

Integration of Ponan Tradition in Event and Culture-Based Tourism Development in Poto Village, Sumbawa Regency

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Abstract

Ponan Tradition as Social Capital and Local Wisdom of Farmers in Poto Village, Moyo Hilir District, Sumbawa Regency. The Ponan tradition is a form of social capital and local wisdom among the farming community in Poto Village, Moyo Hilir District, Sumbawa Regency. This tradition reflects the rich cultural heritage that has been preserved to this day, highlighting the importance of customs and cultural values in the lives of Poto Village residents. However, there is a research gap concerning how this tradition can be preserved and developed as social capital and a sustainable tourist attraction. This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach, involving in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and focus group discussions. The findings indicate that the Ponan Tradition has substantial potential to be developed as a cultural tourism attraction, which can provide significant economic benefits to the Poto Village community. This includes increased income from tourism sectors such as accommodation, culinary arts, and local handicrafts. The implications of this research emphasize the importance of involving all stakeholders in the development of culture-based tourism. It is crucial to maintain a balance between cultural preservation and economic development to achieve long-term sustainability.

Keywords: Economy; Sustainable Tourism; Ponan Tradition; Cultural Tourism

INTRODUCTION

The Ponan tradition is deeply rooted in the agricultural practices of the farming community in Poto Village, located in Moyo Hilir District, Sumbawa Regency (Ahmad, & Mohamad, 2021). This tradition is a significant form of local wisdom that has been handed down from one generation to the next. It not only represents the cultural values of the community but also serves as an essential component of their social capital (Anggraeni, & Ardiansyah, 2022). Social capital refers to the networks, norms, and shared values that contribute to building community cohesion and mutual support, which are vital for maintaining the village's social fabric.

The Ponan tradition plays a pivotal role in strengthening interpersonal relationships among villagers and in preserving the community's cultural heritage (Bramwell, & Lane, 2020). Through its practice, the tradition reinforces a sense of collective identity and belonging among the residents of Poto Village. It allows them to stay connected to their ancestral roots and maintain their unique cultural identity in an ever-globalizing world. However, despite its cultural significance, the Ponan tradition has not been extensively studied, and its potential for further development has remained largely untapped.

A key aspect of this tradition is its potential to be developed into a sustainable cultural tourism attraction. As cultural tourism becomes an increasingly popular niche in the tourism industry, the Ponan tradition could offer a unique and authentic experience for visitors interested in local customs and heritage. If properly managed, this could bring economic benefits to the community, including increased opportunities for local businesses such as homestays, traditional food outlets, and handicrafts. However, this requires careful planning to ensure that the tradition is preserved while also being leveraged for economic gain.

This study aims to address the gap in research by exploring how the Ponan tradition can be preserved and utilized as a form of social capital, while also examining its potential as a sustainable cultural tourism resource. By conducting qualitative research, including in-depth interviews and participatory observation, this research will provide insights into the perspectives of community members, local leaders, and tourism stakeholders. Their views are crucial in understanding the balance between cultural preservation and economic development.

The findings of this research are expected to highlight the importance of involving all stakeholders in the process of developing the Ponan tradition as a tourism attraction. It will explore how community involvement can help ensure that the development aligns with the values and needs of the local population. Furthermore, the study will emphasize the need to maintain the integrity of the tradition, ensuring that it does not lose its cultural essence in the process of commodification for tourism purposes.

Ultimately, this research seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on how local traditions, like the Ponan, can be preserved in a way that supports both cultural sustainability and economic development. It highlights the delicate balance required to develop cultural resources responsibly, ensuring that they continue to serve as valuable social capital while also providing tangible benefits to the communities that maintain them.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology, employing a case study design to investigate the role of the Ponan tradition in Poto Village (Font, & McCabe, 2017). Various data collection techniques were utilized to ensure a thorough exploration of the tradition. These methods include:

1. In-depth interviews conducted with key informants such as local leaders, village elders, and tourism officials. These individuals provided valuable insights into the historical and cultural significance of the Ponan tradition, as well as its current relevance within the community.
2. Participatory observation, where the researcher directly observed and engaged in Ponan tradition activities. This method allowed for a deeper understanding of the cultural practices in their natural setting, offering a more nuanced view of how the tradition functions as a form of social capital.
3. Focus group discussions (FGDs) with various stakeholders, including farmers, local business owners, and community members. These discussions facilitated the collection of diverse perspectives on the tradition and its potential development, especially as a sustainable cultural tourism resource.

By combining these methods, the research ensures a comprehensive analysis of the Ponan tradition, highlighting its multifaceted role in community cohesion and its potential for future development as

both a cultural and economic asset. This approach enables the study to capture a holistic view of how the tradition serves as a vital form of social capital in Poto Village.

RESULTS

The findings of this study indicate that the Ponan tradition holds significant potential to be developed into a cultural tourism attraction. The local community is deeply connected to this tradition, which plays a crucial role in maintaining social harmony and fostering solidarity among the residents. Furthermore, the Ponan tradition is an essential source of identity for the people of Poto Village, giving them a sense of pride and belonging within their cultural heritage. This strong cultural attachment forms a solid foundation for the development of tourism centered on the tradition.

In terms of economic advantages, the development of the Ponan tradition as a tourist attraction could result in substantial financial gains for the community. Some of the potential economic benefits include the growth of local accommodation services to cater to visitors, the expansion of the culinary sector where traditional foods can be showcased, and the promotion of local handicrafts as souvenirs for tourists. These developments would not only generate income but also create employment opportunities for the local population, further contributing to the community's economic stability.

The community's response to the prospect of developing the Ponan tradition into a tourism product has been generally positive. The local residents are open to the idea, provided that the development respects the core cultural values and traditions associated with Ponan. Maintaining this balance between cultural preservation and economic development is seen as essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of the tradition as both a cultural and economic asset.

DISCUSSION

This research emphasizes the critical need to strike a delicate balance between cultural preservation and economic development, particularly in the context of the Ponan tradition. While the Ponan tradition is immensely valuable as a form of social capital, its development into a tourism attraction must be approached cautiously to avoid the commodification of the culture. Over-commercialization could strip the tradition of its authentic cultural significance, reducing it to a mere spectacle for tourists rather than a meaningful practice that embodies the values of the local community.

To ensure that the development of the Ponan tradition is both sustainable and respectful of its cultural roots, it is vital to involve all relevant stakeholders. This includes local government authorities, tourism agencies, community leaders, and the farmers who are integral to the practice of the tradition. Their collective involvement is essential in shaping a tourism strategy that benefits the entire community without compromising the integrity of the Ponan tradition. Collaborative efforts among these stakeholders can ensure that the cultural essence of the tradition is preserved while still allowing for economic opportunities to arise from tourism.

Sustainability in tourism initiatives, particularly those rooted in cultural heritage, depends heavily on maintaining the authenticity of the traditions being showcased. Visitors are increasingly drawn to destinations that offer unique and genuine cultural experiences. In this regard, the Ponan tradition has the potential to attract tourists who are interested in exploring and engaging with local customs and heritage. By focusing on the cultural strengths of the tradition, Poto Village can offer a tourism

experience that stands out from more commercialized destinations, ensuring that the economic benefits are accompanied by the preservation of cultural values.

The success of such tourism initiatives also hinges on the community's active participation in the development process. Local residents must feel a sense of ownership over the tourism products that are developed, ensuring that they benefit directly from the economic opportunities generated. Moreover, the community's involvement helps maintain the authenticity of the Ponan tradition, as it is the people who practice and embody the tradition that can ensure its proper representation to visitors.

Economic development driven by tourism can provide much-needed financial resources to improve local infrastructure, create employment opportunities, and boost local businesses, particularly in the areas of accommodation, food services, and handicrafts. However, it is essential that these economic gains do not come at the expense of the cultural heritage that makes Poto Village unique. By keeping cultural preservation at the forefront of tourism development strategies, the community can enjoy the benefits of increased income while ensuring that future generations continue to practice and cherish the Ponan tradition.

In conclusion, this research underscores the importance of a balanced approach that prioritizes both cultural preservation and economic development. The Ponan tradition has significant potential as a sustainable tourism resource, but its development must be handled with care and respect for its cultural significance. Involving all stakeholders and maintaining the authenticity of the tradition will ensure that the community of Poto Village can reap the economic benefits of tourism while safeguarding their cultural heritage for future generations.

CONCLUSION

The Ponan tradition embodies both a rich cultural heritage and an essential form of social capital for the community of Poto Village. As a cultural practice deeply rooted in the community's history, it fosters social cohesion and provides a sense of identity and continuity. This research highlights the potential of the Ponan tradition to be developed into a sustainable cultural tourism attraction. Through thoughtful planning, this development can yield significant economic benefits, such as boosting local income through tourism, while simultaneously preserving the cultural values that make the Ponan tradition unique and vital to the community.

Involving stakeholders-such as local leaders, government officials, tourism agencies, and community members-is crucial to achieving a balanced and sustainable approach. Careful planning ensures that the tradition remains authentic and that the community directly benefits from tourism without compromising the cultural integrity of the Ponan practice. This research emphasizes that stakeholder collaboration and long-term strategies are essential to maintaining both the cultural sustainability of the Ponan tradition and the economic prosperity of Poto Village.

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