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Sustainable Community Development in Rural and Urban Areas

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Abstract. Cultural dimension in development has been widely accepted to propose an alternative approach in development, in which an emic approach in development provides people’s view and bottom-up approach in development. Gintingan is an example of socio-economic and cultural institution, which has been implemented for decades by local people of Subang, West Java, Indonesia. The institution has been influenced by a Sundanese worldview of Tri Tangtu and implements the local wisdom of Silih Asah, Silih Asih and Silih Asuh. As the institution has been implemented in the region, local people’s preferences varied based on their environmental location and affect its practices in terms of forms and purposes. This paper attempts to elaborate the practices of Gintingan and local people’s preferences in the urban and rural area. The different practices of the institution between rural and urban area might affect to its sustainability and its role in sustainable community development.

1. Introduction
Cultural dimension in development has been widely accepted to propose an alternative approach in development. It proposes a bottom-up approach where local people’s view of development as well as their participation in the development processes, are incorporated [1]. The absence of cultural consideration in the development policies and implementation would lead to the failure to the achievement of development objectives [2].

As cultural factors related to the specific characteristic of a society at the community level, an emic view of development is suggested to any development planners, not only to understand development problems from the eye of the people, but also to understand local people’s knowledge, beliefs and livelihood, including to analyse any existing local institution, which related to the local development [2-4]. This brought to the concept of sustainable community development - in other reference named as endogenous development, which emphasise of how the local institution could be integrated in development plan, policies and practices, and how economic factor should also be integrated with other factors i.e. social, environmental, political as a bottom-up approach in development at the community level, which to a certain extent, has been neglected in development policies and practices [5, 6].

Gintingan is an example of a bottom-up initiative, which has been contributing to the local development in the Subang district of West Java. It is a socio-cultural institution, which is based on commonality in terms of joint participation of individuals to provide a collective contribution to their community and individual assistance to fellow villagers in need, known as Gotong Royong in the Javanese culture. Gintingan is practiced as a local initiative by people in the community when a
particular household, which has a *Hajat* (‘important need’), receives contributions from the community members through the provision of a *Gantangan*, a vessel of rice with a content of about 10 liters. It is a bottom-up initiative, mostly by local people in the Subang district of West Java. (Saefullah, in press). In contrast to the modern micro financing system, *Gintingan* is a typical representative of an indigenous community-managed institution, based on the local people’s Cosmo vision of *Tri Tangtu* which influences their livelihood practices. In this way, this institution maintains the harmonious balance among the villagers during socio-cultural events known as *Hajatan*, including weddings, circumcisions, rituals, etc. The tradition itself has generally been implemented by the people living in the northern agricultural areas of the island of Java, including the district of Subang [7, 8].

![Figure 1. Schematic representation of the Sundanese Cosmo vision of Tri Tangtu, encompassing the three realms of the spiritual, human and natural worlds.](image)

*Source:* Saefullah (in press).

Figure 1 is Schematic representation of the Sundanese Cosmo vision of *Tri Tangtu*, encompassing the three realms of the spiritual, human and natural worlds. The concept of *Tri Tangtu* is used by the indigenous Sundanese population within the context of their traditional beliefs and livelihood. Accordingly, the Sundanese believes that in order to reach a ‘harmonious life’, people should maintain the balance between the three realms as the harmonious balance between the gods, the humans and the earth determine happiness in life. Thus, humans (*Middle Realm*) should maintain a harmonious relation with the spiritual realms (*Upper Realms*), which is expressed in the concept of *Silih Asah* (‘reciprocal learning’) in the Sundanese’ cosmology. Similarly, humans (*Middle Realm*) should also maintain a harmonious relationship with the earth and the environment (*Lower Realms*), which is expressed in the concept of *Silih Asih* (‘Reciprocal Love’) in the Sundanese cosmology. Eventually, the state of *Silih Asih* can be achieved if humans maintain a harmonious relationship with both the spiritual realm and the realm of the earth and environment. The achievement of such an overall state of harmony is reflected in the concept of *Silih Asuh* (‘Reciprocal Care’) of the Sundanese cosmology [9-11].

Earlier researches have been discussed *Gintingan* from the various functions on *Gintingan*, i.e. the research by Irawan, which studied *Gintingan* as an economic institution which preserve Sundanese art and culture, whereas Wijaya studied the local initiative with regards to the *Islamic* law on the debt related mechanism. Similarly, Prasetyo has also studied *Gintingan* as a social capital, which contributes to local development [12-14]. This paper attempts to examine in terms of factors, which influence the utilisation of *Gintingan* in socio-economic development of Subang district of West Java, particularly whether environmental factors e.g. zonation, environmental location influence the utilisation behavior of local people of Subang district to use the institution.
2. Methods
This paper is a part of the author’s PhD research at the Leiden Ethno system and Development (LEAD) Programmer, Leiden University, in The Netherlands. The ethno systems approach, the leading approach of this study, has its roots in the classical school of thought of sociology and sociolinguistic called ‘ethnomethodology’. Furthermore, earlier research documented that, the ethno systems approach accommodates the analysis of processes of interaction between humans and their environment and that the ethno systems approach is capable of taken into account the significant patterns of use, management and conservation of biocultural diversity [15]. The focus of ethnomethodology basically lies in the practical, everyday common-sense reasoning of community members connected to their lay methods. In other studies, the ethno systems approach is useful for respectively the analysis of the conservation behaviour of the Balinese of their island’s biocultural diversity and the analysis of the indigenous knowledge, belief and practices of wild plants among the Meru of Kenya [16, 17]. This study also uses the Leiden Ethno systems Approach, which combine 3 methodological approaches of Participant’s View (PV) which in the Anthropological research known as Ethnography, Historical Dimension (HD) and the comparative analysis in the Field of Ethnological Studies (FES). As the geographical approach is closely related to the FES approach, this paper would limit the analysis to the third methods of Field Ethnological Studies. It attempts to answer whether the environmental locations of local people of Subang, i.e. Urban and Rural location, Zonation conditions, as well as migration status of the people, influence the utilisation behavior to make use Gintingan or vice versa [4].

2.1. Research model and instrument
The analytical function used in the study is as adapted from the analytical model, introduced by Slikkerveer [20], and short represented as follows:

\[
\text{Utilisation of Gintingan} = f (\text{Psycho-social, Socio-Demographic, Perceived Needs, Enabling, Environmental, Institutional, Intervening-variables})
\]

The environmental factors considered in the analysis are zonation of villages (mountainous, non-mountainous), environmental location (rural, urban) of the villages and HH residential status (indigenous, migrant).

The instrument uses the constructed questionnaire, which was developed by Slikkerveer [18] and has been empirically researched by later researchers in various area of ethno sciences and development [19].

2.2. Samples
This study uses samples of respondents from local people at Subang district, one of the Sundanese region in West Java. As suggested by the local government of Subang, the samples of the study were followed the input from the local government of Subang, which has to be gathered from three different geographical areas of Subang: Northern, Central, and Southern part of Subang. Moreover, the samples were also accommodated three different geographical landscape conditions: highland, midland and lowland area of Subang, and more importantly between rural and urban area of Subang. Therefore, the respondents were interviewed from four villages in the Subang district: Cimanglid and Bunihayu villages (represented highland, southern, rural and mountainous area), Sukamelang village (represented midland, central, urban and flat area) and Mayangan village (represented lowland, northern, semi-urban/rural and coastal area). The total of 345 respondents were interviewed from March to May 2012. This paper presents some part of the result of the PhD study of the author [7].

2.3. Method of analysis
Apart from descriptive and explanatory analysis, the study also used multivariate analysis with non-canonical correlation to answer whether the environmental factors influence the utilisation behavior.
Pearson’s coefficient of correlation with a chi-squares statistical distribution and test is used in the inferential statistic.

3. Results and Discussion
Subang is one of the cities in West Java, Indonesia. The people’s livelihood in the region is influenced by Sundanese culture. Sundanese people, including local people of Subang, has a cosmological view, named as Tri Tangtu. Tritangtu is a Sundanese term which is derived from tri=Three and tangtu=realms/components. Sundanese Cosmology of tritangtu influences Subang people’s livelihoods, including socio-cultural activities as well as economic activities and institutional forms. Sundanese believes that human well-being, as a development objective, will only be achieved through a harmonious life balance between human, environment, and sacred/spiritual beings.

As for the socio-economic life, Sundanese implements the principle of reciprocity. In Subang, this reciprocity can be seen through a community initiated institution, named as Gintingan. Gintingan provides an example of how the three harmonies of Silih Asah, Silih Asih, and Silih Asuh have been put into practice by the people of the Sundanese community in Subang. In this context, Gintingan indeed fulfills the underlying principles as follows:

- The community leader represents the first element in the Buana Nyungcung (‘Spiritual World’) of Tri Tangtu as the community leader who puts the spiritual belief into practice by taking care of the people in the community;
- The household, or the individual member of the community in need represents the second element in the Buana Tengah (‘Human World’) of Tri Tangtu, where they are interacting with each other on the basis of reciprocity; and
- The rice, money or any other materials which are contributed within the practice of Gintingan represent the third element of Buana Rarang (‘Natural World’) of Tri Tangtu.

The traditional principle of the voluntary provision of a ‘contribution’ to community members or the community as a whole has been an important part of the Indonesian culture, and is not only practiced in the Sundanese region, but also in other regions of the country. In line with the concept of Gintingan, similar traditions of Jagong in Central Java, Nyande in Madura, Mbecek in East Java, and Talitihan and Andilan in West Java are practicing the same principles of voluntary contribution and reciprocity [7].

3.1. People’s preferences in the utilisation of Gintingan
This paper reveals a part of the results from the study by the author [7]. By using non-canonical correlational analysis, the following table 1 presents the result of the quantitative analysis:

| Variable | Gintingan | Transitional | Modern |
|----------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| Village Name | N % | N % | N % |
| Bunuhaya | 23 | 45 | 11 |
| Cimanggend | 28 | 44 | 10 |
| Maysanen | 50 | 18 | 20 |
| Sukamelang | 63 | 5 | 28 |
| Total | 164 | 112 | 69 |

(Pearson $\chi^2 = .000$
Source: Saefullah (in press)
It is shown that among the 345 interviewed, about 47.5% local people of Subang from four different villages are prefers to utilise their traditional institution of Gintingan and, in comparison with the transitional and modern ones, with about 32.5% and 20.0 % consecutively. Among those who are utilise Gintingan, majority of the respondents came from an urban-flat and central village (Sukamelang), whereas the rural and the mountainous village, Cimanglid, is the least in terms of preferences in the utilisation of Gintingan. An interviewed with one of the informal leaders in the Cimanglid explained that the use of Gintingan for hajatan (ceremony) has changed with the housing construction. Although the purpose of Gintingan is different, however the principle of reciprocity as well as its mechanism with a gotong-royong (communal voluntary help) are just similar [8].

3.2. Multivariate correlational analysis in the utilisation of Gintingan

The following table 2 reveals the result from the non-canonical correlations between independent and intervening variables with the dependent variables of the utilisation of Gintingan institution. For this specific purpose, the details other independent variables and intervening variables are omitted in the result with a specific attention to the environmental factors (zonation location, environmental location and residential status).

| Table 2. Pearson correlation’s on the variables with the utilisation of Gintingan |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Variables                        | Correlation’s coefficient        |
| Socio Demographic                | 0.616                            |
| Psycho Social                   | 0.448                            |
| Perceived Need                  | 0.362                            |
| Enabling                        | 0.174                            |
| Institutional                   | 0.764                            |
| Environmental                   | 0.802                            |
| Intervening                     | 0.130                            |
| Pearson sign χ² = .000           |

Source: Saefullah (in press).

It is shown from the above table that the environmental variable correlate very strong, with the utilisation of Gintingan (0.802). This is also explained by some interviews with the elder people in the research area. Among the environmental variables, it is shown that the environmental location of the respondents (urban-rural) is the strongest correlation with the utilisation of Gintingan, in comparison with the zonation location of the respondents (mountainous, coastal, etc.) as well as with the residential status of respondents (indigenous, migrant, etc.), as it is shown in the following Table 3.

| Table 3. Pearson correlation’s on the environmental variables with the utilisation of Gintingan |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Variables                        | Pearson sign χ²                   |
| Zonation Location                | 0.002                            |
| Environmental Location           | 0.800                            |
| Residential Status               | 0.066                            |

Source: Saefullah (in press).

The result is supported by the interviews with the local people where the practice of Gintingan, has various forms based on their environmental location. In the urban village of Sukamelang, the practice of Gintingan is more related to fulfill the socio-economic and cultural needs, e.g. wedding and circumcision ceremonies, while in the rural area of Cimanglid village, the practice of Gintingan has shifted into housing construction. However, the result is still insufficient as the area of the Mayangan village (semi-rural), the practice of Gintingan is almost gone while in Buniayu (semi-urban) is also still implemented for wedding purpose.
4. Conclusions

Gintingan institution in Subang district of West Java province has shown that socio-cultural dimension of development can be integrated with economic aspect as well as other aspects of development, which is represented a sustainable community development. Moreover, the tradition has demonstrated a bottom-up approach with the involvement of peoples’ participation in development at the community level. The people’s preference to utilise Gintingan in Subang district, is higher than those who prefer to use transitional and modern institutions. The environmental factors are highly correlated with the people’s preference in the utilisation of Gintingan. As for the environmental factors, the environmental location of rural-urban area is the strongest significant variable, in comparison with the zonation location and residential status of the respondents.

This paper is expected to give a valuable input to the government and policy makers, to apply bottom-up development approach in development, where peoples’ participation in the community and cultural perspective of local people are necessary to be included. Further research is still needed to be done in the future, particularly in the practices of cultural based institutions in supporting sustainable development, as well as a how cultural based institution could comply with the challenge of globalisation.

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