

Exploring the Potential of Presean to Enhance Tourism in Sade Tourism Village, Lombok

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ABSTRACT

This research was written to identify various opportunities in utilizing the art of presean as the main attraction for tourists. The research method uses descriptive qualitative research. The data collection technique used in this research is descriptive method. The results of the study show that the art of presean has great potential in attracting tourists, especially in the village of Sade, which is a traditional village of the Lombok people considering that Lombok has nature that is still preserved and conservative. The results of this study reveal the lack of interest in tourism and the lack of interest of the local community in knowing the great potential in the art of presean as a form of economy in Lombok. The contribution of this research can be that an integrated planning of the sade village is carried out so that the growth and development of tourism activities there runs well as a whole in the entire tourist area of the sade village especially the presean event, as well as motivation in cultural interests especially young people and the planning of economic activities,, improving various service qualities that are considered poor by tourists and promotive and implementation efforts are improved.

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INTRODUCTION

Sade Tourism Village, located in Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency, represents one of the traditional Sasak villages that has gracefully preserved its local wisdom and cultural heritage. The enchanting natural landscape, combined with the richness of Sasak traditions, serves as a unique attraction for both domestic and international visitors. Among the most prominent cultural heritages closely tied to the Sasak community is seni presean (Ashari & Muzakir, 2020).

Presean is a traditional martial art performed by two fighters wielding rattan sticks (presean) accompanied by rhythmic traditional music. Beyond its historical and cultural significance, presean holds strong potential as a distinctive tourism attraction (Ardika Yasa, 2020); studies show that ethno-cultural practices amongst the Sasak have measurable tourism potential in aspects of cultural capital and social capital (Lestari et al., 2022); further, presean is an embodiment of local-wisdom values which can strengthen sustainable tourism development in Lombok (Widyaswari et al., 2025).

More than a mere physical display of bravery and martial skill, presean is imbued with philosophical meaning that reflects the values and worldview of the Lombok community (Rina Amelia & Triyadi, 2023). For instance, the tradition encompasses spiritual elements such as prayers ("mentere"), ethics of fighting that uphold sportsmanship, and transformation into a medium for character formation among youth in the Sasak society (Riyadissolihin & Renda, 2025). Its uniqueness—rarely found elsewhere—makes it a compelling draw for tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences; in fact, the tradition has increasingly been featured as a deliberate cultural attraction in festival contexts on Lombok (Times Indonesia, 2024). Typically, presean is showcased during customary ceremonies as well as curated cultural performances designed for visitors. With the rapid growth of the tourism sector in Indonesia, Sade Village has increasingly

gained international recognition. To maintain and enhance its role as a valuable cultural tourism destination, it is imperative for local stakeholders to further explore the potential of traditional arts, particularly presean, as one of the village's main attractions (Solikatun & Kartono, 2020); supporting this, research on the role of traditional art in the promotion of tourism in NTB (West Nusa Tenggara) demonstrates that performing arts significantly contribute to both cultural preservation and tourist appeal (Di Biagi et al., 2025).

When promoted effectively, presean not only enriches the visitor experience but also contributes significantly to the local economy. This contribution arises from increased tourist arrivals and the development of cultural-based local products tied to Sasak heritage (Fibrianti, 2022). Against this backdrop, this study seeks to investigate the role of presean art in enhancing tourism development in Sade Village, Lombok. Specifically, the research aims to analyze how presean functions as a cultural tourism attraction that not only elevates tourist numbers but also generates positive impacts on the local economy while supporting the preservation of Sasak culture as an invaluable heritage for future generations (Solikatun & Kartono, 2020).

Accordingly, this study sets out two main objectives: first, to identify and analyze the tourism potential of presean art in Sade Village; and second, to explore its implications for local economic growth and cultural preservation. The research is motivated by a strong academic and practical interest in strengthening cultural-based tourism in Lombok, particularly by highlighting the unique traditions, symbols, and attire embedded within the practice of presean and Sasak customs. This study is expected to serve as a valuable reference for policymakers, cultural practitioners, and tourism stakeholders, while at the same time enriching scholarly discourse on the intersection of traditional arts, cultural heritage, and sustainable tourism (Suprihatin & Hailuddin, 2016).

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive research method. According to Nazir (2011), "The descriptive method is a research approach used to examine the status of a group of people, a subject, a set of conditions, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present time. The purpose of this method is to construct a systematic description, picture, or portrayal of a phenomenon and to identify relationships among the phenomena under investigation."

As the primary observer, the researcher carefully examined the research object through direct field involvement. To obtain valid data, the researcher engaged in on-site observation. In qualitative research, the presence of the researcher—or with the support of others—functions as the primary instrument for data collection. Hence, the researcher's presence in the field is essential and must be maximized to ensure the depth and accuracy of the data. In this study, fieldwork was conducted in Sade Rembitan Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok (Bahroni et al., 2021).

The data analysis technique followed a systematic process of organizing and synthesizing information obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This process included categorizing data, breaking it down into manageable units, synthesizing the findings, arranging them into patterns, determining which aspects were significant, and drawing meaningful conclusions. The ultimate goal of this analytic process was to facilitate interpretation and ensure that the results could be easily understood by both the researcher and others (Saputra et al., 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The residents of Sade Tourism Village interpret scenes in the traditional Peresean art through the movements performed by the artists. Each performance by the Aldek'mas Peresean group in Sade begins with the Gendang Beleq drum performance, which accompanies the arrival of guest groups to the central hall, or more specifically, to the performance arena. Immediately upon entering the arena, two pakembar (initiators of the duel) perform Peresean as a signal marking the commencement of the event by the pepadu (duel participants), which lasts approximately three minutes. This initial performance emphasizes dance artistry rather than competitive skill.

Following the pakembar performance, the pepadu are invited to enter the arena to engage in Peresean. During the duel, the pakembar take over the arena when audience excitement reaches its peak

and when participant rotation occurs. Rotation is typically indicated when one pepadu raises their hand, signaling surrender and acknowledgment of defeat. Subsequently, the pakembar re-enters the arena to declare the winner by raising the hand of the victorious pepadu. As a marker for participant rotation, the pakembar then performs the same dance as presented at the beginning of the event. Peresean is a long-standing tradition in Lombok Island and continues to be preserved by the Sasak community (Ashari & Muzakir, 2020).

Sade is a hamlet located within Rembitan Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok. This hamlet is well-known for preserving the traditional customs of the Sasak people and is a popular destination among tourists visiting Lombok. Geographically, Sade shares boundaries with Rembitan Hamlet to the north, Selat Hamlet to the east, Peluq Hamlet to the south, and Penjalu Hamlet to the west. The area covers approximately 6 hectares and is inhabited by around 260 households, totaling 715 residents with 150 traditional houses.

The population in Sade represents the 15th generation of the Sasak lineage. Residents number 529 individuals, consisting of 262 males and 267 females, organized into approximately 152 family units. There are no local regulations imposing restrictions on population size. While the settlement pattern is predominantly centralized, gradual population dispersal has been observed over time. The community emphasizes collective living and social cohesion, resulting in a settlement pattern concentrated around a single village center.

The prevailing marriage system in the community is endogamous within the hamlet; however, exogamous marriages are occasionally observed. Regarding inheritance practices, male children are given priority rights to inherit the family house from their parents. In the absence of male offspring within a family, inheritance passes to the male relatives or siblings. Female children also hold inheritance rights; however, their inheritance is typically limited to household furnishings (Bahroni et al., 2021).

The spatial topology of Sade Village exhibits a land-use pattern characterized by low-density residential areas. The dominant spatial functions within the village include residential zones and tourism areas. Sade Village, located within Rembitan, is surrounded by several mountains and other traditional villages (Bahroni et al., 2021).

The livelihood of Sade hamlet residents comprises farming, livestock rearing, weaving, restaurant service, tourism guiding, and selling handicraft accessories. Most men are employed as farmers working in fields located approximately 100–200 meters from the hamlet, typically outside the village boundary. Crops cultivated include rice and soybeans. Some residents work as restaurant staff situated roughly 7 kilometers from the village.

In addition to agriculture, residents produce souvenirs such as necklaces, bracelets, and other accessories for sale to visiting tourists. Livestock farming, including cattle and poultry, supplements household income. While cattle are generally kept outside the village, poultry can be reared within the hamlet. Products from livestock are primarily consumed domestically, although surplus may be sold commercially.

At certain times, the local community engages in hunting activities, predominantly targeting wild pigs. Hunting typically occurs when community members require meat for ceremonial purposes. Individuals who participate in these hunting activities receive compensation; however, this is not referred to as a sale, as the act of selling is considered prohibited (Sudiartawan & Sutama, 2022). In addition to hunting, Sade Village is also renowned for its traditional weaving crafts. The woven products are usually marketed to visiting tourists, while some are sold at the “Pasar Kamis” (Thursday Market), named for its operation exclusively on Thursdays. Pasar Kamis is located in the Sengkol area, approximately 5 km from Sade Village (Sudiartawan & Sutama, 2022).

The Peresean tradition is a form of indigenous martial art practiced by the Sasak community, involving a duel between two male participants (pepadu) equipped with rattan sticks and shields. This art form is an ancient tradition of the Sasak people on Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), and continues to be preserved to this day. Historically, Peresean served as a contest to select the most formidable warriors and as an outlet for the emotional expression of kings and soldiers following battlefield victories (ZULKARNAEN et al., 2022).

The attire worn during Peresean also follows specific conventions. Participants typically wear pants, a cloth wrapped around the lower body, and a headscarf, while the torso remains uncovered. Additionally,

warriors are equipped with shields and rattan sticks for combat. Traditional Peresean performances are accompanied by music, which serves to encourage the pepadu during the duel. Common musical instruments include gongs, a pair of kendang drums, cymbals, small rattles, flutes, and kanjar (Claudea et al., 2024).

The preservation of the Peresean tradition faces several challenges, particularly in rural areas. These challenges include limited governmental attention and support for organizing Peresean events, a lack of active cultural communities to maintain the tradition, divergent public perceptions affecting societal engagement, insufficient promotion to external audiences, and financial constraints in hosting competitions (Saputra et al., 2021). To overcome these challenges, communities have established youth cultural preservation groups, submitted proposals to local authorities for funding and permits, and implemented ticketing systems to generate additional revenue.

Peresean embodies numerous cultural values, including respect for brotherhood, friendship, economic and familial cooperation, religious beliefs, and artistic appreciation. Despite the inherent physicality, the tradition conveys messages of peace. Participants are expected to demonstrate courage, humility, and forgiveness. Moreover, the significance of Peresean varies across communities, reflecting diverse interpretations and social functions.

The tradition represents a core cultural identity of the Sasak people and constitutes a heritage that warrants preservation. Beyond its role as a cultural legacy, Peresean serves as a social adhesive, fostering communal engagement among enthusiasts, while providing a venue for male participants to demonstrate physical and mental resilience. Additionally, Peresean rituals are historically associated with invoking rainfall during dry seasons and promoting Lombok's cultural heritage to a broader audience (Solikatun et al., 2019).

Through the practice of Peresean, participants develop bravery, perseverance, and confidence. The tradition functions as a medium for cultivating "wannen" — self-assurance, courageous character, magnanimity, and sharp observation skills. The cultural behavior embedded in Peresean revolves around three core elements: wirasa (spiritual awareness), wiraga (physical capability), and wirama (aesthetic harmony), which collectively create a unique experience for tourists, comparable to Roman gladiator spectacles, yet deeply rooted in Indonesian, particularly Lombok, local wisdom (Ashari & Muzakir, 2020).

Efforts to develop and promote tourism in Sade Village have not yet been systematically implemented by local managers, either through digital or traditional means. The majority of tourists visiting Sade rely primarily on word-of-mouth information or prior knowledge obtained from previous visitors. The absence of promotion is attributed to both a lack of knowledge and insufficient initiative among the local management. Managers have indicated that promotional activities would only be considered once the tourism facilities are well-organized, adequately developed, and deemed suitable for wider promotion.

Youth engagement in preserving the Peresean tradition—a traditional martial art and cultural performance—is facilitated through community-organized events, inter-village competitions, and training sessions designed to enhance participants' skills. Additionally, dedicated spaces, such as festivals or Peresean competitions, are established to motivate performers (pepadu) and encourage younger generations to sustain the tradition.

Field research conducted in Sade Village revealed significant tourism potential. Based on interviews with local residents and managers, several obstacles inhibit tourism development. These include: 1) limited knowledge and skills among managers and the local community regarding tourism development, 2) inadequate infrastructure and facilities, 3) insufficient government attention or support from the Department of Culture and Tourism, and 4) low community enthusiasm, which reduces active participation in tourism initiatives.

Despite these challenges, Sade Village exhibits unique cultural and tourism potential. The Peresean tradition serves both as a form of artistic expression and a tourism attraction, primarily aimed at preserving the cultural heritage of the Sasak community in Lombok. Local residents engage in Peresean performances to maintain the tradition as a key element of Sasak identity. This preservation effort is exemplified through community events showcasing Peresean competitions.

Moreover, the tradition is strategically leveraged to introduce Sasak culture to external audiences. As a cultural tourism attraction, Peresean performances can contribute to local income generation and serve as an indicator of village-level tourism development. Complementary activities, such as traditional

ceremonies, artistic performances, and local festivals, provide opportunities for tourists to witness and actively participate in dances, music, and rituals, enhancing the overall cultural experience. Several tourism products, centered on local customs and traditions, therefore represent significant opportunities to attract visitors to the region.

CONCLUSION

Sade Tourism Village, located in Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency, represents a traditional village that elegantly preserves the local wisdom and cultural heritage of the Sasak community. The village's captivating natural beauty, coupled with its rich cultural diversity, serves as a distinct attraction for both domestic and international tourists. One of the cultural heritages closely associated with the Sasak people is presean, a traditional martial performance that embodies the community's traditions and societal values. The development of presean in Lombok reflects a notable transformation, wherein the art form has shifted from its ritualistic and social functions to become a cultural commodity attractive to the tourism sector.

Despite its potential, the interest and engagement of younger generations in presean remain limited. This gap poses a risk to the preservation and promotion of the art, especially as contemporary societal changes increasingly challenge traditional practices. Therefore, active participation from both government and local communities is essential to safeguard presean and integrate it effectively into tourism development strategies.

Tourism promotion in Sade Village, particularly regarding presean, has not been systematically implemented, neither through digital platforms nor conventional channels. Visitor influx is primarily driven by word-of-mouth and informal knowledge passed among tourists. The lack of structured promotion stems from limited awareness and initiative among village managers, who often wait until the village infrastructure and tourism facilities are fully organized before undertaking promotional activities.

The integration of traditional arts such as presean into the tourism framework offers significant economic and social benefits. Performances can generate revenue through entrance fees, accommodation, food services, transportation, and extended tourist stays. Consequently, this enhances local government income and provides financial opportunities for artists and performers involved in cultural presentations. Additionally, entrepreneurs within the tourism sector stand to gain economic advantages by hosting cultural performances at tourist sites, thereby fostering a sustainable model of cultural and economic development in Sade Village.

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