

# **LOCAL WISDOM IN CREATING SIDETAPA VILLAGE AS A CULTURAL TOURISM DESTINATION IN BULELENG, BALI**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to explore in depth local wisdom in the transformation of the village into a cultural tourism destination, highlighting community involvement in maintaining traditions in the face of various pressures of tourism development. Become a tourist village since 2018, Sidetapa Village has been able to preserve its traditional and cultural values, despite the increase in tourist visits, especially foreign tourists from year to year, even staying in the village. To determine the interaction between cultural preservation and tourism, this study uses ethnographic methods that include community observation, interviews with community leaders and residents, and studying relevant documentation. The research findings reveal that the involvement of active roles of local residents in tourism management has implications for the ability of Sidetapa Village to maintain its cultural identity while generating economic benefits. By combining tourism activities with traditional values, the village has maintained cultural authenticity while encouraging community empowerment. The practices implemented by Sidetapa Village have shown that cultural sustainability and tourism progress can coexist if local genius, community involvement, and ethical tourism practices are combined.

**Keywords:** local wisdom, community involvement, sidatapa village, tourism

## INTRODUCTION

Sidetapa has been developed as a tourist destination (Widiastini et al., 2020; Widiastini et al., 2023; Widiastini & Darmawan, 2025) through the Decree of the Buleleng Regent Number 430/405/HK/2017. Then, the Sidetapa community has consistently developed its tourism potential, even focusing on educational tourism by utilizing the available natural and cultural resources. Studies (Maheswari, 2018; Widiastini & Darmawan, 2025), reveal the active involvement of the Sidetapa Village community in every stage of tourism management, from planning and implementation to evaluation, by making customary values the main foundation. In practice, the Sidetapa Village community, especially those in the tourism awareness group, always maintains the values inherited from their ancestors.

In practice, local wisdom can be seen in their daily lives, especially Pokdarwis (tourism awareness groups) when managing tourism activities. For example, visiting the Bale Gajah Sekaa Roras Tumpang Salu traditional house, utilizing bamboo forests, preparing traditional food, watching traditional ceremonial activities, tourists always are given information about the procedures and values of existing tourist attractions and activities (Widiastini et al., 2023; Armiyati et al., 2023). Likewise, the active participation of the community in general in maintaining a balance between cultural preservation and economic development is a major factor in ensuring the sustainability of culture-based tourism in the village. As tourism develops, Sidetapa faces challenges in maintaining a balance between the economy and cultural preservation. The community needs to adjust the provision of attractive tourism services without sacrificing traditional values. Therefore, the village needs a wise management strategy to maintain its authenticity in the face of modernization and globalization.

An ethnographic approach is used in this study to understand how local wisdom in Sidetapa functions as a framework for cultural tourism management (Ardhana & Wijaya, 2017; Mardika, 2021). In this case, the ethnographic method is used to gain a better understanding of how people there live, talk, and interact with each other. With the aim of getting an explanation of how local wisdom can inform sustainable tourism management.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Culture-based tourism villages have become the main focus in various tourism studies. Prioritizing local wisdom as the basis for its management and development (K. Astuti et al., 2020), is a form of integration between the tourism sector and the social structure of the local community. Local wisdom functions as a cultural identity, a guideline in maintaining a balance between economic growth, preservation of traditions, and environmental sustainability. In practice, local wisdom includes a system of values, norms, and customs that are passed down from generation to generation which are still firmly held by the community in tourism development. Study of Herdiana (2019), Jannati et al. (2020), Sasongko, Setijawan, & Soewarni (2024) revealed that tourism villages based on local wisdom have a unique appeal because they display the authenticity of the culture that characterizes the local community.

Community participation is one of the main elements in managing local wisdom-based tourism villages, so that tourism that is developed remains in line with local customs and cultural norms (Tosun, 2003). In Sidetapa Village, community involvement is not only limited to economic activities that are manifested in the management of tourism activities, but the most important thing is to maintain traditions and customary life systems, which of course are a special attraction for tourists. As a Bali Aga village,

Sidetapa has various customary practices and beliefs that serve as guidelines for the community in developing their village as a cultural tourism destination in Buleleng Regency, Bali. This is in line, study by Picard (1996) which shows that villages in Bali that have succeeded in maintaining their customs tend to be more sustainable in the long term compared to tourist areas that have experienced excessive commercialization. Thus, the development of culture-based tourism villages must consider the balance between tourist attractions, local values, and community welfare as an inseparable whole. Placing traditional values as the main foundation, tourism villages can develop sustainably while providing economic and social benefits to the local community.

## **METHOD, DATA, AND ANALYSIS**

This study uses an ethnographic approach (Tatano, 2003; Spradley, 2016) by conducting observations and interviews with the community to find out how the Sidetapa Village community applies the Tri Hita Karana values in developing their village as a cultural tourism destination. Community leaders and tourism activity managers, namely the My Darling tourism awareness group, were interviewed in depth. Likewise, bamboo craftsmen who are also icons of this village were also respondents in this study. The object of this study is the application of local wisdom values in the daily life practices of the Sidetapa Village community, especially related to the development of culture-based tourism.

In this study, interaction with the community was carried out through participatory observation, where researchers were directly involved in tourism activities, traditional ceremonies, and the daily lives of the village community. Likewise, in-depth interviews with traditional leaders, village leaders, tourism actors, and community members were conducted to explore the meaning of the culture they adhere to. Informal discussions and daily interactions were also conducted to find out the values internalized by the community in their daily practices. Additional information was obtained from various documents that assisted the analysis, such as official village documents on tourism and cultural preservation, historical records, local archives, traditional texts or manuscripts containing local customs, and relevant articles. Several documents were also collected such as official village records on tourism and cultural preservation, historical archives, local repositories, traditional texts or manuscripts reflecting local customs, and relevant articles.

Data analysis using ethnographic methodology was carried out by prioritizing a comprehensive understanding of the culture and social dynamics of the community. Data reduction was carried out on data obtained in data collection through observation, interviews, and document studies to find the information needed and support the research. Triangulation was also carried out to confirm conclusions by juxtaposing the results of observations, interviews, and secondary data to ensure the validity of the analysis. The data results were then analyzed descriptively qualitatively and presented in a narrative containing how the Sidetapa Village community reconciles tradition and modernity to maintain a balance between culture, environment, and tourism development rooted in local wisdom.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Role of Local Wisdom in Cultural Tourism Development**

Sidetapa Village has a system of values and customary practices that serve as guidelines in community life, including in tourism management. Local wisdom in Sidetapa Village functions as a cultural

heritage as well as a strategic foundation in maintaining a balance between tourism development and the preservation of customs. The Sidetapa community upholds customary values in every aspect of life. The philosophy of a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and ancestors is the main principle in decision-making, including in the tourism sector (Parwati & Trianasari, 2016; Mudana et al., 2018; Astuti, 2018; Widiastini et al., 2023). One real example of applying local wisdom is the prohibition of cutting bamboo on Sundays. This action is a form of respect for the natural cycle and the balance of the ecosystem. Religious and traditional activities such as ritual offerings and religious celebrations are implemented in their daily lives and are a real manifestation of how the people of Sidetapa Village maintain a spiritual relationship with their ancestors. These values are passed down from generation to generation and, in their current implementation, have become the village's identity in attracting tourists looking for an authentic cultural experience. In this case, Sidetapa Village has focused on developing itself as Bali Aga tourism, which, of course, requires the authenticity of customs and traditions to be maintained.

The traditional house of Bale Gajah Sekaa Roras Tumpang Salu, bamboo crafts, and the daily life of the community are magnets for tourists who want to understand and experience the life of the Bali Aga community that still maintains its authenticity. With the increasing demand for tourism, challenges arise in maintaining a balance between commercialization and cultural preservation, resulting in communities facing pressure to adapt to tourism industry standards while still being able to maintain and preserve their cultural identity (García-Hernández et al., 2017; Telfer & Sharpley, 2007; Bui et al., 2020). Therefore, a mature management strategy is needed so that tourism not only provides economic benefits but also contributes to the social and cultural sustainability of the community.

In order for local wisdom to remain the foundation for tourism development in Sidetapa, several strategies can be implemented, including education and cultural socialization to increase public awareness of the importance of preserving traditional values in facing tourism development. In addition, community participation (Chiabai et al., 2013; Bole et al., 2017; Tang et al., 2023) in decision-making is the main key so that local communities have full control over how tourism is developed so that it does not conflict with cultural values that have been inherited. Likewise, limiting the number of tourist visits can also be an important step in maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and the social life of the community. Meanwhile, strengthening the tradition-based economy can be done by developing local products such as bamboo crafts and village culinary specialties so that economic benefits can be achieved without sacrificing cultural heritage. Using existing local values as a guideline, the community develops culture-based tourism and displays its authenticity. The approach taken by Sidetapa Village can be a model for other villages that have similarities in terms of geography and demographics in developing sustainable tourism. Expected Sidetapa Village to continue developing as a cultural tourism village while upholding local wisdom with the right strategy.

### **Community Involvement in Sidetapa Tourism**

Community involvement plays a central role in tourism development in Sidetapa Village. As the main actors, the community is not only involved as economic actors but also as guardians of the village culture and environment. Tourism development in Sidetapa is based on a participatory approach (Arida et al., 2017; Fisun et al., 2023; Soedarwo et al., 2022), community is involved in every tourism activity. This concept is realized by involving tourism awareness groups in determining activities, especially training and

mentoring. Likewise, they are always present and actively involved when tourism activities, such as receiving tourist visits or engaging with related stakeholders, are carried out in their village. With this active involvement, tourism that develops in Sidetapa not only provides economic benefits but also strengthens local cultural identity. In addition, the community's sense of ownership of the tourism program increases, so that the commitment to maintaining the sustainability of tourism in their village is even stronger. However, such participation also requires support in the form of training and mentoring (Wiltshier, 2007; Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2012). Various tourism programs provided by both academics and the government are always followed by the local community to improve their insight and skills. There are four components of the community involvement framework in tourism development in Sidetapa, namely local wisdom, community involvement, principles of sustainable tourism development, and cultural preservation.

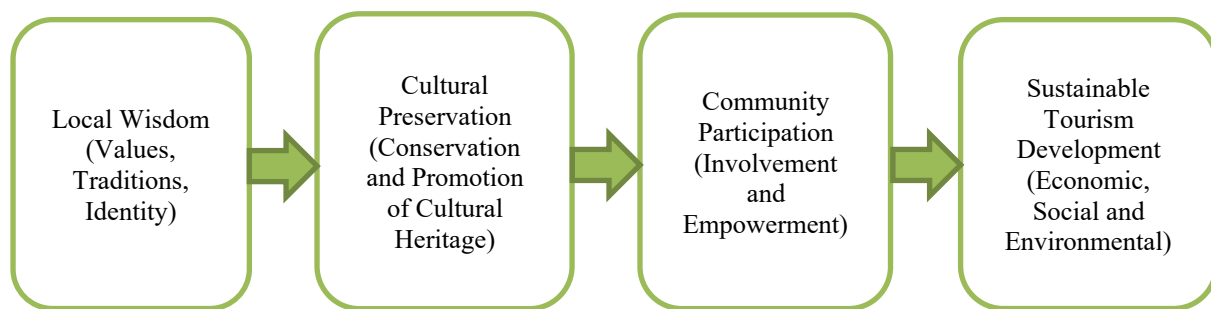


Chart 1. Four Main Components of Community Participation

Chart 1 illustrates the process flow from local wisdom to sustainable tourism development, with the important role of cultural preservation and community participation. Local wisdom (values, traditions, and identity) is the basis of the entire process. Local wisdom adds distinctiveness and appeal, making it a primary tourist attraction. We carry out cultural preservation by maintaining and promoting cultural heritage that originates from local wisdom. This preservation maintains the authenticity of the tourist destination. Community participation is driven by cultural preservation. Local communities participate in tourism management, maintain cultural heritage, and play an active role in empowering the local economy. Sustainable tourism development is the ultimate goal, which is achieved through a process involving local wisdom, cultural preservation, and community participation by paying attention to the balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects.

### Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development in Sidetapa

Tourism development in Sidetapa Village faces major challenges in maintaining a balance between economic growth and cultural preservation. As a Bali Aga village with strong traditional values, Sidetapa must face the risk of cultural commodification (Shepherd, 2002; Irianto, 2016; Pratiwi et al., 2017), where traditional elements can lose their original meaning due to the pressure of tourism commercialization. If not managed properly, rapidly growing tourism can shift the original values that have been upheld by the community. Therefore, collaborative efforts are needed between the community, government, and other stakeholders to ensure that tourism development not only provides economic benefits but also contributes

to cultural and environmental preservation. Another challenge is the management of human resources and supporting infrastructure. Although Sidetapa has rich cultural and natural potential, the community's capacity to manage tourism still needs to be improved (Maheswari, 2018; Widiastini et al., 2023; (Widiastini & Darmawan, 2025). Limited infrastructure such as accessibility, tourism facilities, and information technology are also obstacles in attracting more tourists. On the other hand, Sidetapa has a great opportunity to attract tourists who are interested in culture-based tourism and authentic experiences.

The uniqueness of Bali Aga culture has become a tourist attraction in the form of educational tourism, namely tourists who come with the aim of learning about the culture in the area visited, in this study it is Sidetapa Village. Global trends show an increasing interest in sustainable tourism and ecotourism (Weaver, 2007; Honey, M., & Krantz, 2007), where tourists not only aim to seek entertainment, but also want to get a meaningful experience and be responsible for the environment and local culture. Sidetapa can take advantage of this trend by offering experience-based tourism packages, such as staying at residents' homes, participating in traditional rituals, learning to make village handicrafts, agrotourism, and making various local culinary delights. In addition to cultural potential, support from the government and various institutions is also an important factor in the development of sustainable tourism in Sidetapa. Policies that support tourist villages, assistance in the form of funding, and effective tourism promotion can accelerate the growth of the tourism sector in the village. With synergy between the community, government, and private sector, Sidetapa can develop into a sustainable tourist village that not only improves community welfare, but also maintains cultural authenticity and environmental sustainability. By using the right strategy, Sidetapa Village is able to face various challenges that arise, and always take opportunities in the development of sustainable tourism trends. Through an approach that prioritizes community participation, preservation of tradition, and proper marketing, Sidetapa Village can develop without losing its identity as an authentic Bali Aga community.

## **CONCLUSION**

The development of Sidetapa Village as a cultural tourism destination based on local knowledge demonstrates that traditions and tourism demands may live peacefully. Adherence to customary values helps balance cultural preservation and tourism development. Active community involvement is critical to success, with local citizens not just participating in economic activity but also protecting the village's cultural identity. Their responsibility extends beyond providing services to actively protecting the originality of the tourism experience given in Sidetapa. However, there are ongoing concerns about whether tourism growth might jeopardize cultural integrity. A major worry is the risk of cultural commercialization, which involves changing traditions to meet the demands of commercial tourism. To solve this issue, the community, government, and key stakeholders must continue to work together to find solutions. Sustainable tourism management techniques must focus on responsible tourism practices that respect local customs while giving economic advantages to the community. Community training, capacity-building activities, and the promotion of sustainable tourism are required to assist Sidetapa Village in becoming a cultural tourism attraction in Buleleng, Bali.

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