



STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF CUSTOMARY VILLAGES IN SPIRITUAL TOURISM MANAGEMENT IN BALI

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ABSTRACT

Spiritual tourism is becoming one of the trends in Bali. Many people are currently promoting spiritual tourism. Although spiritual tourism has been managed and supervised, it sometimes comes with risks. This research addressed three issues: 1) How is the authority of customary villages in Bali in the management of tourism in the region? 2) How is the strategy to strengthen the role of customary villages in the management of spiritual tourism? 3) What are the efforts of customary villages in monitoring spiritual tourism in their area? The method used is qualitative through a literature research. Data is collected from previous literature that discusses spiritual tourism and the role of customary villages and then analyzed.

Customary villages in Bali have the authority to manage and develop tourist villages through Baga Utsaha Padruwen Desa Adat (BUPDA). As with official villages, customary villages can manage tourist villages by utilizing the potential of their area. One of them is spiritual tourism. In managing spiritual tourism, traditional villages need to have capable human resources. Of course, procuring qualified human resources requires a fairly high cost. Especially if recruiting professionals in their fields. The role of customary villages in monitoring requires support from other parties, such as the government and religious institutions. The community, especially the traditional village community (krama desa adat) concerned, also needs to be educated, because the krama adat essentially also must monitor things that happen around their environment. Therefore, community participation is very important in this regard.

Keywords : spiritual tourism, customary village, Hinduism

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I. INTRODUCTION

Spiritual tourism is an Indonesian term that refers to trips or visits to places of high religious or spiritual value. The purpose of religious tourism is usually to experience an intimate religious experience, visit sacred places, or engage in religious rituals. Bali Governor Regulation Number 35 of 2014 concerning Spiritual Tourism Business states that Spiritual Tourism is a tourist trip that is more directed towards activities to improve spiritual life by visiting and/or worshiping at sacred places, historical places, or pilgrimages to sacred tombs, hills, mountains, caves, or places that are believed to be sacred, then directly performing prayers or meditation. Still according to the regulation, which is a type of Spiritual Tourism business are Religious Tourism, Meditation Tourism, and/or, Yoga Tourism. Based on Bali Governor Regulation Number 52 of 2021 concerning Regulations for the Implementation of Bali Provincial Regulation Number 5 of 2020 concerning Standards for the Implementation of Balinese Cultural Tourism, the Spiritual Tourism Attraction business is a special interest tourism business in the form of trip to a place to carry out spiritual activities which include self-purification (penglukatan), tapa, brata, yoga, semadi, darmayatra, and tirtayatra.

Sometimes people in general consider spiritual tourism and religious tourism to be the same. Wijaya (2022) states that religious tourism is a trip that aims to get pleasure, satisfaction, and knowledge. This activity is often carried out by individuals or groups to visit sacred places, tombs of famous figures or respected leaders, mountains or hills that are considered sacred, as well as the tomb of a figure or leader who is considered to have miracles and legends. The purpose of religious tourism is to provide meaning that can be a guide in spreading religious teachings around the world, as learning, and as a reminder of the oneness of God Almighty. It also aims to invite and guide people not to get lost in teachings that do not recognize the existence of religion.

In addition, there is such a thing as cultural tourism. Based on Bali Governor Regulation Number 35 of 2014, Balinese Cultural Tourism is Balinese tourism based on Balinese Culture which is imbued with the teachings of Hinduism and the philosophy of Tri Hita Karana as the main potential by using tourism as a means of actualization, to realize a dynamic reciprocal relationship between tourism and culture that makes both develop synergistically, harmoniously and sustainably to be able to provide welfare to the community, cultural and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, based on Bali Provincial Regulation Number 5 of 2020 concerning Standards for the Implementation of Balinese Cultural Tourism, Balinese Cultural Tourism is tourism based on Balinese Culture which is imbued with the Tri Hita Karana philosophy which is sourced from cultural values and local wisdom Sad Kerthi and based on Balinese taksu. Meanwhile, based on Bali Governor Regulation Number 52 of 2021 concerning Regulations for the Implementation of Bali Provincial Regulation Number 5 of 2020 concerning Standards for the Implementation of Balinese Cultural Tourism, Balinese Cultural Tourism is Tourism based on the philosophy of Tri Hita Karana based on the wisdom of local communities.

Spiritual tourism is becoming one of the trends in Bali. Many parties are promoting spiritual tourism today. Starting from the private sector as well as under the management of tourist villages or customary villages. One of the popular ones is melukat, which is generally carried out by bathing in a water source that is considered sacred. The concept is like in Tirta Empul, Gianyar Regency. Some travel companies provide spiritual tour packages with routes to several temples or shrines.

Despite it being managed and supervised; spiritual tourism sometimes comes with risks. There have been several incidents of visitors breaking the rules in sacred places. For example, climbing onto the pelinggih (shrine), as reported some time ago in the Teratai Bang Temple



area, Tabanan (<https://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa/viral-wna-duduk-di-pelinggih-pura-dinas-pariwisata-bali-panggil-asosiasi-guide.html>). There are even those who commit vandalism, such as one of the most recent cases at Goa Raja Besakih Temple (<https://denpasar.kompas.com/read/2023/08/08/212853078/wna-diduga-rusak-pura-di-karangasem-bali-mulanya-mengaku-dapat-bisikan-gaib>).

In general, the management has certainly made efforts to supervise visitors who come to the sacred area. In reality, similar cases repeatedly occur. Therefore, it is important to reassess the religious tourism area and increase supervision by authorized officers. In this case, the customary village that owns the religious tourism area has an important role. However, it needs to be done professionally without disregarding local cultural aspects.

Based on the above, the problems studied in this article are: 1) How is the authority of customary villages in Bali in the management of tourism in their area? 2) What are the strategies to strengthen the role of customary villages in spiritual tourism management? 3) What are the efforts of customary villages in monitoring spiritual tourism in their area? The purpose of writing the article is to study the authority of indigenous villages in tourism management, strengthening the role of indigenous villages in spiritual tourism management, and supervising spiritual tourism in their areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An article entitled “The Authority of Customary Villages in the Management of Balinese Cultural Tourism in the Perspective of Regional Regulation Number 4 of 2019 concerning Customary Villages” by A.A. Istri Eka Krisna Yanti (2022) is one of the literature reviews in this article. She states that the current Indigenous Village Regulation in Bali is a revolutionary step in strengthening the authority of indigenous villages, especially in the context of Balinese cultural tourism. This Village Regulation is not formed based on the Village Law but refers to Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, specifically referring to Article 236 paragraph (4) which states that regional regulations can accommodate local aspects by considering the local wisdom of the Balinese people, especially regarding the management of *padruwen desa* (village assets) which can be used as a tourist destination. This article contributes to emphasizing the authority of customary villages in the management of religious tourism in their territory.

An article titled “Tourism Village Management in the Customary Village of Kiadan Plaga Badung Bali Based on Customary Village (Tourism Law Perspective)” by I Wayan Wesna Astara, et al (2019) states that it is important to have an agreement between all parties involved in the management of a tourist village. A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was held on the preparation of *Perarem* on the management of tourism villages based on traditional villages and/or agreements between interested parties in the Kiadan Plaga tourism village. With the *Perarem* on Tourism Village Management, it is hoped that a common perception will be achieved between the Tourism Village Management which is currently managed by the private sector, the Customary Village, Subak Abian Sari Boga, and the Village Government (represented by the *Perbekel* of Plaga Village). Although currently managed by the private sector individually, there is a desire from the Customary Village, Subak Abian Sari Boga, and the Village Head to participate in the management. There is a dynamic of interests between the private sector, the Customary Village, and the Village Government (*Perbekel*). In this case, the role of local law (*Awig-awig/ Perarem*) is expected to resolve conflicts that arise through local legal products. This article contributes to the importance of joint arrangements between indigenous villages and related parties regarding the management and supervision of tourism in their area.

An article titled "The Role of Customary Villages (*Pakraman*) and *Sekaa Taruna* in Supporting Tourism in Bali" by A.A. Ayu Ngr. Harmini and Solihin (2013) state that although tourism products may be very attractive and promotions are very effective, if the basic conditions for tourism development, such as security factors are inadequate, then all the potential will be meaningless. To ensure security and order at the customary village level, this task is carried out by a traditional Balinese security unit known as *Pecalang*, which is supported by customary village residents. With *Pecalang* in place, customary villages also have an important role in maintaining security for tourists. This article contributes to the strategy of religious tourism supervision by customary villages.

An article entitled "Management of Religious Tourism Based on Local Wisdom: Opportunities and Challenges from a Legal Perspective" by I Ketut Kasta Arya Wijaya, et al (2022) states that there are several religious tourism destinations in Nusa Penida, including Batu Medau Temple in Semaya Hamlet, Suana Village; Tunjuk Pusuh Temple in Tanglad Hamlet, Tanglad Village; Puncak Temple Mundi in Klumpu Village; Dalem Dukut Temple in Br. Sukun, Batukandik Village; Paluang Temple in Bunga Mekar Village, Penida Temple in Sakti Village; Luhur Pusering Jagat Temple Sahab in Batumadeg Village; Sekar Kuning Temple in Batukandik Village. It should be noted that in religious tourism visits to these sacred places, protection against damage and pollution should be a priority, which means avoiding actions that are incompatible with the cultural values and traditions of the local community. This article contributes to the importance of sanctuary protection in religious tourism.

METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative through literature study. Data was collected from previous literature that discusses spiritual tourism and the role of traditional villages and then analyzed. Sugiyono (2011) mentions that qualitative research is a research method used to investigate naturally occurring conditions of objects, where the researcher serves as the key instrument.

II. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

1. The Authority of Customary Villages in Bali in Tourism Management in Their Areas

According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 Year 2014 on Villages Article 1 number 1, jo. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23 of 2014 Concerning Regional Government Article 1 point 43, villages and customary villages or what are called by other names, hereinafter referred to as Villages, are legal community units that have territorial boundaries that are authorized to regulate and manage government affairs, the interests of the local community based on community initiatives, origin rights, and/or traditional rights that are recognized and respected in the system of government of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Furthermore, Bali Province Regional Regulation Number 4 of 2019 concerning Customary Villages in Bali Article 1 point 8 states that a Customary Village is a unit of customary law communities in Bali that has an area, position, original structure, traditional rights, community assets, traditions, manners of community life for generations in the bond of a sacred place (*kahyangan tiga* or *kahyangan desa*), duties and authorities and the right to regulate and manage their agenda.

Meanwhile, Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 concerning tourism Article 1 number 1 states that tourism is an activity carried out by a person or group of people by visiting certain places for recreation, personal development, or studying the uniqueness of

tourist attractions visited within a temporary period. Whereas in point 3 it is stated that Tourism is a variety of tourist activities and is supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, entrepreneurs, government, and local governments. However, both are sometimes misinterpreted or as if they mean the same thing.

The Bali Cultural Tourism Implementation Standards aim to preserve the natural environment and Balinese culture imbued with the *Tri Hita Karana* philosophy based on the local wisdom values of *Sad Kerthi* and improve the quality of Bali Tourism implementation (Bali Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2020 concerning Standards for the Implementation of Balinese Cultural Tourism). These include environmental friendliness, sustainability, balance, partiality to local resources, independence, populism, togetherness, participation, transparency, accountability, and benefits. Bali Governor Regulation Number 52 of 2021 Article 8 paragraph (1) states that customary villages / traditional institutions/community groups have the right to develop tourist villages. Furthermore, in paragraph (2) it is stated that the development of tourist villages is directed at protecting Balinese nature and culture; empowering local communities; applying digital technology; improving people's lives; and developing micro, small, and medium enterprises, as well as the creative economy. In Article 10 paragraph (2), the management of tourist villages can be carried out by several parties, namely the village government; tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis); cooperatives; village-owned enterprises; and/or customary village *padruwen* business entities.

Based on the above regulations, customary villages in Bali have the authority to manage and develop tourism villages through Baga Utsaha Padruwen Desa Adat (BUPDA). As with official villages, customary villages can manage tourist villages by utilizing the potential of their territory. One of them is spiritual tourism. Spiritual tourism attraction based on Bali Governor Regulation Number 52 of 2021 Article 10 paragraph (1) is a special interest tourism activity in the form of a tourist trip to a place to carry out spiritual activities which include self-purification (*pengelukatan*), *tapa*, *brata*, *yoga*, *semadi*, *darmayatra*, and *tirtayatra*. Currently, Spiritual Tourism Attractions are quite widespread in Bali, one of which is the place of *melukat*. Generally, *malukat* is carried out by Hindus in Bali. But lately, this activity has also been followed by non-Hindus. This has become a conversation in cyberspace, especially when artists follow the *pengelukatan* procession in Bali (<https://www.suara.com/entertainment/2022/07/26/134646/11-artis-jalani-prosesi-melukat-di-bali-dikira-pindah-agama>). More than that, spiritual tourism is one of the options that can be developed by traditional villages in Bali.

2. Strategies for Strengthening the Role of Customary Villages in Spiritual Tourism Management in their Areas

According to regional regulation Number 4 of 2019 concerning customary villages in Bali, it states that a customary village is a unit of customary law communities in Bali that has an area, position, original structure, traditional rights, its own assets, traditions, manners of community life for generations in the bond of a sacred place (*kahyangan tiga* or *kahyangan desa*), duties and authorities and the right to regulate and manage its household. It is also stated that the customary village as a unit of customary law society based on the *Tri Hita Karana* philosophy rooted in the local wisdom of *Sad Kerthi* imbued with the teachings of Hinduism and cultural values and local wisdom that live in Bali, plays a very large role in the development

of society, nation and state so that it needs to be nurtured, protected, fostered, developed and empowered to realize the life of *Krama Bali* which is politically sovereign, economically independent, and has a personality in culture.

The traditional village (*Pakraman*) is a traditional institution that encompasses two main aspects, one of which is the physical instrument as a gathering place, and the customs and customary laws that are part of the core of the container. Secondly, as a traditional social institution, the traditional village (*Pakraman*) functions as the center of social, cultural, and religious activities for the Hindu community in Bali, which is based on the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*. This shows that the traditional village (*Pakraman*) is inseparable from the social, cultural, and religious life of Hindus in Bali (Harmini & Solihin, 2013).

In terms of regulations, the Bali Provincial Government has tried to provide a legal basis for tourism management in traditional villages. However, this is not enough. Customary villages, both in terms of institutions and communities, can strengthen their role if they can manage tourist attractions in their area. One of the important things in this case is the formation and strengthening of the quality of Human Resources (HR). Sustainable tourism is explicitly emphasized in the 2030 Agenda. However, realizing this goal requires a detailed framework for its implementation, as well as adequate funding and investment in technology, infrastructure, and human resources (<https://www.unwto.org/tourism-in-2030-agenda>).

Service is an essential need in the tourism industry and is one of the expectations of tourists when traveling for recreation. To ensure satisfactory services for tourists, human resources (HR) are needed that have qualifications, expertise, professionalism, and international standards. Local human resources involved in the tourism industry, such as in Bali, need to improve their skills and knowledge to compete with foreign human resources, especially facing the era of free trade such as the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) (Gede & Putra, 2018).

In addition to the development of facilities and infrastructure, qualified human resources in tourism management are needed. In many countries, in the process of tourism planning and development, discussions about the needs of Human Resources (HR) in providing appropriate and effective tourism services often receive less attention. In some cases, it is even ignored completely. The impact of this is the emergence of serious problems in the tourism industry, as well as the possibility of inhibiting the participation of local communities in economic activities that develop from the tourism sector (Setiawan, 2016). There are two groups of human resource management functions. The first is managerial functions, including planning, organization, direction, and control. The second is the organizational function, which includes workforce recruitment, development, compensation, integration, maintenance, and termination of employment relationships (Rivai and Segala in Setiawan, 2016).

In managing spiritual tourism, traditional villages need to have capable human resources. Of course, procuring qualified human resources requires a fairly high cost. Especially if recruiting professionals in their fields. However, following the spirit of *gilik-saguluk* (togetherness), *salunglung sabayantaka* (cooperation), and *sareng-sareng* (participation) owned by indigenous villages, quality human resources can be formed through the empowerment of indigenous village *krama* (community) who can manage tourism, based on education and experience. *Krama* who can transmit their knowledge to other *krama*. If necessary, the customary village forms a team to accommodate competent *krama*, so that this team can work more effectively from the beginning of pioneering to managing tourist attractions in their area.

Activities that can be carried out to overcome the problem of the low quality of Tourism Human Resources are: 1) Tourism training or technical guidance; 2) Competency certification

and business certification in the tourism sector; 3) Tourism awareness counseling to Kelompok Sadar Wisata (POKDARWIS), students, and the community; 4) Selection of *Jegeg Bagus Bali* as Bali's provincial tourism ambassador (Gede & Putra, 2018). Specifically, regarding spiritual tourism, competent personnel are also needed. In Bali, spirituality is not only about religion but also culture. Bali Governor Regulation Number 52 of 2021 Article 19 mandates that every tour guide is obliged to have a certificate of competence and a certificate of knowledge of Balinese culture issued by competent educational institutions in the field of cultural tourism in collaboration with regional apparatus, Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI), Provincial Customary Village Council or Majelis Desa Adat (MDA), and the Tour Guide Association. This emphasizes that tour guides are not only capable of carrying out their duties but also must truly understand Balinese culture. On an ongoing basis, customary villages need to facilitate their human resources for this. Hopefully, tourism managers will become more competent.

3. Efforts of Customary Villages in Supervision of Spiritual Tourism in their Areas

Tourism supervision refers to the activity of monitoring and controlling various aspects of tourism activities to ensure compliance with applicable rules, norms, and regulations, as well as to maintain safety, cleanliness, and comfort for tourists and local communities. Some important aspects of tourism supervision include:

1. **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensure that all tourism activities run following applicable rules and regulations, including business licenses, tax payments, and environmental compliance.
2. **Security:** Maintain the security and safety of tourists by monitoring potential threats such as crime, natural disasters, and other emergencies.
3. **Environmental Cleanliness:** Monitor and control environmental pollution caused by tourism activities, such as litter, air pollution, and damage to natural habitats.
4. **Tourism Services:** Monitor the quality of services provided to tourists, including accommodation facilities, food and beverages, transportation, and other attractions.
5. **Local Community Empowerment:** Monitor the economic, social, and cultural impacts of tourism on local communities, and ensure their equitable participation and benefits.
6. **Destination Management:** Monitor the management of tourist destinations to ensure sustainability and conservation of natural and cultural resources, and control negative impacts such as over-tourism.
7. **Education and Information:** Provide clear and accurate information to tourists about local rules, norms, and culture, and educate them on the importance of acting responsibly during travel.

Various parties, including local governments, tourism management agencies, private parties, and local communities carry out tourism supervision. The aim is to ensure that the tourism industry runs well, benefits all parties involved, and minimizes negative impacts on the environment and local culture. As social and religious institutions that are the cradle, growth, and development of culture, customary villages (*Pakraman*) have an important role in the context of tourism as a barrier and filter against the impact of tourism development. Therefore,

it is necessary to strengthen customary villages (*Pakraman*) in making the right decisions about the type of tourism taken, especially towards simple tourism. By adopting this type of tourism, the customary village (*Pakraman*) can maintain the local knowledge of the community, especially the younger generation or *Sekaa Teruna*, who are expected to be more creative and innovative in creating new concepts in the development of tourism products by the demands of the times (Harmini & Solihin, 2013).

There have been various cases involving visitors to sacred places in Bali that have been detrimental to customary villages, both institutionally and as a community. This relates to the impact caused, when things are done that should not be done in a sacred place, for example climbing or sitting on a *pelinggih*, doing damage, and so on. Because it is believed to have an impact on *sekala* (real) and *niskala* (supernatural). If something negative happens related to the sacred place, then usually the community holds a ritual that is believed to clean and restore purity.

Although the customary village has made efforts to supervise similar cases occur again. Therefore, indigenous villages or managers cannot work alone in this supervision process. Data collection needs to be carried out by the customary village together with related agencies so that clear data on spiritual tourism managed by parties outside the customary village can be obtained. Cooperation with security forces in conducting direct monitoring is also very necessary. Customary villages already have *pecalang* who are in charge of security. However, *pecalang* must also be supported through training by involving related institutions, such as the police. *Pecalang*, as customary citizens who are assigned to the security sector, certainly have more or less an understanding of the culture in their area. They just need to be given additional knowledge and skills in security by related institutions.

In addition, nowadays the use of technology is an important necessity. The use of CCTV and other electronic devices that support the performance of security officers in guarding spiritual tourism areas is indispensable. In addition to supervising tourists, the use of technology is also important to keep an eye on certain parties who have malicious intentions, such as theft in the sacred area and its surroundings. Moreover, cases of theft in the temple area were rampant some time ago. Supervision by officers and technological support will minimize the gap for violations or crimes in sacred places, including those related to spiritual tourism.

The role of customary villages in monitoring requires support from other parties, such as the government and religious institutions. The community, especially the traditional village community (*krama desa adat*) concerned, also needs to be educated, because the *krama adat* essentially also must monitor things that happen around their environment. Therefore, community participation is very important in this regard.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Customary villages have the authority to manage tourist attractions in their area. To realize good management, adequate facilities and infrastructure are needed. However, it is equally important to have reliable human resources in carrying out management. Sharing knowledge and experience in tourism management between residents is very important. If necessary, the customary village should form a team that specifically handles tourism, from pioneering to developing tourism in the region. Specifically related to spiritual tourism, customary villages also need to take a role in the joint supervision of related parties, especially those related to sacred places. This is based on several violations or destruction of sacred places by visitors in recent times. Customary villages through *pecalang*, who are in charge of monitoring and maintaining security in their areas, need to be supported with competence. Therefore, training and cooperation with relevant agencies, such as the police,

is required. In addition, empowering the local community, in this case, the customary community members (*krama*), is also important, because the *wawidangan* (environment) of the customary village in general is the responsibility of all customary community members.

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