

The Impact of Foreign Tourists on the Culture of the Sasak Community in Ende Tourism Village, Central Lombok Regency

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyse The Impact of Foreign Tourists on the Culture of the Sasak Community in Ende Tourism Village, Central Lombok Regency. The focus of the study is on how tourist interactions influence traditional values, cultural practices, and the adaptation patterns of the Sasak community in facing the development of global tourism.

Method: This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data were obtained through observation, unstructured interviews, and documentation. Research informants included community leaders, tourism village managers (POKDARWIS), and local communities directly involved in tourism activities. Data analysis used Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which includes the stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing.

Result: The results of the study show that tourism has a positive impact on economic growth, job creation, and public awareness of the importance of preserving local culture. But the commodification of culture, like the conversion of Peresean and Gendang Beleq arts into tourist attractions, has changed the meaning of tradition. The Sasak community has demonstrated selective adaptation by preserving traditional architecture, social values, and local language, while also adopting elements of modernity through foreign language proficiency and creative economic innovation.

Contribution: This study contributes to the development of culture-based tourism in Indonesia by emphasising the importance of balancing economic benefits and the preservation of local values. The results of this study also serve as a reference for local governments, tourism village managers, and academics in designing sustainable tourism management strategies that preserve the cultural identity of local communities.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, Sasak Culture, Ende Tourism Village

Introduction

Tourism is an activity that is consciously undertaken to obtain satisfaction and new experiences that are different from daily routines, both domestically and abroad, without being tied to a permanent job. In this modern era, tourism has developed into one of the most promising industries for increasing foreign exchange earnings (Par et al., n.d.). Indonesian tourism is an important economic sector that not only serves as a source of national income but also as a means of introducing and preserving the nation's culture. Culture has a close relationship with the development of tourism, because with the increase in tourism activities, it is hoped that there will also be an improvement in the quality of life of the local community. Therefore, culture must be maintained and preserved by all levels of society. In addition to influencing culture, tourism also has an impact on language, particularly in terms of vocabulary and terminology. This means that the development of tourism can enrich the Indonesian language, although at the same time it can diminish local culture due to the influx of foreign cultures that bring different values (Furqan & Khairulyadi, 2017).

Cultural tourism as a form of tourism development policy in Indonesia emphasises cultural elements as key assets in attracting foreign and domestic tourists.² This does not mean



that other aspects such as natural beauty, beaches, flora and fauna, sports, and entertainment are ignored, but cultural tourism has strategic benefits in strengthening national identity. Cultural elements have important values, including: helping to promote tourism, creating jobs, increasing community income, and strengthening the empowerment of local arts and culture. In addition, cultural arts performances can also encourage the sustainable management of museums, galleries, and cultural monuments (Subhiksu & Utama, 2018).

One of the provinces in Indonesia that has successfully made culture its main tourist attraction is West Nusa Tenggara Province (NTB). This province, whose capital is Mataram City, has a wealth of customs, traditions, and historical relics that are still preserved today (Anggratyas, 2024). One of the leading destinations that highlights local culture is the Sasak Ende Tourism Village, located in Sengkol Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency. The word "Ende" itself means "protector" or "boundary" of Rembitan Village, which is also interpreted as a place to protect state assets, because local culture is part of the national assets that must be preserved (Pajri, 2023). Sengkol Village is known as an area that still preserves the authentic culture of the Lombok people. Its distinctive features can be seen in the architecture of traditional houses built using clay and cow dung, which are polished regularly every month, thatched roofs, and community activities that reflect Sasak traditions such as weaving, traditional musical instruments, and various traditional ceremonies such as peresean and kawin culik (Irfansyah, 2021). Through this socio-cultural context, various symbols and signs in the lives of the Sasak people reflect social behaviour and cultural values that are still alive today. The excellence of Ende Sasak Tourism Village also lies in its spatial planning and management of the area, which is orientated towards cultural preservation and introducing the diversity of Lombok traditions to tourists (Fahmi et al., 2023).

When tourists visit, they are treated to various cultural attractions such as peresean and gendang beleq and can see around 47 traditional houses that are still preserved in their original form (Sorenggani et al., 2024). The architecture of the houses in this village is unique because they use a mixture of soil and cow dung for the floors, bamboo fences for the walls, and dried grass leaves for the roofs. This uniqueness is a strong attraction for both domestic and foreign tourists to come and learn about Sasak culture. The arrival of foreign tourists has had a positive impact in the form of economic improvement and the introduction of local culture to the international community. However, there are also negative impacts, such as the shift in cultural meaning due to the commercialisation of traditions. For example, the Peresean tradition, which was once used to select the king's commander, is now performed as tourist entertainment (Wilantara, 2024).

This phenomenon illustrates that the interaction between local culture and outside culture poses new challenges for the people of Sasak Ende Village, especially the younger generation, in preserving traditional values and ancestral heritage amid the tide of globalisation (Aweda & Wilma, n.d.). Without awareness and preservation efforts, local cultural values can be eroded and lose their authenticity. Therefore, the preservation of Sasak culture must continue to be carried out adaptively so that it remains relevant without losing its original meaning.

Based on the above description, the author is interested in conducting research entitled "The Impact of Foreign Tourist Arrivals on the Culture of the Sasak Ende Tourism Village Community in Sengkol, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency." This research is important because Ende Tourism Village is strategically located on the main road to the Kuta Mandalika Beach Tourism Area, so that almost all tourists heading to that area will pass through and visit Sasak Ende Village. This research is expected to provide an overview of how interactions with foreign tourists affect the culture of the local community, as well as how the community preserves cultural values and local wisdom amid the development of global tourism.

Research Method

The research design used in this study is qualitative research with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research was chosen because it aims to understand phenomena in depth regarding what is experienced by research subjects, such as behaviour, perceptions,

motivations, and human actions, holistically through descriptions in the form of words and language in a unique natural context (Rukin, 2019). The descriptive approach was used because the data collected consisted of words and images rather than numbers, so the research results were presented in narrative form with direct quotations from interviews, field notes, and supporting documentation (Sugiyono, 2017).

The purpose of this study is to describe and examine in depth the impact of foreign tourist arrivals on the culture of the Sasak Ende Tourism Village community located in Sengkol Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency. This location was chosen because of its strategic position, namely on the main route to Sade Tourism Village, Kuta Mandalika Beach, and the Mandalika Circuit, resulting in a high intensity of interaction between foreign tourists and the local community.

The research subjects included local communities and Tourism Village managers (POKDARWIS), while the research object was the social and cultural impacts caused by the arrival of foreign tourists. Research informants were determined using purposive sampling, which is the selection of subjects based on certain considerations who are considered to know and understand the phenomenon being studied (Sugiyono, 2017). In this context, the head of POKDARWIS and several community leaders became the main informants for the research.

This study has two types of data sources, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from interviews with informants in the field, while secondary data was obtained from various literature such as books, documents, papers, and other scientific works relevant to the research topic (Moleong, 2019). Data collection techniques included three main methods, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted in a non-participatory manner, meaning that the researchers were not directly involved in community activities but only acted as independent observers. Interviews were conducted in an unstructured manner, where researchers were free to ask questions tailored to the situation in the field without using rigid interview guidelines (Sugiyono, 2017). Meanwhile, the documentation method was used to obtain supporting data in the form of archives, photos, activity records, and official documents related to the Sasak Ende Tourism Village.

Data analysis in this study used the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of four stages: (1) data collection, (2) data reduction, (3) data display, and (4) conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction was carried out by summarising and sorting important data relevant to the research focus, then presenting it narratively so that it was easy to understand and analyse. The results of the analysis were used to find patterns, relationships between findings, and deeper meanings regarding the impact of foreign tourist arrivals on the culture of the local community.

To ensure data validity, triangulation techniques were used, including source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing data from various informants, technique triangulation is carried out by combining the results of observations, interviews, and documentation, while time triangulation is carried out to ensure the consistency of information obtained at different times (Moleong, 2019). In addition, validity testing is also reinforced by testing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability so that the research results have strong validity and are scientifically accountable (Sugiyono, 2017).

This study does not use statistical hypotheses as quantitative research does, but it does have a working hypothesis, namely the assumption that the arrival of foreign tourists has an influence on changes in the values and cultural practices of the community in Sasak Ende Tourism Village. This hypothesis is temporary and may evolve as data is collected and analysed in the field.

Result and Discussion

The arrival of foreign tourists to Sasak Ende Tourism Village has had a significant impact on the socio-cultural dynamics of the local community. On the positive side, tourism

activities have opened up new economic opportunities for local residents through the sale of woven crafts, tour guide services, and cultural performances. The presence of tourists has also raised awareness among the community to preserve their culture as a tourist attraction. These findings are in line with Putrajip's (2023) research, which explains that culture-based tourism in Lombok is able to integrate cultural heritage with the creative economy in a sustainable manner (Lestari & Yusra, 2022). This shows that interaction between the local community and tourists can be a means of economic empowerment without having to sacrifice the cultural identity of the local community.

However, on the other hand, the presence of foreign tourists also poses challenges to traditional cultural values. Some of the Sasak people's sacred traditions, such as the obligation for young women to weave, have begun to undergo a process of commodification, and certain traditional rituals have been transformed into tourist attractions. Another study emphasises that the commercialisation of traditions can shift cultural meanings from sacred to profane (Ristiawan, 2018). In addition, the intensity of interaction between tourists and local communities also influences the behaviour patterns and lifestyles of the community, especially in terms of consumption and orientation towards modernity (Kusradi et al., 2025). This condition indicates that tourism, despite providing economic benefits, can also be a gateway for social change that has the potential to erode local values if not managed carefully.

Further research shows that the cultural changes occurring in Sasak Ende Tourism Village are selective. The community still maintains their cultural identity through traditional architectural forms such as Bale Tani, Berugak, and Bale Alang, all of which are made of bamboo, thatched with ilalang grass, and have clay floors (Riyadissolihin & Renda, 2025). However, adaptation in terms of language and social behaviour still occurs; the community has begun to master foreign languages such as English and Japanese as a means of communication in tourism activities (Yukuri et al., 2024). This process demonstrates the Sasak community's ability to adapt to the needs of the tourism industry without completely abandoning their inherited cultural values.

In a broader context, the cultural practices of the Sasak people demonstrate a process of acculturation between tradition and modernity (Supartha, 2020). The use of traditional tools is now combined with modern technology, while livelihoods have shifted from agriculture to the tourism sector, such as tour guides and craft sellers. Cross-cultural interactions also encourage two-way social learning that enriches the community's knowledge without eliminating the essence of local culture (Sari, 2020). However, some traditional arts, such as Peresean and Gendang Beleq, have shifted in function to become tourist performances, reflecting how local culture is transforming to meet the needs of the tourism market (Riyadissolihin & Renda, 2025). Thus, tourism in Sasak Ende Village not only impacts the economy but also serves as a negotiation arena between tradition and modernity in shaping the cultural identity of the Sasak community amid the tide of globalisation.

Conclusion

The arrival of foreign tourists to Sasak Ende Tourism Village has had a positive impact in the form of economic growth, job creation, and community awareness of cultural preservation. However, tourism also poses challenges in the form of the commodification of traditions and a shift in traditional values. The Sasak community has demonstrated selective adaptation by preserving traditional architecture and cultural practices while adjusting to modernity through foreign language proficiency and creative economic innovation. Therefore, tourism management must be carried out sustainably and orientated toward preserving local values. Collaboration between the government, tourism village managers, and the community is key to maintaining a balance between economic benefits and cultural integrity, while instilling awareness in the younger generation to preserve the Sasak identity amid the tide of globalisation.

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