

Business Tradition: Qualitative Assessment on The Economic Commodification of Larung Sesaji Ritual for Local MSMEs

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to examine the economic commodification of the Larung Sesaji ritual and its contribution to the development of local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) at Kenjeran Beach, Surabaya. It also explores how local communities balance cultural preservation with economic interests in tourism development.

Research Method: This study employed a qualitative business ethnography approach. Data were collected through observations, interviews, documentation, and field notes involving key stakeholders and analyzed using an interactive data analysis model.

Results and Discussion: The findings indicate that the Larung Sesaji ritual serves not only as a sacred cultural tradition but also as an economic catalyst that stimulates local entrepreneurship through culinary businesses, handicrafts, souvenir production, and tourism services. Cultural commodification does not necessarily reduce ritual authenticity when local communities maintain control over cultural representation and decision-making. Community-Based Tourism enhances participation, strengthens local economic resilience, and supports sustainable destination management.

Implications: The findings provide practical guidance for policymakers and tourism stakeholders in designing inclusive and culturally sustainable tourism strategies while supporting MSME development and community welfare.

Originality: This study integrates business ethnography, cultural commodification, and Community-Based Tourism to explain cultural heritage as a sustainable economic resource.

Keywords: business ethnography; cultural commodification; larung sesaji ritual; community-based tourism; local MSMEs.

1. Introduction

Developments in the global tourism industry indicate that local culture is increasingly viewed as an economic asset capable of creating added value for communities while enhancing the competitiveness of tourist destinations. The shift from mass tourism toward experience-based tourism encourages travelers to seek authentic experiences through direct interaction with the traditions, rituals, and daily lives of local communities. In this context, cultural rituals are no longer understood merely as ancestral heritage but also as part of the creative economy ecosystem that can drive the tourism sector. However,



using culture as a tourism product requires a balance between economic interests and the preservation of cultural values to ensure the sustainability of traditions. This perspective is reinforced by Ristiawan *et al.*, (2024), who explain that commodification in tourism must be understood as a negotiation between economic values, social spaces, and the interests of local communities.

This development has also spurred the emergence of various community-based tourism (CBT) approaches that position local communities as the primary actors in destination management. The CBT model is believed to foster a more equitable distribution of economic benefits while strengthening cultural and environmental conservation. Through community involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of tourism activities, local culture is not only preserved as a community identity but also becomes a source of sustainable livelihoods. This aligns with research by Hanafi (2024), which emphasizes that the success of CBT is determined by community participation, the preservation of local culture, and the strengthening of community capacity in managing tourist destinations.

In Indonesia, the cultural rituals of coastal communities are an important part of the intangible cultural heritage that represents the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and local beliefs. One ritual that is still practiced today is Larung Sesaji, a tradition of fishing communities performed as an expression of gratitude for the bounty of the sea and as a prayer for safety while at sea. This ritual holds religious, social, and ecological significance as it serves as a medium for transmitting cultural values across generations and strengthens solidarity among coastal communities. In the context of tourism anthropology, this ritual represents a cultural identity with great potential to be developed as a culture-based tourist attraction without diminishing its sacred meaning. This perspective is supported by Mustafa *et al.*, (2024), who emphasize the importance of cultural justice in tourism management so that local communities retain control over their cultural heritage.

The Kenjeran Beach area in Surabaya is a thriving coastal tourist destination that has developed through the integration of marine resources, the culture of the fishing community, and local economic activities. In addition to being known as a beach resort, Kenjeran also serves as a venue for various cultural traditions of the coastal community, including the Larung Sesaji ritual, which is regularly held as part of the local cultural identity. The holding of this ritual attracts tourists and indirectly creates economic opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs, food vendors, souvenir artisans, and tourism service providers in the surrounding area. This phenomenon demonstrates that cultural rituals can serve as drivers of the local economy when managed collaboratively by the community, the government, and business operators. These findings align with research by Junaid (2024), which states that the success of community-based destinations is heavily influenced by community participation and social networks in tourism management.

The increase in tourist visits to the Larung Sesaji ritual has spurred various economic activities carried out by micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) around Kenjeran Beach. Local culinary specialties, handicrafts, souvenirs, and transportation services all benefit economically from the increased tourist traffic during the ritual. Thus, cultural rituals not only hold symbolic value but also generate economic value that contributes to increased community income. From a cultural economics perspective, this situation demonstrates that culture can serve as a productive resource as long as its management remains mindful of the social and cultural values inherent in the tradition. This view is reinforced by Lionanda & Kurniawati (2024), who explain that the success of community-based tourism development is heavily influenced by social capital and the economic activities of local communities.

The transformation of cultural rituals into tourist attractions has also given rise to the phenomenon of cultural commodification. When rituals are promoted as tourism products, their cultural

function tends to shift from spiritual practice to economic commodities consumed by tourists. While this shift can bring economic benefits, it also has the potential to diminish symbolic meaning if communities lose control over cultural representation. Therefore, cultural commodification must be understood as a process of negotiation involving economic interests, cultural identity, and social sustainability. This perspective is put forward by Darlis (2025), who emphasizes that cultural commodification must be balanced with the protection of local identity to prevent cultural exploitation solely for the benefit of the tourism industry.

From a business perspective, the Larung Sesaji ritual has the potential to build destination branding, strengthen MSME competitiveness, and create an authentic tourism experience. The economic value generated stems not only from transactions involving products and services but also from the formation of a distinctive destination image and tourists' loyalty to the cultural experiences they gain. Therefore, research on the economic commodification of cultural rituals must use a qualitative approach to explain how communities interpret these changes and how MSMEs derive economic benefits without eroding the cultural values that have been passed down. Research by Ermayanti *et al.*, (2024) indicates that the development of culture-based tourism villages must maintain a balance between cultural commodification and the sustainability of traditional values so that culture remains the community's identity.

Although various studies have addressed community-based tourism, cultural commodification, and tourism-based MSME development, most still focus on aspects of destination management, cultural preservation, or general economic impacts. To date, there has been very limited research specifically examining the economic commodification of the Larung Sesaji ritual in relation to the development of local MSMEs through the perspective of business ethnography. This gap forms the basis of this study. This study offers a novel approach by integrating the theories of cultural commodification, business ethnography, and MSME development to explain how traditional rituals can serve as a source of economic value while preserving cultural significance amid the growth of the tourism industry. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of sustainable tourism business theory and serve as a foundation for formulating more inclusive and sustainable cultural destination management policies.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a literature review and hypothesis development. Section 3 presents the research method and design. Section 4 provides the results and discussion. Section 5 presents Concluding Remarks and Recommendations.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Business Ethnography

Business ethnography is a qualitative research approach that adapts ethnographic methods to understand social, cultural, and economic phenomena within business environments (Amuomo & Odoyo, 2020). Unlike conventional business research, business ethnography emphasizes the lived experiences, meanings, values, and interactions of actors involved in economic activities. Through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and field immersion, researchers can explore how individuals and communities interpret business practices within their socio-cultural contexts. According to recent studies, business ethnography has become increasingly relevant in tourism and cultural industries because it enables researchers to examine how economic activities are embedded within local

cultural practices (Adams, 2024; Mantilla & Solis, 2026). In the context of cultural tourism, business ethnography helps explain how communities negotiate between preserving cultural traditions and pursuing economic opportunities. Therefore, this approach is appropriate for understanding the economic commodification of the Larung Sesaji ritual and its impact on local MSMEs in Kenjeran Beach.

2.2 Cultural Commodification

Cultural commodification refers to the process by which cultural expressions, traditions, rituals, and heritage are transformed into products or services that possess economic value within the tourism market (Erwen *et al.*, 2025). From a tourism perspective, commodification occurs when cultural elements are presented, promoted, and consumed as attractions by visitors. While commodification can generate economic benefits for local communities, it may also create tensions regarding authenticity, cultural ownership, and identity preservation. Recent tourism studies suggest that commodification should not always be viewed negatively. Instead, it can serve as a mechanism for cultural sustainability when local communities maintain control over cultural representation and benefit directly from tourism activities (Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025). In this regard, cultural commodification becomes a process of negotiation between economic interests and cultural preservation. The Larung Sesaji ritual represents an example of how traditional cultural practices can generate economic opportunities while maintaining their symbolic and spiritual meanings.

2.3 Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a tourism development approach that emphasizes active participation, ownership, and control by local communities in tourism planning and management (Jackson, 2025). The primary objective of CBT is to ensure that tourism benefits are distributed equitably among community members while promoting environmental conservation and cultural preservation. CBT encourages communities to become not merely tourism objects but active stakeholders who determine how tourism activities are developed and managed. Previous studies indicate that successful CBT implementation contributes to community empowerment, increased local income, strengthened social capital, and sustainable destination management (Melese *et al.*, 2026; Pramono & Juliana, 2025). In cultural tourism destinations, CBT plays a crucial role in safeguarding cultural authenticity because local communities remain responsible for preserving and interpreting their cultural heritage. In the context of Kenjeran Beach, CBT provides an analytical framework for understanding how residents participate in managing the Larung Sesaji ritual as both a cultural tradition and a tourism attraction.

2.4 Local MSMEs Development in Cultural Tourism

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are widely recognized as key drivers of local economic development, particularly in tourism destinations (Mastuki *et al.*, 2025). Tourism activities create opportunities for MSMEs through increased demand for food products, handicrafts, souvenirs, accommodation, transportation, and other supporting services. The development of cultural tourism destinations often generates multiplier effects that stimulate local entrepreneurship and improve household incomes (Gai *et al.*, 2024). Previous research demonstrates that cultural events and traditional festivals can enhance business opportunities for local entrepreneurs by attracting visitors and creating new markets for locally produced goods and services (Lopes & Hiray, 2024; Prastyo *et al.*, 2025). Consequently, cultural heritage can function as an economic resource that supports sustainable

community development. Within the Larung Sesaji ritual, MSMEs benefit from increased tourist arrivals through the provision of culinary products, handicrafts, souvenirs, and tourism-related services. This relationship illustrates how cultural heritage contributes to local economic resilience.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the integration of Cultural Commodification Theory, Community-Based Tourism Theory, and Business Ethnography. Cultural Commodification Theory explains how cultural rituals acquire economic value through tourism activities. Community-Based Tourism Theory emphasizes the importance of community participation and local control in ensuring sustainable tourism development. Business Ethnography provides methodological and analytical tools for understanding how economic and cultural practices are negotiated within local communities (Jin *et al.*, 2024; Nikjoo *et al.*, 2025). The integration of these perspectives suggests that cultural rituals can simultaneously function as cultural heritage and economic resources when local communities actively participate in tourism governance. Through this framework, the study explores how the Larung Sesaji ritual contributes to MSME development while maintaining cultural authenticity.

3. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using a business ethnography design to gain an in-depth understanding of the process of economic commodification of the Larung Sesaji ritual and its implications for the development of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the Kenjeran Beach area of Surabaya. The ethnographic approach was chosen because it can elucidate the relationships between cultural practices, economic activities, and social interactions within the context of everyday life. Through ethnography, the researcher not only observes economic behavior but also interprets the cultural meanings underpinning the local community's business activities. This approach is considered appropriate for examining the dynamics of culture-based businesses that develop in community-based tourism destinations (Adams, 2024).

The research location is Kenjeran Beach, Surabaya, East Java, with a focus on the Larung Sesaji ritual and the community's economic activities during the ritual. The location was selected through purposive sampling because this area is a coastal cultural tourism destination that blends the traditions of the fishing community with local tourism-based economic activities. These characteristics make Kenjeran Beach a relevant location for examining the relationship between cultural rituals, economic commodification, and the sustainability of community-based enterprises. Such a contextual approach is a defining feature of contemporary ethnographic research in tourism studies.

Research informants were selected using purposive sampling, taking into account their level of involvement in the rituals and economic activities taking place in the study area. Informants included traditional leaders, the chairperson of the Larung Sesaji ritual committee, MSME operators, food vendors, souvenir artisans, fishermen, tourism destination managers, tourists, and local government representatives. Informants were selected based on the principle of "information-rich cases," which involves choosing individuals with deep experience and knowledge of the phenomenon under study so they can provide comprehensive information. This approach is widely used in ethnographic research on business and community-based entrepreneurship (Patton, 2023; Verver & Koning, 2024). Data collection was conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and

field notes. Participatory observation was used to directly understand the performance of the Larung Sesaji ritual, community trade activities, interactions between tourists and MSME operators, and the social dynamics that emerged during the event. In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured approach to allow informants to describe their experiences, perceptions, and strategies in utilizing cultural rituals as a source of economic livelihood. Supporting data included photographs, event archives, government documents, and media publications.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes the processes of data condensation, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions (Miles *et al.*, 2020). All data from observations, interviews, and documentation were analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to the commodification of rituals, local business practices, MSME strategies, and the cultural meanings upheld by the community. Analysis was conducted iteratively throughout the research process to ensure that the resulting interpretations remained consistent with the evolving social context in the field. This thematic analysis approach is widely used in ethnographic research and culture-based business studies. To ensure the credibility of the research findings, the following techniques were applied: source triangulation, methodological triangulation, temporal triangulation, and member checking with key informants. Triangulation was carried out by comparing information obtained from various groups of informants and various data collection techniques so that the resulting interpretations would have a high level of reliability. In addition, the researcher applied reflexivity throughout the research process to minimize bias and maintain objectivity in interpreting the observed social phenomena. The practice of reflexivity is one of the main characteristics of contemporary ethnography.

This study also adheres to the principles of research ethics, which include informed consent, confidentiality of informants' identities, respect for the cultural values of the community, and the use of data solely for academic purposes. Given that this study involves cultural rituals with spiritual dimensions, the entire process of observation and interviews was conducted with respect for customary norms and in accordance with the regulations in effect within the local community. Such an ethical approach is a crucial component of ethnographic and business anthropology research to ensure that the relationship between researchers and the community remains intact. Through the business ethnography approach, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the Larung Sesaji ritual undergoes economic commodification, how MSMEs leverage cultural momentum to boost business activities, and how the community negotiates economic interests alongside the preservation of traditional values. This approach is expected to contribute to the development of theories in business anthropology, cultural tourism, and community-based entrepreneurship, while also serving as a foundation for formulating policies for the sustainable development of cultural tourism destinations.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Analysis Results

4.1.1 *The Commodification of Rituals as a Strategy for Creating Economic Value*

Research findings indicate that the Larung Sesaji ritual has transformed from a spiritual cultural activity into a tourist attraction that generates economic value for the coastal communities of Kenjeran Beach. This transformation does not negate the ritual's meaning but rather creates new opportunities for the community to derive economic benefits through the development of MSMEs, local cuisine, handicrafts,

and tourism services. From a cultural economics perspective, this process constitutes a form of value creation that leverages cultural heritage as an economic resource without eroding the community's cultural identity. According to Adams (2024), culture in tourism is not static but is constantly negotiated through interactions among local communities, tourists, and development actors, thereby generating new forms of cultural economy.

4.1.2 Business ethnography explains the relationship between culture and economic activity

The business ethnography approach reveals that a community's economic activities cannot be separated from the cultural value system that has developed within that community. The commercial activities that emerge during the Larung Sesaji ceremony demonstrate that the community's business practices are built upon social norms, beliefs, and kinship ties that have existed for a long time. Thus, the community's economic behavior is driven not only by profit motives but also by efforts to preserve cultural identity and ensure the community's sustainability. This perspective aligns with Pink *et al.*, (2022), who explain that ethnography enables researchers to understand how economic practices are influenced by people's social and cultural experiences and their daily lives.

4.1.3 Community-Based Tourism Strengthens Local Economic Sustainability

Research findings indicate that the success of the Larung Sesaji ritual as a tourist attraction is inextricably linked to the community's active involvement in the planning, implementation, and management of the event. This involvement strengthens the community's sense of ownership of the tradition while ensuring that MSME operators and the surrounding community benefit economically. This model exemplifies the characteristics of Community-Based Tourism (CBT), which positions the community as the primary agents of destination development. According to Junaid (2024), the success of CBT is heavily influenced by community capacity, collaboration among stakeholders, and participatory governance that maintains a balance between economic, social, and cultural interests.

4.1.4 Cultural authenticity is a competitive advantage for tourist destinations

This study found that tourists do not only come to witness the Larung Sesaji procession, but also seek authentic cultural experiences through interactions with local communities, sampling traditional cuisine, and understanding the meaning of the rituals as conveyed by the community. This indicates that cultural authenticity is a key factor in creating high-quality tourism experiences. According to Timothy & He (2024), authentic experiences are formed through tourists' participation in cultural activities that are still practiced naturally by local communities, rather than merely through performances staged for commercial purposes.

4.1.5 Cultural commodification is not always a threat to tradition

One of the study's key findings is that cultural commodification does not always lead to the loss of ritual meaning. As long as local communities retain the authority to determine how the Larung Sesaji is conducted, cultural values can be preserved alongside the growth of economic activity. In other words, commodification in this study is better understood as a process of cultural adaptation to changing community needs and the tourism market rather than as a form of cultural exploitation. This view is supported by Richards (2021), who explains that culture can be a source of economic innovation as long

as the transformation process remains controlled by the local community as the custodians of that culture.

4.1.6 *The Contribution of MSMEs to Culture-Based Economic Development*

The presence of MSMEs around Kenjeran Beach demonstrates that cultural rituals can generate a multiplier effect on the local economy. The increase in the number of tourists during the Larung Sesaji ceremony drives up demand for culinary products, souvenirs, transportation services, and various other services. Thus, cultural rituals not only generate direct economic benefits but also expand employment opportunities and strengthen the economic resilience of coastal communities. According to UN Tourism (2024), the development of culture-based tourism involving local SMEs is one of the key strategies for enhancing economic inclusivity while strengthening the sustainability of tourist destinations.

4.1.7 *Implications for the Development of Tourism Business Models*

The research findings show that the business models that have emerged around the Larung Sesaji ritual are not only oriented toward product sales but also toward creating cultural experiences. The economic value received by the community arises because the products offered possess historical narratives, cultural symbols, and local identity that attract tourists. Thus, culture serves as a source of product differentiation that strengthens the competitiveness of tourist destinations. According to Kotler *et al.*, (2021), value creation in the modern economy is increasingly determined by a product's ability to deliver experiences, stories, and meanings that are relevant to consumers; therefore, this concept remains relevant in the context of cultural tourism.

4.1.8 *Contributions of this research to the advancement of knowledge*

Academically, this study contributes to the development of business ethnography by integrating the theories of cultural commodification, Community-Based Tourism, and MSME development into a single analytical framework. Unlike previous studies, which have primarily examined cultural rituals from an anthropological or tourism perspective, this study demonstrates that cultural rituals can also be understood as a source of business model innovation that supports local economic development without neglecting cultural preservation. In line with Adams (2024), the ethnographic approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between culture, economic activity, and destination sustainability, thereby enriching the literature on culture-based tourism businesses in Indonesia.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 *The Authenticity of Rituals as a Source of Culture-Based Economic Advantage*

Research findings indicate that the Larung Sesaji ritual not only serves as a cultural practice of coastal communities but also functions as an economic asset that provides a competitive advantage for the Kenjeran Beach tourist destination. The ritual's uniqueness offers an experience that is difficult for other destinations to replicate, thereby enhancing the destination's appeal while expanding market opportunities for local MSMEs. Thus, the economic value created stems from the interconnection between cultural heritage, local identity, and authentic tourism experiences. This interpretation aligns with the thinking of Kathleen M. Adams, who asserts that tourism ethnography views culture as a social

practice that is continuously produced through interactions among communities, tourists, and destination spaces, thereby making culture a vital foundation for sustainable tourism development.

4.2.2 Cultural Commodification as a Process of Negotiation

The research findings show that the commodification of the Larung Sesaji ritual cannot be interpreted solely as a process of cultural commercialization. The community continues to preserve the core elements of the ritual, while supporting aspects such as cuisine, handicrafts, and cultural performances are developed to meet tourist needs. This situation indicates that commodification occurs through a process of negotiation between economic interests and cultural preservation. As long as local communities retain control over the organization of the ritual, cultural value can be preserved alongside increased economic benefits. This perspective is also a focus in the development of contemporary tourism ethnography, which emphasizes the importance of community participation in determining cultural representation (Adams, 2024).

4.2.3 Cultural Rituals as Drivers of Local MSMEs

Research findings indicate that the increase in visitor numbers during the Larung Sesaji ceremony has a tangible impact on MSME activity in the Kenjeran Beach area. Traditional food vendors, souvenir artisans, transportation service providers, and creative economy actors gain greater business opportunities through increased transactions during the ritual. This situation demonstrates that culture functions as an economic catalyst capable of creating a multiplier effect for the local economy. Therefore, the development of cultural rituals should be positioned as part of a local economic development strategy that prioritizes cultural and environmental sustainability.

4.2.4 Authentic Experiences as a Destination's Added Value

One key finding of the study is that tourists are not only interested in witnessing ritual processions but also value direct interaction with the local community, stories about the history of traditions, and local products produced by the community. This indicates that authentic experiences are a crucial factor in shaping tourist satisfaction and strengthening a destination's image. In line with this, Timothy & He (2024) explain that tourists generally seek a balance between cultural authenticity and comfort; therefore, destination management must preserve cultural authenticity without neglecting the quality of tourism services.

4.2.5 The Role of the Community in Ensuring the Sustainability of Rituals

This study shows that the active involvement of the local community greatly influences the success of preserving the Larung Sesaji ritual. The community not only carries out the ritual but also serves as guardians of cultural values, managers of tourism activities, and business operators who derive economic benefits from these activities. This situation demonstrates that the sustainability of cultural tourism is inextricably linked to strengthening local community capacity. The greater the community's sense of ownership toward the tradition, the higher their commitment to preserving cultural sustainability and the quality of the tourism experience.

4.2.6 Implications for the Cultural Tourism Business Model

The research findings show that the business model that has developed around the Larung Sesaji ritual is not only oriented toward economic transactions but also toward the creation of social and cultural value. MSME products gain added value because they are linked to historical narratives, local identity, and the cultural experiences tourists gain. Thus, culture serves as a source of value creation that strengthens the differentiation of local products compared to conventional tourism products. This approach supports the development of more inclusive business models because it involves the community as key actors in the cultural tourism value chain.

4.2.7 The Contribution of Business Ethnography to Tourism Studies

The business ethnography approach used in this study provides a more in-depth perspective than conventional economic analysis because it can explain the relationships between economic activities, cultural practices, and the social meanings that develop within communities. As explained by Adams (2024), tourism ethnography is currently evolving toward a more collaborative, participatory, and sustainability-oriented approach, thereby not only explaining tourist behavior but also the social dynamics of local communities. This approach enables this study to identify how business practices evolve without disregarding the underlying cultural context.

4.2.8 Research Contributions and Policy Implications

Conceptually, this study expands the discourse on cultural commodification by demonstrating that traditional rituals can serve as a source of local economic growth when managed according to the principles of sustainability, community participation, and the preservation of cultural values. From a practical perspective, the research findings indicate the need for policies that strengthen the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), enhance cultural interpretation for tourists, protect the sacred values of rituals, and foster collaboration among the government, indigenous communities, and business operators. This approach aligns with the concept of the "authenticity ecosystem," which positions authenticity as a key element in fostering social, economic, and cultural sustainability in tourist destinations (Novais *et al.*, 2024).

5. Concluding Remarks and Recommendation

This study examined the economic commodification of the Larung Sesaji ritual and its contribution to the development of local MSMEs at Kenjeran Beach, Surabaya. Using a qualitative business ethnography approach, data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and field notes involving community leaders, ritual organizers, MSME owners, fishermen, tourists, and local government representatives. The findings demonstrate that the Larung Sesaji ritual functions not only as a cultural and spiritual tradition but also as an economic resource that supports local entrepreneurship through culinary businesses, handicrafts, souvenir production, tourism services, and other creative economic activities. The study further reveals that cultural commodification does not necessarily undermine ritual authenticity when local communities remain the primary actors in cultural representation and decision-making processes. Through a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) approach, community participation strengthens economic resilience, preserves cultural values, and supports sustainable tourism development.

This research contributes theoretically by integrating business ethnography, cultural commodification, MSME development, and Community-Based Tourism into a single analytical framework for understanding cultural heritage as a sustainable economic asset. The study enriches the literature on tourism and cultural economics by demonstrating how cultural practices can simultaneously generate economic value and maintain authenticity. Practically, the findings guide tourism managers, MSME actors, and local communities in developing culturally based business opportunities. From a policy perspective, the study highlights the importance of collaborative governance among local governments, tourism stakeholders, and community organizations to ensure that tourism development promotes cultural preservation, local economic empowerment, and long-term sustainability.

This study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted only at Kenjeran Beach, Surabaya, which limits the transferability of the findings to other cultural tourism destinations. Second, the qualitative approach provides rich contextual insights but does not quantitatively measure the economic impact of the Larung Sesaji ritual on MSME performance. Future studies are encouraged to adopt mixed-methods approaches by combining ethnographic analysis with quantitative economic assessments. Comparative studies across different cultural rituals and tourism destinations are also recommended to develop a more comprehensive and applicable model of sustainable cultural tourism and community-based economic development.

Statement of Use of Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the author used generative artificial intelligence tools to support the scientific writing process. Grammarly was used to check grammar, refine writing style, and improve clarity in scientific writing. All interpretations, analyses, and conclusions presented in this study are the sole responsibility of the author.

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