

## THE EXISTENCE OF KEDONGANAN AS A CULINARY TOURISM DESTINATION AND LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DYNAMICS

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### Abstract

*This study aims to analyze the existence of Kedonganan as a culinary tourism destination based on Community-Based Tourism (CBT) and the accompanying socio-economic dynamics amidst increasingly complex business competition. Using a mixed methods approach, data was collected through a survey of 24 culinary business actors, field observations, and in-depth interviews with the Head of BPKP2K. The findings indicate that the implementation of CBT in Kedonganan has successfully encouraged community participation in the tourism sector and increased local income. However, on the other hand, weak regulations that are no longer relevant to developments in the field have triggered unhealthy competition in tariffs and commissions among business actors, as well as fraudulent practices that have damaged the destination's reputation. From an Institutional Theory perspective, the crisis is identified as a crisis of regulatory legitimacy and social disintegration that directly impacts tourism sustainability and tourist satisfaction. Although social norms and community values remain strong, they are not enough to offset the weak oversight system and ineffective sanctions. In response to the crisis, an evidence-based approach has been implemented, accompanied by incentives, training, and cross-stakeholder collaboration to rebuild the collective reputation. This research emphasizes the importance of regulatory reform, fair incentive mechanisms, and strengthening community capacity in maintaining a balance between economic growth, cultural preservation, and social sustainability in community-based tourism destinations.*

**Keywords:** *Kedonganan, Culinary Tourism, Community-Based Tourism, Social Crisis, Institutional Theory, Sustainable Tourism.*

### Introduction

Culinary tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the tourism industry, as it introduces the richness of local culture through the unique flavors of regional cuisine. In addition to serving as a means of preserving culinary traditions, culinary tourism also makes a significant contribution to boosting the local economy (Sunaryo, 2019) (Putri et al., 2023). This can be seen in Kedonganan Village, Badung Regency, Bali, which is widely known as a seafood culinary tourism destination, with a management concept that combines culinary experiences and the coastal cultural atmosphere.

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The management of culinary tourism in Kedonganan adopts a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) approach, which positions the local community as the main actors in tourism development. CBT serves as a tool for sustainable development by integrating economic, social, and environmental aspects (Rika Widianita, 2023), and promotes community welfare through active participation in the tourism industry (Wiwin, 2018). However, based on an interview with Mr. I Made Pakris, SH., M.H., the Chairman of BPKP2K, it was stated that since its implementation in 2007, there have been socio-economic dynamics, particularly in the form of pricing and commission competition among culinary business actors, which have led to tensions and instability within the tourism business ecosystem in Kedonganan.

The ongoing competition crisis not only threatens the sustainability of the industry but also leads to social disintegration and a decline in the destination's image. According to the Chairman of BPKP2K, the commission system and weak regulatory oversight have the potential to damage the area's reputation and the community's long-term welfare. To address this issue, a theoretical approach such as Institutional Theory is needed, as it emphasizes the importance of regulations, social norms, and value systems in shaping organizational behavior (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983). In addition, a structured incentive mechanism can also serve as a strategic solution to create a fair and competitive business environment (Firdaus F & Mardiah, 2023) (Wibowo et al., 2024).

Research that integrates this theoretical framework is essential to evaluate the success of CBT implementation in Kedonganan. The participation of stakeholders such as the local community, entrepreneurs, and the government is a key factor in creating sustainable governance (Rentandatu et al., 2021). Thus, this research stems from the need to understand how the competition crisis emerged, its impact on the local socio-economic landscape, and the institutional strategies required to sustain Kedonganan's existence as a leading culinary tourism destination in Bali.

## **Research Method**

### **1. Research Approach**

This research employs a mixed-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. The purpose of this approach is to gain a holistic understanding of the social phenomena and crises occurring within the context of community-based culinary tourism in Kedonganan. This is in line with the approach used by Rentandatu et al. (2021) which combines regulative, normative, and cognitive analysis in the development of community-based tourism, as well as an approach to Mandić et al. (2025) which emphasizes the importance of stakeholder integration in addressing crises in the tourism sector.

### **2. Research Location and Duration**

The research was conducted at the Kedonganan Tourist Attraction, South Kuta District, Badung Regency, Bali. The research period began on February 11, 2025.

### **3. Types and Sources of Data**

#### **3.1 Quantitative Data**

Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires distributed to culinary entrepreneurs to measure their perceptions of regulations, social norms, and incentive mechanisms.

### 3.2 Qualitative Data

Qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews and observations to explore the social context, practices, and ongoing crises. The use of these two types of data refers to the approach of Lavandoski et al. (2016), which emphasizes the importance of combining quantitative and qualitative data in understanding institutional pressures and social legitimacy in tourism destination management.

## 4. Data Collection Techniques

### 4.1 Observation

Direct observation was carried out as reported by Triyuni et al. (2019) who used observational techniques to map the dynamics of business actors' interactions and community participation in the management of coastal tourism (in Kedonganan and its surrounding areas).

### 4.2 Interview

An interview is a face-to-face conversation conducted in a dialogical manner to obtain specific data, carried out in a relaxed yet serious atmosphere to produce valid information (Hermawan, 2018).

### 4.3 Survey

A survey is defined as a quantitative method used to collect empirical data from respondents through structured questionnaires, with the aim of measuring variables such as tourist motivation, satisfaction, and intention to revisit (He & Luo, 2020).

## 5. Research Instruments

### 5.1 Interview Guideliness

The interview guidelines were developed based on indicators from Stakeholder Theory (Freeman et al., 2010) and Institutional Theory (Peters, 2021), to explore the relationships and responses of business actors and managers to the crisis.

### 5.2 Likert Scale Questionnaire

The Likert scale questionnaire was used to measure the level of alignment between institutional values and the behavior of business actors (regulative, normative, cognitive, and incentive), as applied in the study by Rentandatu et al. (2021) and Lavandoski et al. (2016).

## 6. Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all culinary entrepreneurs involved in the management of the Kedonganan area (24 individuals), and a full sample was used. The sampling technique was conducted using purposive sampling, as explained by Mahadewi (2018) to focus on subjects that are relevant to the phenomenon being studied.

## 7. Operational Definition of Variables

The main variable in this study is Institutional Theory by Schoenl (2018) with the following four dimensions:

Tabel 7. 1. Operational Definition of Variables

| Variable                          | Dimension           | Indicator  |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| <i>Institutional Theory Model</i> | Regulative          | the existence of rules and legal sanctions that are enforced   |
|                                   | Normative           | social values and norms that regulate community interactions.  |
|                                   | Cognitive           | shared beliefs and common understanding of how things work.    |
|                                   | Incentive Mechanism | the presence of rewards and punishments for business behavior. |

## 8. Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using a descriptive statistical approach, employing the Respondent Achievement Level (TCR) to summarize quantitative results. This analysis was used to measure perceptions of each Institutional Theory indicator and categorized according to Sugiyono's (2012) scale in Keresna (2012). The use of descriptive analysis aligns with the method of Sharma et al. (2024) assessing stakeholder perceptions of crisis management policies in the tourism and hospitality sector.

## Result and Discussion

### 1. Pre-Crisis at Kedonganan Beach

Before the crisis openly erupted, the culinary tourism area of Kedonganan Beach had already shown signs of misalignment between existing regulations and field realities. The management regulations, which have been in place for over 15 years, were deemed inadequate to accommodate the evolving social and economic dynamics. Based on an interview with the chairman of BPKP2K, despite preventive, educational, and even repressive efforts by the BPKP2K, violations of the rules continued to occur systematically. This situation reflects an "institutional misfit" a mismatch between the regulatory structure and the dynamic needs on the ground which contributed to an increased risk of crisis.

Nevertheless, social values and community norms continued to play an important role in maintaining stability. Survey results show that 91.7% of business actors agree with the presence of local associations as guardians of business ethics and social order. When formal regulations weaken, the normative pillar of institutional theory remains a strong force in preserving the community's social cohesion (B. Miles et al., 2023). Norm enforcement is also carried out through social pressure, such as reprimands directed at influential local figures, thereby creating a broader deterrent effect.

### 2. Crisis Occurs at Kedonganan Beach

#### 2.1 Legitimacy Crisis and Regulatory Ineffectiveness

The crisis in Kedonganan began with the ineffective implementation of regulations, which led to repeated violations such as price manipulation and illegal commission systems. Based on an interview with the chairman of BPKP2K, it was revealed that despite tiered supervision, violations continued to occur—even after sanctions were imposed. This indicates a legitimacy crisis, where business actors no longer respect formal authority due to weak law enforcement. In the context of Institutional Theory, the coercive pressure from regulations failed to generate sustained compliance (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983).

## 2.2 Destructive Competition and Social Disintegration

Unhealthy competition between businesses leads to social disintegration within communities. Fraudulent practices such as price manipulation in transactions demonstrate weak oversight and a loss of solidarity within community-based management (CBT). According to the head of the BPKP2K, open conflict between businesses demonstrates that collective values have been replaced by individual interests, weakening the social structure that was previously a key strength of CBT.

## 2.3 Threats to Sustainability and Destination Image

When regulations fail to be enforced and community values erode, the sustainability of an area as a culinary tourism destination is threatened. The destination's image is tarnished by manipulative practices and open conflict, potentially reducing tourist interest. Furthermore, local communities that previously benefited economically from community-based management begin to experience uncertainty due to tensions between business actors. This situation highlights the importance of institutional legitimacy and social stability as the foundation for destination sustainability (Lavandoski et al., 2016).

# 3. Post-Crisis at Kedonganan Beach

## 3.1 Regulation and Incentives as Institutional Solutions

Recovery efforts require regulatory reform and the implementation of incentive mechanisms. The response to the Kedonganan crisis demonstrates a shift toward an evidence-based approach involving training, education, and incentives for compliant businesses. This creates both positive incentives and strong sanctions, aligning with the incentive principles of Institutional Theory (Peters, 2021).

## 3.2 Collective Reputation as Institutional Capital

One of the key assets in recovery is rebuilding collective reputation. Reputation reflects not only service quality but also social trust between businesses and visitors. Reputation recovery is achieved through cross-stakeholder collaboration and the strengthening of community values, thereby reinforcing the normative and cognitive pillars of institutional theory. In this context, reputation becomes an institutional asset that supports the legitimacy of the area as a leading culinary tourism destination (Rentandatu et al., 2021).

## Conclusion

The social crisis in the Kedonganan culinary tourism area is caused by weak regulations that are no longer relevant to the dynamics on the ground. Regulations, which are more than 15 years old, are deemed incapable of adapting to contextual changes, thus triggering the practice of tariff manipulation and illegal commission systems, despite the implementation of preventive, developmental, and repressive approaches by management. Unfair business competition also triggers social disintegration. Fraudulent practices and price competition between businesses erode collective values and weaken the community's social structure, thus disrupting the principle of Community-Based Tourism (CBT), which has been a key strength in culinary tourism management (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983) (Peters, 2021).

This situation indicates an institutional legitimacy crisis, where business actors no longer view regulatory authorities as legitimate entities due to weak oversight systems and the effectiveness of sanctions. This aligns with Institutional Theory, which states that coercive regulatory pressure will be ineffective without strong legitimacy (Lavandoski et al., 2016). However, normative pillars such as social values and community norms continue to play a crucial role in maintaining social cohesion. Social pressure exerted by local community leaders such as village heads and village heads has proven effective in maintaining social stability, even when formal regulations are weakened.

The crisis recovery strategy is implemented through an evidence-based approach, training, equitable incentive mechanisms, and cross-stakeholder collaboration. This approach aims to rebuild collective reputation and ensure the sustainability of community-based tourism (Rentandatu et al., 2021). Therefore, institutional theory has proven relevant in analyzing and addressing the social crisis in Kedonganan. The combination of regulatory, normative, and cognitive dimensions (Peters, 2021), and strengthening social legitimacy is an important foundation in building fair, competitive and sustainable destination governance.

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