

## PRESERVING TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PRACTICES IN TOURISM IN VILLAGE CULTURAL TOURISM: THE IMPORTANCE AND ITS CHALLENGES

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### Abstract:

Traditional tourism villages that live in the midst of modernity, in general, are difficult to survive and sustain. However, the development of competent tourism is a factor in causing a customary tourism village to maintain the practice of heritage traditions for tourism. This study aims to explain the traditional practices that can be offered for tourist attractions, the benefits obtained and the challenges in maintaining traditional village practices. The research uses a qualitative method, with informants consisting of Village Heads, Tribal Heads, Tourism Actors, MSMEs, Communities and Tourists, as well as documentation studies. The results of the study show that 8 types of traditional practices are maintained and become cultural tourism attractions, including traditional house traditions, local costumes, lifestyle culture, traditional ceremonies, weaving processes, local food, dances and attractions, and local languages. Traditional tourism villages have contributed to economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits. For the sustainability of traditional tourism villages, it is inseparable from a number of challenges, namely stakeholder commitment, economic interests, quality of human resources, cooperation, environmental issues, integrated tourism village development, and modernity.

**Keywords:** Preserving Traditional Culture, Tourism Benefits, Challenges for Cultural Preservation, Traditional Village.

## INTRODUCTION

Indigenous Tourism Villages or, at the hamlet level, indigenous villages have been a growing trend in Indonesia over the past few decades. The concept of indigenous tourism villages focuses on preserving and promoting traditional cultural practices while providing economic opportunities for local communities (Fadli et al., 2023). Indigenous tourism villages are a form of tourism that emphasizes sustainable development, community involvement, and cultural preservation. Indigenous tourism villages developed in the 1970s when the Indonesian government began promoting community-based tourism to alleviate poverty in rural areas and preserve traditional culture. Since then, indigenous tourism villages have become a popular form of ecotourism in Indonesia, attracting domestic and international tourists (Agustina et al. 2019; Nurjaya 2022).

Indigenous tourism villages benefit the local communities through improved living standards and increased income and employment opportunities. Another benefit is that it can help revitalize traditional cultural practices at risk of being lost (Setiyoko et al., 2024). Indigenous tourism villages ensure the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations to appreciate and enjoy, so visitors are involved in cultural activities and cultural education programs. Overall, Indigenous tourism villages have proven to be a successful model of sustainable tourism that benefits local communities and the environment (Agustina et al., 2019).



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Indigenous tourism villages are villages that aim to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of a community (Surata et al., 2024). These villages generally showcase traditional architecture, crafts, music, dance, and other cultural practices to visitors, offering an authentic and immersive experience. Cultural tourism villages also offer cultural performances, handicraft training, traditional food cooking, live-in with the community, and education on the unique customs and traditions of the community. This tourism development helps create sustainable livelihoods for communities, providing opportunities to showcase skills and knowledge to tourists. Socially, cultural tourism villages foster a sense of pride and identity in the community, encouraging them to continue practicing and passing on their cultural heritage to future generations. In this way, indigenous tourism villages play an important role in preserving Indonesia's cultural traditions and ensuring their survival (Pasanchay & Schott, 2021).

Economically, tourism activities generate much-needed income for artisans, helping to sustain their livelihoods and empowering them to continue to maintain and practice their traditional skills. Ultimately, indigenous tourism villages serve as a bridge between the past and the present, ensuring that diverse cultural traditions remain vibrant and relevant in an ever-changing world (Bisht et al., 2020). Culturally, another benefit of indigenous tourism villages is that they provide tourists with an understanding of the community's way of life, introduce local cultural identity and attract tourists through traditional ceremonies, music, dance, and cuisine. The involvement of local communities in tourism development is essential for sustainable tourism and improving the quality of life (Irsyad & Iswanto, 2024; Ristini & Citra, 2022). Overall, Indigenous tourism villages functioning as tourism can be used as a tool for cultural preservation and sustainable development.

In addition to previous studies that emphasize the benefits of developing indigenous tourism villages for the community, on the other hand, some studies also show challenges in the development of indigenous tourism villages, including the risk of commercialization, cultural erosion, exploitation of local artists/artisans, the commodification of their skills so that the authenticity and integrity of cultural practices are lost, products sold are not original, low community involvement to be willing to maintain cultural traditions and ensure sustainable cultural practices, the difficulty of fostering a sense of ownership and involvement of local communities in decision making (Scrase, 2003; Surata et al., 2024). Through careful management, it is expected that the protection of cultural heritage to maintain local identity and traditions prevent the commodification of culture (Setiyoko et al., 2024; Surata et al., 2024), and the importance of welfare and fair treatment of the parties involved (Kumar et al., 2023).

The existence of challenges in the development of indigenous tourism villages as ecotourism destinations is also stated by (De Zoysa, 2022), which states that not all ecotourism destinations can achieve environmental conservation goals, the influx of tourists in the ecotourism environment can cause environmental disturbance and destruction, local communities do not feel fair benefits, and exploitation of residents. So that a resolution is needed to manage conflicts and achieve sustainable goals, the importance of balancing tourism development with the preservation of local traditions (Surata et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, several famous traditional tourism villages are scattered across various islands, including Sijunjung Traditional Village-West Sumatra, Baduy Traditional Village-Banten, Naga Village Tasikmalaya-West Java, Trunyan Village-Bali, Sade Village-Lombok, Prai Ijing Traditional Village and Wae Rebo Village-East Nusa Tenggara, Kete Kesu Village-South Sulawesi, Setulang Tourism Village-North Kalimantan, and Tablanusu Village-Papua. Prai Ijing Traditional Village is a Tembara Village hamlet in Waikabubak District, West Sumba Regency, East Nusa Tenggara. Since



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it was officially opened as a tourism destination in 2018, it has succeeded in attracting local tourists, domestic and foreign tourists. The success of the Pra Ijing traditional village in consistently maintaining traditionalism in the midst of modernism is inseparable from the benefits and challenges that this traditional village has gone through. Being initiated in 2007 and only officially becoming a destination in 2018 is inseparable from the success of overcoming challenges and taking advantage of the community's ability to maintain the traditional daily culture of this traditional village for tourism activities.

Tembara Village has four hamlets, but only one hamlet, Prai Ijing Traditional Village, still survives, while the other hamlets have changed in line with the times. It shows that not all traditional villages have succeeded in maintaining their culture and packaging it for tourism activities, even succumbing to modernism. This research aims to be more integrative by identifying the traditional cultural practices that can be maintained, the benefits gained as well as the challenges that must be overcome in order to be sustainable. This research is expected to contribute to the policies, models, and measures that the government should take to promote the preservation of cultural heritage through sustainable tourism activities.

## METHODS

The research was conducted in Prai Ijing Traditional Village, Tebara Village, Waikabubak, West Sumba Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province. The research uses a qualitative method approach that aims to explore primary and secondary data in depth and integratively to explain the practice of cultural traditions and their philosophy as the benefits and challenges of developing sustainable indigenous tourism villages. Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews using interview guidelines with informants from the Village Head, Tribal Head, MSME actors, cultural actors, local communities, and tourists. Primary data was collected through direct observation by visiting the Prai Ijing Traditional Village. Secondary data was collected from report data from the Traditional Village Manager and other published data. The collected data was analyzed using the source triangulation technique, then inductively to conclude the findings.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Tebara Village, Waikabubak, Sumba Regency has six hamlets, but only one hamlet preserves the tradition and becomes the traditional tourism village of Pra Ijing. The name Prai Ijing village comes from the word Prai, meaning village, and Ijing, meaning forest moth fruit. This traditional village used to be surrounded by the fruit of the forest. Tourism activities in the traditional village have been initiated by the Tebara Village Head since 2007, with visits using voluntary donations. Finally, in 2018, it was officially opened as a tourism destination using a ticket system. Since becoming a destination for tourist visits, various traditional cultural practices of traditional villages have been maintained and offered for tourism along with the philosophy contained in them. The research found eight practices of preserving the traditional culture of Prai Ijing Traditional Village, which are used for tourism offers.

### Preservation of Traditional Cultural Practices and Philosophy.

1. Traditional House Architecture Preservation Practices. The preservation of Sumba's traditional houses or "Uma," made of wood with reed roofs, is done without using nails but using "kasikara" ropes. A total of 42 traditional houses have stood for hundreds of years and are well preserved. Every traditional house must undergo a ritual sacrifice of a pig or buffalo, and the bones are installed in the house. A distinctive feature of the architecture of the house is the high, soaring



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roof that symbolizes the relationship between humans and nature and ancestral spirits. The soaring roof also serves for good air circulation and protects from the heat. Natural materials show the community's attachment and respect for the surrounding nature. 1 - 4 families can inhabit one traditional house, and one village is inhabited by several tribes living side by side.

The tower house has 3 levels; the first level is literally for livestock but philosophically describes human life in a world that is still dirty. The second level is for human habitation and in the middle of the room there is a fireplace for cooking, located right in the heart of the house, divided into 2 large parts namely "Bali Katuonga" (Living room, where men meet and forbidden/pamali for women who are in Belis/mahar) the second part "Kere Padalu" (cooking room and place for women to work, there is a padlu (barrel) where drinking water is stored for cooking needs. Philosophically, the second level symbolizes the purification of the soul before humans go to the world of Ma Rappu/the world of spirits.

The third level is called Umma Daluka/Umma Store, which is a horned tower where food and cultural heritage objects/sacred objects are stored. The philosophy of the top of the tower depicts nirvana so that the shape of the tower is like a palm blowing a symbol of worship of the Creator of the universe. The two horns on top of the tower represent the male horn on the right and the female horn on the left, as humans are masterpieces of the Creator's creation.

In order for tourists to know the philosophy, the village provides a local tour guide and thanks to the village's cooperation with the English Goes to Kampung Foundation trains young villagers to speak English so that they can explain in English to foreign tourists. The importance of cultural interpretation in traditional village tourism is because traditional houses contain cultural values and local wisdom that are very important to the community, which is also a place to carry out all traditional activities and a place to store community ancestral artifacts (Udju & Saingo, 2022).

2. The Practice of Customary Dress Tradition. Community practices in traditional dress can be seen in the daily dress of Sumba women using sarongs and men using cloth equipped with machete accessories and headbands that are still carried out from generation to generation. Communication in woven fabrics is shown if men use images that symbolize assertiveness so that the motif ends tapered like a rhombus prism motif, spearhead, or machete tip. Women's motifs symbolize the mother's womb, meaning to breed the man's offspring. The wearing of the woman's sarong and the man's cloth starts from the right side to the left, counterclockwise.

3. Cultural Practices of Living in Earning a Living. In the daily activities of residents in Prai Ijing village, mothers weave palm leaves for baskets and weave cloth. Since it was developed as a tourist village, weaving has become a tourist attraction, and the handicraft of palm baskets plays a big role in all rituals in their customs. On the other hand, the daily life of the men is working in the fields because the majority are farmers. In the past, men were in charge of hunting; now, they are traders or government employees. However, the men are still involved in working together at the place of mourning, planting rice, and organizing traditional parties.

4. Practice of Customary Traditions. Various customary practices are still preserved, including the death ceremony and the Manao custom. In addition to the tourist attraction of traditional houses, in every courtyard of traditional houses, there are large gravestones and sarcophagi from the megalithic culture. The megalithic stone symbolizes a boat sailing to the spirit world. In the concept of Ma Rappu, it is believed that people who die go to the world of spirits (Prai Ma Rappu), which is the core of Sumba culture. Those who have died must be buried in a stone burrow. The Ma Rappu tradition is that the limbs are folded when someone dies, like the position back in the mother's womb. One family can be included in one gravestone.



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The custom of the people in Ma Rappu's belief is to perform the Manao tradition, which asks for guidance to predict every activity that will be carried out, whether it will work well or not, what will happen, what results they will get and the problems they will face. Manao tradition is a way of praying to ask the Creator through the spirits of ancestors. It is done by ceremonially slaughtering chickens as a medium to communicate with the spirits of the ancestors because they feel it inappropriate to communicate directly or mention the name of the Creator. Manao tradition occurs when people plant rice, harvest rice fields, get married, and die.

5. Traditional Dance and Attraction Practices. Women play Woleka dances in every party celebration to welcome the harvest and welcome guests to this village. In addition to the dance, there is a presentation of equestrian attractions such as pasola, which is a battle of male strength in Sumba attacking each other using wooden javelins. The practice of Sumbanese dance traditions is diverse, typical of Woleka and Kako dances, two continuous dances. Kako, as a male dance, brings the spirit of warrior generators to face ancient wars, greeted by Woleka dances. Sacred dances that were once danced at certain times have now been adopted. Dances that used to escort warriors, now dances are used in various party events such as death, pull gravestones, weddings and others, except in one of the holy months this dance cannot be displayed. Other attractions are Pajurra, Pasola, Kataga/Kodola and Wulla Poddu.

6. Tradition Practices in the Process of Making Traditional Weaving Fabrics Typical of Sumba. Sumba women are able to create quality woven fabrics. The process of weaving Sumba cloth is still firmly maintained as a very valuable ancestral heritage, showing the culture of women's skills who, with their awareness when women already have a prospective husband, must be able to weave, providing woven sarongs and fabrics for prospective husbands.

The process of making weaving contains the value of the struggle of Sumba women, because of the extraordinary complexity from raw materials to finished goods. Starting from the seeds of cotton trees that are geson (gesu) to release seeds from cotton, then the cotton is beaten so that it widens like a mat and becomes pure white. The cotton is then sliced, spun, and rolled into yarn. Next is the process of coloring the yarn with natural materials. There are 20 different colors for the woven fabric with ingredients including betel nut, teak leaf, noni fruit, biduri leaf, candlenut, salt water, and others. This mixture makes the natural colors stick and absorbs well. This months-long endeavor is quite expensive.

The activities of mothers and young women weave not only because of tourism but woven fabrics are a medium of communication in traditional mats and various cultural rituals. Sumba's cultural treasures become a characteristic that is expressed in weaving. Mamuli fabric motifs symbolize femininity in the shape of a mother's womb, which means a form of respect for the mother. The motif of the traditional house kadu uma (the dignity of a house), the buffalo eye "mata karambo" symbolizes economic stability. Woleka party customs are used as motifs on fabric fabrics.

Sumba weaving is a culture of communication that is poured into the motif of a piece of cloth to tell and remind children and grandchildren about the history of Sumba and will not run out. For example, in the motif of the funeral of the king of Sumba, there are pictures of people carrying coffins, people fainting, the king's coffin inserted in the gravestone, buffalo cut, pictures of traditional houses, pictures of the king's coffin stored for years in a traditional house. There is a motif of a horse or buffalo resting next to the traditional house, which according to Ma Rappu belief the animal as a mount, so that the dead do not need to walk to Parai Ma rappu and quickly get to Heaven.



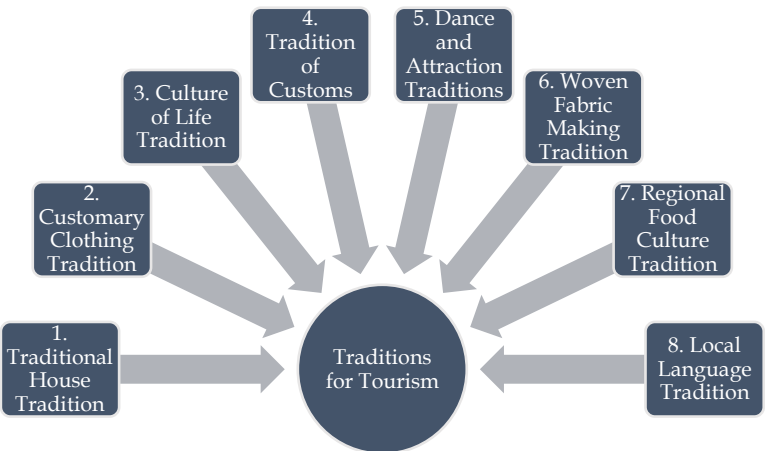
This weaving potential has become the driving force of the community's economy. The diverse weaving colors make Sumba fabrics attractive in combination and used by designers in their creations. The motifs and creations of this weaving are the pride and dignity of the people of Sumba to be preserved. Suppose outsiders will use Sumba fabric motifs in their artistic creativity. In that case, they need permission or are expected to give appreciation by including a written Sumba motif label in each of their works.

7. Cultural Tradition Practice of Regional Specialties. The local food of Prai Ijing Village is made from cassava, corn and cassava. Several foods include kadodoka modani, a mixture of corn and vegetables. Rowe Kariwa is a typical Sumbanese dish of corn rice mixed with pumpkin basil leaves combined with Boka Sawu Toro, which is a complementary sauce for rowe kariwa. The sauce is made from a mixture of forest eggplant (Toro Peddu), chili basil leaves, and lime. Luwa pekelo is dried cassava, which can then be cooked or steamed into a tumpeng-like dish.

Traditional villages also prepare traditional drinks, including local coffee. The average Sumbanese grows coffee, but the mahogany species is so bitter that it disturbs the coffee habitat, making many coffee plants disappear. Lolina Coffee products are Robusta Coffee from the hills of the Loli region of West Sumba. Another drink is tea made from bark called lino tea, which is also made from herbs.

8. Practice of Regional Language Traditions. Local languages are also preserved and offered in tourism offerings. Guests are introduced to local languages. Pra Ijing Village has two types of local languages: Loli language and Lamboya language. Some people in the capital of West Sumba, Waikabubak City, use their language, namely the Loli language, and some use the Sumba Lamboya language. Guests are usually introduced to local languages for personal names, self-introductions, greetings, and family nicknames for father, mother, younger siblings, and older siblings. For tourists who choose a homestay package to stay with residents, Sumba names will be given so that tourists have a close relationship with Sumba culture. Giving names to tourists is done through the traditional Manao chicken sacrifice tradition led by Rapoo, the traditional leader who will explain it.

From the results of this study, it can be summarized in the chart in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Traditions for Tourism Attraction

Tourism activities that grow in the traditional village of Prai Ijing have been able to preserve the typical cultural practices of Sumba Ma Rappu, namely the tradition of traditional houses, traditional clothing, the culture of life, customs, dances and attractions, woven fabric making skills, local food and local languages. There is a mutually beneficial symbiosis between tourism activities and the preservation of cultural heritage traditions. Tourism contributes to cultural preservation, and cultural preservation becomes the main tourist attraction product in the cultural tourism destination development model.

Traditional practices, such as in traditional villages, are products of local wisdom that affect travel interest (Trenggono et al., 2022). Another benefit of indigenous tourism villages is that they help revitalize traditional cultural practices that are at risk of being lost (Agustina et al., 2019). Encouraging greater community engagement in indigenous knowledge systems and cultural expressions, initiatives have successfully countered the uniformity brought by globalization and revitalized community pride in ancestral traditions. (Van, 2024). Communities can contribute to maintaining their natural and cultural resources for tourist attractions (Dala et al., 2021).

**The Important Benefits of Preserving Traditional Cultural Practices for Tourism.** There are various benefits to the preservation of traditional cultural practices for tourism in the Prai Ijing Traditional Village in West Sumba. The perceived benefits include:

1. Economic Benefits. The utilization of traditional villages for tourism has fostered various types of businesses provided in the context of services to tourists. These business activities include the rental of traditional cloth for photos and selfies. There is a rule that each house provides 1 pair of traditional clothes for rent. Tourists are free to choose, and at the end of the month the proceeds from the rental of traditional clothes will be divided equally to each house.

In addition to rentals, there is also a business of selling traditional clothes to tourists, where tourists are free to choose the seller. In this tourism activity, one of the parties that receives the greatest economic benefits is the MSMEs from women who produce woven fabrics, bracelet creations, necklaces, rings, and small bags for tourists. Their business is growing because tourists come as consumers.

Another growing business is the sale of culinary delights such as coffee packaging packages and kaparak, a large flour mixed with coconut. Both product packaging packages are a favorite of tourists. The provision of other regional foods must be through ordering such as Rowe Kariwa cuisine, Luapa Okulai vegetables from processed cassava. The business of providing traditional house homestays is also growing. However, there is no need for a transportation business because tourists can enjoy traditional villages on foot while interacting with residents (Susila et al., 2023).

In addition to the growth of business fields, tourism development in traditional villages also fosters employment, namely as ticket and parking service officers and tour guide officers. Tourists can choose to use or without guide services with payment according to the agreement of guests and tour guides. Various tour packages are provided, namely photo packages only; photo and culinary packages; photo packages, traditional clothing and culinary; and complete packages of photos, traditional clothing, culinary and live-in. Live-in activities include staying in a traditional house with the host, going to the rice fields to plant rice, or participating in the rice harvest.

Traditional ceremonies and regional dances are also utilized for tourist attractions through special bookings, if desired, outside of village events. Each person involved will get the results of their wages. The policy for tourism workers is to receive an allowance of Rp. 50,000 per day for cleaning, ticket booths, parking, and so on. The income per day is above the wages they get when



planting pads. From the results of tourism, the average income per house is Rp. 1,500,000-2,000,000/month.

Prai Ijing Traditional Village is a leading and superior tourist attraction on Sumba Island, and is the main destination that must be visited when tourists come to Sumba Island. The number of visits is recorded during the low season: 3,000-5,000 visitors/month, both from domestic and foreign countries. The income for the village during the low season is at least Rp. 40 million/month, and during the peak season, Rp. 70-100 million/month. The concept of indigenous tourism villages focuses on preserving and promoting traditional cultural practices while providing economic opportunities for local communities (Fadli et al., 2023).

Traditional village tourism is also beneficial to the village economy per year. Tembara village income is around 175 million as Regional Original Income (PADes), and 20% of tourism income goes to BUMDes, which is reused to develop traditional villages, including repairing traditional houses, repairing public facilities such as toilets and water tanks, hydrant pumps to protect the area from fire because traditional house materials are very prone to fire. In the context of risk management, given the difficulty of access for firefighters, the installation of lightweight fire extinguishers (APARI) in each traditional house/building is a solution, training residents every Friday in fire fighting and disaster management in collaboration with BPBD.

2. Benefits of Effectiveness of Village Fund Allocation and Utilization. The role of village leaders who initiate and mobilize the community and are able to allocate village funds with the right strategy to mobilize the community economy in tourism. Mr. Marthen Ragowino Bira, Tebara Village Head, initiated the Prai Ijing Traditional Village as a tourism destination in 2007. Tourism in the village is progressing with the management of BUMDes Iyya Tekki. The role of this leader is in line with research that states that local leaders, both traditional chiefs and village heads, have a strong influence on community participation that has an impact on economic improvement (Listyorini et al., 2024).

The utilization of village funds directly or indirectly supports tourism activities in Tebara Village. The utilization of village funds includes the arrangement and construction of traditional houses, the establishment of BUMDes, the construction of Lake Weenoro as a water tourism, building village markets, village barns, Embung Lae Roa for irrigating rice fields, building plant houses as vegetable nursery centers, building human resource quality through the involvement of children and adolescents in strengthening English so that one day they can become human resources for tour guides and providing scholarships for further studies.

A village market where the village harvest is sold and a village granary to store the community's rice with a cooperative profit-sharing system. A fruit plant nursery center where vegetable seeds are distributed to residents for free. Construction of the 250-hectare Embung Lae Roa to increase agricultural productivity.

The development of infrastructure and tourist attractions is carried out with a cash labor-intensive system (PKT) so as to create jobs in the village and promote handicraft products as souvenirs. BUMDES Iyya Teki now fosters 12 groups of crafters in the village, including crafters of woven fabrics, bags and plaits and even invites people with disabilities to work on making crafts.

3. Social Benefits. Tourism activities have changed the character of residents to become more friendly tourism actors, because the hospitality of residents is one of the strong magnets to attract tourists to visit. Tourists also assess that the residents of the traditional village are very polite, not aggressive and easy to communicate, so that tourists can enjoy tourism. Tourism activities have fostered conditions of harmony, cooperation, hospitality, and participation in tourism. The



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community emphasized the importance of hospitality in welcoming tourists and reducing the disturbance of tourist discomfort. There is an increase in tourism awareness, namely cleanliness order and villagers in terms of cleanliness are getting better. The residents themselves have responded to communication and hospitality to visitors.

At the beginning of tourism in indigenous villages, people were still fighting over which products to sell and which houses to live in. However, after being organized and all earning an equal income, harmony between residents finally grew because tourism became a common livelihood land. There are village regulations and customary cultural regulations to promote justice. The community is taught how to make their products sell with healthy competition, share buyers and let tourists choose what they like.

Tourism increases social capacity in terms of the ability to communicate with tourists and even communicate in foreign languages carried out by trained village children and youth, thus increasing human resource capacity. Tourism activities in this traditional village are believed to have made a big change, namely succeeding in reducing the number of social crimes such as robbery and theft due to economic pressure in the past. Tourism has led people to leave these dark activities to become tourism actors. This village was once famous for fighting, land disputes, war, and livestock theft. However, with the existence of tourism, Tebara Village has been cleared of social crime problems, and residents feel calm that they can run businesses for tourist services such as selling weaving products and agricultural products to get income.

The stretching of tourism development socially encourages the growth of social infrastructure and facilities, namely free PAUD building facilities for children's education. PAUD (Early Childhood Education) is integrated with Posyandu (Integrated Services Post), as well as the construction of health center facilities. This integrated facility is to improve reading skills, improve children's health quality, and handle health problems, birth problems, and children's nutrition problems to reduce stunting cases of malnutrition and undernutrition. Improving the quality of children's education. BUMDes Tebara Village successfully became the village with the highest PAD in West Sumba. It succeeded in developing the quality side of human resources, namely providing scholarships for Tebara Village children in collaboration with campuses in Jakarta, Surabaya and Yogyakarta. Stronger human resources are created in order to be sustainable.

4. Cultural Benefits. The existence of tourist visits to traditional villages has encouraged the community to maintain traditional cultural practices as an offer of tourist attraction, resulting in the preservation of Sumba Ma Rappu culture. The main attraction offered to tourists is cultural tourism, ranging from traditional houses, fashion culture, traditional events, dances and attractions, local food, weaving traditions, and local languages. Tourism in traditional villages emphasizes cultural philosophy, hospitality, comfort, and satisfaction; tourists witness the original traditional village in addition to the beauty of the scenery.

5. Institutional Benefits. Tourism activities in the traditional village encourage the village government to form various institutions. Tourism village institutions were established in the form of Pokdarwis (tourism awareness group) and BUMDes. There is already a Kabisu institution with tribal customary administrators led by Rato, who, in tourism activities, serves as an advisor so that the tribes in the traditional village support tourism. Rato's role is to provide understanding to the tribes to increase human resource capacity and foster community participation. The village makes a management plan so that the coordination lines are visible, and Pokdarwis coordinates with Rato from Kabisu. The Rato or tribal chiefs are the most culturally influential parties in the traditional



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village. Other institutions include youth groups, PKK groups, arisan groups, and MSME business development groups.

To support funding, financial institutions for loans were formed either under BUMDES, Cooperatives, or their institutions under Pokdarwis. Pokdarwis also provides loan funds because it wants to bind its members to be more productive, not only for tourism but also to develop SMEs in the village. Financial institutions have been able to help the development of community businesses with easy loans and very affordable interest; loans can be used for businesses, traditional house repairs, education, and helping economic conditions so that the community is more economically empowered.

The development of the Prai Ijing traditional village has succeeded in showing many economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits that can lead to sustainability. This finding is in line with the opinion that the management model for Indigenous villages organizing tourism is established with the principles of benefits, balance, independence, participation, preservation, and sustainability (Agung, 2021). It is also supported by the statement that tourism-driven preservation efforts have generated sustainable economic opportunities for minority groups, empowering them to become active stewards of their cultural heritage (Van, 2024).

### **Challenges in Preserving Traditional Cultural Practices for Tourism.**

1. Challenges to Stakeholder Commitment in Preserving Culture and Tourism 2. Maintaining cultural traditions and tourism activities requires commitment from all stakeholders. In Tebara Village, there are two sides, namely customary leaders and village government leaders. Tebara Village applies a cultural/customary agreement as the main requirement for commitment. Together with cultural stakeholders and tribal leaders, their perceptions must be united. The tribes living in the traditional village agree to maintain traditions in line with maintaining tourism activities. Tribal chiefs are committed to fostering their human resources, to avoid misuse, fraud, greed in terms of implementing tourism management, and to pay more attention to the interests of the community as a whole.

The commitment of all stakeholders is expected to reduce conflicts of interest and foster synergy because culture can still run, no cultural distortion occurs, and tourism runs and produces economic value that all residents can feel. Economic sustainability causes residents to have an awareness of maintaining their culture (Bangkara et al., 2023). There is an unwritten customary agreement, and the village government put the commitment agreement of all stakeholders in writing in front of a notary in order to have a legal force that guarantees the synergy of customary activities and sustainable tourism in the future.

2. HR Professionalism Challenge. The biggest challenge in the development of traditional villages is actually the professionalism of human resources to be able to carry out tourism village management. Professionals in developing product packaging, services, communication, finance, profit sharing, welfare, and respect for stakeholders/cultural actors from the tribes. When human resources are more professional, the management of traditional villages can run better.

3. Cooperation Challenge. The next challenge is the ability to establish cooperation with various parties for sustainable development in order to get input and share experiences, strategies and ways to be able to develop tourist attractions. Cooperation is carried out with tourism businesses to prevent tourist exploitation through the application of village regulations so that retribution is in accordance with the village-scale local authority in line with Village Law No. 6 of 2014, where retribution is opened transparently. Cooperation with financial institutions has been carried out so that all financial transactions, including tickets, sales of goods, and packages, will be



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entered into the accounts of financial institutions so that management gets regular bank statements. Cooperation with travel agencies is also carried out to help introduce the village and market packages both at home and abroad. Contributed to the making of a video and book published under the titles "a village above the storm and celvina marseline". Working with resort business owners in Jakarta, Bali, Lombok and Labuhan Bajo. Who will build businesses around the Prai Ijing Village area, so that in the future it is hoped that the tourist village will increase.

Cooperation with academics who play a role in research, student community service, community service, equipment assistance and expert assistance. Students who carry out KKN activities for up to 6 months have been able to speak Sumba, have a Sumba name, and help promote the village to the campus. The village cooperates in the education of villagers' further studies.

Cooperation with the community with the English goes to the village foundation, which trains the English language skills of children and youth of the village 2x a week, as the next generation of tourist services. Cooperation in empowering residents in services in the fields of ticketing, parking, guides, and sellers with the Desa Wisata Institute.

Cooperation with the government, among others, the Central government helps a lot through the Ministry of Tourism program and the Ministry of Villages, which provides much assistance in rehabilitating traditional houses, repairing public facilities, and equipment such as drone documentation tools, garbage motors, laptops, and in focus. The local government also assists in the form of access roads, street lighting, culverts, and retaining walls.

Cooperation with banking businesses, including BRI and BNI banks, in the form of concrete assistance in the form of 2 homestay units from BRI care, then from assistance from the National Library in the form of a National Library building in the form of a traditional house in the middle of Prai Ijing Village.

4. The Challenge of Managing Visitor Behavior. In order to be sustainable, Indigenous villages need to make efforts to increase visitor appreciation and reduce negative tourist behavior within Indigenous village locations. Efforts to provide maximum benefits from traditional practices of traditional villages for tourists by providing education, cultural interpretation to tourists and understanding that traveling in traditional villages is not the same as other ordinary tourist attractions. There is do and do not education, namely behaviors that can and should not be done, in order to maintain the sacredness and respect for local customs. The village has a rule book and signboards.

5. Environmental Impact Challenge. The presence of tourists in indigenous villages presents environmental challenges, especially in waste management. For this reason, tourism managers focus on processing plastic waste, providing garbage motorbikes to take waste to the general processing site, and providing specialized cleaning staff.

6. Challenges of Sustainability of Integrated Tourism Village Development. Pra Ijing traditional village is located within Tebara Village. To maintain the existence of the traditional village, zoning of the traditional area and the area outside the traditional village is carried out. Within Tebara village, there are six villages, five of which have been distorted, especially changes to the roofs of traditional houses. It leaves only one village, Pai Ijing, where the houses are still original. Prai Ijing village is the mainstay, although other villages have the advantage of a much better view. In order to ensure sustainability, there are plans for other villages to become traditional villages, but this must be as realistic as possible depending on changes in political officials. The village needs to ensure that the development of infrastructure and facilities is in line with and supports the development of a tourist village. The ability to make Tebara village an integrated economic and



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cultural tourism village shows that indigenous tourism villages have proven to be a successful model of sustainable tourism that benefits local communities and the environment (Agustina et al. 2019; Nurjaya 2022).

7. Challenges of Modernity. Indigenous villages for tourism but still sustainable is a tough challenge in the midst of the modern world is the threat of cultural distortion. Children and teenagers all have cellphones, which allows them to see YouTube, and access to everything via the internet. For this reason, it is necessary to improve human resources so that the youth of the village are well educated then have a strong cultural basis because Sumba people have one bond with their tribe. Sumba's custom is that if a man has to return, and if a woman, even if she has an outsider husband, marries outside the tribe. The husband must come to the traditional village and run some cultural affairs.

Modernism can also affect the tradition of changing Sumba cloth motifs into non-traditional motifs. However, there is flexibility because of the development of the times. Sumba cloth is allowed to be changed into modern motifs for the benefit of tourists. However, traditional motifs will still be made, and the way of making them still uses the original technology.

One of the strong cultural ties is in the custom of marriage, but there are challenges in the tradition of dowry to take Sumba women with expensive Belis or dowry. Sumbanese men who want to propose to Sumbanese women must prepare an expensive dowry, except with outsiders.

Modernity affects the shape of the house, thus increasing the desire of residents to change traditional house buildings into modern houses. To prevent this, a traditional house zone and land area outside the traditional house are created, which can be used by residents to build modern houses and other business activities on land outside the traditional village.

The steps taken in Prai Ijing Traditional Village are in line with the opinion that to be sustainable, it is necessary to preserve a number of houses that have high cultural and architectural value, preserve the entire village and provide new land to accommodate the development of villagers and the development of land as a tourism area with tourist facilities (Farhan & Anwar, 2016).

Modernity can also disrupt various traditional ceremonies that require high financing because they involve funds for the provision of sacrificial animals in customs, such as buffaloes, horses, and pigs. For this reason, it is necessary to create productive human resources involved in tourism activities so that they can economically finance their lives and customs to continue the ancestral heritage. Because tourism involving the community needs efforts to build human resource capacity (Juma & Khademi-Vidra, 2019). A similar opinion was also expressed that the community involved in indigenous tourism villages cannot only generate income through tourism but also participate in revitalizing and maintaining cultural traditions for future generations (Setiyoko et al., 2024).

## CONCLUSION

This research successfully identified eight traditional cultural practices still preserved in Prai Ijing Traditional Village as an offer of tourist attraction-themed cultural tourism. The interests of tradition preservation and tourism are closely related, so mutual need is the key to the sustainability of traditional practices. This traditional practice is inseparable from the various benefits felt by the community participating in tourism, including economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits arising from cultural offers for tourism. In preserving culture for tourism, a number of challenges must be overcome, namely the challenges of stakeholder commitment, economic interests, human resource quality development, cooperation, environmental issues, integrated



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tourism village development, and modernity. The results of this study provide opportunities for future research. It is hoped that future research can develop the results of this study with quantitative methods on a number of Indigenous tourism villages using variables of cultural tradition practices, benefits, and sustainability challenges with dimensions and indicators that have been found in this study.

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