

Sustaining the Monkey Forest: A Model for Edutourism Sanctuary in Ubud, Bali

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Abstract

Ubud, a cultural and spiritual hub in Bali, Indonesia, is renowned for its sustainable tourism practices that align with the traditional Balinese philosophy of *Tri Hita Karana*, which emphasizes harmony between humans, nature, and the divine. This research explores the sustainability of the Monkey Forest in Ubud, Bali, as an edutourism sanctuary, focusing on its role in promoting education and conservation. The study examines how the Monkey Forest integrates ecological preservation with cultural tourism, providing an educational experience for visitors while maintaining the area's biodiversity. Data were collected through surveys, interviews with interviews with local stakeholders, including community leaders, conservation experts, and tourism managers, and field observations, analyzing the economic, environmental, and social impacts of the sanctuary. This research used qualitative methodology, Snowball sampling was also carried out in the data collection process. The results indicate that the Monkey Forest contributes significantly to local economic growth through tourism while fostering awareness of conservation practices among visitors. The research suggests implementing community-based initiatives, stricter visitor management, and enhanced educational programs to ensure the balance between conservation and tourism development.

Keywords: sustainability, Monkey Forest, edutourism, Ubud, Bali

A. INTRODUCTION

Ubud, situated in the heart of Bali, Indonesia, is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, lush natural landscapes, and spiritual atmosphere. Many people visit Ubud to experience traditional Balinese arts, crafts, and ceremonies. Besides its artistic charm, Ubud is also known for being a top spot for eco-friendly tourism and educational travel, where visitors can connect with the environment and community while focusing on preserving nature and helping local people. Ubud's sustainable tourism is based on the Balinese idea of *Tri Hita Karana*, which focuses on the balance between people, nature, and the spiritual realm. This belief has influenced local projects and tourism efforts that protect the environment and culture. The town shows its dedication to sustainability by supporting eco-friendly hotels, organic farming, and traditional agriculture, in line with worldwide trends for responsible tourism. The people and businesses in Ubud work together to help the environment, save resources, and include locals in making decisions. Edutourism, which lets you learn while you travel, is a big reason why people like to visit Ubud. In this town, you can discover Balinese culture, art, religion, and the special ecosystems of the area. Ubud is a top choice for people who want to have fun and learn new things. The Monkey Forest Sanctuary, art classes, yoga getaways, and farm tours offer hands-on experiences that teach visitors about Balinese culture and nature. These activities also help local artists, farmers, and cultural experts. The Monkey Forest shows how Ubud cares about sustainable tourism and education. Being a place that protects nature and teaches people, it shows how we can take care of the environment and enjoy our heritage. But,

more tourists coming here can harm the environment, create trash problems, and make it harder to keep our traditions alive. We need to find a way to welcome tourists while also making sure we protect our environment and culture. In this situation, keeping Ubud as a popular place for learning vacations relies on taking care of nature, helping the community grow, and giving visitors valuable educational experiences.

The Sacred Monkey Forest Sanctuary (Mandala Wisata Wanara Wana) houses more than 700 long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*) and a variety of plant species, many of which are culturally significant to the local Balinese population. This sacred site is roughly 12.5 hectares and serves as both a significant tourist destination and a location of spiritual value, housing several old temples essential to Balinese Hindu rites. The sanctuary serves a dual purpose as both a cultural heritage site and a natural conservation area, exemplifying Ubud's commitment to sustainable tourism and Edu tourism. Sustainable tourism inside the Ubud Monkey Forest encompasses techniques that mitigate environmental damage while bolstering the local population. This method aligns with the Balinese philosophy of Tri Hita Karana, which underscores the importance of harmony among humans, the environment, and the divine. The administration of the Monkey Forest Sanctuary incorporates these ideals by guaranteeing that tourism endeavours enhance the welfare of local communities via job development, money distribution, and community participation in conservation initiatives. The sanctuary enacts steps to safeguard the natural environment, including habitat restoration, waste management initiatives, and the regulation of visitor conduct to reduce disturbances to wildlife.

The Ubud Monkey Forest has been classified as a sanctuary as it serves both as a protected area for wildlife and as a site of cultural and spiritual importance. The Monkey Forest Sanctuary is a protected place for the conservation and protection of long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*). It provides a secure environment in which the monkeys can inhabit without the dangers of hunting or habitat degradation. The refuge seeks to promote the welfare of the macaques and sustain their population health by providing an environment that closely mimics their native habitat. As a sanctuary, it supports the preservation of the natural forest ecosystem, encompassing diverse types of trees and plants. The term "sanctuary" emphasizes the area's function in preserving the forest's biodiversity. The Ubud Monkey Forest spans around 12.5 hectares of dense woodland, serving as a sanctuary for numerous plant species indigenous to Bali, which possess ecological and cultural significance. The administration of the forest encompasses initiatives to conserve its natural condition, rehabilitate ecosystems, and sustain the equilibrium between flora and fauna, rendering it ecologically significant.

The Ubud Monkey Forest serves as both a wildlife habitat and a spiritual spot for the local Balinese population. The woodland contains three ancient temples, notably the Dalem Agung Padang Tegal Temple, which are integral to local religious activities and rituals. The term "sanctuary" denotes a spiritual aspect, designating the location as a site for worship and cultural heritage. The Balinese regard the forest and its creatures as safeguarded by heavenly powers, with the temples in the sanctuary serving as significant venues for religious rituals. Function in Education: The Monkey Forest functions as a sanctuary, providing instruction on the natural environment, Balinese culture, and conservation techniques. It serves as a venue for visitors to get a profound comprehension of the region's fauna, the significance of environmental conservation, and the cultural framework around the forest. This educational component is integral to its character as a sanctuary, seeking to cultivate knowledge and respect among visitors.

The integration of CBT with educational tourism (edu-tourism) in the Monkey Forest has created opportunities for visitors to engage deeply with the local environment and culture. This blend allows tourists, especially students and researchers, to learn firsthand about the ecological significance of the forest, the behavioral patterns of its resident macaques, and the cultural heritage tied to the sacred temples within the area. The presence of research facilities further enriches the educational aspect, allowing visitors to gain insights into conservation efforts and sustainable tourism practices. This harmonious combination of CBT and edu-tourism not only fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of the local ecosystem but also strengthens community involvement in preserving their heritage while benefiting economically from increased visitor engagement.

Edu tourism is essential for the preservation of the Monkey Forest, providing tourists with the chance to understand Bali's distinctive biodiversity and cultural legacy. Guided tours and educational activities in the sanctuary offer insights on macaque behaviour and ecology, the value of forest conservation, and the cultural relevance of the temples. Pitman et al. (2010) discuss edu-tourism as part of sustainable tourism that benefits host communities and travelers alike. Their study shows that by incorporating educational elements, tourism can promote environmental stewardship, cultural understanding, and respect for local customs. This not only enriches the visitor experience but also contributes to local conservation and economic goals, especially in culturally or ecologically significant areas. These educational programs seek to cultivate a profound comprehension of the interrelation of nature, culture, and spirituality, prompting visitors to value and honour the fragile equilibrium of this ecosystem. This corresponds with the overarching objectives of Edu tourism, which aims to elevate guests' consciousness of conservation matters while bolstering local economy. The prominence of the Monkey Forest as a tourist site poses problems to its survival. The surge of tourists can result in environmental strains, including habitat deterioration, trash buildup, and increased stress on the macaque population. The threat of cultural commodification increases as the sanctuary becomes increasingly commercialized to satisfy tourist needs. These problems underscore the necessity for sustainable management solutions that emphasize both conservation and the enhancement of the tourist experience.

This study looks at how to combine sustainable practices and learning vacations in Ubud, using the Monkey Forest Sanctuary as an example. By looking at how tourism and protecting nature work together in Ubud, this research aims to give ideas on how to keep the right balance between growing tourism and saving the environment.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This methodology combines in-depth interviews, field observations, and snowball sampling within a qualitative framework to provide a nuanced understanding of the Monkey Forest Sanctuary's impacts. The snowball sampling method facilitated access to a broad range of perspectives, while thematic analysis provided a structured way to interpret the qualitative data. This approach allowed the research to address the interwoven economic, environmental, and social dimensions of sustainable tourism in Ubud, highlighting the balance between community development, conservation, and cultural preservation.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Cultural Learning and Preservation

At the Sacred Monkey Forest Sanctuary, edu-tourism is strategically utilized to foster a deeper appreciation for Balinese culture among visitors. The sanctuary's location within Ubud, a town renowned for its rich cultural and spiritual heritage, makes it an ideal site for cultural immersion. The presence of ancient temples within the sanctuary, such as Pura Dalem Agung Padang tegal, provides visitors with a tangible connection to Balinese Hindu traditions and rituals. These temples are not simply tourist attractions but active sites of worship, which introduce visitors to the sacred and historical dimensions of Balinese spirituality.

The sanctuary leverages this cultural context to educate tourists about the significance of the temples and the role of religious sites within Balinese society. Through guided tours and interpretive signs, visitors gain insight into local practices, symbols, and the values that underpin Balinese life. Such educational engagements contribute to cultural preservation by fostering respect and understanding among tourists, encouraging them to appreciate the depth of Balinese cultural heritage rather than viewing it as a mere spectacle. This not only enhances the visitor experience but also aids in protecting the cultural integrity of the site from the pressures of mass tourism.

One aspect of Cultural Learning and Preservation involves supporting local music and traditional arts communities, such as *sekehe kesenian* groups that perform traditional Balinese music like gong, angklung, and *pesantian*. By providing these groups with financial support, the community can help sustain these art forms, which are essential to Balinese identity and heritage. This funding can be used for regular practice sessions, ensuring that artists have the resources to refine their skills and prepare for performances that showcase Balinese culture to both locals and visitors. Additionally, funds can be allocated to repair and maintain their instruments, many of which are handmade and hold cultural significance.

Such financial assistance is not only a means of preserving traditional music but also serves as an educational tool for visitors who are exposed to these performances. Witnessing live performances of gong, angklung, and *pesantian* allows tourists to experience the rich sounds, rhythms, and ceremonial significance of Balinese music. This immersive experience deepens their understanding of Balinese culture, reinforcing respect and appreciation for the community's artistic heritage. In addition to supporting traditional arts groups, the community also benefits from financial assistance during important religious and cultural events, particularly during Balinese holidays like *Galungan* and *Kuningan* significant festivals celebrated every six months. These funds help families and community groups with the extensive preparations required for these ceremonies, such as creating offerings, decorating temples, and conducting rituals in accordance with Balinese customs.

Galungan and *Kuningan* mark the victory of good over evil and the reunion of ancestors with the living. These ceremony involve elaborate preparations that require time, resources, and financial commitment, often stretching the budgets of local families and communities. External financial support relieves some of this burden, allowing Balinese communities to maintain the integrity and beauty of their religious ceremonies without undue financial strain. This support can also be extended to other important ceremonies, such as temple anniversaries (*odalan*) and life-

cycle rites, which are crucial to preserving the spiritual life and cultural identity of the Balinese people.

By assisting with these costs, financial support programs enable the community to uphold their spiritual and cultural practices, reinforcing the values of Tri Hita Karana the Balinese philosophy of harmony between humanity, nature, and the divine. This assistance further strengthens community cohesion and encourages cultural preservation, as the rituals and ceremonies remain accessible to all members of the community, regardless of economic status. For visitors, experiencing these festivals and ceremonies provides a powerful form of cultural learning, allowing them to observe and appreciate the deep-rooted traditions and the spiritual significance of Balinese rituals. This exposure not only enhances tourists' understanding of Balinese culture but also fosters respect for the religious practices that shape the identity of the Balinese people. Financial support for these ceremonial activities, therefore, plays a vital role in cultural preservation, supporting the community's ability to share their heritage authentically with the world.

In their efforts to preserve and share Balinese culture, the community of Banjar Padang Tegal has also established an amphitheatre dedicated to cultural performances. This amphitheatre serves as a vibrant venue where local arts groups, including those specializing in traditional dance, music, and theatre, can showcase their talents to both local audiences and visitors. By creating a space specifically for cultural performances, the community not only sustains its traditional arts but also provides tourists with an authentic experience of Balinese cultural expressions. This initiative supports the livelihoods of local artists and keeps cultural practices alive, ensuring that they remain integral to Balinese society.

In addition to the amphitheatre, Banjar Padang Tegal has developed an exhibition area to feature the work of Balinese artists, including painters, sculptors, and craftspeople. This dedicated space allows local artists to display their creations, which often draw from the rich symbolism and spiritual themes of Balinese culture. The exhibition area provides artists with an opportunity to gain recognition and connect with a broader audience, which can lead to sales, commissions, and collaborations. By supporting these artists, the community promotes the development of Balinese art and empowers artists to continue exploring and innovating within their cultural heritage.

Together, the amphitheatre and exhibition area contribute to a holistic cultural experience for visitors, integrating visual arts, performance, and traditional practices. This arrangement also supports edu-tourism goals by providing an educational space where tourists can engage with Balinese arts and gain insights into the culture's aesthetic and spiritual dimensions. These cultural venues reflect the community's commitment to cultural preservation, enabling Banjar Padang Tegal to sustain its artistic legacy and present it to the world in an impactful way. The amphitheatre performances and art exhibitions create a meaningful exchange between the local culture and visitors, fostering a mutual appreciation that aligns with the principles of sustainable and educational tourism.

Environmental Conservation Education

the community of Banjar Padang Tegal has established Yadnya Park, a dedicated green space that not only serves as a public park but also functions as an environmental learning hub. At Yadnya Park, the community plants various trees and labels each one with its name, including information on the species, cultural significance, and ecological benefits. This practice fosters environmental awareness among both residents and visitors, as they can learn about the local flora and understand the role of these trees in maintaining a balanced ecosystem. By naming and labelling the trees, Yadnya Park transforms into an open-air classroom where people can engage directly with nature and appreciate the importance of biodiversity.

Yadnya Park is more than just a green space; it represents the community's dedication to integrating conservation practices with cultural values. In Balinese tradition, trees and plants hold spiritual significance, often associated with specific deities or used in ritual offerings. By linking environmental conservation with these cultural beliefs, Yadnya Park strengthens the community's relationship with nature, aligning with the Balinese philosophy of *Tri Hita Karana*, the harmony between people, nature, and the spiritual realm.

Waste Management Initiatives are another key component of Banjar Padang Tegal's environmental efforts. The community actively promotes waste management practices to keep Padang Tegal and the surrounding Ubud area clean. These initiatives include waste segregation, recycling programs, and public awareness campaigns aimed at reducing litter and encouraging responsible disposal. Through these efforts, the community not only addresses the waste generated by increasing tourism but also instils a sense of environmental responsibility among residents and visitors alike.

By promoting both Yadnya Park and comprehensive waste management practices, Banjar Padang Tegal contributes to a cleaner, greener Ubud. These conservation efforts support the community's Edu-tourism goals by educating visitors on sustainable practices and demonstrating the value of environmental stewardship. For tourists, engaging with these initiatives provides a learning experience about Balinese environmental values and the importance of caring for nature. This approach enhances their understanding of the local ecosystem and the impact that responsible tourism can have on preserving the beauty and health of the environment. In summary, the community's efforts in Yadnya Park and waste management exemplify how environmental conservation can be woven into the fabric of daily life and cultural practice. Through these initiatives, Banjar Padang Tegal creates a model for sustainable tourism that not only benefits the environment but also enriches the visitor experience by offering hands-on learning opportunities. This commitment to conservation aligns with the overarching goals of sustainable tourism, ensuring that Ubud remains a beautiful and ecologically balanced destination for generations to come.

The community of Banjar Padang Tegal also prioritizes **public infrastructure and recreational facilities** to enhance the quality of life for locals and the experience for tourists. One prominent example is the **maintenance of sidewalks** in the Padang Tegal area. By ensuring that the sidewalks are safe, clean, and well-maintained, the community makes it convenient and enjoyable for both tourists and local residents to stroll around Ubud. This improvement not only supports the flow of foot traffic but also encourages a more pedestrian-friendly environment, reducing the reliance on motorized transport and helping to preserve Ubud's serene atmosphere.

Furthermore, Banjar Padang Tegal has invested in building a variety of public recreational facilities that cater to diverse interests and age groups. Facilities include a basketball court, soccer field, futsal area, and martial arts spaces, among others. These facilities provide safe, accessible spaces for locals to engage in sports, exercise, and community gatherings, supporting physical health and social connection. They also offer an added attraction for tourists seeking recreational activities, allowing them to observe or even participate in local sports and cultural activities.

These infrastructure improvements align with the community's broader commitment to sustainable tourism and community development. By creating and maintaining such facilities, Banjar Padang Tegal not only meets the needs of its residents but also enhances the tourist experience, offering a range of leisure options that contribute to a more comprehensive and enjoyable visit. Tourists can benefit from these public spaces by interacting with locals, observing community life, and experiencing Ubud beyond its traditional tourist attractions. The community's active role in infrastructure maintenance and development reflects its commitment to creating a sustainable, accessible, and enjoyable environment for everyone in Padang Tegal. The pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and recreational facilities reduce environmental impact, as they encourage walking and healthy outdoor activities.

Socioeconomic Benefits and Community Involvement

the community of Banjar Padang Tegal demonstrates a strong commitment to educational development by providing scholarships and planning future educational facilities. Currently, the community offers financial support to students who face economic challenges in pursuing higher education. Every semester, scholarships amounting to 5 million rupiah are awarded to eligible students to help cover tuition fees and educational expenses. To date, approximately 119 students have benefited from this program, reflecting the community's dedication to supporting the educational aspirations of its youth. These scholarships not only alleviate financial burdens for families but also promote educational access, empowering students to pursue their academic goals and contribute to their community upon graduation. This Investment in education has long-term benefits, as it encourages local talent development and builds a more educated workforce that can sustain and contribute to the growth of Ubud.

Looking ahead, Banjar Padang Tegal has ambitious plans to further enhance local education by establishing new institutions, including a preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school. These schools will implement a national plus curriculum, combining the Indonesian national curriculum with additional international elements, which prepares students with a more global perspective while retaining local cultural values. This approach is particularly valuable in Ubud, where the blending of tradition and modernity plays a key role in the community's identity. These future educational facilities will provide local children with a strong educational foundation from an early age, allowing them to develop both academic skills and cultural awareness. By integrating the national plus curriculum, these schools will nurture students' abilities to navigate an increasingly interconnected world while remaining grounded in Balinese culture. This educational vision aligns with the community's holistic approach to sustainable development, as it not only focuses on infrastructure and economic support but also invests in human capital—the next generation of Ubud.

The scholarship program and plans for new schools highlight Banjar Padang Tegal's commitment to sustainable community development. By investing in education, the community

strengthens its social fabric, promotes equity, and fosters a sense of opportunity for all residents. The scholarship program ensures that financial hardship does not hinder educational achievement, creating a more inclusive environment where young people can pursue their potential and contribute meaningfully to the community. For visitors, these educational initiatives reinforce the perception of Ubud as a community deeply invested in its future. The presence of accessible, high-quality education fosters a stable and prosperous local society, which is essential for sustainable tourism. By creating opportunities for educational advancement, Banjar Padang Tegal not only supports its residents but also contributes to the social and cultural resilience that underpins Ubud's appeal as a tourist destination.

(Puja, et al., 2020) explains that monkey Forest is also carrying out Community-Based Tourism (CBT) for its implementation, demonstrating how local communities can utilize their cultural and natural assets to enhance tourism experiences. This model not only promotes sustainable tourism but also empowers residents by involving them in all aspects of tourism management from planning to execution. The CBT approach helps preserve cultural traditions, protect natural resources, and uplift the local economy by ensuring that economic gains are reinvested back into community initiatives. By actively participating in the management of Monkey Forest, the local community maintains the area's cultural and environmental integrity while benefiting economically. Integrating community-based tourism with educational tourism (edu-tourism) in Monkey Forest offers visitors, especially students and researchers, a rich learning experience. This approach allows tourists to immerse themselves in the ecological and cultural significance of the forest, observe the behavior of the resident macaques, and explore the sacred temples within the area. The establishment of research facilities further enhances the educational value, enabling deeper insights into conservation efforts and sustainable tourism practices. This combination of CBT and edu-tourism not only enriches visitors' understanding of the local environment but also strengthens the community's role in preserving their heritage, while simultaneously boosting local economic growth through tourism.

The economic impact of sustaining the Monkey Forest as an edu-tourism destination extends beyond just the site itself; it supports a thriving ecosystem of businesses in the surrounding area, including canteens, restaurants, and art shops. These businesses cater to both the local community and the influx of tourists, creating significant economic benefits for Banjar Padang Tegal and the wider Ubud area. The presence of the Monkey Forest brings a steady stream of visitors who require dining options, driving demand for local eateries. Canteens and restaurants around the sanctuary offer tourists an opportunity to sample authentic Balinese cuisine, creating an immersive cultural experience that complements their visit to the Monkey Forest. This demand for food services supports local entrepreneurs and workers, providing employment opportunities and contributing to the community's income. The Monkey Forest attracts a culturally curious audience, many of whom are interested in bringing home locally crafted souvenirs. Art shops around Padang Tegal offer a range of traditional Balinese art and handicrafts, such as wood carvings, textiles, paintings, and jewelry. By purchasing these items, tourists not only support local artisans but also contribute to the preservation of Balinese craftsmanship. The success of these shops allows local artists to sustain their livelihood and promotes the survival of traditional art forms within the community.

The increased tourist activity driven by the Monkey Forest has led to a surge in job creation in Padang Tegal and Ubud. Many residents find employment in the businesses surrounding the sanctuary, from service positions in restaurants to roles in retail and artisan workshops. This influx

of tourism-based job opportunities empowers the local population economically, enabling them to participate directly in Ubud's growing tourism sector. Beyond direct employment, there are also indirect economic benefits, as the supply chains for these businesses often rely on local producers and vendors. For instance, restaurants source ingredients from local farmers and suppliers, while art shops may procure materials from local craft producers. This interconnected economic system stimulates the local economy and strengthens Ubud's financial resilience.

D. CONCLUSION

The community of Banjar Padang Tegal in Ubud actively integrates cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and economic support to sustain a model of edu-tourism centred around the Monkey Forest Sanctuary. Financial aid supports traditional arts groups and community ceremonies, while an amphitheatre and exhibition spaces offer platforms for cultural performances and local artists. Environmental initiatives include the establishment of Yadnya Park, where labelled trees educate visitors about local flora, and waste management programs to maintain cleanliness in Padang Tegal. In terms of infrastructure, the community maintains sidewalks and provides recreational facilities like basketball courts and soccer fields for locals and tourists. Educational support includes scholarships for economically disadvantaged students and plans to build new schools with a national plus curriculum. Economically, the Monkey Forest boosts nearby canteens, restaurants, and art shops, creating local jobs and generating funds that go back into community projects. This approach fosters a responsible tourism model, aligning with Balinese values of *Tri Hita Karana* the harmony between people, nature, and spirituality while providing a rich, educational experience for visitors.

For future research, we suggest other researcher to do evaluation of planned educational Institution, as Banjar Padang Tegal is planning to establish preschool, kindergarten, and elementary schools with a national plus curriculum, future research could examine the implementation and impact of these schools on educational quality and cultural preservation. This study could also assess how the curriculum balances global education with Balinese cultural values. Secondly, Future research could explore the perspectives of different community members residents, artisans, and business owners on the development of sustainable tourism. This would provide valuable insights into local satisfaction, cultural challenges, and suggestions for enhancing community involvement in decision making.

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