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The Legal Values of Bonokeling Customary Law as Indigenous Knowledge in Heritage-Based Tourism Innovation

Rizky Amelia Kusuma Wardani[1], Rahmi Erwin[2]

[1,2] *Law Faculty, Universitas Sahid, Indonesia*

**Corresponding author. Email: 2024510041@usahid.ac.id*

ABSTRACT

This study examines the existence of living law within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community as a form of indigenous knowledge that persists amid modernization. The research focuses on the process of internalizing legal values through customary ritual practices and their relevance to heritage-based tourism innovation. Employing a normative juridical method, this study is conducted through literature review and analysis of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials concerning the recognition of indigenous peoples. The findings indicate that legal values are internalized through communal rituals that reinforce collective identity and legitimize customary leadership. Customary law functions not only as a mechanism of social control but also holds strategic potential as a normative foundation for the development of sustainable, authentic, and community-based heritage tourism.

Keywords: *living law, indigenous knowledge, tourism innovation, Bonokeling*

1. INTRODUCTION

The understanding of law as it exists within society cannot be separated from the ideas of Carl von Savigny, who asserted that law is not created but rather grows and develops organically alongside society. A similar perspective was articulated by Eugen Ehrlich through the school of sociological jurisprudence, which posits that law must correspond to the law that lives within society, commonly referred to as living law.

These perspectives align with the state's normative recognition of the existence of indigenous legal communities. Normatively (das sollen), as stipulated in Article 18B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the state recognizes and respects units of indigenous peoples along with their traditional rights, provided that they remain in existence and are consistent with societal development and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, as regulated by law.

This view is further supported by Jemmy Jefry Pietersz, a constitutional law scholar from Pattimura University, who emphasizes that constitutional recognition of indigenous peoples constitutes the basis for state respect. Such recognition must be formally established and meet the conditions of existence as expressed in the phrase "as long as they remain in existence and are consistent with societal development and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia" in the 1945 Constitution. Thus, state recognition and respect for indigenous peoples are conditional, depending on the continuity and conformity of customary practices with constitutional provisions [1].

Despite such constitutional recognition, the sustainability of customary law is highly dependent on the continued existence of its community. One indigenous community in Indonesia that remains extant is the Bonokeling Indigenous Community, located in Pekuncen Village, Banyumas Regency, Central Java Province. This community is known for its distinctive traditions related to beliefs and reverence toward ancestral figures, particularly Purwana [2]. These traditions function not only as cultural practices but also as part of a local knowledge system (indigenous knowledge) that shapes the collective identity of the community while serving as a mechanism for the internalization of social values and norms. Various rituals are practiced within the Bonokeling community, including general rituals, lunar-based rituals, and life-cycle rituals. One of the most prominent is Perlon Unggahan, an annual tradition conducted prior to the month of Ramadan, in which all community members actively participate [3].

Additional rituals such as Ngapati, Nyadran, Ruwatan, Slametan, and ancestral pilgrimages represent active participation in religious and communal activities that embody normative messages. The internalization of legal values occurs organically, as these traditions regulate not only relationships among individuals but

also relationships between humans, God, nature, and ancestors. Consequently, the living law within the community possesses strong cultural legitimacy and persists despite the pressures of modernization.

Heritage-based tourism innovation represents a strategic approach that integrates cultural preservation with sustainable economic development. Tourism innovation is no longer understood merely as the creation of new tourism products but as a creative process rooted in indigenous knowledge, customary values, and the social systems embedded within communities. Within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community, rituals, traditions, and inherited value systems hold significant potential as authentic cultural tourism attractions. However, such development must remain grounded in customary law, which regulates the boundaries of sacredness, community participation, and social legitimacy, in order to prevent the commodification of culture that may erode its normative meaning. Therefore, heritage-based tourism innovation should position indigenous communities as primary subjects, with living legal values serving as the foundation for designing tourism models that are sustainable, equitable, and respectful of collective identity.

An understanding of the functions of rituals within the Bonokeling Community cannot be viewed in isolation but must be understood as embedded in daily practices that are continuously preserved through tradition. To comprehend the living law within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community, it is necessary to examine how each ritual activity functions as a medium for the formation and transmission of norms. Accordingly, this study seeks to explore the process of internalizing legal values within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community.

In the context of heritage-based tourism development, Bonokeling rituals and traditions possess significant potential as unique and authentic tourist attractions. Nevertheless, such development cannot be separated from the customary legal system that governs the community. Without a proper understanding of the values and norms underlying these ritual practices, tourism innovation risks reducing sacred meanings into mere economic commodities. Therefore, it is essential to position indigenous knowledge and customary law as foundational elements in designing heritage-based tourism innovation that is sustainable and equitable for local communities.

Based on the foregoing background, the paper entitled “The Legal Values of Bonokeling Customary Law as Indigenous Knowledge in Heritage-Based Tourism Innovation” is focused on two principal research questions, namely:

1. How are the values of customary law embodied in the rituals and traditions of the Bonokeling Indigenous Community internalized and sustained as part of indigenous knowledge constituting living law within society?
2. How can these customary legal values serve as a foundation for the development of heritage-based tourism innovation that preserves authenticity, ensures cultural sustainability, and maintains the social legitimacy of the indigenous community?

2. METHOD

2.1 Type and Research Design

This study employed a normative juridical research method with a qualitative approach. This method aimed to analyze legal norms related to the recognition of indigenous peoples and to examine the concepts of living law and indigenous knowledge from the perspective of statutory regulations and legal theory. The data utilized consist of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials obtained through literature review and document analysis. The qualitative approach was applied to conceptually and contextually understand the values, customary norms, and social practices within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community as part of the living law in society.

2.2 Research Approach

This research adopted a legal anthropology approach, which conceptualizes law as an integral part of culture and social practice within a community. This approach is informed by the theoretical perspectives of:

1. Alan R. Emery (Indigenous Knowledge Theory);
2. Janet Hjalager (Innovation in Tourism Theory);
3. Dallen J. Timothy (Community-Based Heritage Tourism Framework);
4. Eugen Ehrlich (living law);
5. Van Vollenhoven (customary law as living law);
6. Gerald Elisah (the interrelationship between anthropology, sociology, and law);
7. Victor Turner (Symbolic Anthropology Theory); and
8. Ratih Baiduri (anthropological theories as foundational frameworks for understanding society).

2.3 Data Sources

This study utilized two categories of data sources:

1) Primary Data

Primary data consisted of statutory regulations and legal provisions related to the recognition of indigenous peoples and the development of heritage-based tourism, including:

1. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia;
2. Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code (KUHP);
3. Law Number 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture;
4. Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages;
5. Decree of the Head of Pekuncen Village Number 09 of 2011 concerning the Establishment of the “Bonokeling” Community Group for the Preservation of Customary and Cultural Values.

2) Secondary Data

Secondary data were obtained from supporting literature and documents, including:

a. Ratih Baiduri, Anthropological Theories as a foundation for general anthropological theory;

b. Arisman MSY, Sociology and Anthropology of Islamic Law (2022) as a reference for the relationship between law, religion, and society;
c. Gerald Elisah, Anthropology and Sociology of Law to strengthen the theoretical framework of legal anthropology;
d. Arief Fahmi, Cultural Anthropology to understand cultural values and symbols within indigenous communities;
e. Nawawi, Bonokeling in the Wave of Pluralism as a specific reference on the Bonokeling Indigenous Community.

2.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study was conducted through documentation study and literature review. The researcher examined written documents, customary archives, ritual photographs, scholarly literature (books and journals), mass media reports, and audiovisual documentation available online to support the analysis of the internalization process of legal values within Bonokeling traditions.

2.5 Research Location

This research was conducted in Pekuncen Village, Jatilawang District, Banyumas Regency. This location was selected as it represents the central locus of the Bonokeling Indigenous Community, which exhibits distinctive characteristics in maintaining customary law within the broader framework of national law.

2.6. Data Analysis Technique

The researcher applied an interactive qualitative analysis model consisting of the following stages:

1.Data Reduction

Data reduction constituted the initial stage of analysis, carried out by selecting, focusing, and simplifying raw data obtained during the research process. At this stage, all information related to the activities of the Bonokeling Indigenous Community is filtered and refined to distinguish data relevant to the core research problem, namely, the internalization of legal values within ritual practices, from irrelevant data.

2.Data Display

The reduced data were subsequently organized into a systematic descriptive narrative. The researcher classified findings into key thematic categories, including:

- Identification of legal values within rituals;
- Structure of traditions and the community's social system;
- Manifestation of customary morality in everyday life.

3.Conclusion Drawing and Verification

The final stage of data analysis involved qualitative interpretation of the collected documentation. The researcher assigned meaning to written documents, customary archives, scholarly literature, and audiovisual materials to understand how customary law functions as living law in the daily life of the Pekuncen community. The results of this interpretation were subsequently re-examined using the theoretical frameworks of legal anthropology and indigenous knowledge to ensure the consistency, validity, and relevance of the research findings in supporting the development of heritage-based tourism innovation.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Internalization and Preservation of Customary Legal Values within the Rituals and Traditions of the Bonokeling Indigenous Community as Part of Indigenous Knowledge (Living Law)

3.1.1 The Existence of the Bonokeling Community

The Bonokeling Indigenous Community traces its origins to a figure known as Kyai Bonokeling. According to the descendants (anak putu) of Kyai Bonokeling: "Kyai Bonokeling originated from the Kadipaten of Pasir Luhur; he was of noble lineage but held different principles from his father, which led him to leave Pasir Luhur and eventually settle in the area now known as Pekuncen." The arrival of Kyai Bonokeling was associated with agricultural expansion (among tani or babad alas), particularly for the purpose of clearing forest land for cultivation, as well as for disseminating Islamic teachings while accommodating local cultural practices.

The leadership system of the Bonokeling Kejawen Indigenous Community is distinctive and highly structured. Leadership is not merely administrative but also embodies deeply rooted spiritual and cultural dimensions. Each position carries specific roles and responsibilities that collectively support the execution of customary rituals and the preservation of ancestral values. The leadership structure within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community is as follows: [4]

Table 1. The leadership system of the Bonokeling Kejawen Indigenous Community

No.	**Position**	**Primary Duties**
1	*Kyai Kunci / Custodian*	The highest spiritual leader responsible for conveying the community's collective intentions (*hajat*).
2	*Bedogol*	Deputy to the Kyai Kunci, responsible for leading specific territorial areas and transmitting teachings.
3	*Manggul*	Assistant to the Bedogol in conducting rituals and facilitating interregional communication.
4	*Mondong* / Juru Leladi	Responsible for delivering ritual equipment from the residence of the Kyai or Bedogol to the ceremonial site.

No.	Position	Primary Duties
5	Ceremonial Cook	Responsible for preparing food for customary ceremonies and communal feasts (*selametan*).
6	Onder	Field coordinator ensuring the smooth implementation and logistical readiness of each ritual event.

The Kyai Kunci serves as the guardian of tradition, a transmitter of ancestral teachings, and a communicator of values that must be upheld by the descendants in navigating life's challenges. His authority derives not only from lineage and mastery of customary knowledge but also from social recognition by the community, which positions him as the custodian of the continuity of customary law (living law).

Within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community, there are thirteen Kyai Kunci, listed as follows:

1. Ni Cakrapada;
2. Kyai Sokacandra;
3. Kyai Candrasari
4. Kyai Raksacandra
5. Kyai Tirtasari
6. Kyai Prayabangsa
7. Kyai Padasari
8. Kyai Prayasari
9. Kyai Singapada
10. Kyai Jayadimulya
11. Kyai Arsapada
12. Kyai Karyasari
13. Kyai Mejasari.

3.1.2 The Belief System and Local Spirituality of the Bonokeling Community

According to Mulyareja: "Menungsa urip teng dunya niku nek mboten nyantri nggih nyandi", which may be translated as: "Human beings living in this world, if they do not pursue religious learning (nyantri), then they follow the symbolic path (nyandi)." The term nyantri refers to the comprehensive observance of the five pillars of Islam, whereas nyandi denotes a form of Islamic practice that does not include the five daily prayers, and is instead oriented toward sacred sites (punden), particularly the tomb of Kyai Bonokeling.

Differences in religious practice within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community include the necessity of intermediaries in worship, such as the burning of incense and the mediation of prayers by the Kyai Kunci or his representatives to ensure their acceptance by the Almighty. The syahadat (profession of faith), or sadar, is recited only during marriage ceremonies before a marriage registrar or official. The community also observes a form of fasting known as Puasa Sirrih, with the intention expressed as: "nek srengenge lingsir lan wetenge kerasa perih" (when the sun has declined and the stomach begins to feel hunger, it is permissible to break the fast).

Prior to the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, the Bonokeling community performs zakat al-fitr, which is submitted to the Kayim, with contributions ranging from IDR 5,000 to IDR 10,000 per household.

The Bonokeling Indigenous Community believes in the existence of a post-world realm known as Alam Kelanggengan (the eternal realm). As stated by Sumitro: "After the worldly realm, there exists an eternal realm without temporal limits. When a person enters this eternal realm, their existence transforms into an inner essence (tata batin) [5].

This belief in Alam Kelanggengan forms the foundation of the community's local spirituality, which is manifested in various ritual practices, including:

a) Bonokeling as an Intermediary of Prayer

The movement toward returning to the essence of Islamic teachings, commonly referred to as the Purification Movement, has been promoted by Muhammadiyah with the aim of reforming religious practices within the Bonokeling Community that are perceived as divergent, particularly traditions such as pilgrimage, offerings (sesaji), and ancestral veneration. However, the Bonokeling community maintains that they worship Allah, while positioning Kyai Bonokeling solely as an ancestor and intermediary in prayer. This belief is expressed through collective rituals such as perlon, pilgrimage practices, and the use of incense as a symbolic medium. For the Bonokeling community, ancestral spirits are believed to remain present and protective of their descendants. Consequently, customary rituals function as a means of sustaining spiritual relationships while simultaneously preserving the collective identity of the community.

b) Slametan

The Bonokeling Indigenous Community conducts slametan ceremonies as offerings that signify submission and devotion to the Almighty, with the intention of attaining safety in life and protection from harm.

c) Lawon

Lawon cloth is a funerary shroud specifically used within the Bonokeling Community to wrap the deceased. This cloth is produced using traditional spinning and weaving techniques in Pekuncen Village. The Bonokeling Indigenous Community believes that if a body is not wrapped in lawon, the family of the deceased will encounter misfortune.

d) Sacred Trees (Pohon Kramat)

Surrounding the tomb of Kyai Bonokeling are large, lush trees regarded as sacred and enclosed by a fence. The community believes that if a tree within the enclosure collapses, it signifies the occurrence of misfortune. However, if a tree falls outside the enclosure, it is interpreted as a sign of a larger-scale disaster, potentially at a national level.

e) Grave-related Prayer and Rice-planting Prayer

The Doa Rikat Kubur (grave-related prayer) and Doa Tanam Padi (rice-planting prayer) reflect the Bonokeling Community's profound spiritual connection with their ancestors. These prayers, delivered in the Javanese language, are not directed immediately to God but rather to the ancestors, who are regarded as intermediaries that provide protection, guidance, and blessings. The rice-planting prayer further emphasizes the agrarian character of the community, as the teachings of Kyai Bonokeling encompass guidance on agricultural practices alongside supplications for safety and successful harvests. Both prayers illustrate the belief that maintaining harmonious relations with ancestors constitutes a source of sacred power, protection, and prosperity.

3.1.3 Collective Rituals as a Medium for the Formation of Legal Consciousness

The rituals practiced by the Bonokeling Indigenous Community play a crucial role as a space for the reproduction of legal values, wherein customary norms are learned, interpreted, and sustained by successive generations. These rituals function not merely as intergenerational spiritual obligations but also as mechanisms for reinforcing legal consciousness within the community. The schedule of ritual activities within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community is as follows:

a. In the month of Sura: recitation rituals (puji-pujian) held at the Pasemuan on Friday Kliwon, Friday Legi, or Friday Pon;
b. In the month of Sapar: perlon rituals on Monday Pahing and Tuesday Kliwon, as well as rikat (ritual cleansing of the sacred site) at the tomb of Kyai Bonokeling on the third Friday;
c. In the month of Mulud: Bakda Mulud ceremonies and pilgrimage to Adiraja, Cilacap;
d. In the months of Rabiulakir and Jumadilawal: perlon rikat and perlon rituals (Monday Pahing), followed by perlon rikat in Jumadilakhir;
e. In the month of Rejeb: selamatan ceremonies on Tuesday Kliwon, the second Thursday, the third Thursday, and the final Monday;
f. In the month of Ruwah/Sadran: Unggah-unggahan rituals, and in the month of Pasa (Ramadan): likuran or bakda likur on the twenty-first night;
g. In the month of Syawal: Riyaya (Eid celebration) on the first day of Syawal (Aboge calendar), followed by Turunan on the second Friday;
h. In the month of Apit: selamatan on Monday Pahing and Sedekah Bumi (earth-offering/ritual purification of the land);
i. In the month of Besar: perlon rikat and Besaran Kurban (sacrificial ritual). [5]

3.1.4 The Meaning of the Unggah-Unggahan Ritual in Relation to Victor Turner's Theory of Symbolic Culture

Victor Turner posits that symbols are multivocal, meaning they possess multiple layers of meaning and are connected to various phenomena and social contexts. Consequently, symbols are not confined to a single interpretation but instead reflect a plurality of meanings, demonstrating the richness and complexity of symbolic expressions within ritual practices. Polyphony, in this context, may also be understood as a system of belief, whether individual or collective, wherein symbols convey multiple meanings rather than a singular, fixed interpretation.

The symbols embedded within the rituals of the Bonokeling Indigenous Community represent reverence toward both the Creator and ancestral figures, as well as notions of purity and sanctity in ritual practice. Furthermore, these symbols reflect the communal character of the society, particularly the values of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) and respect for ancestors, which constitute the essence of their cultural identity. [6]

3.1.5 Living Law as a Framework for Understanding the Bonokeling Indigenous Community

Within the Bonokeling Indigenous Community, legal values are internalized through cultural structures, kinship systems, and ancestral teachings attributed to Kyai Bonokeling. The identity of being anak putunipun Kyai Bonokeling (descendants of Kyai Bonokeling) serves as the foundation of social and moral legitimacy for community members. Consequently, customary law functions not only as a guide for behavior but also as a source of belonging and symbolic attachment to ancestral heritage.

Living law manifests in values, rituals, social institutions, and the community's adherence to ancestral teachings, which continue to be practiced in everyday life. Rather than being codified in written form, the living law of the Bonokeling Community is embodied in customs, traditions, and authority structures, particularly through the role of the Kyai Kunci. Thus, living law within the Bonokeling Community is not merely a set of social norms but constitutes a lived practice that organizes social, spiritual, and cultural relations within the community.

3.1.6 The Construction of Legal Values: Harmony, Genealogical Obedience, and Communal Cohesion

Legal values within the Bonokeling Community are constructed upon moral and social principles that regulate collective life. These values function not only as normative rules but also as ethical foundations that sustain order, solidarity, and the continuity of tradition within the community. The principal values include:

a. A system of belief is formed and collectively recognized as truth, thereby shaping human perspectives on diversity [7]. Within this diversity, processes of inclusivity can be observed across various domains. In the religious sphere, for instance, marriage practices involve diverse social groups. In the economic sphere, similarities in geographical conditions contribute to shared livelihoods. In the political sphere, cooperation between the Bonokeling Indigenous Community and non-Bonokeling actors results in mutually binding agreements. This reflects a strong spirit of inclusivity within Bonokeling society. [8] Thus, interreligious harmony is not merely a passive condition but the outcome of a societal disposition that prioritizes civic pluralism and mutual coexistence.

b. Genealogy, at its core, is the study of family histories and lineages. In anthropology, it is not merely about tracing individual family trees, but about understanding how kinship systems function within a society. Kinship is foundational to the way communities are organized and how relationships between individuals and groups are structured. This makes genealogy a vital tool in anthropological research for several reasons. [9] Therefore, the genealogical system not only regulates kinship structures but also gives rise to genealogical obedience as a form of reverence toward ancestors, manifested through adherence to customary norms.
c. Social cohesion refers to the degree of attachment, trust, cooperation, and sense of belonging among members of a community. High levels of social cohesion are closely associated with social stability, collective resilience, and the capacity of a community to confront shared challenges. In the Bonokeling Indigenous Community [10] communal cohesion is strongly manifested through the collective identity as anak putu Bonokeling, which reinforces solidarity and continuity within the group.

These values affirm that customary law is not understood through formal textual codification but rather through social practices that are emotionally and symbolically binding upon the community.

3.1.7 The Dynamics of Bonokeling Living Law under the Pressure of Puritan Movements

The continuity of Bonokeling customary law faces challenges arising from the emergence of Islamic puritan movements, particularly through formal religious education in madrasahs and religious activities in mosques that promote scriptural and orthodox interpretations of Islam. The expansion of puritanism has generated normative tensions between customary traditions and religious teachings that advocate for the purification of Islamic practices.

Nevertheless, the Bonokeling Community does not adopt a confrontational stance. Instead, it demonstrates an adaptive-selective approach, accepting changes insofar as they do not threaten customary identity or eliminate the fundamental aspects of ancestral traditions. This strategy illustrates how customary law operates dynamically, responding to social transformations without losing its core inherited values.

According to a report by Antara News, the Bonokeling Kejawen Indigenous Community in Pekuncen Village, Jatilawang District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, exemplifies a model of coexistence. In daily life, during religious gatherings (pengajian), all community members contribute food, regardless of whether they adhere to Islam Aboge or mainstream Islam, thereby fostering integration without distinction. For example, during a religious gathering led by Kiai Gus Muwafiq, members of the Pekuncen Village PKK (Family Welfare Movement) contributed refreshments for attendees. The Bonokeling Indigenous Community demonstrates a high degree of respect and openness toward individuals of diverse beliefs, provided that they are willing to adapt to the surrounding social environment [11].

The condition of the Bonokeling Community reflects the existence of legal pluralism, characterized by the coexistence of customary law, formal religious law, and state law. Within this context, a contestation of legitimacy arises between:

a. Puritanism, which emphasizes textual religious standards. Puritan groups advocate for a return to the perceived purity of Islamic teachings, as reflected in the establishment of various socio-religious organizations such as Jamiat Khaer, Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Persatuan Islam [12].
b. The Bonokeling Indigenous Community, which maintains genealogical and traditional legitimacy. This community constitutes a social unit that perceives itself as bound by genealogical ties, territorial consciousness, and a shared social identity grounded in norms, moral values, and customary rules, both written and unwritten.

The Bonokeling Community sustains its legal system through ritual practices, customary authority, and communal cohesion, thereby ensuring that living law continues to exist despite external normative pressures. This demonstrates that customary law possesses strong resilience, not only in its capacity to endure but also in its ability to adapt to evolving social structures.

3.2 Customary Legal Values as the Foundation for Heritage-Based Tourism Innovation while Preserving Authenticity, Cultural Sustainability, and Social Legitimacy

3.2.1 Customary Legal Values as a Normative Foundation in Heritage-Based Tourism Innovation

Customary legal values within the Bonokeling Community function as moral guidelines for its members in conducting daily life. These values also serve as a normative framework underpinning the development of heritage-based tourism. The internalization of these legal values through rituals and traditions forms the foundation for regulating social behavior within the community.

The role of the Kyai Kunci as a customary authority aligns with Dallen J. Timothy's Community-Based Heritage Tourism Framework, which emphasizes that active community participation is a crucial factor in heritage tourism development. This is further reinforced by Janet Hjalager's Innovation in Tourism Theory, which posits that tourism innovation is not limited to technological or product-based advancements but may also derive from authentic cultural heritage.

3.2.2 Integration with Tourism Innovation

Customary legal values and traditional rituals may be integrated into tourism innovation through interactive tourism experiences, cultural education, and socio-economic activities that empower local communities. This approach not only enhances collective awareness of Bonokeling heritage but also ensures the social, economic, and cultural sustainability of the community.

For instance, heritage-based tourism in the Baduy Indigenous Community (Banten) demonstrates a

successful model of such integration. The annual Seba Baduy celebration in 2025 attracted 42,731 visitors over three days, generating approximately IDR 142,052,000 in economic transactions across accommodation, restaurants, and local micro-enterprises (Bantenraya.com, 5 May 2025). The active participation of the Baduy community as lodging providers, tour guides, drivers, and restaurant operators illustrates the effective application of local wisdom in accordance with the principles of community-based heritage tourism.

Accordingly, customary legal values serve two primary functions: first, as normative guidelines for social life, and second, as a strategic foundation for heritage-based tourism development that creates unique and educational tourism experiences.

3.2.3 Bonokeling Indigenous Rituals as Tourist Attractions

Rituals such as Perlon Unggahan and slametan may be developed into heritage-based tourism experiences. These activities embody collective identity and indigenous knowledge, allowing visitors not merely to observe cultural performances but also to understand the meanings and social functions underlying these traditions. A comparable example can be found in Bali Province, where the Ngaben ritual, a Hindu cremation ceremony intended to return the soul to the Creator, has become a major tourist attraction that successfully integrates heritage-based tourism with local cultural values.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study, entitled "The Legal Values of Bonokeling Customary Law as Indigenous Knowledge in Heritage-Based Tourism Innovation," yields the following conclusions:

The customary legal values of the Bonokeling Indigenous Community are internalized through rituals, traditions, and a leadership structure centered on the Kyai Kunci, thereby forming a living law that is actively practiced in everyday life, even in the face of external normative pressures. This demonstrates that customary law possesses a strong capacity for resilience, not only in its ability to persist but also in its adaptability to evolving social structures. Ritual practices such as perlon, slametan, rice-planting prayers, and the use of customary symbols function as mechanisms for the transmission and reproduction of legal values, sustaining social harmony, genealogical obedience, and communal cohesion.

Beyond serving as moral and social guidelines, customary legal values also constitute a strategic foundation for the development of heritage-based tourism. Through active community participation and the integration of indigenous knowledge, Bonokeling rituals and traditions can be transformed into educational, authentic, and sustainable tourism experiences. At the same time, such development strengthens the social legitimacy of the community and provides local economic benefits.

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