

SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF *NYADRAN KALI* TRADITION

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ABSTRACT

Kandri Village is a village in Gunung Pati District, Semarang Regency, Central Java known for its potential in art and cultural tourism, particularly the tradition of *Nyadran Kali*. The management of this tourist village is carried out by the younger generation, setting an example for a sustainable culture. This research follows a qualitative approach with data collection methods of observation, interviews, and literature studies. The observations were conducted during the *Nyadran Kali* ceremony, involving several key informants, including community leaders, youth leaders, and *pokdarwis* managers. The data obtained were analyzed and compiled into written form along with the researchers' recommendations for the development of Kandri Village's tourism management. Journals related to sustainable cultural tourism management serve as secondary sources to strengthen the data. The study's results show that Kandri Village has been successfully managing its cultural potential in a sustainable manner. This management involves active participation from village officials, youth, and various units, such as BKM, *Pokdarwis*, etc.

Keywords: *Nyadran Kali*, Sustainable Culture, Kandri's Tourism Management

INTRODUCTION

Community harmony is one form of social activity that must be carried out in Indonesia. As a unitary country comprising diverse ethnic groups, each with its own unique cultural, national, and physical characteristics, living together harmoniously is crucial for maintaining the unity of the nation and the state. Harmony can be achieved through various activities, including arts and cultural activities, which can be carried out in various community settings, such as the village of Kandri in Semarang, Central Java.

Art serves as a distinguishing factor among the ethnic groups in Indonesia. The diversity of arts and cultures across the archipelago reflects various forms of traditions within the communities, each providing identity to the respective cultures across Indonesia (Ikhwan, 2022). Identity acts as recognition for outsiders who observe it. For insiders, on the other hand, art and culture provide a sense of security as they are familiar with them and can expect to find comfort through desired aesthetic enjoyment. Comfort and stability are achieved through the basic principles consistently found in various forms of expression. Regarding identity, it can be classified into group identity, ethnic or tribal identity, and national identity. National identity is an interpretation of the patterns of values, symbols, and traditions that shape the unique heritage of the nation, as well as the individual's identity with these patterns and heritage, including cultural elements (Arini, 2015).

Kandri Village is one of the villages in Gunung Pati Subdistrict, Semarang Regency, Central Java. This village has several potentials, especially in the field of arts and cultural tourism. Kandri Tourism Village is well-known for its residents who preserve local traditions and culture. One of the traditions that is still preserved is the *Nyadran Kali* ritual, which is performed as a form of respect to the ancestors believed to have saved the village from a past flood disaster.

In the management of *Nyadran Kali* tourism in Kandri Village, sustainable culture plays a crucial role. Sustainable culture refers to the efforts to preserve and pass down culture from generation to generation as a form of heritage and cultural identity of a region.

Efforts for sustainable culture in the management of *Nyadran Kali* tourism in Kandri Village are carried out in various ways, including involving the local community in the management and organization of *Nyadran Kali* tourism. This engagement includes youth groups, mothers, and residents. Additionally, introducing the younger generation to the *Nyadran Kali* tradition and educating them about it are done through formal and informal education, such as school activities or community-based initiatives. This community-based and participatory tourism management can also enhance the economic well-being of the local community by empowering them in tourism management and organization.

Previous studies related to Kandri Village have been conducted, such as Khotimah (2019), who studied the cultural differences between foreign tourists and the local community based on intercultural communication. The research revealed differences in communication, evident in verbal and non-verbal language systems, economic systems, educational systems, values, norms, as well as religious systems. This differs from the research conducted by Lewa (2018), which focused on the development of tourism and culture in Kandri Village through entrepreneurial community development. The study resulted in the development of entrepreneurship in Kandri Village through ecolodges, eco-recreation, eco-education, eco-research, eco-energy, eco-development, and eco-promotion. Furthermore, Wiyatasari (2021) conducted training to enhance the ethical competence of tour guides when dealing with Japanese tourists. While several studies and training programs have been carried out in Kandri Village, the authors aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of sustainable culture from the older generation to the younger generation, as seen in the *Nyadran Kali* tradition of Kandri Village in 2023.

METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative research approach. According to Moleong (2017), qualitative research aims to understand phenomena experienced by the research subjects, such as behaviors, perceptions, motivations, actions, and so on. The process of understanding is viewed holistically and described in words and language. The data sources for this research consist of primary and secondary data. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. Data validity is ensured through the triangulation of sources. The data analysis follows an iterative process of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Overview of Kandri Village

Kandri Village is one of the villages located in the Kandri

Sub-district of Gunungpati, Semarang City. The Kandri Tourist Village is abbreviated as Dewi Kandri. According to data from Alfiyanti (2022), Kandri Village has a total area of 375,848 hectares. Kandri Village is divided into 26 neighborhood units (RT) and 4 community units (RW). The majority of the population in Kandri Village is of Javanese ethnicity and uses Javanese as their daily language. Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2020, the population of Kandri Village is approximately 4,827 people.

Kandri Village has diverse natural potential. Dewi Kandri has natural tourism potential such as the Kreo Cave Tourism Object, located on a small island in the middle of the Jatibarang Reservoir, inhabited by hundreds of friendly long-tailed monkeys. Additionally, there is the Jatibarang Reservoir, which is a man-made tourist attraction equipped with tourist boats and fishing spots, as well as several springs (*sendang*) utilized by the community for daily needs or other tourism activities. Special interest tourism potentials include eco-tourism and educational tourism, packaged as tours for groups of preschool and school-aged children, ranging from elementary to high school and college. The supporting facilities and infrastructure for tourism include the tourism village management office and secretariat, tour guides, homestays, parking areas, tour packages, fruit gardens, Omah Alas Art Studio, tourist train, toilets, small businesses (PKL), micro, small, and medium enterprises (UMKM) stalls, camping grounds, outbound locations, river tubing, village exploration, fishing area, Omah Alas Studio, and Kandri Etnik. The signature dish of Dewi Kandri is *Sego Kethek*, and the typical souvenirs include various snacks and food made from cassava, such as *Wingsing*, *Jenang Tape*, *Dodol Tape*, *Sikela*, *Gethuk*, various cassava chips, and *criping*. In Kandri, there are also various handicraft products made from bamboo, wood, and other materials, as well as t-shirts and batik. In addition to its natural potential, Kandri Village also has the potential for local cultural heritage that is carried out according to the Annual Activity Calendar. These activities include the Procession and Cultural Parade of *Sesaji Rewanda*, the Legend of Gua Kreo Grand Work, *Nyadran Desa*, *Nyadran Kubur*, *Nyadran Kali*, as well as *Barikan and Sedekah Waduk*. The existing art potentials include

Gendongan Lesung, Kempling Kemanak, Gamelan, Karawitan, and Dance Studios. The presence of these various potentials led to Kandri Village being designated as a Tourist Village in 2012 by the Mayor of Semarang through Decree No. 556/407 dated December 21, 2012, as a Tourist Village Cluster Based on Natural and Cultural Attractions. Approximately 10 years later, in 2022, Kandri Tourist Village was recognized as one of the top ten tourist villages in Central Java (“Gelar Desa Wisata,” 2022).

2. Nyadran Kali Tradition in Kandri Village

*Nyadran Kali is one of the traditions in Kandri Village, Gunung Pati Subdistrict, Semarang Regency. Nyadran Kali is usually held every year in the month of *Jumadil Awal* according to the Javanese calendar. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Nyadran Kali had been postponed and resumed in January 2023. This event is a form of gratitude and tribute to the ancestors and river guardians, who are considered the source of life for the community in Kandri Village.*

*Nyadran Kali is managed by several parties and is carried out sustainably. One form of sustainable management is carried out by tourism awareness groups (*pokdarwis*). In Kandri Village, there are two *pokdarwis*, namely *Pokdarwis Pandanaran* and *Pokdarwis Suko Makmur*. These *Pokdarwis* have their own responsibilities. *Pokdarwis Pandanaran* is responsible for managing education, agriculture, animal husbandry, and cultivation, while *pokdarwis Sukomakmur* focuses on Kreo Cave and Teak Reservoir. Since *Nyadran's* activities this time were related to the two *pokdarwis*, they were carried out together (Sriyanto, 2018).*

*In general, Nyadran Kali is held in a sacred river or stream area according to the local community's beliefs. The tradition of Nyadran Kali is carried out by the people of Kandri Village, who gather along the river and perform rituals such as cleaning the river, decorating boats, and lighting torches. After that, the event continues with offering *sesajen* (ritual offerings) to the ancestors and river guardians.*

Nyadran Kali, besides being a religious ritual, also serves as a gathering to strengthen the bond and brotherhood among

community members. In addition, the *Nyadran Kali* tradition provides an opportunity to teach cultural values and morals to the younger generation to preserve the cultural traditions and noble values of their ancestors. The difference between the implementation of *Nyadran Kali* tradition this year compared to the previous years is that the people of Kandri Village entrusted the execution of this tradition to the younger generation to carry it out correctly and systematically. As stated by one of the community leaders in Kandri Village, "*sing enom sing ngupakara lan ngupayake, sing sepuh jaluk pangestune*" (the youth make an effort, the elderly pray and give their blessings).

3. Stage of implementation of *Nyadran Kali* tradition in Kandri Village

The implementation of *Nyadran Kali* Tradition in Kandri Village involves several stages, namely:

- a. Welcoming guests: Before the event begins, the community welcomes guests who come from outside the village, such as relatives or close friends.
- b. Preparing *sesajen*: After welcoming the guests, the community prepares *sesajen*, which includes rice, side dishes, fruits, and scented flowers. These offerings are presented as a sign of respect to the ancestors who have passed away.
- c. *Ngondhog*/river cleaning: The initial stage of the *Nyadran Kali* ceremony is cleaning the river or stream considered sacred by the local community. The community cleans the river from trash or other objects that may disrupt the ceremony.
- d. Floating *sesajen*: After the river is clean, the community prepares *sesajen* or scented flowers to be floated in the river. These offerings are considered a form of respect to the ancestors and spirits residing in the river.
- e. Procession: Once the *sesajen* is ready, the community prepares for a procession toward the river. The procession begins with carrying flags and gamelan

instruments, followed by the community members holding the *sesajen*.

- f. Floating *sesajen* into the river: Upon reaching the river, the prepared *sesajen* or scented flowers are floated to the river as a tribute to the ancestors who have passed away.
- g. Collective prayer: After floating the *sesajen*, a collective prayer is conducted as an expression of gratitude and supplication to God, as well as a plea to the ancestors for blessings and prosperity.
- h. Sharing food: After completing the ceremony, the community usually holds a communal meal as a gathering to strengthen the bond and brotherhood among the residents.

4. Local Cultural Values in Kandri Village as the Foundation of Kandri Tourism Village

Based on observations and direct interviews with various sources in Kandri Village during the implementation of the *Nyadran Kali* tradition on January 22, 2023, several local cultural values are continuously preserved and manifested in various forms of culture, such as traditional ceremonies and art performances. Some of the local cultural values in Kandri Village include:

(1) Religious values:

Religious values in the implementation of the *Nyadran Kali* tradition in Kandri Village are manifested through various activities involving prayers. These prayers are performed individually by the guardians of the sacred springs and collectively by the community, expressing gratitude and seeking fertility and well-being from the Almighty God.

(2) Mutual cooperation values:

The value of mutual cooperation is demonstrated through various community activities. Before the implementation of the *Nyadran Kali* tradition, a mutual

cooperation called “*resik-resik*” (cleaning) is carried out to clean the springs that will be used for the tradition. It is worth noting that Kandri Village has several springs, including Jambu, Pancuran, Nggawi, Lanang, Getas, and Tanjung.

(3) Environmental care values:

The value of environmental care is shown through the attitude of the Kandri Village community in maintaining the cleanliness of the surrounding environment. When visiting Kandri Village, one can observe the clean and serene atmosphere despite its location on the outskirts of Semarang City.

(4) Responsibility values:

The value of responsibility is demonstrated through the community’s compliance with regulations to maintain environmental cleanliness. This includes adhering to prevalent myths and traditions, as well as faithfully carrying out the traditions every year.

(5) Creativity values:

Creativity values are reflected in the local products of Kandri Village. One example is the Siwarak batik, featuring motifs inspired by cassava leaves and long-tailed monkeys, which reflects the local potential of Kandri Village.

(6) Artistic values:

Artistic values can be found in Kandri Village during the implementation of local traditions. The purpose of art performances is to promote and introduce the unique culture of Kandri Village to the wider community. During the *Nyadran Kali* tradition, various forms of artistic performances, such as traditional dances and *ketoprak* shows, can be witnessed. However, art performances are not limited to the *Nyadran Kali* tradition alone. For instance, the Matirta Suci dance is showcased during the *Rewanda* tradition, and *Wayang Kulit* (shadow puppetry) performances are held during the *Apitan* tradition. In addition, Kandri Village is home to a cultural gamelan studio called Kandri Laras.

3. The Philosophical Values of the *Nyadran Kali* Tradition

The *Nyadran Kali* tradition in the village of Kandri, Gunung Pati District, Semarang Regency, has philosophical values, including:

- (1) Respect for ancestors: In the *Nyadran Kali* tradition, the people of Kandri Village show respect for their deceased ancestors by making offerings and praying together. This demonstrates a sense of respect and gratitude towards the ancestors who are believed to protect the well-being and fortune of the community.
- (2) Balance of nature: The *Nyadran Kali* ceremony in Kandri Village is usually performed in a river or sacred stream. In this regard, the community maintains the cleanliness and balance of the natural environment around the river, creating harmony between humans and their surroundings.
- (3) Unity and brotherhood: The *Nyadran Kali* tradition also serves as an opportunity to strengthen the bond of brotherhood and unity among community members. Additionally, the community imparts values of togetherness and mutual assistance to the younger generation as part of preserving cultural traditions and local wisdom.
- (4) Gratitude and sincerity: In the *Nyadran Kali* tradition, the people of Kandri Village express gratitude and sincerity by making offerings as a form of respect to their ancestors. This also reflects a sense of sincerity and devotion in worship and social activities.
- (5) Serenity and harmony: *Nyadran Kali* in Kandri Village embodies the philosophical values of serenity and harmony. During the event, a peaceful and tranquil atmosphere prevails. The community engages in collective prayer as a form of self-reflection and harmony with nature and their ancestors.
- (6) Belief and spirituality: The *Nyadran Kali* tradition in Kandri Village also showcases the community's belief and spirituality towards their ancestors and the power of nature. This is reflected in the way the traditional ceremony is performed with conviction and respect for the ancestors

believed to possess mystical powers that bring fortune and security to the community.

The factors regarding the cultural relay in Kandri Village concerning the *Nyadran* tradition this time align with research conducted by Trimartuti (2022) on an integrated and sustainable tourism pilot strategy in Semarang City. The study results indicate that Kandri Village has supporting factors to make the village a potential tourist village with agro-tourism characteristics. Kandri Village has beauty, fertility, strategic location, adequate transportation, and a rich culture to which people are still attached. This is supported by the ongoing government support through *pokdarwis* and BKM in Kandri Village.

4. Future Development of Kandri Tourism Village

The management of Kandri Village is carried out by several parties and involves related agencies. In the management of Kandri Village, the existing *pokdarwis* are assisted by the Community Independence Agency (BKM) whose role is to bridge between the village government, *pokdarwis*, and PNPM (National Community Empowerment Program). The BKM in Kandri Village, namely BKM Langgeng Joyo, has been running for 10 (ten) years, implementing various programs as planned (Sriyanto, 2018). To aid in the implementation of the BKM program, BKM Langgeng Joyo has formed works unit, including the Environmental Management Unit (UPL), Financial Management Unit (UPK), Social Management Unit (UPS), and the Tourism Management Unit (UPP). The Community Independence Agency, particularly through the Tourism Management Unit (UPP) of Kandri Tourism Village, holds primary responsibilities and functions related to managing, maintaining, utilizing, and preserving the potential of Kandri Tourism Village.

The continuation of the sustainable cultural process, as reflected through the *Nyadran Kali* tradition in Kandri Village, has given rise to optimism among various parties regarding the clear development direction of the village. Based on the researcher's observations of the series of events and considering Kandri Village as an integrated tourism village, the following development proposals can be made:

- (1) Infrastructure Development: The village government can enhance infrastructure development, such as roads, irrigation, and other public facilities. This can facilitate mobility and economic activities in Kandri Village.
- (2) Tourism Development: Kandri Village possesses a natural beauty that can attract tourists. The village government can develop various tourism potentials, such as nature tourism, historical tourism, or culinary tourism.
- (3) Improvement of Community Welfare: The village government can enhance community welfare through economic and social development programs, such as skills training, women's empowerment initiatives, or the construction of a village market.
- (4) Education: Education plays a crucial role in improving human resources quality. The village government can develop education programs that enhance the quality of education in Kandri Village, such as establishing quality schools or providing scholarships to high-achieving students.
- (5) Health: Improving community health is also an important factor in the development of Kandri Village. The village government can implement health programs, such as constructing a community health center or health improvement programs for the community.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

1. Conclusion

Village management in Kandri can be sustainable due to several influencing factors, one of which is the effective coordination between local governments, village governments, community leaders, youth, and units in Kandri Village, such as BKM, *Pokdarwis*, Karang Taruna, etc. The *Nyadran Kali* tradition serves as an exemplary model of sustainable cultural tourism that is still preserved by the people of Semarang. The existence of cultural philosophical values contained in the *Nyadran Kali*

tradition serves as a valuable foundation for the development of sustainable tourism in Kandri Village. The *Nyadran Kali* tradition is also an attractive tourist attraction for visitors seeking to learn more about Javanese culture and its influence on the lives of local people. Effective tourism management must pay attention to cultural aspects to ensure that traditions such as *Nyadran Kali* continue to be preserved and utilized as valuable tourism assets.

2. Recommendations

This research solely focuses on the topic of sustainable culture in Kandri Village through the *Nyadran Kali* tradition. Further research should be developed in various fields of knowledge, such as Philosophy, Anthropology, Culture, and Social Politics to enrich the research literature on Kandri Village. Currently, many studies in Kandri have focused on the field of tourism and its development. However, there is potential to explore other research perspectives that examine the customs and cultural traditions in Kandri Village, such as the tradition of *Nyadran Kubur* (graveyard ritual), the tradition of *Napak Tilas* in Goa Kreo, and the ritual of *Sesaji Rewanda*. In the authors' opinion, there is a necessity for investigating the values and meanings embedded in the existing traditions of Kandri. Further research can be conducted to explore the philosophical meanings and values of other traditions in Kandri Village, which will enrich the literature on cultural values.

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