

Article

Identifying Tourism Potentials of Ethno-Cultural Attractions in Lombok

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Abstract: This article is aimed at identifying the potential of various ethno-cultural practices in the Sasak community with a view of developing them as ethno-cultural attractions to sustain tourists to stay longer in Lombok. Various ethno-cultural practices in relation to folklore, festivals, sports, music, food, beverage, and cultural events were identified, and the tourism potentials were also measured. Data were collected by directly observing and video-recoding the ethno-cultural events, interviewing cultural leaders, religious clerics, community leaders, tourism practitioners, tourism experts, tourism workers' organizations, entrepreneurs, and governments. With content analysis, the study has identified ethno-cultural practices with the potential to be an alternative to Lombok's tourist attractions. These practices are not only essential for Indonesian multiculturalism but are also a resource for improving the economic quality of Sasak families and communities. The article also recommends strategies for this development.

Keywords: cultural tourism; tourism development; cultural attractions



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1. Introduction

This article examines the tourism potential of various ethno-cultural practices in the Sasak ethnic groups on Lombok Island (see Figure 1) which is one of the world's best tourism destinations in Indonesia and in the world [1]. Various ethno-cultural practices have been identified and their tourism potentials have also been analyzed. Data for the study were collected through direct observation of the ethno-cultural events, interviews of key informants from six Sasak ethnic communities, and focused group discussions involving key figures in tradition, religion, community, tourism, and youth matters. The analysis is aimed at identifying and exploring language and cultural knowledge, skills, and practices, as well as local wisdom, with the potential to be reengineered to be essential components for cultural capital and social capital which are not only essential for Indonesian multiculturalism but also support the improvement of the economic quality of Sasak families and communities. The article will rank the tourism potentials which serve as the basis for recommendations in tourism development for the local government.

Improving the economy through tourism has been the agenda of the Indonesian and West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) governments since the 1980s. Attracting more tourists to stay longer in tourist destinations has also been the main marketing strategy of the NTB government [2]. However, the number of visits to NTB, and Lombok in particular, has been fluctuating. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of visits was skyrocketing but went into free fall during the pandemic. Such a situation was also being faced by the tourism industry in other countries [3]. In 2015, two million visits were recorded [4] and two years later the visits increased respectively by 40% and 53%. The outburst of the COVID-19 attack in 2018 sharply decreased tourist visits to NTB to minus 20%, which worsened in 2019 and 2020 to minus 98.91%. In a normal situation, annual tourist visits to NTB are three million with an average annual increase of around 25% [4] and, in 2020, countries of origin of visitors to Indonesia were Singapore (22%), Malaysia (18%), Australia (11%), China

(10%), Japan (8%), Korea (5%), Taiwan (4%), Timor Leste (3%), USA (3%), UK (3%), India (3%), Germany (2%), France (2%), Philippines (2%), and the Netherlands (2%) [5]. However, to Lombok in 2017, the visitors were mostly from Europe (34%), America (21%), Australia (21%), and Asia (18%) [6]. Besides, the age range of the tourists in majority between 15 to 24 (44%) and between 25 to 44 (50%), while other age ranges are minimum (younger than 14, 0%, 45 to 65, 5%; older than 65, 1%). The purposes for traveling range from recreation in the fun, relaxing atmosphere of nature, to participating in ethnocultural camps, sports competitions, and official business meetings, but the main goal is for a holiday (88%) [6]. In terms of education and occupational background, the greatest majority are high school and university students (26%), staff (19%), business persons (11%), housewives (7%), artists (6%), government staff (4%), scholars (4%), and others (19%) [6]. With a total expenditure of around four to ten million rupiahs out of personal, family, or company budget, the tourists were found to have no trouble accessing local cultural attractions which are not only affordable but also mostly included in tour packages.

Although the number of visits is high, the average length of stay is very low. The average length of tourist stay in NTB is 2.11 days [7], which is far below the average national length of stay of 7.79 days [8]. Due to this limited length of stay, tourism contribution to NTB's economy is relatively low. According to the chairperson of the NTB chapter of the Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI NTB), the local government and the local tourism practitioners should uphold tourism events so that tourists can stay longer, spend more money, and contribute more significantly to the economic welfare of NTB communities [9].

Tourists' length of stay is affected by a number of factors [10]. According to them, the stay will be longer when (a) the destination is visited the second time, (b) it is marketed through magazines, TV, and the internet, (c) it is the only destination to visit, (d) accessible via flights, (e) the visitors are teenagers, and (f) the destination has tourist attractions such as cultural events (e.g., cultural festivals and shows) and cultural reviews (e.g., in museums, dioramas or attractions). These dimensions should be dispatched through international tourism promotion agencies [11], such as Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), because they have access to potential tourists [12].

In the West Nusa Tenggara Province (NTB) of Indonesia, the factors from (a) to (e) above have been provided by local governments. Nonetheless, one of the factors, that is, factor (f), cultural events and reviews, is still in need of identification before they can be developed into tourist attractions. The urgency of the study falls within these needs (niches). In the first place, the absence of cultural attractions as reported in a local news report [9] leads to a short length of tourists' stay in Lombok. Secondly, since 2021, Lombok has been a venue for international motorcycle racing (MotoGrand Prix), Iron Men and Iron Women championships, and other international events, and their onlookers need cultural entertainment between the main events [13]. Finally, identifying the ethno-cultural assets to put on offer as tourist attractions needs academic scrutiny involving academics and tourism stakeholders before the assets can be promoted as tourist attractions. Additionally, more and more cultural attractions are demanded after the events are over.

The study aimed at this endeavor by identifying and developing the ethno-cultural practices of NTB communities as assets for local creative economic enterprises in tourism. These can only happen by treating local wisdom as cultural, social, and human capital through which local communities (including women communities) are empowered and, at the same time, sustainable tourism, economic stability, and national cultural heritage must be maintained.

Various factors have been reported to affect tourists' length of stay. Tourist visits are pulled by cultural interest, recreational motives, and ethno-cultural attractions [14]. Recreational tourists usually stay longer [14] but they have a low revisit rate if interesting ethno-cultural attractions are not available [14]. Their number is great and, thus, they need to be served with tourist attractions according to their characters [15].



Figure 1. Map of Lombok.

Tourist attractions and promotions have also been found to affect tourists' length of stay [16]. Tourist attractions need to be attractively promoted before tourism adventures are taken. Tourism brochures and pamphlets have been the top priority in tourism promotion but magazines, TV, and the internet have been found the most effective means of promotion [10], and they have been found to be in high correlation with length of stay [11]. The promotional information should be presented through the internet [12] because studies have found that 35 to 40% of tourists seek tourism information through it prior to deciding tourism destination [12].

Potential ethno-cultural tourism presented as tourist attractions can be in ideographic, organizational, and cognitive forms. Tourist attractions in Lombok can be ideographically presented when local ethno-cultural knowledge is portrayed through the beauty of Lombok's landscapes [17], ethno-cultural sites, museums [18], folklore, ethno-cultural festivals, or ethno-cultural sports [16]. The potential ethno-cultural tourism destinations are organized involving a great number of practitioners, with uniquely local characteristics, involving other potentially related attractions, with a wide range of potential targeted tourists, and having legal status as tourism destinations [17]. The ethno-cultural tourism potential for Lombok's tourist attractions can also be cognitive when they require cognitive involvement of tourists in the attractions: for example, tourist attractions involving tourists learning or partaking in Lombok's sports, dances, songs, traditional cooking classes, Sasak's traditional relaxation massage [19], adventure to ancestral and heritage villages [20], and Lombok's painting arts ([17,21]).

Development of tourist attractions can be conducted using Heritage/Cultural Attraction Atmospherics [22]. Ethno-cultural symbols in the ethno-cultural practices are empowered to be a means of promoting to potential tourists the uniqueness of the tourist attractions over others [23]. These can happen by modifying the current conditions of Lombok's traditional villages as ethno-cultural heritages, for example, by rebuilding the physical conditions, the atmosphere surrounding the village sites, and the public services (e.g., restaurants, public toilets, health services, souvenir market, and others) provided at the sites.

Ethno-cultural attractions can be developed at ethno-cultural sites and can be presented for ethno-cultural, historical, geographical, and educational purposes [24]. The key to success in such development is the creation of a physical environment through remodeling (that is, rearranging the environment of the sites) or refurbishing (that is, re-creating the ethno-cultural attractions to suit tourism and tourist needs). Messy, unorganized, or crowded tourist attractions tend to be avoided by tourists while quiet, well-organized, and well-presented attractions tend to receive positive feedback. The atmosphere of the sites and the tourist attractions can be modified according to tourist expectations [25]. Positive and attractive tourist attractions can be pulling factors for tourists to revisit and recommend the tour packages to potential tourists in their home country [22]. In the case of Lombok's tourism, the physical environments have been well developed but ethno-cultural attractions therein are still in need of continuous development.

Positive and attractive images of tourist attractions are dependent upon design, social, and supporting factors [26]. At the design level, tourist attractions should be designed to maintain tourist-practitioner comfort so that visiting tourists can interact with ethno-cultural practitioners directly and technologically mediated through video, live shows, films, or other communication panels. For this purpose, the route to the sites, the map of the sites, and the seating arrangement should be managed to provide comfort to all visitors. Poor site management leads to confusion and chaos, and these will reduce tourist comfort [22]. Additionally, the sites should be managed such that the visiting tourists can interact socially and professionally with the ethno-cultural practitioners, thus enabling them to pay respect to practitioners' ethno-cultural professions. Supporting factors such as lighting, visual graphics, color patterns, signage of the venue, and music also need to be considered to provide comfort to visiting tourists [27].

In a greater scope, the study focuses on the ethno-cultural practices of Lombok's communities (or the Sasak communities). In the first stage of the study, the language and ethno-cultural practices of the Sasak community with tourism potential have been identified, and this article is concerned with this stage. In the second phase of the study, the language and the ethno-cultural practices will be reoriented and remodeled for tourist attractions in limited scopes before trying them out in greater scopes in a later stage of the study. As a form of social reproduction of ethno-cultural attractions for tourist attractions [28], this three-year development effort will involve the provincial and local governments, ethno-cultural leaders, ethno-cultural practitioners, tourism experts, and

tourism practitioners so that the remodeling and refurbishing of the ethno-cultural attractions for tourist attractions can be effectively performed. Examples of success in such endeavors have been reported in a number of other studies [17,23,24], but with a note that community independence in managing local tourism is preferable because total control of the government system on localized community-managed tourist attractions has been found to negatively affect the latter's development [29].

2. Materials and Methods

The study is motivated by previous studies conducted by the authors themselves or by others in other contexts, particularly on the importance of attractions in traveling decisions and, thus, urging the providing, refurbishing, and promoting of them for cultural attractions as is used in Southeast Asian countries.

In the current stage of the study, language and ethno-cultural practices and attractions with the potential to be developed into tourist attractions have been identified. Data for the study were collected by distributing questionnaires to 127 international tourist respondents. These respondents vary according to countries of origin (Singapore 28, Malaysia 23, Australia 14, China 13, Japan 9, Korea 6, Taiwan 5, East Timor 4, USA 4, England 4, India 4, Germany 3, France 3, South Africa 3, Italy 2, and Argentina 2), gender (Male 63 Female 64), age structure (a. up to 19, 9, b. 20 to 29, 28, c. 30 to 39, 32, d. 40 to 49, 30, e. 50 to 59, 19, e. 60 to 69, 9 and f. 70 or older, 2), education and training (unspecified 9, high school 12, vocational training 37, college 43, specialist training 18, and university degree 8), traveling purposes (official/business 11, curiosity with culture 24, nature 39, and rest/recreation 53), and the estimated amount (unspecified 41; below US\$250, 41; US\$250 to \$750, 40; more than US\$750, 5) and the sources of financial expenditure (unspecified 47; company rewards/funding 14, personal savings 67, travel loan 5).

The respondents were asked to order pictures of ethno-cultural sites and events (see Appendix B), ethno-cultural foods (see Appendix C), and ethno-cultural beverages (see Appendix D) based on their preferences. These pictures were printed on one side of 4R colored paper, with a circle for the order number, while information about ingredients and making procedures were on the other. The presence of researchers had often prompted respondents to ask for information about items in the questionnaires, thus, making the supposedly question-answering activities of the questionnaire become those of informal conversations. Participant and non-participant observations of linguistic and ethno-cultural events, face-to-face interviews with key informants, and six focused group discussions (FGDs) involving ethno-cultural chiefs, religious clerics, community leaders, tourism practitioners, tourism entrepreneurs, tourism experts, and youth group organizers were also used for collecting secondary data. The focus of the data collection was on exploring the potential of language and ethno-cultural practices to be refurbished into local ethno-cultural and social capital so that they can function not only as a show of Indonesian multiculturalism but they can also be used to support the economy of Sasak families and communities. These potentials were analyzed with content analysis supported with descriptive analysis where relevant. The development and the implementation of the model will be the main attention in later phases of the study where the evaluation of the socio-economic benefits of the development is considered.

3. Results

The article is concerned with linguistic and ethno-cultural practices with tourism potential. Our preliminary interviews with key informants presented us with a long list of potential ethno-language and ethno-culture-related tourist attractions. ethno-language related tourist attractions are defined here as cultural events where the ethnic language of the community is used as the core of the cultural events in the forms of speeches, poetry readings, songs, or other language performances: for example, dawry-presentation (Aji Kerame), poetry reading (Bepantun) or ethno-song singing (Cilokaq) events. Ethno-culture-related attractions refer to events where cultural items and activities are performed

without language as core events: for example, stick fighting (Peresean), bride-groom escorting (Nyongkolan) events, and worm-catching (Bau Nyale) events. A number of ethno-language and ethno-culture-based events have been identified, but, since language is inseparable from culture, ethno-language and ethno-cultural events are always inseparable. Nonetheless, focused group discussions involving ethno-cultural and tourism practitioners and experts, and other tourism stakeholders helped us narrow down the list into twenty-five items and these items are presented in Appendix A. For ethno-cultural food and beverages, the FGDs suggested eighteen items each for food (see Appendices C and D).

With this list in mind, we were able to devise picture-prompted questionnaires and used them for more than six months to interview 127 international tourists in various tourist resorts and destinations on the island of Lombok and on its three small islands (i.e., Gili Trawangan, Gili Air, and Gili Meno). With these questionnaires and with additional information from us when the respondents required, we asked them to rank from the most to the least preferred ethno-cultural destinations. With 25 or 18 items respectively on the site and the food/beverage lists, an item ranked number 1 deserves the highest point (i.e., 25 or 18) while an item ranked the last obtains the lowest point (i.e., 1). With this procedure, we were able to come up with potential tourism scores for the ethno-cultural items (as shown in Appendix E). These tourist attractions can be described in terms of language-related and ethno-culture-related tourist attractions.

3.1. Language-Related Tourist Attractions

The top ten language-related ethno-cultural practices potential for tourist attractions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Ethno-Language-Related Tourist Attractions.

No.	Attractions	Score	Language-Related Activities
1	Nyongkolan: Wedding Ceremony	2853	Songs & Dances
2	Sorong Serah: Wedding Ceremony	2845	Old Sasak Language
3	Bau Nyale: Sea worm Catching Festival	2760	Sasak Poems
4	Bayan: Sasak Traditional Village	2719	Guest welcoming & guiding through the village
5	Sade: Sasak Traditional Village	2681	Guest welcoming & guiding through the village
6	Sukarara: Traditional Hand Weaving Village	2529	Language for Procedures
7	Desa Beleq: Sasak Traditional Village	2313	Guest welcoming & guiding through the village
8	Traditional Food Cooking Classes	2188	Language for Procedures
9	Ende: Sasak Traditional Village	2104	Guest welcoming & guiding through the village
10	Segenter: Sasak Traditional Village	1986	Guest welcoming & guiding through the village

The relationship between the Sasak language and the tourist attractions above can be described in three categories: arts performance in Sasak festivals, guest welcoming in Sasak traditional villages, and use of Sasak procedural knowledge in cooking and handcrafting. Let us discuss how these language practices are performed in tourist attractions.

In the performance of Sasak arts in festivities, such as wedding ceremonies or ethno-cultural festivals, competence and expertise in the language are required and one thing that tourists could do is by joining the audience of the performances. In the Sorong Serah ceremony, that is, a stage in the Sasak marriage procession where the groom's family hand over the marriage dowry to the bride's family. For this, each family hires an expert in the old Sasak language (called Pembayun) to speak on behalf of the family and tourists can participate with local people as companions to both experts. As this process is sacred, numerous restrictions prevail and failure to obey the ethno-cultural rule is less tolerable, the presence of Pembayun-accompanying tourists has become tolerable, and it has indeed become a privilege to the families. Tourist participation is not only unlimitedly encouraged

but it has also been promoted through scheduled ethno-cultural festivals in various tourist areas of Lombok.

This is also true to Nyongkolan, that is, the acts of communally escorting the bride from the house of the groom's family back to the bride's family after their elopement from the former's house for the marriage. While it is dominantly related to music, songs, dances, traditional clothes, and traditional cosmetics, this activity is also related to language particularly when the bride and the groom are returned through Sasak speeches to the bride's family and start their life as a spouse. Note, however, that, similar to Sorong Serah, tourists' participation in Nyongkolan would be more related to ethno-cultural endeavors rather than language experiences.

With respect to Bau Nyale (Seaworm Catching) Festival is strongly related to the folklore of Princess Mandalika whose name is now the name of the famous sandy beach formerly known as Kuta Beach. The festival has not been widely promoted as a tourist attraction although its potential could also facilitate other ethno-cultural attributes: for example, drama and storytelling performances of the Mandalika folklore or traditional cooking classes with seaworm products. While these attractions have not been offered, they might be potential menus for promising tourist attractions. Similarly, events in the folklore can be formed as physical tourist attractions in which tourists can take part in the reenactment of the folklore. Such enactments have been packaged as tourist attractions: for example, the reenactment of the American civil war in various city tourism of the US. The ethno-cultural wedding or the Princess Mandalika events can similarly be reenacted and, though sacred and meaningful to the cultural life of the local people, there are no ethical or moral restrictions as to the reconstruction of it for tourism purposes. In fact, this enactment can also trigger development in other ethno-cultural sectors of tourism. It, for example, opens up an opportunity for costume hire, make-up artists, musicians, and other related jobs. One might argue that this can lead to over-tourism, but such events in Sasak ethno-culture can only take place in particular months of the Sasak year.

In guest welcoming activities, local tourism practitioners mostly use English. While this is not what tourists have expected, most of them use the moments to show off their English competence on the job. As Abdul Hanan, a professional ethno-cultural tourist guide reported,

... [As soon as] the guests arrive, young girls and boys in the [Sasak] traditional village will come forward, greeting the guests in very good English. They also excellently present the guest to the tour guides of the site. They also speak good English [considering] the village is a traditional one and not many people are educated in English. [I think] they have been properly trained for the job (Abdul Hanan, 45, Guide).

While the tourism activities have been used by the local people to learn English, the visiting tourist have expected them to use their own language and ethno-culture. In their view, the use of English ruins the authenticity of the activity wherein the Sasak language and the Sasak ethno-cultural ritual should have instead been used. One of the tourists complained about this when she said,

[You asked me about] my opinions about that. It is amazing that little children like them have already been able to speak fluent good English. But I would like to see more of the Sasak language, the Sasak ethno-culture. Also, we would also like to be told what to say when they greet us. Wouldn't it be fantastic, do you think? (Dagney, 25, Tourist, US).

She expected to hear "Salam rawuh [welcome]" or "Sugeng rawuh [welcome]" greetings from the children or to be taught how, when, and where to say "Tunas paice [thank you]" or "Matur tapi asih [thank you]" within the geographical spaces of the Sasak ethno-culture, although the tour as a whole operates in English.

While tourists expect the feel of the Sasak language, experts of the Sasak ethno-culture actually have solutions to offer. In addition to ethno-cultural attributes, each traditional

village has its own way of greeting and expects visiting tourists to play a role in the greeting rituals. As one of the ethno-culture practitioners suggests, welcoming dances and greetings are also known in the Sasak ethno-culture, but they have been used only in welcoming political figures. In her view, these practices should be exercised in tourism when she said,

... In addition to Tari Petuk welcoming dance and Gendang Beliq welcoming music, Songket scarfs presentation to guests as a welcome gesture, we Sasak people use welcoming greetings sung by ladies or young children, as if we were welcoming long gone soldiers' home. We should use them (Ratipa, 37, Ethno-cultural Practitioners).

The use of the Sasak language in its procedural knowledge can be realized in two Sasak ethno-cultural skills in tourists' demand: firstly, hand weaving and, secondly, Sasak food and beverage cooking classes.

Hand weaving of traditional Sasak clothes appears to be one of the high demands for ethno-cultural tourism. Not only do tourists purchase the products, but they also want to experience the cloth-weaving activities themselves. While the activities are physically shown and explained in English, Sasak names for the activities, tools, materials, and motifs are also used. At the same time, the ethno-cultural meanings implied within the motifs and the ways in which the clothes are used could be used as events where Sasak lifestyles and worldviews are accentuated.

Cooking classes for Sasak traditional food have been used as attractions for tourist groups visiting for company purposes. The majority of the tourists we interviewed reported that the Indonesian "nasi goreng" (fried rice) and "mie goreng" (fried noodles) and the Sasak food (e.g., Ares, Taliwang chicken, and different kinds of meat and fish satay) and beverages (e.g., Sasak coffee, sweet palm sap, various types of iced drinks and locally made Brem alcoholic drink) are in the top ten list of local knowledge, creativity, and skills that tourists would enjoy to learn in cooking lessons. Easily made simple food and beverages are often made parts of fun competition among tourists traveling in groups or for company tours, while ethno-cultural products requiring lengthy processes are presented in site visits and testing.

Having presented the language-related tourist attraction potentials, we can now move on to ethno-culture-related attractions with the potential to be converted into tourist attractions.

3.2. Ethno-Culture-Related Tourist Attractions

Since language and ethno-culture are inseparable, the language-related attractions above are essentially also ethno-culture-related. In this section, we will focus only on the ethno-cultural aspects of them and how they have been or could have been offered as tourist attractions. The list of ethno-culture-related attractions can be found in Appendix A, but the attractions rich in ethno-cultural attractions are summarized in Table 2.

The relationship between the Sasak ethno-culture and the tourist attractions above can be described in three categories: (a) Sasak way of life and lifestyle with respect to nature, human, and environment, (b) Sasak clothes, manners, cosmetics, and tools, and (c) Sasak food and beverages. Let us discuss how these ethno-cultural practices are enacted in tourist attractions.

In the Sasak traditional villages, a great number of Sasak ways of life can become sources of ethno-culture-related tourist attractions. In Bayan, Sade, Ende, and Segenter, Sasak ways of life have long been the main ethno-cultural attractions. Traditional housing complexes, typical Sasak houses, and human activities therein have been the major pulling factors for tourists to visit the villages. Although these destinations have usually been visited in addition to other touring purposes, for example, after or on the way to a visit to waterfalls, parks, beaches, or zoos, visits to traditional villages remain the main agenda. One of the tourists explained the reasons when interviewed during his visit to Bayan,

Table 2. Ethno-culture-Related Tourist Attractions.

No.	Attractions	Score	Ethno-Culture-Related Activities
1	Nyongkolan: Wedding Ceremony	2853	Clothes, Manners & cosmetics
2	Sorong Serah: Wedding Ceremony	2845	Clothes, Manners & cosmetics
3	Bau Nyale: Seaworm Catching Festival	2760	Nature, Animal & Human
4	Bayan: Sasak Traditional Village	2719	Sasak lifestyle
5	Sade: Sasak Traditional Village	2681	Sasak lifestyle
6	Sukarara: Traditional Hand Weaving Village	2529	Clothes & Tools
7	Desa Beleq: Sasak Traditional Village	2313	Sasak lifestyle
8	Traditional Food Cooking Classes	2188	Food & Beverage
9	Ende: Sasak Traditional Village	2104	Sasak lifestyle
10	Segenter: Traditional Village	1986	Sasak lifestyle

... Actually, it is my fourth visit to this place. I was at the waterfalls down there [Sendang Gile and Tiu Kelep], but I came up here to see people preparing the rice wine [Brem]. They say they are doing it today (David, 45, tourist, South Africa).

The same situation was also reported by Sissy and Belen, two traveling friends from Argentina when they were interviewed on what they wanted to see in Sade.

We went to the Tanjung Aan and Gerupuk just now and we still have some time to come here. I want to see Sasak life before modern time. And I read in the newspaper that they polish the house floor with buffalo dung [laughter] not that I want to do it (Sissy, 25, tourist, Argentine).

I have seen Ende. It was fantastic. We also want to see Sade. I would like to see how they use the house, the rooms, the kitchen, the bathroom, and others. I have seen Indians in America and Aborigines in Australia. I want to see them in Lombok and compare them with others in the world (Belen, 26, tourist, Argentine).

It is true that life in traditional villages presents typical Sasak clothes, cosmetics, and behaviors. These settings, however, present everyday costumes, and the festivity clothes and cosmetics are usually worn only on special occasions, such as wedding ceremonies and celebrations. These are the favorite attractions for tourists with a special interest in participating in or having ethno-cultural feelings about the events. While the participation is for fun, the preparation for it is taken seriously. When asked about it, a tourist spouse participating in a recent Nyongkolan in Sengkol has used the event as a memorization and re-enactment of their own marriage procession in Sasak style.

... we have just married. Due to COVID, we did not really have a proper celebration of it. Lucky, here with thousands of people following us, I will like having a proper wedding of myself and my wife (Adam, 35, husband, tourist, US).

When asked about her preparation for the event, Dorothy, the wife said,

... [It is] amazing that we could participate in it. Even, I could dress like the bride and my husband the groom. We hired the dresses. They helped us with the cosmetics. I enjoyed it. People congratulated us on the street, and it was so touching. They don't even know us, and they give us good wishes although we were not in the wedding. I gonna do it again (Dorothy, 30, wife, tourist, US).

Other tourists have also used touring experiences to have a feel of Sasak ethno-culture by participating in traditional skills in cloth hand weaving and in ceramic hand making. Although they participate for fun, the experience is a good learning chance for young tourists. In our observation of cloth handmaking in the village of Sukarara, we met a Japanese tourist group having hands-on experience in cloth and ceramic making and we

had a chance to interview them. When asked what she thought about the experience, she said,

It is difficult. It is hard to balance the pressure on both hands. My right hand was not strong. [laughter]. I end up breaking the threads. [laughter]. Yet, they do it so easily. [laughter]. (Naoko, 18, tourist, Japan).

I made ceramics back home. I used a machine. It is much easier. We bought clay. Here, we made the clay. And [we] made it with bare hands, pressing here pressing there. I could do it, but the ceramic is big, and I need time to make it beautiful. It is good fun though (Ilana, 47, tourist, Italy).

Wedding ceremony, procession, and festivities are always associated with food and beverages. Although hotel types of food are the main delicacy for holiday-making tourists, national and local food and beverages have been on the menu of traveling tourists. These national and local menus have also been the units of lessons in cooking challenges among company holidaymakers.

Essential in the ethno-cultural practices are food and beverages and in order to see which national and local food and beverages have the potential to be presented to tourists, we also distributed a food questionnaire (Appendix C) and a beverage questionnaire (Appendix D) where eighteen colored pictures of each food and drink are presented to tourist for ordering (from the most to the least wanted). Description of ingredients and procedures was orally provided by the interviewing researchers with or without the tourists questioning them.

Out of 18 foods, the top ten of them in Table 3 were identified as the most preferable. Two of them are nationally known food (i.e., Fried Rice and Fried Noodles) and these are the most favorite food among visitors (i.e., those staying overnight or two in resorts less than fifty kilometers away from home for work or business purposes), travelers (i.e., those traveling for less than a year in tourism locations more than fifty kilometers away from home) and holiday-makers (i.e., those traveling to tourism destinations during holiday seasons of the year). Others are local and the choices of visitors and travelers or at least among holidaymakers who had become tolerant of hot spicy Indian, Italian or Mexican food. Mild spice level is the most common choice among tourists while traditional Sasak spicy levels of higher than 2500 Scoville scale were the choice of those with a special interest in spicy food. Different kinds of satay and beef soup (Bebalung) are not so spicy and they have been selected due to their ethno-cultural uniqueness. Other forms of snacks, such as seaweed sweets and crackers, are seen as unique and appealing while other food types are avoided for being unappealing or for fear of health hazards.

Table 3. The Most Preferable Food.

No.	Food Name	Category	Spicy Level (Scoville)	Score
1	Nasi Goreng (Fried Rice)	National	Mild (100 to 2500)	2085
2	Mie Goreng (Fried Noodles)	National	Mild (100 to 2500)	2035
3	Ares (Spicy Banana Stalk with coconut milk)	Sasak	Hot (30,000 to 100,000)	1895
4	Ayam Taliwang (Taliwang Chicken)	Sasak	Hot (30,000 to 100,000)	1795
5	Sate Bulayak (Chicken Satay with coconut sauce and rice)	Sasak	Medium (25,000 to 30,000)	1785
6	Bebalung (Beef Soup)	Sasak	Mild (100 to 2500)	1771
7	Sate Pusut (Coconut Satay with meat)	Sasak	Medium (25,000 to 30,000)	1585
8	Sate Tanjung (Fish Satay)	Sasak	Medium (25,000 to 30,000)	1321
9	Dodol Rumput Laut (Seaweed Sweets)	Sasak	Sweet	1163
10	Sate Rembiga (Beef Satay)	Sasak	Medium (25,000 to 30,000)	1115

Out of 18 drinks, the top ten of them were identified as the most preferable (see Table 4). These drinks can at least be classified into three categories: hot, cold, and alcoholic drinks. The most favorite drinks are Sasak coffee various local names from where the coffee trees and beans originated: for example, Prabe coffee, Sajang coffee, or Sembalun coffee. Hot Sasak ginger tea is the second favorite hot drink. As such drinks have not been offered at hotels in Lombok, travelers and revisiting tourists enjoy these drinks in street food and drink stalls.

Table 4. The Most Preferable Drinks.

No.	Beverage Name	Category	Score
1	Kopi Sasak (Hot, Sasak Coffee)	Sasak	2185
2	Kopi Prabe (Hot, Prabe Sasak Coffee)	Sasak	2136
3	Tuak Manis (Fresh, Non-alcoholic, Sweet Palm Sap)	Sasak	1893
4	Es Sarang Burung (Cold, Iced Bird Nest Juice)	Sasak	1865
5	Es Bubur Reket Hitam (Cold, Iced Black Sticky Rice Porridge Drink)	Sasak	1783
6	Es Tape Isi (Cold, Iced Fermented Cassava Drink)	Sasak	1765
7	Es Cincao (Cold, Iced Green Delight Drink)	Sasak	1587
8	Serbat Jahe (Hot, Ginger Tea)	Sasak	1320
9	Brem (Alcoholic, Sasak Fermented Rice Wine)	Sasak	1162
10	Es Daluman Santan (Cold, Iced Green Delight with Coconut Milk)	Sasak	1112

Tourists were also found to favor different types of iced drinks. The most appealing are Iced Bird Nest Juice, Iced Porridge Dessert made of black sticky rice, Iced Green Delight Drink, and Iced Green Delight with Coconut Milk. More than 75% of the respondents placed these drinks as desirable for the in-tourism locations hot sun of Sasak beaches.

Favorite among special interest tourists are alcohol-related drinks: sweet palm sap drink (number 3 in Table 4), fermented sap drink called Tuak (not in the list), and fermented rice wine (number 9 in Table 4). Sap from palm trees on the slope of Mount Rinjani is taken overnight and sold plain on the street or served at hotels as fresh sweet drinks. When fermented, this drink becomes a pinky alcoholic drink sold nightly on the streets of Mataram city. Fermented rice wine is made of white sticky rice in pottery vessel containers made from clay and planted under the ground for years and the longer the vessels are kept underground the better the quality is. Labeled as “Sasak Sake”, Brem as well as Tuak is now sold in bottles.

3.3. Strategies for Development

Our findings from international tourists above were presented to tourism experts, practitioners, entrepreneurs, government, and other stakeholders for ideas of tourism development. Of the various strategies offered, two are the most implementable solutions: ethno-cultural festivals and nightly food street markets.

All tourism stakeholders expect the local governments to organize regular ethno-cultural festivals as they have conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic. A local tourism entrepreneur highly praises the attempts made by one of the local governments which regularly organize ethno-cultural events in its tourist destination when she said,

I really appreciate what the government of [xxx] Lombok has done in [xxx] where ethno-cultural events like Nyongkolan, Peresean, and Gendang *Beleq* performances are regularly shown. Tourists like that and if we are informed about them, we could include them in tour packages. Unfortunately, we don't such things in others (Muzhar, 56, entrepreneur, Sasak, My translation).

Requests for more ethno-cultural events also come from international entrepreneurs working locally and tourism experts. An Italian-born entrepreneur, Ila, called for the local government to re-organize Sengkol Ethno-cultural Festivals as they have successfully conducted in previous years and these events have been the favorite of European holiday-makers who are the main purchasers of Ila's tourism services. She expected the events to be conducted urgently when she said,

I had a group of Italian and Spaniard tourists last July and August. They were here for two weeks. Some of them were second visitors. I needed new things to offer to them. Nature, beach, and waterfalls have been offered. No ethno-culture shows to show them. They were a bit disappointed. We need these events now. COVID-19 is gone and tourists are coming back. Tolonglah Pak! [Please help sir!] (Ila, 47, entrepreneur, Italy).

Closely related to ethno-cultural festivals is the food market. With regard to food, food safety, availability, and tourist friendliness are the most important factors. Tourism experts warned practitioners and entrepreneurs that food poisoning is one of the major sicknesses facing traveling tourists. Thus, cleanliness and food safety are the main issues to tackle for tourism food service providers. One of the experts used his recent study to warn the stakeholders when he said,

We interviewed doctors in hospitals and clinics around tourism objects. We asked them the most common disease that tourists have. "Stomach problem" they said. This has something to do with unclean food and drinks (Ramdan, 48, Expert, Sasak, My translation).

The idea of food safety was also recommended by other stakeholders. However, as one of the international tourist practitioners suggested, safe food should be available first. To him, Sasak traditional food should be made available by opening street food as he has seen as the power of tourism in Vietnam,

Vietnam is famous for its street food. It has food culture where people eat out on the street with friends and relatives. You could have plenty of food choices there. Here, street food should be arranged and managed so it attracts tourism. You know, food is also a pulling factor for tourism (Ben, 46, entrepreneur, France).

To Chelsea, an England-born entrepreneur, and Syahdan, a local burger street vendor, street food should be tourist friendly. To her, European tourists are shy to eat on the street and they usually dine out at night. A nightly street food market is appealing to her. However, most important to her is that European tourists always want to know what is on a plate before they eat it. Thus, samples and written or oral information about the food should be made available.

Tourists are shy. They are worried about the food that they eat. They need to know what happened to the food before it comes to the plate. What is it inside, how is it made, how was the animal treated before it becomes food. In daylight, they might be shy to ask so it should be at nighttime (Chelsea, 36, entrepreneur, England).

Bule [European tourists] are very picky with food and drinks. They want to know the ingredients. We need to inform them. We give free samples. If they don't like it, they will go away (Syahdan, 47, entrepreneur, Sasak, My translation).

All government officials in the focused group discussions strongly support the festival and night market proposals. These have become the main strategies of all local governments although the implementations have not fulfilled tourism needs and this fulfillment is one of the political agendas to come in tourism government.

Having identified language and ethno-culture-related tourism potentials and strategies for developing the into tourist attractions, we now need to learn how these strategies have been successfully implemented in other tourism contexts. This issue is the focus of the section below.

4. Discussion

The study has identified ethno-language and ethno-culture-related practices that have the potential to be tourist attractions. As most of the practices deal with Sasak traditional villages, ethno-cultural events, and festivals, as well as food and beverages, studies in ethno-cultural heritage tourism might be most relevant.

One of the main findings of the study is, as shown in Table 2, the profound expectation of Sasak ethno-cultural practices and traditional villages to be used as the sites of the revival of the Sasak cultures. This is by no means a surprise because as references [16,30–33] have shown, tourism development around the world has been built on ethno-cultural heritages. Seen by tourists with special interests, ethno-cultural heritage sites, such as the traditional villages, above appear more interesting because they expose the local ethno-culture and facilitate ethno-cultural exchanges between residents and special-interest tourists. For the local community, as references [34–36] have shown, ethno-cultural heritage tourism can inject significant economic value, improve social welfare, and provide resources to preserve the local ethno-culture.

The study has also shown that ethno-cultural events and festivals should be organized so that they can be pulling factors for tourists with special interests in culture and cultural heritage to visit. A significant number of studies have shown that regularly planned and executed ethno-cultural events and festivals are detrimental to tourism survival and growth. Reference [37] studied the reinvention of local, regional, and international games and festivals in post-Apartheid South Africa have positively contributed to the economy of the country. Ethno-cultural events and festivals in the study have been suggested to be managed by the communities in collaboration with tourism practitioners and organizers, but they can also be organized by hotels or hotel associations. Reference [38] has displayed that ethno-cultural events organized by hotels were highly valued by the majority of the hotel guests at were not a selection factor, these were attended by the majority of guests, and they were found to volunteer in spreading the information electronically and through word of mouth. Although the events were not the main pulling factors, they were effective in lengthening the length of stay but these aspects of tourism have received little to no academic attention. Our analysis of tourist interview data supports this claim that they would either extend their stay or revisit when there are ethno-cultural attractions unattended during the current visit.

The study has also indicated that traditions, traditional villages, and traditional food and beverages are essential cultural capital for the development of local tourism. References [34–36,39] have explicated some explanations why ethno-cultural events and festivals are essential to local tourism development. In the first place, with ethno-cultural exposure, ethno-cultural festivals enable hosts and tourists to transfer new knowledge and skills and with them, they can co-create the events and the festivals. In this way, ethno-cultural events and festivals have not only become tourist attractions but also sites for the co-creation of tourism experiences. Consequently, as reference [39] recommends, tourism service providers should include co-creative learning environments in the elements of the events and within the scope of the event food and beverage tourism experiences could also be integrated. Reference [40] in their study of creativity in ethno-cultural event tourism should involve these factors in order to be effective: Fluency (i.e., familiarizing tourists with the events), originality (i.e., creating new innovations in every event), imagination (i.e., generating newly imagined ways of presenting the events), collaboration (i.e., different people and organizations collaborate in the presentation of the events), environment (i.e., creating certain geographical and situational spaces to be more suitably associated with particular ethno-cultural events), and complexity (i.e., emancipating all dimensions of the ethno-cultural events and all participants to take responsibility). Reference [31] categorizes these dimensions as best practices in creative ethno-cultural tourism but adds that to be successful tourist attractions should carefully select skilled practitioners and tourists and immerse them into well-planned and professionally-executed events that the tourists

would have positive experiences in them and, thus, promote them to potential tourists in home countries.

The study establishes in Section 3.3 that street food and night markets close to tourism areas have been recommended to be the main strategies for empowering the local ethno-culture for local tourism. While these strategies have been successfully implemented in Gili Air, Gili Meno, and Gili Trawangan, they have not reached similar expectations in other tourism centers of the island. Reference [41] has probed into this problem and suggested that local entrepreneurs have often failed to identify characteristics, requirements, and expectations of the industry. Unlike the successful entrepreneurs, the local ones failed to provide minimum tourism quality standards of products, and governments are expected to train the locals to achieve the standards. Similar expectations are found in other ethno-cultural tourism elsewhere (e.g., the Philippines [32], Kenya [42], Japan [33]), local, national, regional, and international organizations must work together with local tourism practitioners to meet the standard expectations of the tourism world.

However, tourism thinkers have also warned us not to be over-creative in promoting local ethno-cultures to tourism. Reference [43] was worried about over-tourism, over-development, and commercialization as they can lead to the destruction of the local ethno-culture. They recommended that ethno-cultural tourism should ascertain that through tourism, ethno-cultural skills and values are protected and inherited. To [44], these could happen, if local tourism development ensures the health and well-being of ethno-culture, nature, environment, and economic livelihood of the people while, at the same time, setting up rules and regulations on the requirements for and the maximum numbers of tourist participating in an ethno-cultural event as a way of maintaining its originality and saving it from over exploitation.

5. Conclusions

The article has discussed the potential of language-related and ethno-culture-related attractions to be developed into creative ethno-cultural tourist attractions. The majority of the practices are concerned, firstly, with ethno-cultural heritages as practiced in various Sasak traditional villages and, secondly, with ethno-cultural events and festivals where food, beverages, and other ethno-cultural products can be refurbished as tourism products. These trends are by no means unique to Lombok tourism as similar situations are also found in others. The study has also recommended the establishment of street food vendors and night markets near tourism areas because in the views of tourism experts, entrepreneurs and practitioners, they can open up spaces for other ethno-cultural products to be promoted as tourism products. The article has discussed strategies for this development, but it has also raised the alarm that over-tourism and over-commercialization in ethno-cultural development can destroy the ethno-culture it promises to empower. Collaboration among tourism stakeholders should ascertain that creative ethno-cultural tourism will bring more benefits than harm to nature, ethno-culture, the host communities, and the visiting tourists.

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Appendix A. List of Potential Language and Ethno-Culture-Related Tourism

No.	Tourist Attractions	Category	
		Relation to Language	Relation to Ethno-Culture
1	Bau Nyale Festival	Sasak Poems	Nature
2	Bayan Traditional Village	Guest welcoming	Sasak lifestyle
3	Begasingan Festival	Swearing	Sports & Game
4	Desa Beleq Sembalun Village	Guest welcoming	Sasak lifestyle
5	Ende Traditional Village	Guest welcoming	Sasak lifestyle
6	Gandrung Dance	Guest welcoming	Dances & courtship
7	Sukarara: Cloth Hand weaving	Procedures	Clothes & Tools
8	Horse Race	None	Traditions
9	Islamic Centre	None	Religion
10	Maulid Festival	Religious Speeches	Food, Beverage, Clothes, and others
11	Narmada Water Park	None	Nature
12	Nyongkolan Ceremony	Songs & Dances	Clothes, Manners & traditional cosmetics
13	Peresean Game	None	Sports & Game
14	Praje Ceremony	Child Praising Speeches	Clothes, Manners & traditional cosmetics
15	Rebo Bontong Festival	Religious Speeches	Food, Beverage, Clothes, and others
16	Sabung Ayam Festival	None	Traditions
17	Sade Traditional Village	Guest welcoming	Sasak lifestyle
18	Segenter Traditional Village	Guest welcoming	Sasak lifestyle
19	Sorong Serah Ceremony	Old Sasak Language	Clothes & Manners
20	Suranadi Historical Site	None	Nature
21	The Topat Food Presentation	Guest welcoming	Sasak lifestyle
22	The Topat War Festival	Speeches for tolerance	Food, Beverage, Clothes, and others
23	Traditional Food Cooking Class	Procedures	Food, Beverage, Clothes, and others
24	Traditional Game	Procedures	Sports & Game
25	Visits to NTB History and Arts Museum	Narratives	History & Arts

Appendix B. Research Questionnaire

Which of the following sites and events would you like to be in when you are in Lombok? List them based on your preferences.



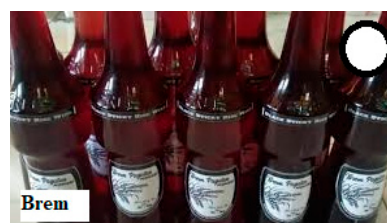
Appendix C. Food Questionnaire

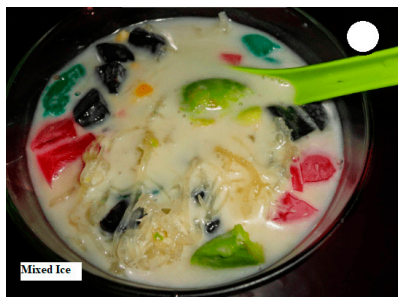
Which of the food below would you like to eat while you are in Lombok? List them based on your preferences.



Appendix D. Beverage Questionnaire

Which of the drinks below would you like to eat while you are in Lombok? List them based on your preferences.





Appendix E. Tourism Potential Scores

No	Tourism Objects	Score
1	Sade Traditional Village	2681
2	Nyongkolan: Wedding Ceremony	2853
3	Sorong Serah: Wedding Ceremony	2845
4	Bau Nyale: Sea-worm Catching Festival	2760
5	Bayan: Sasak Traditional Village	2719
6	Hand weaving	2529
7	Desa Beleq Sembalun: Sasak Traditional Village	2313
8	Traditional Food Cooking Class	2188
9	Ende: Sasak Traditional Village	2104
10	Segenter: Sasak Traditional Village	1986
11	Maulid Festival	1963
12	Peresean Game	1934
13	The Topat Food Presentation	1800
14	Narmada Water Park	1499
15	Suranadi Historical Site	1489
16	NTB Museum: History and Arts Museum	1322
17	Gandrung Dance: Sasak Traditional Welcoming Dance	1309
18	The Topat War Festival	981
19	Praje: Child Adulthood Ceremony	926
20	Traditional Game	744
21	Rebo Bontong Festival	716
22	Islamic Centre: The Biggest Mosque in Lombok	612
23	Horse Race	373
24	Begasingan: Sasak Traditional Game Festival	360
25	Sabung Ayam: Cockfighting Festival	269

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