the main components of eco-cultural tourism. The stages of the study were as follows:

1. Exploring the grand theory of ecocity, cultural city and eco-cultural city, cultural sustainability, tourism and tourism development in the era of disruption of Pandemic COVID-19
2. Due to the Pandemic COVID-19 outbreak, data exploration was done through secondary data by government documents exploration, related journal articles, previous research, books, etc.
3. Data analysis was done by descriptive analysis referred to the theories and triangulating with the results of case studies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Case studies are located in Surakarta, the central city in Central Java, with a population of 512.226 in 2015 and a city size of 44,04 km² (RPIJM Surakarta, 2016). The town is famous as Batik City, the heritage traditional fabric, which right now is very famous all over the world. As the population density is high, the central potency of Surakarta is tourism. The powers are mainly based on the culture, such as heritage buildings, heritage culinary, heritage craft, and creative industry.



Figure 2. Maps of Surakarta
Source: Surakarta Government

In the era of the Mayor of Surakarta city, Jokowi leaderships has introduced the eco-cultural policy to preserve the cultural products while conserving the ecology of Surakarta. Several areas have been recognized to support the policy of eco-cultural, such as Balekambang Park, Kasunanan Palace, Sriwedari Park, Vastenburg Park, etc.

1. Case Studi 1. Balekambang Cultural Park

Balekambang Park was built in 1921 by Kanjeng Gusti Adipati Mangkunegoro VII as a gift for the two of his daughters, Partini Tuin dan Partinah Bosch for the Wonderful Leisure Place of the City. (Afifah, 2014). At that time, Balekambang

Park has been built with the concept of Green Tourism and Leisure, with the most popular traditional-cultural performing Art called Ketoprak. Apart from that, Balekambang has collections of big trees for green space and a group of animals such as deer, monkeys, turkeys, camel and Reptiles Park on the edge of the natural lake. After a long time, Balekambang has been neglected, 2007 in the era of Mayor Jokowi's leadership, to support the eco-cultural policy, it was a Revitalization Program, which was in two years, this was dramatically revitalized Balekambang's roles as City Open space, city water absorption and the centre of Javanese cultural performance in Surakarta. The revitalization implemented the Grand Theme of Edu tourism, which is now becoming the integrated tourism area, with complete tourist attractions of an arboretum of ancient plants; reptile park zoo; outbound recreation area, heritage conservation area as well as Javanese traditional art performance called *KETOPRAK* (Adriyan Dining. 2013). Balekambang has been becoming the favourite tourism place for Surakarta people to spend the time in the weekend with the tourist in 2019 was 482 foreign tourists and 2. 737. Two hundred sixty-nine domestic tourists out of 13—047 foreign tourists and 3. 549. 504 domestic tourists in Surakarta (BPS, 2020). However, in Millennial, the *KETOPRAK* is considered the oldest, marginalized by Games and any performance-based information technology (Afifah, 2014). However, *Ketoprak* needs to be more millennial and modern to be accepted by the young generation. In 2020, in the era of uncertainly due to Pandemic COVID-19 outbreaks, Balekambang nearly lost visitors. Since the last weeks, Balekambang has been opened and gradually invited some visitors.

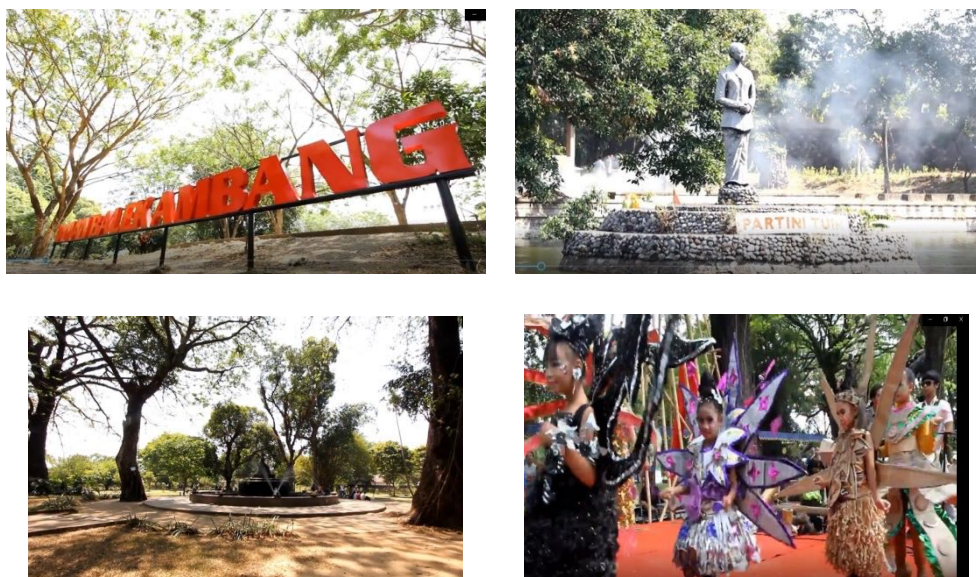


Figure 3. Balekambang Park

Sources: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KpmlcDo_f8

2. Case Study 2. Jayengan Kampung Permata (JKP)

Kampung Jayengan Surakarta Indonesia was originally inhabited by Banjarness community, who came to Surakarta from Banjarnegara Shouthern Kalimantan in 1746. They were mostly the jewels traders, a creative industry that inherited from generations to generations. They were first built the Darussalam Mosque as a centre of Muslim religion, cultural and educational activities. Some culinary and cultural attractions become exciting tourist attraction until recently, such as Banjar Porridge traditional event every Ramadhan, Jewels craft, Hadrah folklore, and other conventional culinary people called Wadai. After a long hibernation process for nearly five generations, in 2015, *Kampung Jayengan* was Launched by the Government of Surakarta as Jayengan Kampung Permata (JKP) and formulated Forum JKP as Community -based organization. This area became the new icon of tourism destination based on heritage creative industry. The Forum JKP plays a role as the centre of development, mediation with the Government, other NGS and the Private sectors. Therefore, the integrated planning model has been applied in the Jayengan Kampung Permata to combine various attractions, urban development policies, related institutions, and collaborating people potencies, Place and culture (Astuti et al., 2017). In some part, the JKP has applied the concept of eco-cultural equity. There is some relationship between a cultural group of people and fair distribution of eco-cultural impact. Components of eco-cultural image applicated in JKP are: 1) cultural artefact in the area such as heritage Darussalam mosque; heritage settlements Buildings; 2) Cultural religion events such as Bubur Banjar (Banjar Porridge) event, which happens every year in the Ramadhan; Hadrah traditional dance; Jarwono Festival every year; 3) Cultural heritage Craft of Jewelry, which is the central potency of the area in terms of Jewelry Products and the Processes of jewellers production; 4) Cultural culinary of wadi such as *Bingka*, *Soto Banjar*; 5) Eco-cultural People in the form of Banjarnese Craftsmen, with the unique people resources and the Forum of JKP; 6) zero waste processes of Jewels production, where there is no waste in the production of jewellery; 7) Walking activity of tourism.

Most of the activities in JKP have emerged accumulation of people such as *Bubur Banjar* event, which is performed in the Ramadhan session, where some local peoples cook Banjar porridge for about 50 kg a day to be distributed to the local neighbourhood people for breaking vesting for free. Therefore, many people surrounding areas are coming to the JKP in the evening about to Maghrib for preparation of break vesting. Apart from that, the Jarwono festival is also inviting many people in the line along the Gatot Subroto street for experiencing Art performance from some groups of people. On the Muslim occasion, some culture called dance called *Hadrah* invites a lot of people to watch the cultural parade. Some traditional culinary restaurants there also ask a lot of people. Therefore, in the era of pandemic COVID-19, most tourism areas have been losing visitors for several months, reducing the economic conditions of the local community in the area and surroundings, which have been economically highly dependent on the tourist activity.



Figure 4. Jayengan Kampung Permata (JKP)

Sources: Astuti, W. et al., 2015 and other sources

The Pandemic COVID-19 is the stressor, which has been pressed the people, the Government, the city planners, the community organizations to solve the problems affected by the long Pandemic COVID-19. Some issues can be identified as follows:

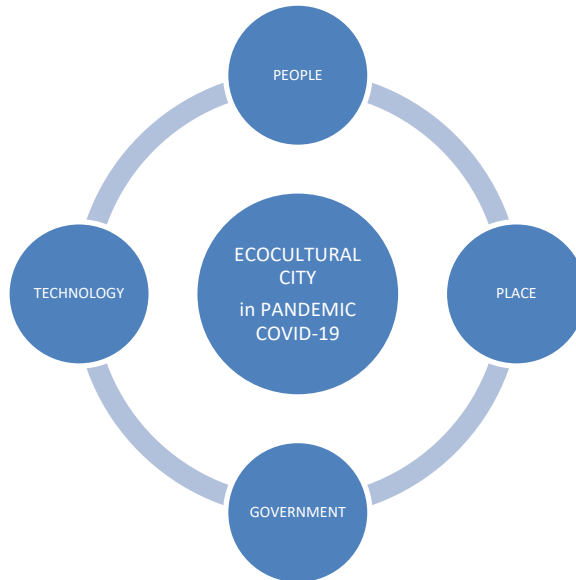


Figure 5. Model of Ecocultural City in the Era of Pandemoc COVID-19

Source:

People

The reaction of most people related to their economic activity in the era of Pandemic COVID-19 is stopping the economic activity, closing the shops, restaurant or any physical display for their product or shifting the methods of transactions from direct contact to online forms. As

Mitchel, WJ et al., 2003 stated that Information Technology is the new model in the creative production process. However, some actors of economic activities have difficulties adopting the direct transaction into the Information Technology methods. This expressed in the JKP that most jewel's workers cannot trade in online media as the products of jewels craft mostly have high prices, which have increased risk for online transactions. Therefore, this needs the building capacity of people to adapt, absorb, and respond to the change in the system of economic transactions and marketing tourism products.

Place

As the place of tourist activity, where a lot of people have to be visited, the place should be able to be Resilience. Resilience in terms of cities generally refers to the ability to absorb, adapt and respond to changes in an urban system (Kevin C. Desouza, Trevor H. Flanery, 2013). Therefore, the place should adjust the evolution adapting the New Normal Era; consequently, it has to be planned for Resilience to the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Rezoning and buffering of activities of place can be applied in the area to limit the maximum capacity of space to avoid the concentration of people in one place in a very short distance to each other. The

creation of open space can be applied to the area, which still has many empty rooms. Rescheduling activities into several agendas could be used to limit people's concentration and somehow avoid unexpected people, for example, older adults or kids for specified activities, which is not convenient for them. Protocol of the COVID-19 Pandemic obligates to be applied such as checking the temperature of people coming to the tourism area with thermometer gun, using 3 M (*mencuci tangan, Memakai masker. Menjaga Jarak*) by washing hands, applying mask and social/ physical distancing by the provision of wastafel, disinfectant, hand sanitizer in some places in the area. The use of plastic wrap for every snack and food and any display of products needs socialization and health campaign to the tourism areas regularly to increase awareness of people related to environmental health. The Place has to be a part of an intelligent, resilient, creative and healthy city environment.

Technology

Information Technology also supports cultural activities related to creativity such as Art, Design, Engineering, education and business. This has become the new model of the creative production process. Mitchel et al., 2003 has introduced the Model of Information Technology and Creative Practices (ITCP), which can be applied in for development of I.T. in the creative industry. In the era of Pandemic COVID-19, the transformation of the marketing system of places (tourism area destination) and tourism product from conventional marketing system to virtual marketing become obvious for limiting physical contacts among tourism actors and visitors. Apart from that, a virtual marketing system in the tourism sector reduces the concentration of people in the tourism destination areas as a part of economic and cultural policy development and developing some efforts in multinational collaboration (Mitchel et al., 2003). Application of Digital Kampung or Digital City is becoming the future of tourism management development to support the eco-cultural city of Surakarta.

Government

The concept of disaster refers to the natural hazard and the social accident caused by human behaviour physical and social aspect (Neil in Malalgoda et al., 2014). As Dsouza and Flanery, 2013 stated that Resilience in terms of cities generally refers to the ability to absorb, adapt and respond to changes in an urban system; the concept of Resilience has also been applied to the Government for the increasing capability to govern and conceptualized the policy and programs for adaptation and respond in the disruption era. In term of Government aspect, according to Smart Mature Resilience, 2016, Resilience means the government ability to face, absorb, adapt and release from stressors, keep the urban services function through urban and interrelated region collaboration, and how to increase adaptation capability to strengthen metropolitan readiness for anticipation and respond to the future threat optimally. This supports by stakeholder as individual, groups, and organization; the Government, community services, volunteers, citizens, media, and public and private company (Hernantes et al., 2019). Collaboration of multi-stakeholder becomes the model of adaption to develop the urban Resilience

CONCLUSIONS

The eco-cultural concept is referring to connectivity between Place and culture (Camargo *et al.*, 2008). When this is applied to the tourism world, the sustainability of tourism has to highly addressed people, Place, and their cultural relationships with the biophysical world. In the era of disruption due to the Pandemic COVID-19 outbreaks, most tourist destinations lose visitors. Some people who depend economically on tourist activities have nearly been in the worse economic situation. This research proposes an Eco-cultural city in the era of Pandemic COVID-19, which should address and integrate People, Place, Technology and Government. To sustain, the people should be able to adapt, absorb and respond to the change in economic transactions and market the tourism products. Capacity building is needed for people for community economic resilience. The place should be planned to be resilient in adapting to the change in the new era of Pandemic COVID-19. This needs rezoning of activities, providing more space and facilities for sterilization of Place and people, and campaigning the people to increase the awareness of health environment. In terms of Technology, the Application of Digital Kampung or Digital City are becoming the future of tourism management development to support the eco-cultural city of Surakarta. Finally, the Government supported those efforts in conceptualizing the programs for alleviating the problems impacted by Pandemic COVID-19. Collaboration among regions, among stakeholders of multi-stakeholder becomes the model of adaptive to develop the urban Resilience.

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