

# A model of religiosity integration in sustainable tourism development (The case of Tenganan Pagringsingan Village, Bali, Indonesia)

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**Abstract:** The research in Tenganan Pegringsingan village in Bali, Indonesia examines the relationship between religiosity, convention (awig-awig) environmental sustainability, and sustainable tourism development. The study explores how the village's cultural practices and social structures impact its ecological balance. The method used is descriptive qualitative to examine potential challenges faced by the village. The findings emphasize the importance of preserving traditional practices in maintaining the ecological health of the region. The village's commitment to cultural preservation and environmental sustainability is crucial for its sustainability and resilience. The research also identifies five challenges faced by the village, including tourism governance, friction between customs and tourism, preservation of local wisdom, economic life and cultural-based tourism, and informal education for endogamous marriages. To address these challenges, a comprehensive model is proposed that integrates religiosity, traditional conventions, tourism governance, local wisdom, informal education, cultural tourism-based economy, cultural friction, and integration. This model ensures that tourism development aligns with the village's religiosity and traditional practices, maintains cultural integrity, and promotes sustainable economic growth while preserving the community's way of life.

**Keywords:** cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, religiosity, sustainable tourism development, tourism governance

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## Introduction

The village of Tenganan Pegringsingan, Bali, Indonesia, is a treasure trove of ancient beliefs and spiritual practices that have been woven into the fabric of its culture. As the world of tourism increasingly seeks to engage with the spiritual aspects of destinations, Tenganan offers a unique opportunity to explore the integration of religiosity into sustainable tourism development. However, this integration poses significant challenges, as the village must balance the preservation of its cultural and environmental heritage with the demands of tourism, ensuring that the exposure of its ancient beliefs does not compromise the integrity of its traditions and the ecological balance of the region.

Tenganan Pegringsingan Village, located in Karangasem Regency, East Bali, is a significant cultural and historical site known for its unique traditions and sustainable practices. The village is renowned as a Bali Aga village, preserving ancient customs and rituals that predate the Majapahit kingdom. The village's traditional architecture, including its building layouts and the positioning of Hindu shrines, reflects the influence of generations of ruling families. Despite its rich cultural heritage, Tenganan Pegringsingan Village has successfully integrated tourism into its community, providing the necessary facilities and skilled human resources to attract visitors. The local government is actively involved in the village's development, ensuring that tourism benefits the community while maintaining the integrity of the cultural heritage.

The objective of the research on the integration of religiosity in sustainable tourism development in Tenganan Pegringsingan Village, Bali, Indonesia, is to understand how the unique cultural and religious practices of the village can be effectively incorporated into tourism activities without compromising the village's cultural integrity and the sustainability of its natural and social environments. Religiosity is the capacity to practice the teaching of religion in daily life (Song & Conner, 2015). This research aims to identify strategies that balance the economic benefits of tourism with the preservation of the village's traditional customs and beliefs, ensuring that tourism development does not undermine the village's cultural identity and ecological balance. The study will involve empirical research, thematic observations, and interviews with local stakeholders to assess the feasibility and impact of integrating religiosity into sustainable tourism practices in Tenganan Pegringsingan Village. The research proposes an integration model to ensure the viability of the culture, environment and economy of the village. The research elaborates on literature pertaining to the relationship between religiosity and its contribution to sustainability. The literature as the foundation for the data analysis collected during the research period. The result of the analysis will be synthesized and the foundation of the model construction.

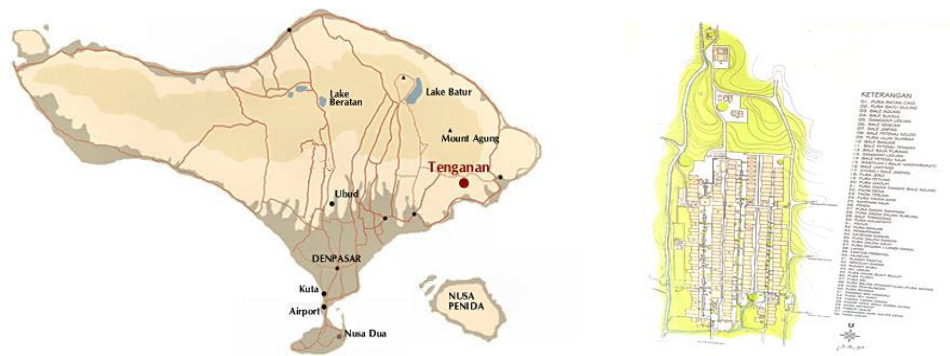
Sustainable tourism theory focusing on a tourism development integrating socio-cultural and environment sustainability as the capital of the development. This research integrated sustainable tourism theory into the concept of religiosity, the practice of the faith of the community. Sustainable tourism development driven by religiosity will be very strong, since it is not just ethical and legal but it is a call of faith. This approach applied to question the phenomenon in the village of Tenganan, since there is a gap between the conventions of the traditional village with the actual condition of the tourism practices. Some studies have pointed out that there are some challenges faced by the village amid the modernization and globalization era (Joniarta et al., 2019).

The research on religiosity and tourism sustainability explored the intersection of religious practices and tourism development using sustainable tourism theory and concept of religiosity, emphasizing the importance of understanding the distinctions between religiosity and spirituality in the context of tourism. Previous researches focus on the culture studies (Dwijendra, 2019; Joniarta et al., 2019; Suci et al., 2023), non-specifically examines the intersection between religiosity and sustainable tourism. This nuanced perspective is vital for constructing a comprehensive model that integrates the cultural, economic, and environmental aspects of tourism development, ensuring that cultural heritage is preserved, economic development is fostered, and environmental sustainability is maintained.

Religious beliefs and cultural traditions play a crucial role in shaping communities' perception and attitudes towards environmental conservation, ethical consumption, and social responsibility (Barro & McCleary, 2019; Kakooza, 2019). Aligning these perspectives in sustainable tourism development strategies, overlooks a vast resource of wisdom, holistic and inclusive approach necessary for effective global change. UNDP and UNWTO start turning to the importance of integration between religiosity and sustainability in tourism development (Geng et al., 2017).

Singh & Clark (2017), indicates the need for deeper exploration into why these valuable perspectives have not been fully integrated. Possible reasons could include cultural biases, lack of understanding, or insufficient collaboration between religious leaders, policymakers, and the scientific community. Addressing this gap requires fostering meaningful dialogue between these stakeholders, acknowledging the significance of religious and indigenous knowledge, and actively incorporating these perspectives into policy-making processes. Only through such comprehensive integration can sustainable tourism development truly become inclusive and representative of the diverse beliefs and traditions that constitute our global society (Dimock, 2019).

This research examined the values of religiosity, analyze aspects that are relevant to the principles of sustainable tourism. The result of the analysis used to develop a model of religiosity integration in sustainable tourism. The efficacy and challenges of the religiosity emanating from the religious and traditional culture integrated in the village. Religiosity can be the catalyst of sustainable tourism as McNamara et al. (2011), deeply elaborate that religious teaching transforms the brain and behavior of its followers.



**Figure 1.** Map of Tenganan Village

The study of the village as a living cultural heritage site enables the exploration of the complex interplay between cultural preservation and sustainable tourism development. By investigating the impact of tourism on the village's economy, social structure, and traditions, it is possible to generate data that can guide the development of policies and strategies aimed at supporting the conservation of cultural heritage while promoting the wellbeing of the local community (Joniarta et al., 2019).

The data collected from the stakeholders of the village demonstrated that 85% of the village members still strongly adhere the traditional rules and regulations of the village, 15% of the members leave the village due to marriage or occupation. The village has been officially inaugurated as tourism village. The living traditions of the villagers provide an authentic experience for the visitors.

This research focuses on the power of religiosity integration in sustainable tourism development, taking the case of Tenganan Pagringsingan Village. The Tenganan Pagringsingan Village map's can be seen in Figure 1. The religiosity aspects examined and analyzed their efficacy in making tourism more sustainable and resilient. The challenges faced by the village in balancing tradition preservation and tourist demand. The research done through observation, interview, focus group discussion and literature studies.

## Methodology

The research method is descriptive qualitative, involving the detailed, comprehensive, and systematic analysis of phenomenon in their natural context context (Dwyer et al., 2012), it aims to understand the underlying meanings, patterns, and themes within a specific phenomenon in the village of Tenganan. The data collected by interviewing the elders of the village. They are chief of customary village, chief of official village and head of eco-tourism development, three members of Gringsing double ikat traditional cloth association. Besides the interview, the focus group discussion was held in the village hall attended by the elders and the representative of the community (Gringsing association). The research was carried out for three months, from April to June 2024. The data collected from the stakeholders was condensed and qualitatively described.

## Results and Discussions

### Results

The result of the research analyzed by elaborating the theory of sustainable tourism, focusing on the environmental and cultural viability to improve the holistic welfare of the village community. The concept of religiosity examines the cross-section between the practice of indigenous traditional beliefs in the community's daily life as the capital of the village's unique living culture. Sustainable tourism involves balancing the needs of visitors, the tourism industry, the environment, and the host communities to ensure long-term sustainability. This approach ensures that tourism development respects the economic well-being and social and cultural concerns of

host communities, while also reducing its impact on the environment and providing meaningful experiences for visitors.

Tenganan village as one of original Balinese traditional villages in Bali elaborates its traditional conventions called *awig-awig* rooted in their ancient cultures to lead the community of the village live sustainably. The leadership model in the village based on seniority called *Ulu-Upad* enables the flow of the teaching and religiosity sustainable from generation to generation. *Awig-awig* in the village controlled and enforced by the village management led by *Bendesa Adat* (chief of the village). As Dharmika (2009), explores the traditional laws and customs of the Tenganan Pegringsingan village focuses on the relationship between the traditions and environmental sustainability, examining how the village's cultural practices and social structures impact its ecological balance. The study is significant because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between cultural heritage and environmental conservation in Tenganan Pegringsingan. By analyzing the village's customs, the study highlights the importance of preserving traditional practices in maintaining the ecological health of the region (Veldman et al., 2013).

The village of Tenganan has maintained its traditional character by focusing on cultural preservation and environmental sustainability, rather than developing as a tourist attraction for financial gain. This approach is evident in the community's priorities, as demonstrated through focus group discussions and observations. The villagers prioritize preserving their cultural heritage and maintaining their traditional way of life, which is reflected in the unique architecture and customs they practice. For instance, the *Pandanus War*, or *Mekare-kare*, is a ritual that involves men fighting with thorny pandanus leaves to ward off evil spirits and bring prosperity to the village. Similarly, the double ikat weaving technique, used to create the sacred *Geringsing* cloth, is a complex and time-consuming process that reflects the villagers' dedication to their traditional crafts. Moreover, the village's management has implemented a donation-based system, where visitors are not required to pay entrance fees but are encouraged to contribute to the village's upkeep through donations placed in boxes provided by the village. This approach ensures that the village remains authentic and commercialized, allowing tourists to enjoy a genuine experience of local life (Ives & Kidwell, 2019). The villagers' commitment to environmental sustainability is also evident, as they have worked to restore the local forest after it was damaged by the construction of a paved parking area during the surge in tourism in 2016.

The result during the Focus group discussion with the village management, they are committed to make the village sustainable by enforcing 8 important prohibitions for the village community. Those who are not compliance, traditional sanctions will be imposed.

**Table 1.** Eight prohibitions mandated by tradition convention (*awig-awig*) for the community members

No.	Heading	Explanation
1	Prohibition of Cutting Down Trees Without Consent	Ensures sustainable management of the village's forests, preserving cultural heritage and essential resources by requiring community consent before cutting down trees.
2	Prohibition of Cutting Down Living Trees	Prevents the destruction of the forest ecosystem and ensures natural growth and maturation of trees, preserving diverse plant and animal species.
3	Rules for Cutting Down Trees for Building and Firewood	Allows cutting down only dead trees for building materials and firewood, ensuring environmental sustainability and forest regeneration.
4	Prohibition of Cutting Certain Trees	Prohibits cutting down sacred trees such as <i>cempaka</i> , <i>durian</i> , and <i>nangka</i> while alive, preserving their cultural significance.
5	Reporting Dead Trees for Cutting	Requires reporting to the head of the traditional village before cutting down dead trees, ensuring responsible environmental management.
6	Exception for Newlywed Families	Allows newlywed families to cut down living trees for building materials, supporting social and cultural practices during their transition into married life.
7	Prohibition of Selling Land Outside the Village	Ensures that the village's land remains within the community, preserving cultural heritage and responsible land use.

8	Prohibition of Picking Fruit from Trees	Only fallen fruit can be picked, ensuring the preservation of fruit trees and natural growth while meeting the community's needs responsibly.
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Table 1 shows the 8 elements outlined above are crucial for the sustainability of Tenganan village, reflecting the principles of sustainable tourism and ensuring that the village's environment, economy, and social fabric are protected for future generations. These elements are not only important for the current generation but also for the future ones, as they ensure the preservation of natural resources, cultural heritage, and community well-being. The prohibition is no longer ethical but spiritual, the teaching of the religion mandates the follower to behave and act accordingly, this is relevant with the research done by Geng et al. (2017). The first four elements focus on the sustainable management of the village's forests. The prohibition of cutting down trees without consent ensures that the community's natural resources are managed responsibly, preserving cultural heritage and essential resources. The prohibition of cutting down living trees prevents the destruction of the forest ecosystem, allowing for natural growth and maturation of trees, which is essential for maintaining biodiversity. The rules for cutting down trees for building and firewood allow for the responsible use of dead trees, ensuring environmental sustainability and forest regeneration. The prohibition of cutting certain trees, such as sacred trees like cempaka, durian, and nangka, preserves their cultural significance and ensures that they are not destroyed, as pointed out by Song & Conner (2015).

The remaining elements address economic and social sustainability. The requirement to report dead trees for cutting ensures responsible environmental management and prevents the unnecessary destruction of natural resources. The exception for newlywed families to cut down living trees for building materials supports social and cultural practices during their transition into married life. The prohibition of selling land outside the village ensures that the village's land remains within the community, preserving cultural heritage and responsible land use. The prohibition of picking fruit from trees ensures the preservation of fruit trees and natural growth while meeting the community's needs responsibly. These 8 elements reflect the intergenerational aspect of sustainable tourism development, as they ensure that the village is not only sustainable for the current generation but also for future ones. The principles of sustainable tourism, as discussed by (Edgell, 2019), in his research, emphasize the importance of considering the environment as one of the capitals in development. By adhering to these elements, Tenganan village can ensure that its natural resources, cultural heritage, and community well-being are preserved for future generations, creating a legacy of sustainability (Wijana et al., 2020).

The existence of the village amid modernity and globalization, challenges for its preservation is inevitable. The result of the interview, focus group discussion and literature review 5 challenges are identified. The five challenges faced by the village of Tenganan Pagringsingan can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Five challenges faced by the village of Tenganan Pagringsingan

No.	Challenges	Description
1	Tourism Governance	The village lacks optimal governance for tourism, with no careful planning or clear tourism management organization, leading to inefficiencies and potential cultural erosion.
2	Friction Between Customs and Tourism	Rapid tourism growth has created friction between traditional customs and modern influences, undermining the village's cultural identity and social structure.
3	Preservation of Local Wisdom	Continuous effort is needed to package and promote local traditions effectively to maintain their relevance and attractiveness to tourists.
4	Economic Life and Cultural-Based Tourism	The village's economic life is tied to its cultural heritage, requiring careful management to develop cultural-based tourism without altering the traditional way of life.
5	Informal Education for Endogamous Marriages	Informal education preserves endogamous marriages, essential for maintaining the village's social structure and cultural heritage.

While the immediate adverse impacts of tourism on the village may not be significant, proactive anticipation and prevention are crucial for ensuring the village's sustainable and resilient development. The village confronts several challenges related to tourism governance, cultural identity, and economic sustainability. Effective management of these issues is essential to maintain the village's cultural heritage, economic viability, and social cohesion.

The village's lack of optimal governance for tourism has led to inefficiencies and potential cultural erosion. Without careful planning and a clear tourism management organization, the village is unable to effectively manage the influx of tourists, which can lead to the erosion of its cultural heritage (Gohar, 2022). This is particularly concerning as tourism growth can bring about significant changes to the village's social structure and cultural identity. Rapid tourism growth has created friction between traditional customs and modern influences, undermining the village's cultural identity and social structure. As more tourists visit the village, they may not understand or respect the local customs and traditions, leading to a loss of cultural identity. This friction can also lead to changes in the village's social structure, as traditional customs and practices may no longer be followed.

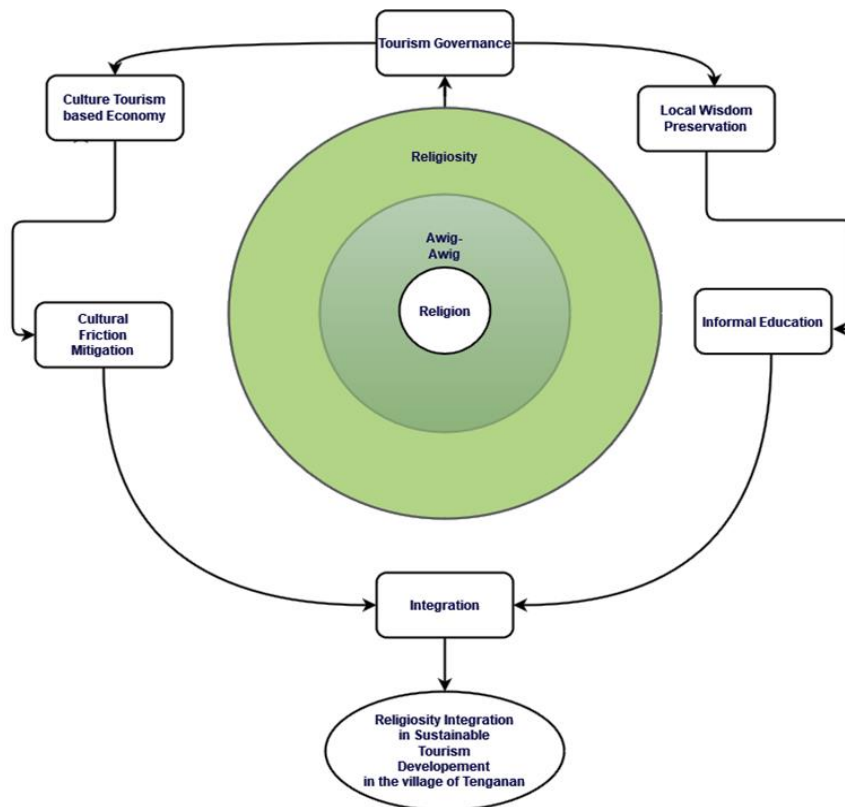
To maintain the relevance and attractiveness of local traditions, continuous efforts are needed to package and promote them effectively. This involves understanding the needs and interests of tourists while also preserving the authenticity of the traditions. Effective packaging and promotion can help maintain the cultural heritage of the village and ensure that tourists gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the local culture. The village's economic life is closely tied to its cultural heritage, requiring careful management to develop cultural-based tourism without altering the traditional way of life. This involves striking a balance between economic development and cultural preservation. If not managed carefully, cultural-based tourism can lead to the erosion of traditional customs and practices (Aritama et al., 2022). Informal education, such as preserving endogamous marriages, is essential for maintaining the village's social structure and cultural heritage. By preserving these traditions, the village can ensure that its cultural identity remains intact and that its economic development is sustainable (Nezlek, 2021).

The finding of the research obviously demonstrates that Tenganan Village has a great potential and opportunity to be developed as a sustainable tourism destination based on religiosity. The traditional teaching and belief structurally accommodated in the tradition convention and executed by the head of Ulu Upad or Bendesa Adat. At the same time challenges take place when a traditional village enveloped by modern and global ecosystem. A model need to be develop to anticipate the deterioration of the village performance.

## **Discussions**

### ***A model of Religiosity integration in Sustainable Tourism Development (The Case of Tenganan Pagringsingan Village, Bali, Indonesia)***

Tenganan Pegringsingan village in Bali faces significant challenges in balancing its cultural heritage with the demands of tourism. To minimize the adverse impacts, a comprehensive model is necessary that integrates various aspects such as religion, traditional conventions, tourism governance, local wisdom, informal education, cultural tourism-based economy, cultural friction, and integration. This model should ensure that tourism development aligns with the village's religious and traditional practices, maintains cultural integrity, and promotes sustainable economic growth while preserving the community's way of life. The model can be seen in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2.** A model of religiosity integration in sustainable tourism development (The case of Tenganan Pagringsingan Village, Bali, Indonesia).

Religion and religiosity play a significant role in shaping various aspects of society, including tourism. It can inspire the creation of awig-awig (convention) that govern tourism practices and promote religiosity among tourists and local communities. This religious aspect can bring about a unique charm and authenticity to tourist destinations. The role of religion and religiosity has become an important issue in sustainable development, the term back to religion indicating that sustainable practices emanate from religious aspect is stronger as it is part of the call of faith (Singh & Clark, 2017).

Tourism governance aims to manage and regulate the tourism activities in the village and ensure that they align with religious values and traditions. This involves preserving the sanctity of religious sites, promoting responsible tourism, and respecting local customs and practices. The research found that the village is not specifically design as tourism destination, the people just live on their culture. The interest of visitors and travel agents to visit the village is inevitable, thus governance is paramount to manage the culturally rich destination (Dredge, 2018).

Local wisdom, deeply rooted in religious beliefs and traditions, guides the development and management of tourism. Local communities often possess rich cultural knowledge and practices that can enhance tourist experiences. Tourism practitioners need to collaborate with locals, learn from their wisdom, and involve them in decision-making processes (Veldman et al., 2013).

Informal education also plays a role in religiosity and tourism. Local communities often share their religious knowledge and practices through storytelling, festivals, or cultural performances. This informal education helps visitors understand and appreciate the religious significance of the destinations they visit. The tradition of Materuna Nyoman, where young generations have to make a strong commitment to study and practice their culture and religiosity for a certain period of time is a model that need to be well integrated with sustainable tourism principles (Dwijendra, 2019; Puglisi & Buitendag, 2022; Suci et al., 2023).



Cultural-based tourism economy is closely linked to religion, as many destinations attract tourists due to their religious heritage. This type of tourism can contribute to the local economy, providing income and job opportunities for the communities while preserving their cultural identity. Culture friction and integration can occur in religious tourism when different cultural and religious beliefs interact. This can lead to a better understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures or, in some cases, challenges due to conflicting values. Achieving cultural integration requires respect, open dialogue, and the willingness to learn from one another. Religious integration and sustainable tourism development involve creating a harmonious relationship between religious practices and tourism activities. This requires a careful balance, where tourism respects and contributes to the preservation of religious sites and traditions, while also benefiting local communities and ensuring the long-term Global Code of Ethics in Tourism

of the destination (Aritama et al., 2022; Song & Conner, 2015; Weaver, 2011; World Trade Organization, World Travel and Tourism & Earth Council (Costa Rica), 1997), they agree that harmonious intersection between religion, religiosity and sustainable tourism are crucial, especially in a village culturally and environmentally sensitive. Overall, religion plays a multifaceted role in the context of tourism, inspiring governance, local wisdom, cultural exchange, and sustainable development (Sherma & Bilimoria, 2022). It is important to approach religious tourism with respect, sensitivity, and a commitment to preserving cultural heritage while fostering positive experiences for both tourists and local communities. The discussion should explore the significance of the results of the work, not repeat them. Comment on the data, referring to the literature (compare it to previous research) and pointing out similarities and differences, explaining these if possible. Return to the aim and research question and show how the aims have been met, and the research question answered.

## Conclusions

Tenganan Pegringsingan village in Bali, Indonesia has successfully maintained its traditional character by prioritizing cultural preservation and environmental sustainability by practicing the community religiosity. The village's unique customs and reservoir of their ancient culture in their conventions reflect the community's dedication to their cultural heritage. The village's management has implemented a donation-based system, ensuring that visitors can enjoy a genuine experience of local life without commercializing the village. The villagers' commitment to environmental sustainability is evident in their efforts to restore the local forest by enforcing the principles stipulated in the traditional convention or *awig-awig*. The indigenous belief and practices have become a significant contribution for sustainable tourism development in the village.

However, the village faces several challenges related to tourism governance, cultural identity, and economic sustainability. The lack of optimal governance for tourism can lead to inefficiencies and cultural erosion. Continuous efforts are needed to package and promote local traditions effectively to maintain their relevance and attractiveness to tourists. The village's economic life is closely tied to its cultural heritage, requiring careful management to develop cultural-based tourism without altering the traditional way of life. Informal education, such as preserving endogamous marriages, *Metruna Nyoman* are essential for maintaining the village's social structure and cultural heritage. A comprehensive model integrating religion, religiosity, traditional conventions, tourism governance, local wisdom, and cultural tourism-based economy is necessary to balance cultural heritage with the demands of tourism, ensuring sustainable economic growth while preserving the community's way of life.

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