

Community Perceptions on Cultural Preservation and Local Economic Benefits In The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival

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Abstract

This study examines community perceptions of the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival in Lumar District, highlighting its dual role in cultural preservation and local economic development. Using a quantitative survey of 100 respondents and descriptive statistical analysis, the findings show that the festival strengthens cultural identity, preserves traditions, and transmits knowledge across generations, while also generating economic benefits through MSME revenues, seasonal jobs, and local trade growth. Respondents further emphasized the importance of participatory planning, cultural-based innovation, government support, and cross-sector collaboration to sustain these outcomes. Despite limitations in scope and methodology, the study identifies the festival as a potential model for sustainable cultural tourism in rural contexts.

Keywords: *Cultural Heritage Preservation, Cultural Festivals, Local Economic Impact, Community Engagement, MSMEs*

A. INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage contributes to sustainable development by adhering to international standards. The preservation of community identity is upheld through global regulations and policies that ensure the safeguarding of cultural heritage (Ramadhan & Adi Prasetyo, 2023). Customary law plays a vital role in safeguarding cultural heritage and maintaining local identity. Traditions knowledge, as an integral aspect of community identity, is transmitted across generations, ensuring its continuity and preservation (Santoso et al., 2023). In an increasingly advanced and rapidly evolving world, change is inevitable, however it remains essential to understand and preserve the cultural roots inherited from our ancestors to maintain a strong cultural identity. Nowadays the tension cultural identity faces between tradition and modernity in the context of globalization. It underscores the importance of preserving cultural roots as the foundation of identity, while simultaneously emphasizing the need for adaptability in response to contemporary developments. Societies are thus challenged to navigate these transformations in a way that sustains their cultural identity amidst ongoing change (Santoso et al., 2023).

According to (Vu Hoang, 2021) he emphasizes the significance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage values within the framework of sustainable development. Cultural heritage is regarded not only as a cultural asset, but also as a form of social and economic capital that can contribute to national progress and development. Furthermore, (Prajawrdhi et al., 2015) in her research in Denpasar Bali, she underscores the significance of incorporating local community perspectives in the preservation of cultural heritage. The active participation of local communities is essential for effective preservation in the context of increasing pressures from modernization and urbanization. One effective approach to preserve culture is through the organization of cultural festivals for instance in "Ethno-Festival", it serves as important platforms for the expression and transmission of traditions and intangible cultural heritage. Integrated within the creative industries, these festivals bring together cultural practitioners, artists, and local communities to safeguard and promote traditional knowledge through artistic expressions, craftsmanship,

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Received: June 01, 2025; Revised: September 15, 2025; Accepted: November 21, 2025

and cultural performances. As much, they function as dynamic spaces for the production and reproduction of living culture (Pletsan, 2022).

Cultural Festivals are part of intangible culture. Intangible cultural heritage can be conceptualized as a metacultural construct. Cultural expressions that are reproduced and recontextualized within contemporary settings. Cultural festivals serve a critical function in mediating traditional cultural forms, facilitating their interpretation and appreciation by modern audiences. These festivals reframe elements of intangible culture for public engagement, while endeavoring to preserve their core meanings and cultural significance (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004). In the tourism sector, cultural festivals as strategic instruments for the promotion and preservation of intangible cultural heritage. These events not only serve to showcase local cultural expressions to visitors but also foster a sense of cultural pride and identity among host communities. By facilitating public engagement with tradition practices, languages, music, and rituals many of which may be at risk of decline, festival contribute to their revitalization and sustained transmission across generations (Qiu et al., 2022). Among the various cultural practices upheld by the community in Indonesia, Ngarantek Sawa Bahu stands out as a significant ritual that continues to be actively preserved as part of ongoing efforts to maintain cultural heritage and identity. The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival is a customary ritual of the Dayak community in Lumar District, Bengkayang Regency, traditionally conducted prior to the agricultural season. This event carries profound spiritual and social meaning, serving as a collective invocation to “Jubata” (God) for guidance in the selection of farming land, protection throughout the cultivation process, and the hope of a fruitful harvest. Beyond its religious function, the festival plays a pivotal role in preserving cultural identity, fostering harmonious relationships with nature and ancestral heritage, and enhancing communal cohesion. An integral aspect of the festival is the cultural seminar, which acts as a medium for intergenerational transmission of indigenous knowledge, particularly concerning local customs and sustainable agricultural practices. The celebration also encompasses ritual ceremonies performances and traditional music and dance, and spiritual land designation led by customary authorities.

The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival functions as a strategic mechanism for safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Dayak community in Lumar District, Bengkayang Regency. By revitalizing traditional rituals and incorporation cultural expressions such as traditional dance, music and attire, the festival reinforces communal identity and supports the intergenerational transmission of ancestral knowledge. Moreover, the inclusion of cultural seminars within the festival framework fosters critical discourse on the preservation of customary practices and traditional agricultural systems, thereby positioning the festival as an educational platform within the context of ongoing modernization. The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival can be seen in **Figure 1 until Figure 4**.

Figure 1. Opening Ceremony by The Regent of Bengkayang Regency and Regional Leadership Communication Forum (FORKOPIMDA)



Figure 2. Cultural Parade from All Contingents Represented All Villages in Lumar District



Figure 3. Cultural International Seminar with Speaker from Malaysia



Figure 4. The Ritual of Ngarantek Sawa Bahu by Amba Kotek Created at Ramin Adat Banua Lumar



Source: Researcher's personal documentation, 2023 & 2024.

Cultural festivals as a component of cultural tourism are anticipated to generate positive economic impacts for the host communities by contributing to local economic development and simulating related sectors. Cultural festivals and events play a vital role in enhancing cultural tourism by drawing both domestic and international visitors. The influx of tourist stimulates the local economy through increased spending on services such as accommodation, food and beverages, transportation and traditional crafts. Furthermore, these events contribute to short-term employment opportunities and serve as platforms for promoting local cultural heritage on a global scale (Lopes & Hiray, 2024). Cultural tourism represents a potential economic sector with significant multiplier effects on local economies. Investment in cultural heritage preservation can enhance economic value by boosting tourist arrivals, increasing visitor expenditure and stimulating infrastructure development. Nevertheless, it is essential to maintain a balance between economic utilization and the safeguarding of cultural values to ensure sustainable long-term benefits (Noonan & Rizzo, 2017).

Cultural festivals are also recognized for their potential to enhance community income, support the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and generate employment opportunities. This is evidenced, for instance, by empirical findings presented in studies such as those conducted by (Achmad et al., 2023), (Fajri et al., 2023), (Haryanto et al., 2024) drawing from the findings of three empirical studies, festivals are identified as strategic instruments in advancing local economic development. They contribute significantly to increasing household income, supporting the growth and competitiveness of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and generating employment opportunities.

Optimizing the economic benefits of cultural festival for local communities presents several significant challenges such as there is a limited capacity of local human resources in the effective management of cultural events and festivals (Gantina & Pradhipta, 2024), the commercialization of culture poses risks, including potential value conflicts between tourist and local communities (Iqbal Iskandar et al., 2025), cultural festivals face the risk of being reduced to mere forms of entertainment, there by diminishing their original cultural significance (Fahma et al., 2024), and there is insufficient government promotion and support, coupled with inadequate infrastructure, which hinders the development of cultural festivals (Siagian & Kusumawardhana, 2019). Addressing these challenges requires the active engagement of relevant stakeholders to develop effective solutions, ensuring the successful implementation of cultural event activities.

In addition to understanding the various existing challenges, it is equally important to recognize the significance of community participation in ensuring the sustainability of cultural festivals. For instance, research by (Santosa et al., 2024) highlights that community involvement in festival activities contributes to strengthening the local economy and promoting the utilization of tourism village potential such as engagement fosters a sense of ownership among community members, enhances social support, and ensures the continuity of festival implementation, furthermore (Desnithalia et al., 2024) explains the community's role as co-creator in cultural festivals is essential for fostering authentic experiences and

enhancing the festival's image. Active community participation ensures cultural relevance, drives innovations, and facilitates continuous adaptations to contemporary developments.

The organizing of cultural festivals is significantly influenced by diverse public perceptions, which shapes the level of support for cultural preservation as well as the extent to which economic benefits are recognized. These perceptions are shaped by multiple interrelated factors, including first the level of knowledge and education, particularly regarding cultural and historical values, significantly influences individuals' perceptions of the importance of cultural preservation, second community participation and involvement in tourism-related activities are critical determinants of local engagement, as individuals who are actively involved are more likely to develop a sense of ownership. This, in turn, fosters stronger support for both cultural preservation and sustainable economic development. thirdly, directly perceived economic benefits play a pivotal role in shaping public attitudes, as individuals who gain income or economic opportunities from tourism are more likely to hold favorable perceptions toward its development and sustainability, fourth fairness in the distribution of benefits and inequality in the distribution of tourism results (only a handful of parties benefit) can give rise to negative perceptions, fifth cultural values and locals identity where communities with a strong cultural identity care more about preserving their culture, and sixth social and environmental impacts represent key dimensions through which communities evaluate tourism activities. Local perceptions are often shaped by the extent to which tourism influences social cohesion, cultural practices and the integrity of the surrounding environment (Fadhila, 2024), (Nadhifatur Rifdah & Kusdiwanggo, 2024), (Manuhutu et al., 2024).

The gap between the potential and actual economic benefits of cultural festivals arises when profits are concentrated among a few stakeholders, such as core organizers or external businesses. Limited community participation, along with the absence of sustainable planning and equitable benefits distribution, often leads to economic disparities and negative public perceptions. Therefore, inclusive planning and community empowerment are essential to ensure fair and sustainable economic outcomes.

The present study addresses several research gaps identified through a critical review of existing literature, first, in terms of geographical focus, there is a notable scarcity of studies that explore cultural festivals in smaller or lesser-known local context, such as Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival, second with regard to the type of festival, limited research has specifically examines traditional, community based festivals that embody local cultural wisdom. Third, from the perspective of community participation, there remains a lack of comprehensive studies that simultaneously investigate the relationship between community perceptions of cultural preservation and the perceived economic benefits derived from a single festival. Fourth, in the area of socio-cultural and economic analysis there is still scope to explore how local cultural perceptions shape community support for both economic sustainability and preservation of cultural values. Finally, concerning the uniqueness of local cultural context, no existing studies have focused on the symbolic meanings and cultural significance of The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival, particularly in its role as a marker of local identity and as a potential asset (Handyastuti et al., 2020), (Hidayah et al., 2023a), (Yulianingsih et al., 2024).

This study offers a distinct contribution by focusing on the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival, an event deeply embedded with cultural values yet largely underexplored in academic discourse. Employing an integrated approach that examines community perceptions of both cultural preservation and local economic benefits, the study introduces a novel perspective on the role of community engagement in ensuring the sustainability of cultural festivals. Furthermore, it emphasizes the symbolic meanings and expressions of local identity associated with the festival, highlighting their significance in fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging active community participation. By situating the research within a unique local context and exploring the interconnections between cultural heritage and economic development, this study aim to advance the scholarly understanding of community based cultural tourism.

Drawing from the preceding discussion, this study seeks to investigate the following key issues:

1. The perceptions of the Lumar District Community regarding the preservation of cultural heritage through the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival
2. The distribution of the festival to enhance the local economy
3. Potential strategies that can be employed to strengthen cultural preservation while simultaneously maximizing the economic benefits for the community

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs quantitative approach, with the primary objective of assessing public perceptions of cultural preservation and the local economic benefits derived from the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival. Utilizing a quantitative framework, data will be gathered through surveys and analyzed statistically to provide an objective representation based on the distribution of respondents. The study incorporates three key variables. Variable 1: Public perception of cultural preservation through festivals (Independent), Variable 2: Public perception of local economic benefits from festivals (Independent), Variable 3: Potential strategies for enhancing cultural preservation and economic benefits (Dependent). Each Variable will be operationalized using measurable indicators, structured in a Likert Scale (1-5) within the questionnaire. The population for this study consists of the entire community of Lumar District, particularly Tiga Berkat Village, who are either knowledgeable about or actively involved in the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu. This study utilizes the stratified random sampling technique, a form of random sampling that ensures representation from distinct subgroups or strata within the population. The primary objective of this method is to guarantee that each community group with unique characteristics is proportionally represented within the sample. In the context of this research, the target population comprises individuals directly engaged or impacted by The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival. This population is categorized into several groups such as Cultural Actors/Traditional Figures, Local Communities (general residents in proximity to the festivals venue), Local Business Actors/MSMEs, Committees/Organizers, and Visitors/Domestic Tourists. Samples were randomly selected from each group in a proportional manner, with a total of 100 respondents.

A sample size of 100 respondents is considered methodologically sufficient for this study, as it provides a robust foundation for examining community perceptions of cultural preservation and the economic benefits associated with the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival. In line with Roscoe's (1975) guideline, sample sizes ranging between 30 and 500 are generally appropriate for behavioral and social science research, with 100 respondents often regarded as an acceptable threshold for descriptive analyses (Gay & Diehl, 1992). Moreover, Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table suggests that for a population of approximately 3,000, a minimum of 97 respondents is adequate at a 95% confidence level. Given that the research scope is confined to a single village with a population of roughly 3,121, the selection of 100 respondents not only aligns with these methodological standards but also ensures representativeness while balancing statistical rigor with practical feasibility.

This research focuses on the community involved in or participating in Ngarantek Sawa Bahu activities in Lumar District both as cultural figures, MSME actors, committees, local residents, and visitors. Based on a sample of 100 respondents. The characteristics of the respondents in this study are presented in the data shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Respondents Distribution Data

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
1. Male	50	50%
2. Female	50	50%
Ages		
1. 20 years old	10	10%
2. 20-29 years old	27	27%
3. 30-39 years old	34	34%
4. 40-49 years old	15	15%
5. 50 years old and above	14	14%
Status Respondents		
1. Cultural/Traditional Leader	5	5%

2. Local Resident	68	68%
3. Local Business Actor (MSMEs)	5	5%
4. Committee/National Organizer	7	7%
5. Visitor/Tourist	15	15%

Educations

1. Elementary School	3	3%
2. Junior High School	2	2%
3. Senior High School	34	34%
4. Diploma/Bachelor	54	54%
5. Master/Doctoral	7	7%

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The table presents the demographic profile of the 100 respondents participating in this study, categorized by gender, age, respondent status, and educational attainment. The demographic characteristics of the respondents in this study reflect a balanced and representative diversity. The equal distribution between male and female respondents, along with the predominance of participations in the productive age group (30-39 years), indicates active engagement across various age categories. Most respondents are local residents, suggesting a high level of community participation in the research. Furthermore, the generally moderate to high levels of education among respondents imply a strong capacity to comprehend the issues under investigation. Therefore, these demographic characteristics support the validity and relevance of the research findings, as they reflect appropriate diversity and population representativeness.

This research was conducted based on the results of respondents' answers which made the perception of the community in Lumar District, especially the people of Tiga Berkat Village, towards the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival. The results of data collection can be analyzed by paying attention to and calculating the average number of scores consisting of 100 respondents as follows:

1. $5/100 \times (100) = 5$ is a very good average score or very agreeable which means that the community considers that festivals are very and closely related so that they can be a medium for cultural preservation and improvement of the local economy.
2. $4/100 \times (100) = 4$ is an average score of good or agree which means that the community considers festivals to be a medium for cultural preservation and local economic improvement.
3. $3/100 \times (100) = 3$ is a sufficient average score which means that the community is hesitant or neutral in the assumption that festivals can be a medium for cultural preservation and improvement of the local economy.
4. $2/100 \times (100) = 2$ is an average score of poor or disagree which means that people think that festivals are less able to be a medium for cultural preservation and improvement of the local economy.
5. $1/100 \times (100) = 1$ is an average score of not good or very disagree which means that people think that festivals are not able to be a medium for cultural preservation and improvement of the local economy.

To determine the range of responses from respondents' answers to each indicator item in this study, the score interpretation criteria can be used as follows:

$$\text{Interval Length} = \text{Margin of maximum and minimum} / \text{Number of Total Score} \\ = 4/5 = \mathbf{0.8}$$

The length of the interval above means that each distance between the average amounts can be measured by 0.8 for each average. Thus, at the next stage, the average number can be categorized to make it easier to interpret the responses of each respondent which are stated in the following intervals:

Table 2. Mean Range

Score	Interval	Interpretation
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1	1 – 1.80	Very Disagree
2	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
3	2.61 – 3.40	Neutral
4	3.41 – 4.20	Agree
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very Agree

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The rating scale table utilizes a five-point interval system to interpret respondents' levels of agreement with given statements. Scores within the range of 1.00 to 1.80 are classified as very disagree, signifying a strong rejection to the statement. Scores from 1.81 to 2.60 fall under the Disagree category, indicating a moderate level of disagreement. Scores between 2.61 to 3.40 are categorized as Neutral, representing an impartial stance without a clear inclination toward agreement or disagreement. The interval from 3.41 to 4.20 corresponds to the Agree category, reflecting respondents' positive affirmation of the statement. Finally, scores ranging from 4.21 to 5.00 are interpreted as Very Agree, denoting a high level of endorsement. This interval-based scale provides a structured and consistent approach for researchers to quantitatively assess and interpret respondent perceptions.

Through the application of the stratified random sampling method, this research ensures proportional representation of the diverse groups identified in the study. This sample size is sufficient for conducting initial analyses to uncover key patterns and relationships between the festivals and its impacts on cultural preservation and the local economy, which can subsequently be expanded upon in future research with a larger sample. Data analysis in this study uses decriptive quantitative. According to Aziza (2020), descriptive quantitative is a statistical analysis used to visualize, summarize, and analyze quantitative data covers a wide range of techniques, including mean, median, mode, range, varian, standard deviation, quartil, desil, percentile, skewness, and kurtosis. In this research we will focus more on the calculation of the mean. To examine the differences in perception both male and female respondents and education levels, the Kruskal-Wallis test was used. This non-parametric analysis used to compare mean ranks across groups for three variables: Cultural Preservation, Economic Benefit, and Strategic Implementation at the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival.

Before conducting the analysis, first the data must be test by using instrument test to examine whether the instruments met the required criteria for further analysis as follows:

Table 3
Instrumen Validation and Reliability Test

No.	Variables	Item	Pearson Correlation	Significant	Cronbach's Alpha
Cultural Preservation Perceptions (CPP)		CPP 1	0.798	0.000	0.868
		CPP 2	0.875	0.000	
		CPP 3	0.778	0.000	
		CPP 4	0.804	0.000	
		CPP 5	0.840	0.000	
Economic Benefit Perceptions (EBP)		EBP 1	0.884	0.000	0.926
		EBP 2	0.871	0.000	
		EBP 3	0.891	0.000	
		EBP 4	0.892	0.000	
		EBP 5	0.868	0.000	
Strategic Implementation Perceptions (SIP)		SIP 1	0.684	0.000	0.761
		SIP 2	0.646	0.000	
		SIP 3	0.779	0.000	
		SIP 4	0.747	0.000	
		SIP 5	0.803	0.000	

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that all 15 statement items show an average significance value of 0.000. The testing assumption is that if the significance value is less than 0.05 (5%), the item is considered valid. When using the Pearson Correlation method, it is necessary to compare the obtained correlation values with the critical value of r table. In this case, the r table value for the total number of items is 0.1603. Since the average Pearson Correlation value for each item is greater than the value of r table, all items can be considered valid. In the reliability test, regarding to the value of Cronbach's Alpha in the table, each variable demonstrates a Cronbach's Alpha value as follows: PoC at 0.868, LEB at 0.926, and SoCS at 0.761. The results indicate that all statement items are reliable, Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the threshold of 0.70 (> 0.70).

Following the instrument validation, the data were further analyzed using Spearman's correlation to identify the relationships among the previously tested variables as presented below:

Table 4
Spearman Correlation Test

	CPP	EBP	SIP	Significant
CPP	1	0.643	0.545	0.001
EBP	0.643	1	0.578	0.001
SIP	0.545	0.578	1	0.001

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The result show that it have strong positive correlation between CPP and EBP which the coefficient value of 0.642 and the p value of 0.001 (< 0.05). Furthermore, SIP was also found to have correlations both CPP and EBP with the coefficient value of 0.545 for CPP and 0.578 for EBP. Each variables also show a p value of 0.001, which is low than the significance of 0.05.

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The Preservation of Cultural Heritage through Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival

Based on the data presented in Table 5, all indicators measuring perceptions of cultural preservation through the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival received high evaluations, with mean scores between 4.33 and 4.69 on a five-point Likert scale. The strongest agreement was observed in the reinforcement of community cultural identity (mean = 4.69), followed by contributions to the preservation of local values and traditions (mean = 4.68) and the transmission of cultural knowledge to younger generations (mean = 4.64). Other dimensions, such as pride in local cultural heritage (mean = 4.62) and emotional connection to the festival (mean = 4.33), also scored positively.

While these descriptive results suggest that the festival is perceived favorably in terms of cultural preservation, it is important to interpret them cautiously. The consistently high averages indicate a strong community consensus, but they may also reflect a tendency toward socially desirable responses, especially in small, close-knit communities where cultural identity is highly valued. Moreover, the use of descriptive statistics alone limits the ability to test the strength of these relationships or to establish causality. For example, although the festival is associated with cultural knowledge transmission, the data does not reveal whether younger generations actually internalize these values in the long term.

Nevertheless, the findings point to several implications. First, the high score for cultural identity underscores the festival's symbolic role as a marker of belonging and continuity, aligning with studies that highlight festivals as arenas of identity reaffirmation rather than solely entertainment (Quinn, 2005). Second, the educational dimension suggested by the transmission of knowledge indicator points to the festival's potential as an informal learning platform, but further research is needed to examine how this occurs in practice. Finally, the relatively lower score for emotional connection (mean = 4.33) may reflect generational differences in attachment or changing cultural orientations, a factor worth exploring through qualitative approaches.

When compared with similar festivals in Indonesia and beyond, the results show both similarities and distinctive features. For example, studies on the Bali Arts Festival reveal that such events function as

showcases of cultural pride and education but also face tensions between commodification and authenticity (Picard, 1996). In Southeast Europe, cross-border festivals like the Guca Trumpet Festival in Serbia demonstrate similar patterns of reinforcing identity and intergenerational transmission, but they also highlight issues of cultural commercialization and contested heritage (Baker, 2008). The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival appears less commercialized, reflecting a stronger emphasis on local ownership and cultural continuity rather than tourism-driven spectacle. This distinction suggests that community-based festivals in rural contexts may offer a more sustainable model of cultural preservation, though their impact may be more localized compared to large-scale urban or national festivals.

In sum, while the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival appears to be an effective cultural mechanism that strengthens identity and fosters continuity, the interpretation of its preservation function should remain modest given the descriptive scope of the analysis. Future studies could apply comparative or inferential methods to assess whether these positive perceptions are unique to this festival or consistent across other cultural events in the region.

Table 5
Distribution On Cultural Preservation Perceptions

Statement	Indicator	Mean
1	The Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival contributes to the preservation of local cultural values and traditional practices	4.68
2	I take pride in the local cultural heritage showcased during the festival	4.62
3	This festival reinforces the community's cultural identity	4.69
4	I experience a deep emotional connection	4.33
5	The festival serves as an effective medium for transmitting cultural knowledge to younger generations	4.64

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The Distribution of the Festival to Enhancement of The Local Economy

The findings presented in Table 6 show that community perceptions of the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival's economic benefits are largely positive, with all indicators falling within the "Strongly Agree" range (4.21–5.00). The highest mean score was associated with the statement that "the influx of tourists during the festival contributes to local economic growth" ($M = 4.43$), suggesting that increased visitor arrivals are perceived to stimulate consumption in trade, services, and transportation sectors. This aligns with previous studies emphasizing the multiplier effect of festivals in rural and peripheral regions (Getz, 2010; Derrett, 2015). However, given the descriptive nature of this study, the extent of such impacts cannot be fully confirmed without additional economic or statistical modeling.

The festival's contribution to enhancing the income of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) also received strong agreement ($M = 4.39$). While this indicates that local business actors perceive tangible benefits, such perceptions may reflect expectations or short-term gains rather than sustained structural improvements in MSME performance. Similarly, the indicator on temporary employment opportunities ($M = 4.30$) suggests that the festival generates seasonal jobs. Yet, without longitudinal evidence, it is difficult to determine whether these opportunities lead to longer-term livelihood stability.

Respondents also reported direct and tangible benefits ($M = 4.26$), reinforcing the idea that economic gains are not merely abstract but personally experienced. Nonetheless, the relatively modest difference between this score and others points to a need for caution: the benefits may be unevenly distributed across different segments of the community. Finally, the perception that the festival enhances the regional economy ($M = 4.23$) supports broader claims in cultural tourism literature that festivals can contribute to local development strategies (Quinn, 2010). Still, such interpretations should be approached carefully, as this study's limited quantitative design does not allow causal inferences.

Overall, while the results highlight positive community perceptions, they remain descriptive and perception based. The findings suggest that the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival has potential as a culture-based tourism event that stimulates local economic activity, particularly for MSMEs and seasonal

employment. However, further research using mixed methods or economic impact assessment tools (e.g., input-output analysis, cost-benefit evaluation) would be needed to validate and quantify the actual scope of its contribution to regional economic development.

Table 6
Distribution On Economic Benefit Perceptions

Statement	Indicator	Mean
1	This festival contributes to the enhancement of income for local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)	4.39
2	This festival generates short-term employment opportunities for members of the local community	4.30
3	The influx of visitors and tourists during the festival contributes to the stimulation of local economic growth	4.43
4	I experience tangible economic benefits as a result of this festival	4.26
5	This festival plays a role in enhancing the regional economy	4.23

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The Potential Strategies that can be employed to strengthen cultural preservation while simultaneously maximizing the economic benefits for the community

Table 7 presents the processed data on public perceptions regarding strategies for cultural festival organization. All indicators recorded mean scores ranging from 4.53 to 4.74, which fall under the “Strongly Agree” category (4.21–5.00). This indicates that respondents perceive the proposed strategies as highly relevant to advancing both cultural preservation and local economic development.

Nevertheless, these findings must be interpreted with caution. While the high scores demonstrate strong public support, they remain descriptive in nature and do not fully capture the complexities of practical implementation or long-term impacts. For instance, the strong endorsement of community involvement in festival planning (mean = 4.53) emphasizes the importance of participatory approaches; however, without sufficient facilitation, such participation risks becoming tokenistic. Likewise, the strong agreement on the need for innovation grounded in cultural values (mean = 4.65) highlights the challenge of balancing modernization with authenticity, an issue frequently observed in other cultural events where commercialization may dilute traditional meanings.

The highest-rated indicator (mean = 4.74) reflects the community’s expectation for stronger government involvement in cultural preservation through festivals. This resonates with literature underscoring the role of state intervention in providing policy frameworks, funding, and institutional support. At the same time, overreliance on government may foster dependency, suggesting that sustainable strategies should combine top-down support with grassroots initiatives. Meanwhile, the emphasis on MSME training (mean = 4.57) and cross-sector collaboration (mean = 4.65) demonstrates recognition of festivals as instruments of economic empowerment. Yet, experiences from other Indonesian festivals suggest that such collaboration often faces coordination challenges and competing stakeholder interests.

A useful comparison can be drawn with other cultural festivals in Indonesia. The **Jember Fashion Carnaval (East Java)** illustrates how community creativity, government support, and MSME involvement can generate both cultural pride and international recognition, though it has been critiqued for prioritizing spectacle over traditional values (Purnomo, 2018). In Bali, **Mass Ngaben ceremonies** demonstrate how strong community participation safeguards religious and cultural traditions while simultaneously creating opportunities for local service providers and tourism-related enterprises (Putra & Pitana, 2019). Similarly, the **Tabuik Festival in Pariaman (West Sumatra)** has become a major cultural attraction that strengthens local identity and stimulates tourism, yet it also faces challenges of commodification that risk overshadowing its sacred meaning (Syafrini, 2020).

Taken together, these comparisons highlight that while the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival shares common challenges with other Indonesian festivals—such as balancing authenticity with innovation,

ensuring meaningful community participation, and avoiding excessive commercialization it also has the opportunity to design more sustainable and context-sensitive strategies. The strong community support reflected in the survey results should therefore be regarded as a foundation for future improvements rather than as definitive evidence of impact.

Table 7
Distribution On Strategic Implementation Perceptions

Statement	Indicator	Mean
1	Enhanced community involvement in festival planning is essential	4.53
2	Festivals need to be developed innovatively without abandoning original cultural values	4.65
3	The government must be more active in supporting cultural preservation through festivals	4.74
4	Training for MSMEs needs to be improved so that economic benefits are more optimal	4.57
5	Collaboration between communities, government and the tourism sector must be increased	4.65

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Next section will present the analysis of differences in ordinal scores across responden groups. The Kruskal-Wallis test was selected as the method to evaluate difference in medians among three or more groups as below:

Table 8
Kruskal-Wallis Test

Variables	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Asymp. Sig.	Education	N	Mean Rank	Asymp. Sig.
CPP	Male	50	49.66	0.595	SD	3	14.00	0.205
	Female	50	51.28		SMP	2	60.75	
					SMA/SMK	34	51.18	
					DIPLOMA/S1	54	50.85	
					S2/S3	7	57.21	
EBP	Male	50	48.97	0.376	SD	3	33.00	0.676
	Female	50	51.91		SMP	2	46.00	
					SMA/SMK	34	48.46	
					DIPLOMA/S1	54	51.63	
					S2/S3	7	60.50	
SIP	Male	50	53.11	0.772	SD	3	35.17	0.559
	Female	50	48.09		SMP	2	23.00	
					SMA/SMK	34	51.26	
					DIPLOMA/S1	54	51.69	
					S2/S3	7	52.00	

Source: Data Processed, 2025

To examine the potential difference in perceptions of the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival, respondents were grouped by gender and the educational level. Gender was used to explore the possible differences between male and female perspectives, while educational level was chosen to determine whether formal education influenced perceptions of cultural preservation, economic benefits, and the strategic implementation.

According to the table 8, the result indicated no statistically significant difference between male and female for Cultural Preservation, Economic Benefit, and Strategic Implementation. Specifically, Cultural

Preservation had a mean rank for male respondents was 49.66, while female had a mean rank of 51.28 within p value of 0.595. Then, Economic Benefit had a mean rank of 48.97 compared to 51.91 for the female respondents within p value of 0.376. Finally, for Strategic Implementation, had a mean rank of 53.11 for male respondents, whereas female respondents had a mean rank of 48.09 within p value of 0.722. This result indicated that awareness and appreciation of the cultural and economic values of the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival are evenly distributed across the community, without significant gender bias. Between male and female respondents demonstrated a similar perception regarding the importance of cultural preservation, the economic benefits and the strategic implementation of the festival. This also indicated that the festival is recognized and valued broadly within the community. It's potential to foster inclusive support for cultural heritage and local economic development initiatives.

The similar pattern was observed for educational level for specifically, the mean ranks for Cultural Preservation across different education groups was as follow: elementary school (SD) had a mean rank of 14.00, then 60.75 for junior high school (SMP), 51.18 for senior high school/vocational (SMA/SMK), 50.85 for the diploma/bachelor (Diploma/S1), and 57.21 for master/doctoral (S2/S3). The p value for this variable showed a value of 0.205. The other variables such as Economic Benefit and Strategic Implementation also have a various mean rank as follow: elementary school (EBP – 33.00 and SIP – 35.17), junior high school (EBP – 46.00 and SIP – 35.17), senior high school/vocational (EBP – 48.46 and SIP – 51.26), Diploma/Bachelor (EBP – 51.63 and SIP – 51.69), and for master/doktoral (EBP – 60.50 and SIP – 52.00). Economic Benefit and Strategic Implementation also showed no significant differences among the educational groups, with p values of 0.676 and 0.559, respectively. So, in practical terms, the analysis suggests that perception of Cultural Preservation, Economic Benefits, and Strategic Implementation of the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival are similar across people with different educational levels. This indicates that both highly educated respondents and those with lower formal education recognize and value the festival's cultural and economic importance. It means that the festival has broad community support and its activities, such as cultural performance and local trade opportunities, are appreciated and understood by the entire community. Not limited to any particular education level. Such uniform perception can facilitate inclusive participation and stronger community engagement.

D. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Ngarantek Sawa Bahu Festival simultaneously safeguards Dayak cultural heritage and generates tangible economic benefits for the local community. The findings highlight that the festival reinforces cultural identity, facilitates intergenerational knowledge transmission, and nurtures cultural pride, while also supporting MSME revenues, seasonal employment, and broader regional economic activity. Community perceptions strongly endorse strategies that combine participatory planning, innovation rooted in tradition, government involvement, MSME capacity-building, and cross-sectoral collaboration, indicating the festival's potential as a replicable model for sustainable cultural tourism in rural and border contexts. Nevertheless, the study remains limited by its reliance on descriptive analysis, single-village scope, and cross-sectional design. Future research should adopt comparative, longitudinal, and mixed-method approaches to better capture long-term cultural transformations and validate economic impacts. Overall, the festival illustrates how community-based cultural events can balance authenticity, innovation, and sustainability, providing valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners of cultural tourism.

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