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The Indigenous-Led Regional Development in Delanggu and Juwiring Districts of Indonesia through the Design Approach of “Flowering of the Total Person”

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ABSTRACT

Delanggu-Juwiring districts are located in Central Java Province, Indonesia, have a very close relationship with rice farming activities since the beginning of the Javanese kingdom era. This strong association produced 2 characteristics which became the identity of the society in Delanggu and Juwiring: (1) the pattern of traditional rice farming activities, and (2) the local rice variety. Based on the findings from the main author, there were 3 main activities in rice cultivation process in Delanggu and Juwiring: farming, making crafts, and rituals. While from rice variety aspect, Rojolele is a local high quality (both taste of rice and rice straw for craft making material) grown from the geographic characteristic both in Delanggu and Juwiring. After the Green Revolution initiated by the government in 1967, the traditional rice farming pattern gradually transformed into industrial based farming which focusing only on rice production quantity. Despite the success of the program, the society now facing a problem in social, cultural and environmental aspects.

To prevent these conditions, as an effort to redevelop the region of Delanggu-Juwiring, a project was held based on the Flowering of the Total Person/ 人身の花 (read: Jinshin no hana) concept. This way of thinking advocated by Emeritus Professor Kiyoshi Miyazaki of Chiba University and describes a holistic design approach for “designing living” which has a strong emphasis in social and ecological consciousness. Through close cooperation and active participation with village people as the requirement for this concept, the design team was supporting the locals on improving craft design, and formulating a tourism promotional idea. In running this project, the first phase is exploring “being” as an actual existence of “treasures” in local’s area. After the “being” was explored, the next phase is formulating “what should be” design ideas with local community, continued with implementation. This project produced 2 outputs: the development of rice straw crafts based on local needs and a plan of a traditional festival of rice culture activities.

Key Words: Regional development, designing living, craft design, rice culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

Javanese is one of the ethnicities in Indonesia which has a close relationship with rice farming activities. Based on the data from Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2015, the rice fields in East Java, Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region of Java Island, or the area where Javanese resides, produced 25,401,525 tons of rice per harvest, exceed the quantity of rice production in other regions of Indonesia. Delanggu and Juwiring are two districts which located in Klaten Regency of Central Java (562 km from Jakarta capital city) which has a strong Javanese rice culture history and known as “rice granary” areas in Java Island (see figure 1). There are two reasons of why these locations are famous with rice farming culture: (1) Geographically, Delanggu-Juwiring locations are close with Merapi volcano and surrounded by 134 springs spread in Klaten regency which produce these areas into a fertile areas for farming activities, (2) These districts are located between two palaces, Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Javanese believed that King is the representation of God in the world and from his palace, cosmic power from King flows to his sovereignty region and bring fertility to the region, therefore it psychologically motivated farmers to continuously perform farming activities [1]. Through a close relationship with rice farming activities, Javanese in Delanggu-Juwiring districts has their own uniqueness in rice culture, both in utility and ritual aspects. While for rice varieties, these areas have their own local Javanica variety named Rojolele which grows based on the geographical character of the region. For Javanese, this variety is considered as the best quality in the taste of rice, therefore for most of the ritual processions require rice or rice ears from Rojolele variety. For rice straw quality, Rojolele local variety has a taller dimension with 60-80 cm compared to IR64 superior variety with 30-40 cm [2], thus, in the postharvest stage, the traditional Javanese community utilized Rojolele rice straw into various daily utilization.



Figure 1: Location of Delanggu and Juwiring Districts

In 1967, the Indonesia government initiated the Green Revolution program in order to national rice self-sufficiency [3]. Despite the success of the program in increasing the production of rice, the social, environment and cultural problem also emerged. This program has gradually changed the traditional pattern of rice farming activities to modern method. Supported by machinery tools, the rice harvest time was accelerated from 2 times in a year in traditional pattern to 4 times of harvest. This efficiency based program changed the phase of postharvest from resting soil as an act of respect for nature practiced by traditional farmers, to continuously planting rice without resting soil. To accelerate the new planting period, 99% of rice straw also being burned which produced pollution in the community around the rice fields area. From the social aspect, the system of rice farming activities has been changed from partnership relationship between the owner of the rice field and the farm laborer, while in the modern era, the relationship becomes commercial and different of rank emerged (a position similar to the relation between boss and worker). The rice produced from harvest also channeled to the rice packing industries for external needs, internal community needs are not a priority anymore. This modern pattern has been performed by farmers' community in Delanggu-Juwiring until present and causing the loss of knowledge in traditional rice farming method and values.

Development without considering the traditional aspect of rice farming activities caused a community to be unaware with the environmental and social aspects. In other hands, this culture is a potential that could be developed to sustainably bring environment, social and economic impact to the local community. Based on the background above mentioned, the authors were proposing the indigenous-led project development through the approach of Flowering of the Total Person method. This concept of design objective is to develop design approach for regional development to mitigate, challenge, adjust or accept the change that community face, change that differs with the given circumstances and objectives of each community.

2. FLOWERING of the TOTAL PERSON

Today, many communities are excluded from the development process in their area. As an impact, they did not receive beneficiaries of development and become the victims of change. Therefore The valid regional development could be achieved only by active participation and close cooperation with the locals. As a design approach in order to perform community-based development program, Flowering of the Total Person is the approach advocated by Emeritus Professor Kiyoshi Miyazaki of Design Culture Laboratory, Chiba University and has been published at numerous international academic meetings and published papers.

The terms of Flowering of the Total Person or in Japanese 人身の花 (read: Jinshin no Hana) comes from a Japanese intellectual of the Meiji Period who studied in Europe and the United States. This proverb implies that design reflects the true heart and figures of the people engaged in design [4].

Flowering of the Total Person is a holistic design approach to “designing living” (see figure 2). The context of “designing living” is designing a project to revive a community with the “treasures” inside their living area and encourage local communities as a key element in development and user from this project. In order of how to “designing living”, in Flowering the Total Person, the development question is “what should be” or “what should the community life be inside the area” both in social, environmental and economic aspects. This question could be answered through discernment and introspection on the actual existence or “being”, which is realized or not, is a “treasures” for local communities. To collect this information and knowledge, a field survey by living in the community in one week or more is needed. Inside the area, a designer should become part of the local community, walking to see every corner of the village together with locals and identifying the resources. In the discovery process, oftenly locals apologetically say “there are no attractive features in our village”, but after the exploration or reconnaissance with the five sense, the perception switched to “many treasures to enjoy”.

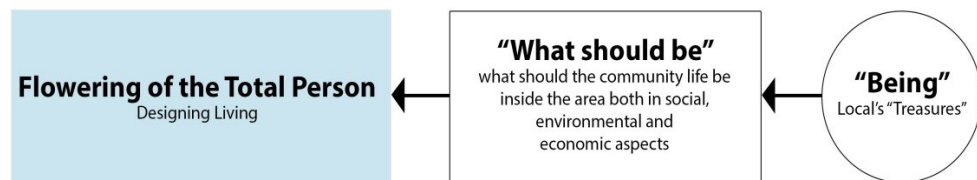


Figure 2: The approach of Flowering of the Total Person

After the “being” is explored, the “what should be” by design could clearly understand. As the next phase is the design process with the locals to formulate a proposal of development which could be improving craft design or formulation of tourism promotional ideas. During the development process, locals should be the real designers, and the right design should be returned to locals, not external [5]. External designer and researcher should avoid replacing the local ideas. If it happens, decision-making rights would diminish for locals. Therefore in Flowering of the Total Person, designers have a role as facilitators, motivator, and stimulus provider for the locals, as what *kuroko* do in Japanese *Kabuki* traditional art performance. *Kuroko* dressed in black from head to toe in *Kabuki* performance in order to imply that they are invisible and not a part of the action onstage but have a very important role in changing scene, costume, and dramatic movements of performers (see figure 3). Nowadays, it seems difficult

for a rural community to fulfill the role as a planner and implementer in the entire process of design and implementation. Therefore the designers should act as “*kuroko*” to help the indigenous people design the development process.



Figure 3: Sketch of *kuroko* figure (wear black dress) in Kabuki performance

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Delanggu-Juwiring districts have the traditional agricultural culture as its potential, but unfortunately, this “treasures” has been lost and forgotten by the people due to the process of modernization without consideration of traditional aspect. Therefore through the approach of Flowering the Total Person, to revive the culture of rice farming as a potential for community development, the authors firstly held a residency at the local community's house in one week for an exploration of traditional rice culture which is a "being" in the community. The process continued with developing a project with locals consisting of *Tetua desa* or village elders, senior farmers, and neighbors. While for the external elements, authors were supported by Design Culture Laboratory of Chiba University, students of Interior Design Sebelas Maret University, and lecturer from Pembangunan Jaya University. After the design planning process, the implementation was performed as the final phase of this research (see figure 4).



Figure 4: Methodology of this research

4. EXPLORING “BEING” in DELANGGU-JUWIRING DISTRICTS

At Delanggu-Juwiring Districts, one of the authors stayed for a week at one of the local community's house to experience the social interaction in the community and explore the rice farming culture guided by senior farmers and *tetua desa* for the values aspects. Based on the author's living experience there, even though they have been surrounded by the flood of global influence, the strong social relations between neighbours are still maintained. The motivation to help each other is not based on commercial aspect but emotional bonding between them. It could be seen from how villagers totality in supporting the exploration process rice farming culture by initiatively asking other villagers who understand about the other rice farming culture information for this research without asking for rewards for their services. In Javanese community, this value of helping each other called *gotong royong* or community relations [6].

In the exploration process, the author was trying to reveal the traditional pattern of rice farming activities, from planting rice until postharvest phase both in daily activities and rituals. Because most of the traditional rice farming culture has been abandoned by the community, besides writing the results of the interview, the author was trying to visualize the activities and artefacts utilize and produce from this culture. Lead by senior farmers, the reconstruction of several traditional artefacts also performed to experience the production process with its respective values. In revealing this culture, the author got directions mostly from elderly in Delanggu-Juwiring areas, because most of them experience the era when rice culture create the community alive in social, environmental and spiritual aspects.

As the result of the exploration process, in rice farming phase, the traditional pattern has more activities compare to the modern (see figure 5). In the planting phase, the traditional farmers were performing two rituals. *Slametan* and *nyajeni* are rituals performed before planting seeds as an effort to discuss with nature and mythological elements for the protection of rice fields from planting to harvesting. While in the pre-harvest period, farmers were performing *wiwitan* ritual by cutting several rice ears and create artefacts which represented Dewi Sri figure or Goddess of rice as a sense of gratitude for the harvest. During the harvest period, different with modern patterns which directly process the rice ears with machines and directly brought to the rice packaging factory, the traditional method perfoms a more ethical attitude towards rice plants by cutting rice ears using *ani-ani* or small knife only for the ripe rice ears. The harvest process also participated by 200-500 female workers different with modern method which only requires 10-20 workers. For the rice harvest part, in traditional method, farmers were tying the rice ears into *prentilan* or the size of a circle made by both hands' forefingers and thumbs, dried in the rice field and distributed to the rice

granary which located next to the farmer's house. While in modern method, harvested rice is distributed to the rice packing factories.

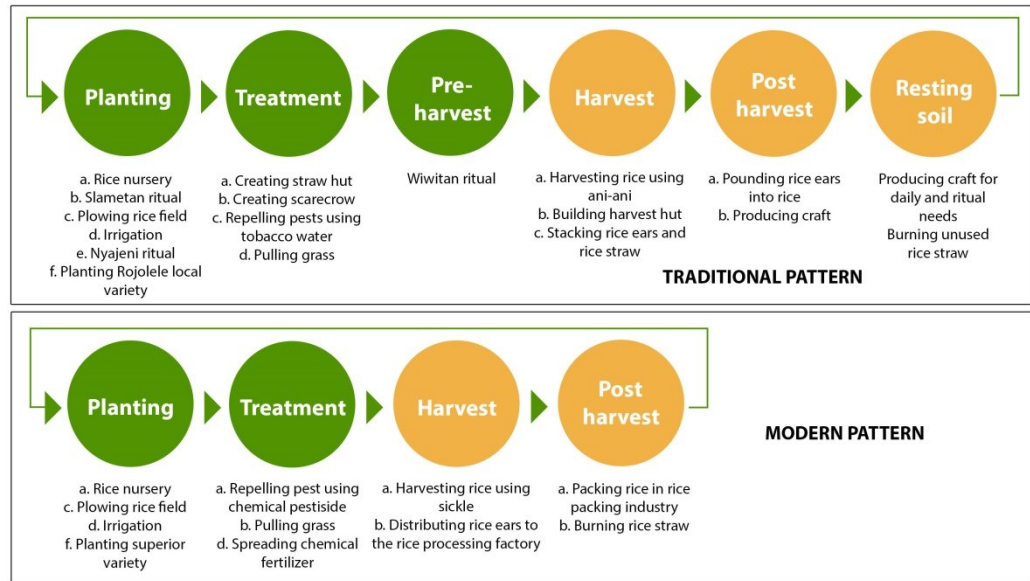


Figure 5: Traditional and modern pattern of rice farming activities in Delanggu-Juwiring districts

In postharvest stage of traditional pattern, farmers were resting soil before the next planting season. This phase was also utilized by farmers to create crafts from rice straw or material that is considered waste by the present community, both for utility and ritual needs. For traditional community, they had a special place for rice straw storage named *njlangkaringan* which located usually on the right side of house and designed with a floor higher than ground level to protect rice straw from water and humidity. From the artefacts visualization process of both sketch and reconstruction (see figure 6), the author was discovered 40 utilization of rice straw for utility needs, and 15 utilization for ritual needs which majority produced by tying and bundling production methods. For the community development design plan in the next phase of research, these all findings from planting until rice straw utilization are the “treasures” not only in activities but also values aspect.



Figure 6: Reconstruction process lead by senior farmers in creating rice straw hut, *banyu londbo* (rice straw shampoo), and rice straw broom

B. “WHAT SHOULD BE” DESIGN IDEAS FROM THE DATA FINDINGS

From data findings related to the “being” in Delanggu-Juwiring above mentioned, the process continued with design project formulation. Through active participation of the locals in bringing ideas, there are two project planning produced based on their “being” which is the rice farming culture. Villagers in Delanggu-Juwiring districts usually hold a discussion group with a kinship atmosphere, from this custom, the discussion process of idea searching was performed in an informal situation (see figure 7), not formal situation which tends to create a situation similar to a boss with subordinates. In the design process, it was proven that this approach could effectively produce an active atmosphere for the locals in giving their ideas. As an output, there are two outputs from design project formulation with locals: (1) An event of introduction and development of rice postharvest rice culture to the village’s young generation, and (2) Village festival of rice farming culture called “Ngani-ani 2019”.



Figure 7: Discussion with locals related to the event planning

1. An event of introduction and development of rice postharvest rice culture to the village’s young generation

The first idea of the project is to introduce rice farming culture to village’s young generation through an approach to the educational institutions in Delanggu-Juwiring districts in order to increase awareness and interest of their own “treasures”. As the event location, Juwiring 1 Vocational High School was chosen because they have extracurricular inline with this event which is Javanese culture and art. This event was divided into four main activities: (1) presentation and exhibition of the rice farming postharvest culture by showing the sketches of findings, (2) Workshop of how to harvest rice using *ani-ani* traditional tool, (3) workshop of creating traditional rice straw broom, and (4) the competition of developing rice straw handicrafts based on the local needs. As the supporter for senior farmers in presenting this workshop, interior students from Sebelas Maret University were learning about how to create a traditional rice straw craft and preparing rice straw and other workshop needs for the event.

2. Juwiring Ngani-ani Festival 2019

The second design plan produced from discussion with locals was creating a village-scale event named “Juwiring Ngani-ani Festival 2019”. “Ngani-ani” name was taken from the Javanese words of traditional harvest activity, which represents farmers’ happiness, ethical attitude towards rice plants, and respect for the mythological elements, therefore it represents the spirit of this project. This project is divided into five aims: (1) preservation of rice farming culture and Rojolele local rice, (2) cultural education for local community, especially young generation, (3) create an entertainment based on culture for the locals, (4) create a rice straw and pottery craft development program for supporting the community’s daily life activities, and (5) As an economic input for the locals.

To achieve four aims above mentioned, the concept of the project’s activities are planned to be held in four phases which represents the traditional farming activities from planting rice to postharvest (see figure 8). This project will be held in rice field area in Juwiring district with a dimension of 10 x 200 m, which is owned by one of the event’s committee. The detail of the four activities are written below:

- *Nandur* Rojolele (planting rice phase)

In this phase, the main activity is to planting local variety Rojolele rice organically. Rojolele is high-quality rice and had a special position in the traditional community, but today it is difficult to find this variety because most of the farmers are planting superior varieties which could possibly be harvested until 4 times in a year. Another activity is creating infrastructures for the event which consist of a straw hut, stage, route, signage, and decoration. These activities mainly performed by farmers and bamboo craftsman.

- *Memeden Manuk* Festival (pre-harvest phase)

One month before the harvest time, this activity is planned to be performed mainly with three workshop leads by senior farmers and pottery craftsman such as: creating rice straw brush continued with splashing tobacco water into rice plants, creating rice straw hut, and pottery making which later the participants’ works will be burned in Bentangan village near Delanggu District, and the results will be exhibited in the harvest phase.

- *Ngani-ani* Festival (harvest phase)

As the representation of traditional harvest activity, the authors team and local committee were designing several activities of harvest phase started from simulation of *wiwitan* or ritual as gratitude for the harvest, experiencing rice harvest using *ani-ani* tool, crafting *dramenan* or rice straw flute for harvest celebration, and the competition of tying the harvested rice ears into *prentilan* size.

- *Damen and Gerabah* Festival (postharvest phase)

In the last phase, most of the activities are playing with rice straw by creating *wayang damen* or rice straw dolls, *kebo damen* or rice straw doll of water buffalo, and rice straw broom. The results of rice straw craft development also will be exhibited in this phase, and the production method will be shared with the visitors. To give an idea of rice straw craft development which will be introduced in the next event, the board of idea will be provided in event area for visitors who wants to give his/her idea of utilization in the form of sketches and writing. Other than these activities, visitors will be experiencing the traditional method of processing rice ears into rice and rice straw art performances by schools from Delanggu-Juwiring.

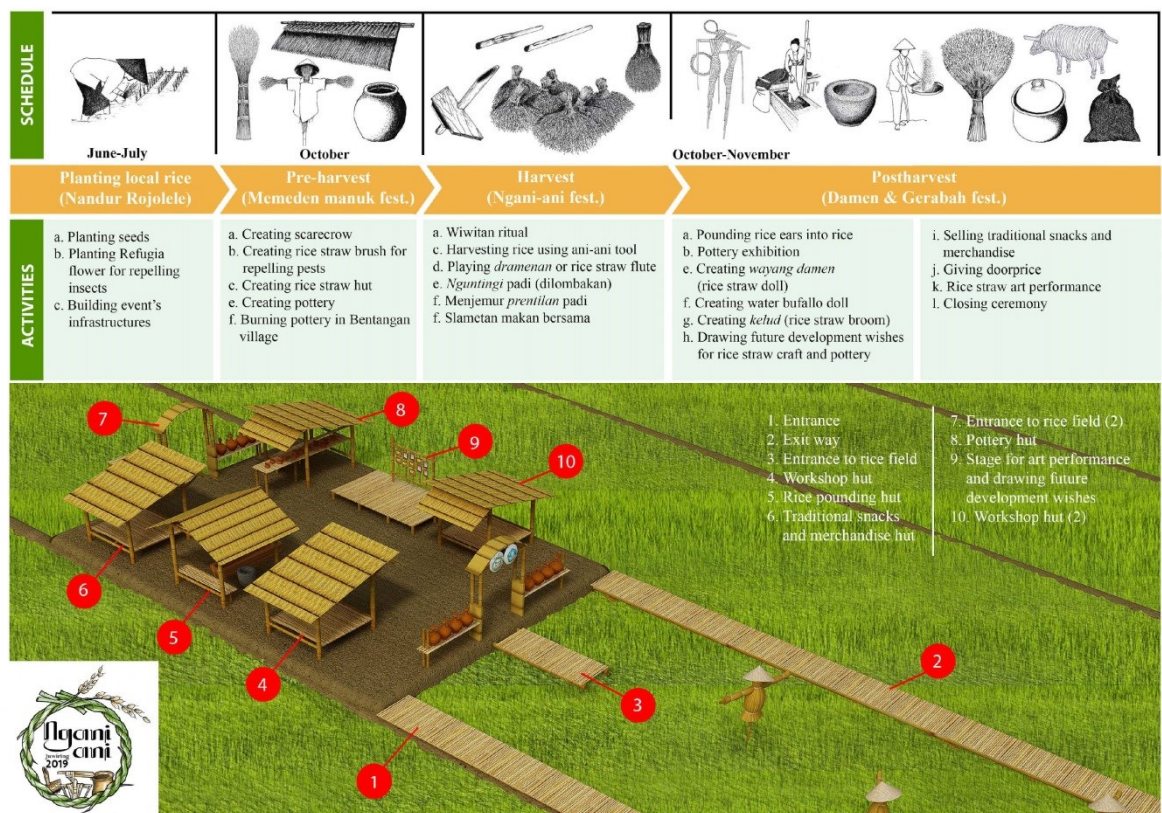


Figure 8: Event's plan in time, activities and location

3. Idea Implementation

Through locals' cooperation for the event preparations, such as rice straw, tools, and consumption, the first project of introduction and development of rice postharvest rice culture to the village's young generation has been completed in Juwiring Vocational High School 1. Lead by a senior farmer and supported by Sebelas Maret University Interior design students, 35 participants successfully created a rice straw broom by using tying and bundling methods as the most utilized production methods in producing traditional rice straw craft. In the development competition, the high school students were divided into 5 groups, and each of them was challenged to make rice straw craft inspired by local activities in the village, not external commodity products. Through the process of discussion and sketching idea, each group has been successfully produced rice straw into items such as sandals, bicycle replica, decoration, cup holder, and a scope (for cleaning home floors). At the end of this event, each group was presenting their creation in front of the class, all groups were sharing the background of their ideas, which all of the ideas had a relationship with their daily activities.

While for "Juwiring Ngani-ani 2019", the project is planned to be started in planting season of 2019. Until present, the implementation progress is searching for event's sponsor both from government agencies, state-owned enterprises, and private companies. Coordination with local community is also being held for the event's committee as the preparation for next year's village festival.



Figure 9: Workshop implementation in Juwiring Vocational High School 1 (left), and location plan for Juwiring Ngani-ani Festival 2019 (right)

CONCLUSION

Delanggu and Juwiring districts have a "treasures" related to the traditional rice farming culture. Unfortunately, as an impact of the Green

Revolution and modernization, the traditional culture has gradually abandoned by the farmers community. Today, village community consider rice farming activities are merely only producing rice for commodity products, they unaware that in the traditional method of rice farming activities, there are a lot of potentials that could be developed to improve the quality of life of the locals. Therefore through the design approach of Flowering of the Total Person this research was performed as an effort to develop the community in Juwiring-Delanggu based on their “being” and village people’s active participation. This indigenous-led approach was chosen to tackle the present development issues which majority excluded locals which the true beneficiaries of the development process. As the implementation results, the authors team guided by *tetua desa* and senior farmers was successfully explored “being” which is the traditional rice culture from planting rice until postharvest phase, in the form of notes, sketches, and craft reconstruction. Based on the analysis of the findings data, the traditional rice farming activities in Delanggu-Juwiring reflected the strong community relationship with the element of the environment, mythological, and social.

From this “being”, there are two projects designed through the informal discussion between authors and locals, consisting of (1) Event of introduction and development of rice postharvest rice culture to the village’s young generation which already performed in Juwiring 1 Vocational High School, and (2) Village scale festival named “Juwiring Ngani-ani 2019” which presently in progress of searching for sponsors and planning the event committee. The implementation of the Flowering the Total Person method in Delanggu-Juwiring communities provide space for the local community to actively share their ideas and became a decision maker in the design planning process. While, the authors and other external elements took on the role of the supporters, facilitators, and stimulators for the locals, and should avoid from being a teacher for them. With this method, the local community will have a high sense of belonging to a project, which could motivate them in the development process and a keys of indigenous-led sustainable development.

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