
The Impact Of Developing The Beji Temple Tourist Attraction On The Local Economy Of Sangsit Village, Sawan Subdistrict, Buleleng Regency

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ABSTRACT

Beji Temple, a culturally significant heritage site in Sangsit Village, Buleleng Regency, is a key tourist attraction. This study examines the impact of its tourism development on the local economy. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data was collected through field observation, in-depth interviews with eight key informants (including the Village Head and local businesses), and documentation. Analysis was framed by Multiplier Effect Theory, Tourism Impact Theory, and Sustainable Tourism Theory. Findings reveal significant positive economic impacts, particularly boosting culinary businesses like coffee shops, young coconut ice, *rujak kuah pindang*, *blayag*, sausages, and *soto*. Ancillary services such as parking and *kamen* rentals for worshippers also benefit. However, other potential sectors like tour guiding, transportation rentals, and accommodation remain underdeveloped. Key constraints include a lack of trained personnel, insufficient supporting facilities, and limited professional tourism promotion. To maximize sustainable benefits, increased income, new job creation, and local empowerment, more intensive collaboration is crucial. This requires concerted efforts between the village government, tourism office, cultural office, and active participation from the local community.

Keywords: *Beji Temple, Tourism Development, Local Community Economy, Sangsit Village, Cultural Tourism.*



INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as one of the largest archipelagic nations in the world, is endowed with abundant natural and cultural resources that form a strong foundation for its tourism sector. Tourism has emerged as a key driver of national economic growth, providing substantial contributions to state revenue while promoting cultural preservation and local development. The country's diverse natural landscapes and rich cultural heritage make it an attractive destination for both domestic and international visitors. Over the years, tourism in Indonesia has undergone significant transformation, not only in visitor numbers but also in travel patterns, tourist behavior, and infrastructure development.

Bali, in particular, has established itself as one of the premier global tourist destinations. Known for its unique cultural expressions, breathtaking landscapes, and warm local hospitality, Bali continues to attract millions of visitors annually. Supported by aggressive marketing campaigns such as "Wonderful Indonesia" and "Island of Gods," the island's tourism industry has seen consistent growth. Attractions ranging from religious temples, terraced rice fields, and cultural performances to culinary experiences have solidified Bali's global reputation. Among the emerging tourist destinations in Bali is Beji Temple (Pura Beji), located in Sangsit Village, Sawan Subdistrict, Buleleng Regency, which has gained increasing popularity due to its architectural beauty, spiritual atmosphere, and its potential to serve as a driver for local economic growth.

Historically, the economy of Sangsit Village has been rooted in traditional sectors such as agriculture, plantation, and fisheries. With a strong reliance on subsistence farming and traditional irrigation systems (subak), economic opportunities were once limited and seasonal. However, the emergence of Pura Beji as a cultural and religious tourism site has marked a shift in the local economic landscape. The influx of visitors has stimulated small-scale economic activities such as culinary businesses, souvenir shops, homestays, and guiding services, thereby diversifying income sources for the local population.

Tourism, when developed sustainably, plays a critical role in enhancing local livelihoods and creating employment opportunities. It also incentivizes infrastructure development, including roads, communication networks, and public services, which collectively improve the quality of life for local residents. Government intervention is essential in this regard, through strategic policies that support local participation, infrastructure development, tourism training, and destination promotion. At the village level, collaborative efforts between local authorities and communities are pivotal in ensuring that tourism development aligns with cultural integrity and environmental conservation.

The rapid rise in tourist visits to Pura Beji over the period 2022–2024 reflects its growing appeal. According to data from the Buleleng Tourism Office, the number of domestic and international tourists increased significantly, with international visitors forming the majority by 2024. This shift illustrates the importance of Pura Beji not only as a religious landmark but also as an economic asset for the surrounding community. Nevertheless, there remains a gap in scholarly literature concerning the specific economic impacts of this development on local livelihoods in Sangsit Village.

Previous studies have primarily focused on the cultural and historical significance of Pura Beji, treating it as a heritage site rather than as an economic catalyst. Therefore, this research seeks to fill that gap by investigating the real and perceived economic impacts of tourism development centered on Pura Beji. The study specifically aims to examine changes in household income, employment patterns, and the role of local government in supporting sustainable tourism practices. By addressing these aspects, the present study contributes to a deeper understanding of the interplay between heritage-based tourism and rural economic development. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and community leaders in formulating inclusive and sustainable tourism strategies that empower local communities without compromising cultural identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a review of relevant literature and prior studies that inform the analysis of the economic impact of developing the Beji Temple tourist attraction in Sangsit Village, Buleleng Regency. It integrates theoretical perspectives and empirical findings to provide a scholarly foundation for the current research. Several relevant studies have explored the relationship between tourism development and local economic outcomes. Prawira (2013) investigated Pura Beji from a cultural heritage and educational perspective. While offering valuable insights into its historical and spiritual importance, the study did not assess the economic implications of the temple's growing role as a tourist destination. This gap highlights the need for further investigation into how the development of a culturally significant site like Beji Temple can influence local livelihoods and income generation.

Kurniawati (2020) studied the impact of tourism development in Bukit Tinggi, noting that increased visitor numbers led to diversification of local income sources, such as informal trading and food stalls. Their research showed that even modest improvements in tourism infrastructure could positively affect community income. However, the scale and religious-cultural nature of Beji Temple offer a different context, where spiritual tourism may attract more consistent year-round visitation compared to nature-based attractions. Aswin et. al (2023) examined tourism's economic effects in Talang Lake, Solok. The study found that user-generated content on social media significantly increased tourist inflows, generating additional income for local businesses. Although seasonal fluctuations affected the sustainability of these benefits, the research emphasized tourism's potential to stimulate entrepreneurial activities. Compared to this, Pura Beji's cultural draw may result in a steadier tourist base, thereby offering more stable economic opportunities.

Lubis (2023) analyzed the transformation of Melati II from an agricultural village into a tourist village, which led to notable increases in local income and entrepreneurship. However, the study pointed out that the economic benefits were not evenly distributed across the community. This insight is particularly relevant to Pura Beji, where religious

institutions and cultural stakeholders may play a central role in managing tourism, thus requiring inclusive governance to ensure equitable benefit sharing.

Suwilma and Abdi (2022) studied the development of Suak Geudubang Beach, highlighting improvements in local infrastructure, employment opportunities, and income stability. Their findings support the notion that tourism can be a catalyst for regional development. However, they also noted that peak tourist activity was restricted to holidays, unlike cultural sites like Beji Temple, which may attract international tourists year-round due to its spiritual and historical appeal.

The conceptual framework of this study is guided by the Multiplier Effect Theory (Fletcher & Cooper, 1996), which posits that tourism spending triggers direct, indirect, and induced economic effects. Direct effects include tourist spending at local attractions, food vendors, or lodging. Indirect effects encompass subsequent business-to-business transactions to support tourism services, while induced effects involve the increased household consumption resulting from higher income earned through tourism. This framework is pertinent to examining how Pura Beji influences the broader local economy. The research also draws on the Tourism Impact Theory (Richardson & Valetta, 2000), which explores the social, economic, and environmental changes driven by tourism development. The presence of tourists can alter community dynamics, consumption patterns, and cultural expression. As Beji Temple continues to attract more visitors, understanding these multifaceted impacts becomes essential for planning sustainable development.

Lastly, the principles of Sustainable Tourism (Bramwell, 1993; McIntyre, 1993) emphasize that successful tourism development must balance economic gains with environmental protection and community well-being. The integration of local stakeholders in decision-making and the preservation of cultural identity are crucial for long-term benefits. These principles are especially relevant in culturally sensitive sites such as Pura Beji, where the preservation of spiritual heritage must coexist with tourism growth. In summary, the reviewed literature collectively underscores the transformative potential of tourism for local economies, while also highlighting challenges such as equitable benefit distribution, seasonality, and cultural sustainability. These insights frame the analysis of how Beji Temple's development as a tourist attraction contributes to the economic well-being of Sangsit Village and inform the study's approach to assessing both benefits and limitations of cultural tourism development.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the economic impact of developing the Beji Temple tourist attraction on the local community in Sangsit Village, Buleleng Regency. The qualitative approach was chosen to capture in-depth perspectives, contextual realities, and nuanced social phenomena that cannot be represented by numerical data alone. Specifically, a case study approach was utilized to analyze the unique and localized implications of tourism development surrounding Beji Temple, taking into account its historical, cultural, and economic context. The research was conducted at the Beji Temple Tourist Attraction in Sangsit Village, Sawan

Subdistrict, Buleleng Regency, Bali. The location was chosen due to its cultural and historical significance and its increasing potential as a tourism destination. The fieldwork was carried out over a six-month period, allowing for comprehensive data collection and contextual observation. This study used both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data consisted of descriptive narratives gathered through interviews and observations. Quantitative data supported the qualitative analysis by providing measurable indicators such as visitor numbers and changes in income.

Primary data were collected through direct fieldwork, including interviews with key stakeholders and participant observation. Respondents included village leaders, temple custodians, tourism and cultural offices, local entrepreneurs, and residents. Secondary data were obtained from official documents, prior studies, academic literature, and tourism statistics.

Sampling Technique The selection of informants was conducted using purposive sampling, targeting individuals with deep knowledge and involvement in the development and management of Beji Temple as a tourist destination. These included the village head, temple custodians, officials from the Department of Tourism and the Department of Culture, and members of the local community involved in tourism-related businesses.

Data Collection Methods Three primary data collection techniques were employed:

1. Interviews.
2. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather perspectives on how tourism development has impacted economic conditions, livelihoods, and local business opportunities.
3. Observation.
4. The researcher conducted direct observation of the temple area and its surroundings to understand tourist flows, interactions, infrastructure conditions, and emerging business activities.
5. Documentation.
6. Supporting documents, including tourism records, promotional materials, and previous research findings, were reviewed to validate and enrich the analysis.

Data Analysis Data analysis followed the model of Miles and Huberman (1992), which includes four main stages:

1. Data Collection. Information was gathered through field observations and interviews.
2. Data Reduction. Raw data were categorized and synthesized based on themes such as economic impact, employment, infrastructure, and social change.
3. Data Display. Information was organized into tables, descriptive narratives, and visuals to facilitate interpretation.
4. Conclusion Drawing and Verification. Patterns and relationships within the data were identified to draw conclusions that address the research questions.

This methodology ensures a comprehensive, contextual, and empirically grounded understanding of how the development of Beji Temple as a cultural tourism destination affects the local economy in Sangsit Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Research Location

Sangsit Village, located in the Sawan Subdistrict of Buleleng Regency, Bali, holds deep historical and cultural significance. The area was formed through the unification of four traditional villages and is now home to Pura Beji, a temple dedicated to Dewi Sri, the Balinese goddess of rice and fertility. As a "Pura Subak," the temple has long served as a spiritual and agricultural center, making it a key site for understanding the interplay between religion, tradition, and economic life.



Figure 1. Beji Temple Tourist Attraction
Source: Author (2025)

Community Economic Conditions Surrounding Beji Temple

The development of Beji Temple as a tourist attraction has significantly influenced the economic conditions of the local population. Observations and interviews conducted with local stakeholders—including small business owners, community leaders, and local authorities—reveal a notable shift in livelihood patterns. Previously unemployed residents or housewives are now involved in micro-enterprises such as selling food, beverages, renting ceremonial cloths (*kamen*), and managing parking facilities. Qualitative evidence from interviews with local entrepreneurs (e.g., Made Sayang, Ketut Suwan, Ketut Suartini) affirms improved income and business opportunities following increased tourist activity. Similarly, community leaders such as the Village Head and Adat leaders confirmed that tourism has expanded employment and diversified income sources beyond agriculture and fishing, which were often unreliable due to seasonal factors.

Using Fletcher and Cooper's (1996) Multiplier Effect Theory, the economic changes were analyzed through three main channels:

1. Direct Multiplier Effect: Tourists purchase food, drinks, pay parking fees, and rent *kamen*, directly benefiting local sellers and service providers.

2. Indirect Multiplier Effect: Businesses reinvest earnings in local supply chains, buying ingredients, improving facilities, or hiring labor, thereby expanding the benefit to non-tourism actors.
3. Induced Multiplier Effect: Increased income leads to higher household consumption, stimulating other sectors like retail, education, and housing improvements.

Economic Impacts of Beji Temple Tourism Development

Using the Tourism Impact Theory (Richardson & Valetta, 2000), three dimensions of economic impact were assessed:

1. Economic Impact: Enhanced income generation, diversification of livelihoods, and microenterprise development were evident. Households that once relied solely on farming now benefit from consistent tourist-related income.
2. Sociocultural Impact: The temple's growing popularity has promoted cultural pride and preservation. However, unregulated tourism poses risks of commodifying sacred traditions. Local leaders emphasize the need for cultural sensitivity and proper tourist behavior.
3. Environmental Impact: Environmental preservation remains critical. The temple and surrounding landscapes are vulnerable to pollution and overcrowding. While tourism raises awareness about preservation, inadequate infrastructure and visitor management could undermine these benefits.

Government's Role in Supporting Economic Impact of Tourism Development The local and regional governments play a vital role in facilitating sustainable tourism. Through training programs in guiding and homestay management, the Tourism Office of Buleleng Regency aims to increase community participation and service quality. The Department of Culture supports preservation of traditional practices and encourages residents to engage in creative economy activities (e.g., traditional food, crafts).

Digital promotion via social media, tourism platforms, and collaborations with Google Maps has increased visibility for Beji Temple. However, limitations persist—such as the lack of souvenir kiosks, accommodation options, and tour services. These gaps present opportunities for policy-driven development.

Applying the Sustainable Tourism Theory (McIntyre, 1993; Bramwell, 1993), the government's role is assessed across three dimensions:

1. Economic: Government enables inclusive economic growth through training, easing business permits, and promoting SMEs to benefit from tourism.
2. Sociocultural: Regulations and public campaigns ensure that tourism respects local traditions and religious norms, thereby preserving cultural identity.
3. Environmental: Infrastructure projects like toilets, trash bins, and designated pathways help mitigate tourism's ecological footprint. Community education further strengthens stewardship.



Figure 2. Community meeting involving traditional leaders, local government representatives, and residents at Pura Beji, Sangsit Village

Source: Author (2025)

The image illustrates a community meeting held at Pura Beji involving traditional leaders (kelian adat), village officials, and local residents, reflecting the participatory governance model in managing cultural tourism development. This form of dialogue is crucial in ensuring that tourism initiatives align with local values and traditions, as well as in identifying community needs and potential opportunities. Such collaborative forums demonstrate the active role of local stakeholders in preserving cultural heritage while embracing the economic benefits brought by increasing tourist visits. The presence of various community elements also highlights the integration of social, cultural, and economic perspectives in supporting sustainable tourism at Pura Beji.

Overall, government efforts align with sustainable tourism principles, yet require further integration across stakeholders to maximize long-term benefits. Conclusion of Results and Discussion The development of Beji Temple as a cultural tourism site has demonstrably improved local economic conditions, expanded livelihoods, and fostered cultural revitalization in Sangsit Village. While challenges remain—particularly in infrastructure, equitable benefit distribution, and cultural preservation—the combined efforts of the local community and government show strong potential for realizing sustainable tourism that benefits current and future generations.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that the development of Beji Temple as a tourist attraction has had a significant positive impact on the economic conditions of the local community in Sangsit Village, Buleleng Regency. Prior to the development, many community members relied heavily on agriculture, fishing, or were unemployed. With the rise in tourist visits to Beji Temple, various forms of microenterprises have emerged—including food stalls, beverage sales, kamen rentals, and parking services—contributing to increased household income and job creation. Furthermore, the tourism development has affected not only economic conditions but also social and cultural dimensions. Economically, community members have become more

independent through small businesses and tourism-related employment. Socially, local awareness of cleanliness, hospitality, and communal participation has grown stronger. Culturally, the presence of tourists has inspired the community to better preserve and promote their heritage and religious practices, especially at Pura Beji. However, efforts are still needed to ensure that this tourism development remains culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable. Government agencies, especially the Tourism Office and the Department of Culture of Buleleng Regency, have played a key role through training programs, promotional strategies, and infrastructure support. These collaborative efforts have laid a foundation for inclusive and sustainable development, though there remain opportunities for improvement in areas such as accommodation, souvenir markets, and guide services. For future researchers, this study recommends expanding on the current qualitative findings by employing quantitative or mixed-method approaches to more precisely measure the economic impacts of tourism development at Beji Temple. Future studies could focus on calculating income multipliers, employment rates, or statistical comparisons over time to provide deeper insights into how tourism influences local livelihoods and economic structures in Sangsit Village.

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