

Local Wisdom Transformation in the Customary Community of Kampung Naga

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Received: March 10, 2026 | Revised: June 21, 2026 | Accepted: June 26, 2026 | Online Publication: July 14, 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examines the transformation and sustainability of local wisdom in Kampung Naga, a customary community in Tasikmalaya Regency, West Java, in relation to the development of the tourism village. The objective of this research is to analyze the transformation of local wisdom as a living value system that occurs alongside the development of Kampung Naga as a tourism village. Using a qualitative approach with a constructivist perspective, data were collected from September 2025 to February 2026 through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, documentation, and literature review involving customary leaders, community members, youth representatives, village officials, and visitors selected through purposive and snowball sampling. The findings reveal that local wisdom transforms gradually through deliberation and collective negotiation rather than abrupt change, as core values such as simplicity, mutual cooperation, self-reliance, and respect for nature remain foundational while their practical expressions adapt to tourism development, governance dynamics, and external interventions. Tourism operates as a negotiated social arena where cultural meanings are articulated and economic roles are distributed collectively under customary authority. The study concludes that sustainability in Kampung Naga is achieved through the community's autonomous capacity to regulate transformation, conceptualizing local wisdom as a dynamic relational system rather than a static cultural inheritance.

Keywords: customary community, local wisdom, tourism, transformation, sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Local wisdom refers to a set of values, norms, knowledge, and social practices that live within a community and serve as guidelines for everyday life. It cannot be understood merely as a legacy from the past that is passively inherited, but rather as a value system that is continuously practiced, interpreted, and adapted by the community according to its social context. In this sense, local wisdom is dynamic and contextual, as it is shaped through ongoing social interaction within the community.

In various studies, local wisdom is viewed as a form of collective identity that functions to maintain social order, manage the environment, and strengthen community solidarity (Mahrinasari *et al.* 2024). Values such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, customary prohibitions known as *pamali*, and unwritten rules governing the use of space and the environment demonstrate that local wisdom operates as a tangible social guideline. These values are not only expressed in symbols or rituals, but are also reflected in collective decision making, the distribution of social roles, and the ways communities maintain balance with nature (Patty *et al.* 2024; Napitupulu *et al.* 2025).

Over time, local wisdom does not exist in a completely fixed space. Social transformation resulting from population mobility, regional development, and interaction with external actors influences how communities interpret and practice these values. In such situations, local wisdom does not simply disappear, but undergoes adjustment. The transformation of local wisdom can be understood as a process in which long standing values and practices are reinterpreted in order to remain relevant to present

conditions (Hidayat & Hasmiza 2025). This transformation does not mean abandoning core values, but rather adjusting their application so that they continue to function as guiding principles in everyday life. Kampung Naga in Tasikmalaya Regency is one of the customary communities that continues to uphold traditional values and regulations in daily life. The customary spatial arrangement, traditional house forms, and various social and religious practices are consistently maintained as part of collective living. Local wisdom in this village functions not only as a symbol of cultural identity, but also as a shared system of rules that regulates relationships among residents, environmental management, and the division between sacred and profane spaces. These values serve as guidelines for maintaining social order and the sustainability of community life.

Nevertheless, the people of Kampung Naga are not entirely isolated from broader social transformation. Interaction with external communities and regional development influences the life of the village. This condition requires adjustments in everyday practices without eliminating the fundamental values that serve as collective guidance. The process of adjustment demonstrates that local wisdom continues to be reinterpreted so that it can be practiced within changing circumstances.

In academic discourse, there are two main tendencies in understanding local wisdom. Preservation-oriented studies emphasize local wisdom as inherited cultural heritage that must be safeguarded to maintain identity continuity (Wahdiniawati *et al.* 2023; Anggraeni *et al.* 2024), while transformative perspectives argue that local wisdom remains relevant precisely through adaptive reconstruction and social reinterpretation across changing contexts (Jalal *et al.* 2024; Nakudom *et al.* 2026).

Attention to the importance of local values has also become increasingly visible in regional development discourse, which emphasizes that policies and community governance should be rooted in local culture. This approach highlights the importance of maintaining balance between humans, nature, and the social environment as the foundation of collective life (Suara Indonesia, 2024; Pikiran Rakyat Koran, 2025). In the context of Kampung Naga, local wisdom functions not only as cultural identity, but also as a value system that regulates social life.

Research on local wisdom in customary communities has largely focused on cultural preservation or traditional identity. In cultural preservation studies, local wisdom is commonly viewed as indigenous cultural heritage that must be preserved to sustain continuity across generations (Anggraeni *et al.* 2024) and as a key foundation for sustainable cultural heritage conservation amid social change (Lusianawati *et al.* 2023). In contrast, studies centered on traditional identity understand local wisdom as a core element that reinforces communal identity through the preservation of social values and customary norms (Wahdiniawati *et al.* 2023), while also sustaining indigenous identity continuity through the interconnection of language, tradition, and cultural practice (Imbang *et al.* 2025). Studies that examine how local wisdom undergoes transformation in meaning and practice in everyday life remain limited. The transformation of local wisdom is often understood only in terms of visible changes, such as ritual forms or spatial arrangements, without examining shifts in how communities interpret these values in social practice (Mahrinasari *et al.* 2024).

Anggraeni *et al.* (2024) and Lusianawati *et al.* (2023) primarily conceptualize local wisdom as cultural heritage that should be preserved to maintain intergenerational continuity. Conversely, Jalal *et al.* (2024) and Nakudom *et al.* (2026) argue that local wisdom remains relevant through adaptation and reinterpretation in response to changing social contexts. However, both perspectives provide limited explanation of how such transformations occur in everyday community practices and how they affect socio-cultural sustainability. Previous studies have provided important insights into how local wisdom is preserved and how it shapes cultural identity. However, most of this research focuses on the results of preservation, not on the ongoing ways local wisdom is negotiated, adapted, and reinterpreted in everyday life. Much of the existing work looks at visible cultural expressions like rituals, traditional buildings, and customary practices, but pays less attention to how local values are rebuilt through interactions between local communities and outsiders. As a result, we still know little about how local wisdom changes in communities affected by tourism development, or how these changes might influence the long-term sustainability of their social and cultural life. This gap is particularly relevant in customary communities experiencing tourism development, where local wisdom may not simply be preserved or displayed, but continuously negotiated and transformed through new social and economic interactions. This study adopts a social construction perspective, which views local wisdom as a social reality that is continuously maintained, interpreted, negotiated, and reconstructed through social interaction (Jalal *et al.*, 2024) Therefore, this study examines how local wisdom in Kampung Naga transforms alongside its development as a tourism village. Local wisdom is positioned as a living value

system that continues to be practiced and reinterpreted by the community. This study aims to explore and describe the transformation of local wisdom within the Kampung Naga customary community in relation to the development of the tourism village, using a qualitative-constructivist perspective.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a constructivist perspective to understand how local wisdom is practiced, interpreted, and transformed in community life. The constructivist approach views social reality as something formed through interaction, experience, and shared interpretation. Through this perspective, the research aims to explore how community members reinterpret traditional values, negotiate their meanings in everyday life, and adapt them to social transformations resulting from the development of Kampung Naga as a tourism village. In this study, social transformation refers to changes in social practices, meanings, and interactions that emerge alongside the development of tourism activities in Kampung Naga.

The research was conducted in Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya Regency, West Java. Kampung Naga is a customary community that continues to preserve traditional spatial arrangements, customary regulations, and sociocultural practices in daily life. Surrounding areas such as Neglasari and Nangtang were also considered as part of the research context, as they represent spaces where interactions between the customary community, visitors, and the external environment occur, particularly in relation to tourism activities. Observing these interactions helped provide a broader understanding of how local wisdom is practiced, negotiated, and interpreted within the context of Kampung Naga's development as a tourism village.

This study uses both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight informants, consisting of one customary leader (Kuncen), three community leaders, one local MSME actor, two youth organization (Karang Taruna) representatives, and one village official. Informants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques based on their knowledge of local wisdom practices and their involvement in tourism-related activities in Kampung Naga. Initial informants subsequently recommended other relevant individuals to provide broader perspectives on the research topic. Interviews were conducted between September 2025 and February 2026, with each interview lasting approximately 30–60 minutes. The interviews explored community experiences, perspectives, and interpretations of the cultural values and practices they uphold.

Non participant observation was carried out to directly examine everyday activities, social interactions, and cultural practices in the field. Observations were supported by field notes, visual documentation, and relevant archives. Secondary data were obtained from academic literature, village documents, government reports, and previous research related to local wisdom and Indigenous communities.

Data analysis was conducted inductively alongside the data collection process. The researcher organized and transcribed interviews and field notes, and then coded the data to find key themes. NVivo software helped with coding, organizing, categorizing, developing themes, and showing how themes are connected. Using NVivo, the researcher systematically examined patterns, connections, and emerging themes in how local wisdom changes in Kampung Naga. The findings were then shared as thematic narratives to highlight patterns and relationships. An NVivo project map was also created to show the links between local wisdom, customary institutions, the transformation of local wisdom, and cultural resilience. The researcher drew conclusions by repeatedly reviewing and interpreting the data to ensure the analysis aligned with what was found in the field. To ensure the data's validity, the researcher employed source and method triangulation and checked with informants to confirm that the interpretations aligned with their experiences. This approach helped the study show how local wisdom is still practiced and understood in the daily life of the Kampung Naga community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kampung Naga as a Social System

Transformation and the sustainability of local wisdom in Kampung Naga cannot be understood merely by viewing the village as a fixed and isolated place. Customary values are continuously practiced and adjusted through everyday social relations among residents, between customary leaders and younger generations, and through interactions with people from outside the village. Therefore, in this study,

Kampung Naga is understood more as a social space where local wisdom is practiced and collectively interpreted, rather than simply as a geographical research site.

Kampung Naga is located in Neglasari Village, Salawu Subdistrict, Tasikmalaya Regency. Situated in a valley below steep cliffs and along the Ciwulan River, the village is relatively separated from the main road. To reach the settlement, visitors must descend hundreds of steps. This physical setting shapes distinctive patterns of interaction. The surrounding environment such as rivers, rice fields, and forests not only provides livelihoods but also influences how residents build social relationships and maintain balance in their lives.

The village's history is largely preserved in the collective memory of its people. Written archives were lost during past conflicts, so knowledge about the village's origins has been passed down through stories and oral narratives from elders. This process of transmission shows that customary knowledge lives through intergenerational relationships. Customary leaders play an important role in safeguarding and rearticulating prevailing rules, while younger generations learn through direct involvement in everyday life.

The spatial layout of the settlement also reinforces social relations among residents. Houses are built facing each other at close distances, allowing villagers to interact easily and remain attentive to one another. This arrangement fosters a high degree of social proximity in daily life. When someone falls ill or needs assistance, neighbors quickly become aware. Thus, the village's spatial organization functions not only physically but also socially, shaping how residents relate to one another.

The social structure of Kampung Naga remains grounded in customary leadership. The Kuncen, Lebe, and Punduh each have specific roles in maintaining social order. Despite this structure, social relations among residents are relatively egalitarian. There are no striking differences based on wealth or formal position. A person's standing is measured more by adherence to adat (custom) and involvement in community life. This condition strengthens solidarity and mutual trust among residents.

The value of mutual cooperation, locally known as *sauyunan*, forms the core of social life. Farming activities, house construction, and customary ceremonies are carried out collectively. Through these shared activities, relationships among residents are continually reinforced. Mutual cooperation is not only a way to complete tasks but also a means of maintaining social bonds and togetherness. In this way, local wisdom is embedded in everyday practice and not limited to rituals or formal rules.

Interaction with external actors also influences how customary values are practiced. The entrance area of the village functions as a meeting point between residents and visitors. Here, villagers explain the rules in place, including behavioral boundaries and certain prohibitions. These rules are conveyed orally by residents or local guides. This process demonstrates that the boundary between the customary world and the outside world is maintained through communication and shared understanding. While some residents use Indonesian or simple foreign languages when interacting with visitors, Sundanese remains the primary language in daily life.

Local knowledge in agriculture, spatial management, and environmental stewardship is likewise enacted through shared practice. Residents understand seasonal cycles, water management, and forest conservation through experience passed down from generation to generation. Decisions regarding the use of technology are also discussed collectively to ensure they do not contradict adat. Within the core area of the village, the use of modern technology is restricted. However, outside the core area, some residents utilize technology for specific purposes such as communication and coordination. These adjustments are made carefully to remain aligned with customary values.

By offering this conceptualization, the study argues that local wisdom in Kampung Naga endures through ongoing social relations that structure everyday community life. Core values such as simplicity, togetherness, and respect for nature remain foundational normative principles, while their practical articulation is continuously adjusted in response to changing social contexts. The transformation observed does not indicate the erosion or abandonment of tradition; rather, it reflects the adaptive reconfiguration of practices to sustain their relevance within contemporary conditions. By positioning social relations as the primary analytical lens, this study conceptualizes local wisdom not as a static cultural residue, but as a living normative system that is continually produced, negotiated, and reproduced through the daily interactions of the community.

Tourism Agenda of Kampung Naga

Kampung Naga's tourism agenda has emerged as an adaptive response to increasing tourist arrivals while local wisdom operates as a continuously negotiated and enacted framework within social interaction. Tourism has developed organically through community-visitor interactions, rather than through external structural interventions. In this context, tourism is regarded not only as an economic activity but also as a platform for social, cultural, and environmental practices are reworked through ongoing interaction under customary coordination. This approach aligns with the perspective that tourism village development should be managed integratively, balancing economic, social, and environmental dimensions to achieve sustainability (Arum *et al.* 2022). Before tourism, the community relied entirely on traditional agriculture. As tourist visits increased, new economic opportunities emerged, such as guiding services, handicraft sales, small shops, and simple homestays. The distribution of community involvement in tourism-related economic activities is presented in Figure 1.

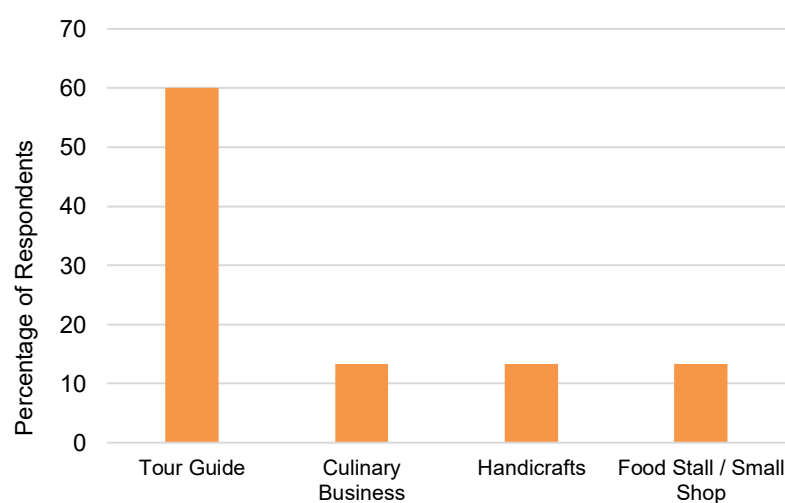


Figure 1. Types of Businesses or Tourism Activities

As shown in Figure 1, the majority of respondents are involved as tour guides, accounting for the highest percentage. This indicates that guiding services play a central role in Kampung Naga's tourism activities, followed by culinary businesses, handicrafts, and small shops. The distribution reflects the community's adaptive response to tourism expansion through collective coordination and negotiated participation rather than fixed role allocation.

However, these activities have not developed in an exploitative manner; instead, they operate within collective values and principles of togetherness. Tourism is not regarded as the main source of livelihood but as a complementary economic activity that strengthens household resilience. This pattern reflects the practice of social entrepreneurship, where economic activities are oriented not toward profit accumulation but toward shared benefits, equity, and social sustainability (Verver & Koning 2024). In this regard, the growth of ecotourism-based livelihoods is closely linked to the development of local community capacity, which may generate both positive and negative impacts on the sustainability of livelihoods.

The division of roles in economic activities is determined through deliberation. Roles in economic activities are allocated through deliberation and rotational systems, ensuring that tourism benefits are distributed equitably and not concentrated among a few individuals. This approach reinforces social solidarity and mitigates social envy. Activities such as guiding, handicraft production, and homestay management are coordinated collectively. Through these arrangements, tourism becomes a site where cooperation and social coordination are continually enacted and adjusted rather than simply maintained. This practice exemplifies Community-Based Tourism, which positions local communities as primary actors in tourism management (Marlina, 2019). All tourism activities operate within customary norms that are continually reproduced, interpreted, and renegotiated through everyday interaction.

Rituals such as *Hajat Sasih* and *Seren Taun* function not only as religious events but also as social arenas in which collective meanings are enacted and interpreted. Through these ritual practices, values of

togetherness, respect, and balance are continuously rearticulated by different generations within changing interactional contexts. These rituals therefore operate as spaces where cultural meanings are reproduced and recontextualized rather than preserved as fixed forms.

Gotong royong remains central to community life in Kampung Naga. All activities, whether customary or tourism-related, are managed through deliberation and teamwork. This collective practice operates as an ongoing relational process that sustains coordination and mutual responsibility across changing conditions. Nature is seen as part of spiritual and social life and must be protected. Customary rules maintain environmental balance. These include bans on cutting sacred forests, using natural building materials, and modern technology, and on following traditional water management are continually enacted and reaffirmed through shared practice rather than through static transmission. Houses are constructed with bamboo, wood, and palm fiber without cement or concrete, to reflect ecological sustainability. Agriculture uses traditional, eco-friendly methods without chemical fertilizers.

Environmental management in Kampung Naga is grounded in shared beliefs and practical considerations. Nature is regarded as a collective responsibility that requires careful coordination. This orientation generates strong social regulation through ongoing interaction and mutual monitoring rather than through formal enforcement mechanisms.

Overall, the tourism agenda of Kampung Naga demonstrates the integration of economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions through continuous adjustment and negotiated practice. Tourism functions as a medium through which social relations, economic activities, and cultural meanings are reorganized in response to changing condition. The observed reflect ongoing reinterpretation and reconfiguration of cultural values within expanding interaction, rather than cultural fixation. Local wisdom operates as a dynamic guiding process that enables tourism development while maintaining social coordination, ecological balance, and collective identity.

Transformation of Local Wisdom in Kampung Naga

The transformation of local wisdom in Kampung Naga occurs through a gradual social process shaped largely by increasing interaction with visitors and the development of tourism activities, alongside other influences such as education and social mobility. This transformation is neither revolutionary nor destructive, but occurs selectively while continuously reinterpreting customary values as the foundation of social life. In this context, local wisdom is not understood as a static heritage, but a dynamic cultural process embedded in ongoing social interaction and collective meaning-making.

Local wisdom in Kampung Naga is embedded in everyday social practices, shared experiences, and collective interpretations that shape relationships among humans, nature, and the spiritual realm. Values such as simplicity, togetherness, self-reliance, and respect for ancestors continuously organize and guide community life through daily interaction rather than functioning as fixed principles. These values are reflected in daily behavior, deliberative decision-making, social interactions, and community responses to change. One customary leader explained that maintaining balance in life requires moral conduct and harmonious relations with nature. *"We must live together and not harm one another. Disasters come when our morals and way of life are no longer in order."* (Kuncen of Kampung Naga)

This statement illustrates that the community understands morality as part of a cosmic and social order that is continually interpreted within changing circumstance. Any violation of customary values is believed not only to affect social relations but also to disturb the balance of nature and collective life. Therefore, all forms of change are approached cautiously and carefully evaluated in light of customary considerations.

Self-reliance is another strong trait in Kampung Naga society. The community tends to avoid reliance on outside help that could alter its social structure or weaken customary values. This attitude also shapes how the community responds to tourism development, ensuring that tourism activities do not create economic dependency or undermine customary autonomy. They accept external aid only if it does not put them in a dependent position. This attitude appears in the words of a youth leader: *"Several times assistance was offered, but it required proposals. We rejected it because submitting proposals would mean asking for help."* (Ijat, Youth Leader)

This view shows local wisdom as more than a cultural guide, but as an ethical orientation continuously enacted in social relations. Independence and dignity are sustained through collective negotiation rather than rigid preservation.

Customary norms are key in shaping social behavior. These norms are unwritten but followed by habit, example, and spiritual belief. One important rule is not to discuss or conduct customary activities on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Saturdays. These norms also influence how tourism activities are organized, as visitor schedules and tourism interactions must adjust to customary restrictions. This taboo highlights tradition's sacred side. *“It is forbidden to talk about customs on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays.”* (Utari, Local Guide)

Such norms are not enforced through formal sanctions but through shared awareness that violating them may disrupt the village's spiritual balance. *“In the past, we were not used to talking with outsiders. Now we are, as long as we remain polite and explain our customs respectfully.”* (Pak Heri, Guide)

From a social construction perspective, the interaction between community members and visitors contributes to the ongoing interpretation and adaptation of local wisdom, allowing cultural values to remain relevant while maintaining their core meaning (Jalal et al., 2024). Community members have developed communication skills to explain traditions and position themselves as cultural representatives. Customs that previously functioned primarily as internal social guidelines are now also communicated as cultural references for external audiences. This process demonstrates that local wisdom is not a fixed cultural inheritance but a socially constructed system of meanings that is maintained and adapted through ongoing interaction.

Transformation also appears in social and economic practices. Guiding, handicraft production, visitor management, and hospitality have grown over time. All these activities are managed collectively through deliberation and remain under customary control. No one is allowed to earn too much profit. *“Now there are contributions, but they are shared equally. Even those who do not receive guests still benefit.”* (Utari)

This shows that economic change does not reduce the value of cooperation. Economic practices redefine and extend the meaning of togetherness within new interactional contexts.

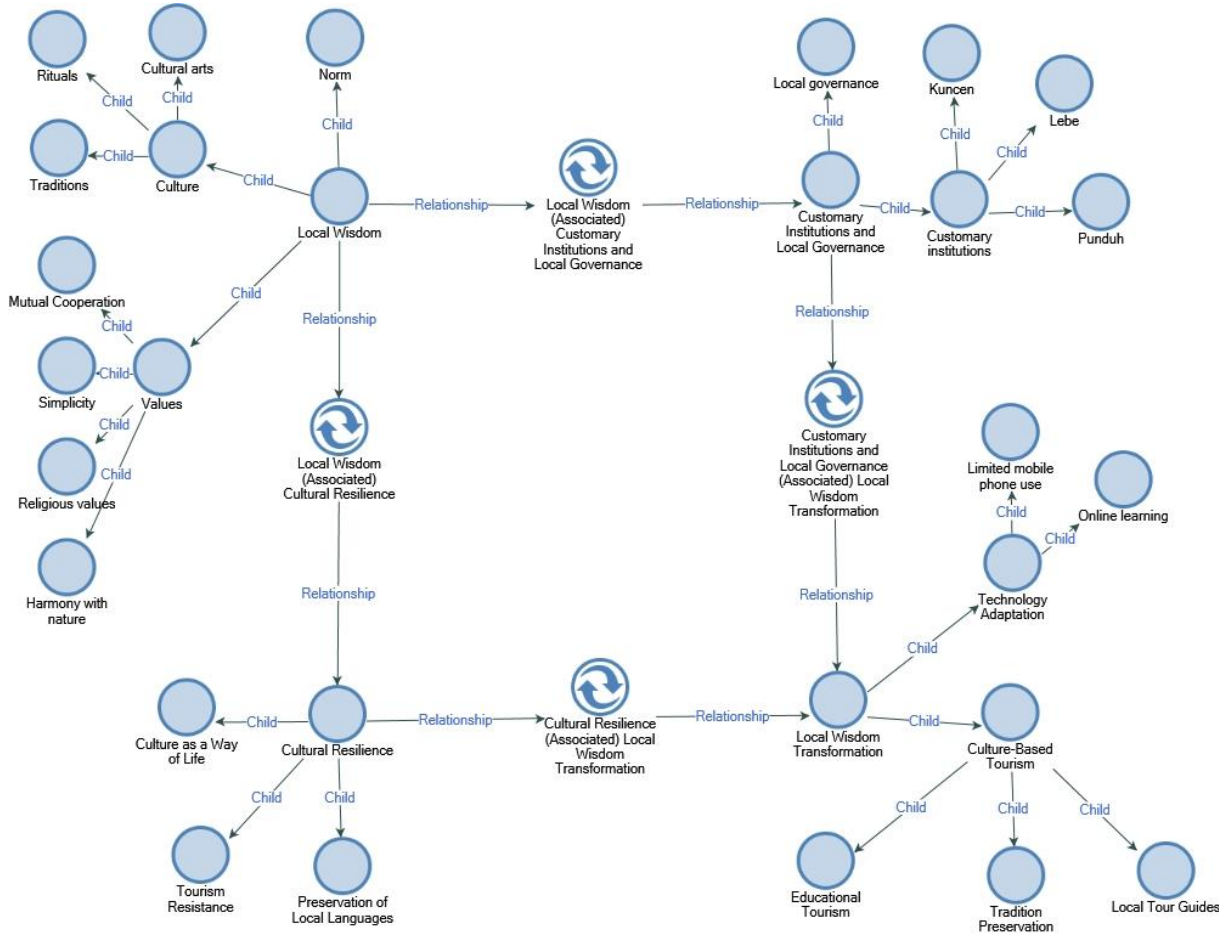


Figure 2. Thematic relationships of local wisdom transformation in Kampung Naga based on NVivo analysis

Change is also seen in the roles of community members. The younger generation now takes part in tourism and external communication through the youth organization (Karang Taruna). But traditional leaders such as the Kuncen, Punduh, and Lebe still hold customary authority. This division of roles demonstrates adaptation while reworking tradition power structures. *“The youth manage technical matters, but decisions still belong to customary leaders.”* (Ijad)

This arrangement demonstrates not preservation of fixed hierarchy, but ongoing reallocation of roles that adjusts authority and responsibility to contemporary conditions.

Transformation in knowledge comes with more access to formal education and external work experience. Yet, new knowledge is not accepted without careful thought. It is reviewed to ensure it aligns with customary values. *“It’s fine for children to study outside, as long as they return and continue to uphold our traditions.”* (Local shop owner)

This perspective reflects that knowledge from outside is not rejected, but reinterpreted and integrated through local interactional processes.

Overall, the transformation of local wisdom in Kampung Naga occurs through shifts in meaning, function, practice, and social roles, while remaining firmly grounded in core customary values. The process is not imposed but emerges organically from everyday social experience. The community positions itself not as an object of change but as an active subject shaping its own adaptation in line with shared values.

Figure 2 shows that local wisdom in Kampung Naga is based on cultural values, norms, and practices that guide daily life. These values are maintained through customary institutions and local governance, which manage social relations and address external influences. The community’s adaptation to technology and growth in cultural tourism demonstrate the evolution of local wisdom, achieved without compromising inherited values. This process strengthens cultural resilience, as seen in the preservation of the local language, the ongoing role of culture as a guiding principle, and the community’s ability to uphold its identity despite outside influences.

Table 1. Summary of Main Themes, Key Findings, and Implications

Main Theme	Key Findings	Implications
Local Wisdom	Local values such as simplicity, togetherness, self-reliance, and respect for nature guide everyday life and community decision-making.	Strengthens collective identity and social cohesion.
Customary Institutions and Local Governance	Customary leaders and local governance structures regulate social relations, tourism activities, and responses to external influences.	Supports community autonomy and adaptive governance.
Local Wisdom Transformation	Local wisdom is continuously interpreted, negotiated, and adapted through interactions with visitors, education, and social change.	Demonstrates the dynamic and evolving nature of cultural practices.
Cultural Resilience	The community maintains its cultural identity through selective adaptation while preserving core customary values.	Enhances long-term socio-cultural sustainability and resilience.

Dynamics of transformation in Kampung Naga

The transformation of Kampung Naga unfolds through an ongoing social process shaped by expanding interaction between community members, visitors, and external institutions. Rather than occurring as abrupt change, transformation emerges through continuous interpretation, negotiation, and adjustment of customary principles within everyday practice. Before the development of tourism, community life was largely oriented toward agriculture and ritual activities, with limited interaction with outsiders.

As Kampung Naga became increasingly known since the 1970s, visits from researchers and tourists grew. As the number of visitors increased, the community began making adjustments, particularly in infrastructure. However, these adjustments were not intended to alter the physical form of the village, but rather to ensure shared safety and comfort. The community responded through collective deliberation to ensure that spatial arrangements and daily practices remained socially coherent. Physical improvements such as access paths and supporting facilities were introduced through negotiated adjustments that balanced new interactional demands with existing social coordination.

“Now it’s different, the number of visiting guests keeps increasing. Thus, the paths and stairs have to be repaired to ensure safety. But we are still not allowed to change the form of the village” (Pak Heri, guide)

This statement highlights the clear boundary maintained between functional improvements and structural change. The community is willing to adapt, but remains committed to preserving the fundamental principles of customary spatial organization.

Environmental transformation demonstrates a similar pattern. Adjustments such as river reinforcement, waste management, and pathway maintenance were carried out to respond to increasing visitor intensity while sustaining ecological relations. These changes were not framed as modernization but as collectively organized responses that rearticulated environmental responsibilities within changing conditions. Ecological knowledge operates through socially embedded practice and continual reinterpretation (Berkes et al., 2000).

Transformation also appears in social and cultural interaction. Increased encounters with visitors have encouraged residents to develop new communication practices and take on interpretive roles within the village. Through these interactions, *adat* is articulated in ways that connect internal norms with external understanding. Rather than functioning solely as an internal regulatory system, *adat* becomes a relational medium through which cultural meanings are performed, explained, and continually renegotiated in engagement with outsiders. This process demonstrates how tourism can serve as a platform for strengthening cultural awareness and fostering social learning (Wirawan, 2025).

This dynamic is clearly reflected in how residents describe their evolving experiences in communicating with visitors. As interaction with outsiders becomes more frequent, villagers grow more confident in explaining their traditions, while still maintain the core values of respect and propriety embedded in *adat*. At the same time, the community maintained control over the rhythm of daily life. Ritual activities, agricultural work, and customary ceremonies continued to take precedence over tourism activities. Visitors were required to adjust to local schedules, ensuring that tourism did not disrupt cultural continuity. This reflects the ability of customary institutions to regulate change without undermining social order. This demonstrates the community’s capacity to reorganize interaction without relinquishing control over social coordination. This principle becomes visible in the way access is regulated during important events. *“If there is an ongoing ceremony or event, visitors are restricted. Individual visitors may sometimes still be allowed, but group visits are not permitted during such occasions.” (Utari, Guide)*

The quotation clarifies that tourism operates within boundaries defined by *adat*. Limitations are not arbitrary; they are mechanisms to protect ritual integrity and maintain the social rhythm of the village.

Economic transformation emerged in the form of community-based activities such as guiding, handicraft production, and small-scale services. These activities provided additional income while remaining embedded within collective values and mutual cooperation. The economic model adopted in Kampung Naga reflects a form of community-based tourism that prioritizes social cohesion over profit accumulation (Tao & Wall, 2009).

The involvement of younger generations further strengthened this transformation. Youth participation in guiding and cultural interpretation enhanced community capacity without weakening traditional authority. Their role illustrates how regeneration within customary societies can occur through adaptive participation rather than cultural replacement (Khristianto & Oktawirani, 2025).

External actors, including government agencies and CSR programs, also contributed to change through technical support such as sanitation facilities and environmental infrastructure. However, all external assistance was subjected to customary deliberation, ensuring that no intervention altered the cultural foundation of the village.

“All assistance from outside must be discussed first. If it does not align with our customs, it will not be accepted. We accept support that strengthens us, not the kind that changes us.” (Rendi, village administrative staff)

This quotation underlines that external support is filtered through customary authority. Acceptance depends on alignment with *adat*, reaffirming community control over the direction of change.

Transformation in Kampung Naga is therefore better understood as a process of sustaining continuity while adapting to new circumstances. The community does not reject transformation entirely, yet neither does it uncritically embrace every new influence. Instead, residents regulate the rhythm and boundaries

of transformation through deliberation and shared practice. Tourism, for example, does not replace customary life; rather, it becomes part of a regulated interaction that remains aligned with village values. This demonstrates that when communities retain control over transformation processes, tourism-based development can proceed without eroding social cohesion and collective identity (Tao & Wall, 2009; Moscardo, 2014).

Agricultural life, ritual activities, and traditions of mutual cooperation remain the primary priorities, even as interactions with visitors increase. The regulation of visiting hours, spatial boundaries, and modes of engagement with guests shows that residents continue to exercise authority over their own lives. This pattern illustrates that the customary system functions as a flexible mechanism, capable of adapting without losing direction. These findings support the argument that Local communities possess the capacity to drive transformation processes when they are actively involved as key decision-makers, supported by local knowledge, participation, and a sense of ownership (Duskhova & Ivlieva, 2024). Moreover, interaction with visitors has heightened residents' awareness of their own cultural values and encouraged them to articulate these values more actively to outsiders (Stronza 2001; Wirawan 2025).

In light of these dynamics, local wisdom in Kampung Naga can be understood as something living and evolving. Core values such as simplicity, togetherness, and respect for nature remain foundational, yet their practical expression adapts to shifting conditions. Transformation does not necessarily imply abandoning tradition; rather, it becomes a means of ensuring that tradition remains relevant in contemporary life. These findings reinforce the perspective that sustainability is not achieved by resisting transformation, but by strengthening a community's capacity to manage and interpret transformation according to its own values (Berkas 2012; Kasman 2024). In this context, local wisdom is not merely a legacy of the past, but an active way of life that continues to be practiced, discussed, and collectively negotiated.

Previous research frequently describes local wisdom as cultural heritage that is maintained by keeping traditional values and practices alive. Anggraeni et al. (2024) emphasize the preservation of indigenous knowledge as an important effort to maintain cultural continuity. Similarly, Wahdiniawati *et al.* (2023) highlight the significance of preserving local culture for community identity. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that in Kampung Naga, local wisdom is not preserved through isolation or the rejection of change. In Kampung Naga, local wisdom develops through selective adaptation, collective negotiation, and regulation by customary institutions. Tourism, technology, education, and interactions with external actors are not viewed as inherent threats to cultural sustainability. Rather, these elements are deliberately filtered and integrated into community life when they align with established customary values.

The findings further indicate that cultural resilience is achieved not by restricting change, but by the community's capacity to manage and direct change in accordance with customary principles. This perspective differs from preservation-oriented studies that primarily emphasize safeguarding traditional cultural values and practices (Anggraeni et al. 2024; Wahdiniawati et al. 2023). In Kampung Naga, change is employed to reinforce cultural identity through filtering mechanisms established by the customary community. Therefore, the sustainability of local wisdom should be understood not only as the preservation of traditions in their original form, but also as the community's capacity to reinterpret, negotiate, and transform cultural practices in response to social change while maintaining core values. These findings broaden the current understanding of cultural sustainability, which has often been associated primarily with preservation, by demonstrating that sustainability can also result from dynamic and continuous adaptation.

IMPLICATIONS OF TRANSFORMATION AND SUSTAINABILITY IN KAMPUNG NAGA

The transformation of tourism governance in Kampung Naga reveals a dynamic interaction between customary values and administrative intervention. In its early stages, tourism management was partly controlled by the village government and external tourism organizations. This arrangement generated tension, as the applied management model emphasized modern service standards that were not fully aligned with the values of simplicity and spirituality as locally interpreted and enacted in everyday interaction. Such external interventions risked altering the meaning of cultural space and social relations, a condition that aligns with Stronza (2001) argument that tourism development which neglects local values may disrupt social balance.

The implementation of standardized service facilities and formal administrative procedures prompted collective reflection among community members. Residents perceived that these changes transformed visitor relations into transactional encounters, contradicting the principle of *silaturahmi* (maintaining social ties) that had long characterized interactions with guests. Rather than merely restoring earlier arrangements, the community renegotiated tourism governance through renewed deliberation, repositioning customary coordination as an active mechanism for reorganizing interaction under changing conditions.

This shift marked an important transformation in governance, whereby customary institutions regained substantive authority while the village administration assumed a more supportive and administrative role. This model illustrates that governance in Kampung Naga is not static, but continuously reconfigured through negotiation, relational processes, and situational adaptation. Such dynamics reflect hybrid governance arrangements, in which formal and informal institutions interact and evolve over time rather than operating within a fixed hierarchical structure (Fan et al., 2026).

The COVID-19 pandemic further reinforced the central role of *adat* in regulating community life. The decision to close the village to visitors was made through customary deliberation rather than government instruction. Similarly, the refusal of an electricity program reflected concerns about how technological change might reshape interaction patterns and everyday rhythms. These responses demonstrate that local values function as evaluative processes through which new conditions are interpreted, discussed, and selectively integrated.

Cultural sustainability is also reflected in the community's consistent protection of spatial order and the natural environment. The prohibition of electricity in the core settlement, the protection of sacred forests, and the continued use of traditional resource management practices illustrate how *adat* functions as a living ecological system. These arrangements are not expressions of cultural fixation, but continuously enacted practices that are reassessed and reorganized in response to shifting social and environmental pressures. These practices are consistent with the findings of Berkes et al., (2000) and Turner et al., (2003), who emphasize the role of local ecological knowledge in sustaining environmental balance.

From an economic perspective, this transformation has fostered a form of community-based social entrepreneurship. Activities such as guiding, handicraft production, and homestay management are organized collectively through deliberation and equitable task distribution. Economic activities are not oriented toward profit maximization but toward shared benefits and social cohesion. Rather than limiting economic change, local values actively structure how expansion is negotiated, distributed, and embedded within social relations. This reflects Moscardo (2014) view that tourism can serve as a medium for social learning and community empowerment rather than mere commodification. Furthermore, the concept of community empowerment itself emerges as a critical response to centralized and uniform development patterns in Indonesia (Kolopaking *et al.* 2022). In the context of Kampung Naga, this process illustrates how local wisdom is not diminished but transformed, functioning as a guiding framework in adapting to external economic influences.

The findings of this study also have theoretical implications for understanding local wisdom. Rather than viewing local wisdom solely as a cultural heritage that must be preserved, this study shows that local wisdom continues to evolve through everyday social interactions. In Kampung Naga, local values are not simply inherited and maintained in their original form, but are continuously interpreted, negotiated, and adapted in response to changing circumstances. These findings suggest that transformation and sustainability are not contradictory processes. Instead, the sustainability of local wisdom depends on the community's ability to maintain its core values while adapting their expression and practice to contemporary social realities.

This study enhances the understanding of local wisdom by demonstrating that it is not solely a tradition to be preserved, but also a dynamic process shaped through everyday social interactions. In Kampung Naga, community members continuously interpret, discuss, and adapt their values in response to changing circumstances while maintaining their core meaning. The findings suggest that transformation and sustainability are not opposing processes. Furthermore, this study contributes to existing perspectives on local wisdom by showing that its sustainability depends not only on preservation, but also on the community's capacity to reinterpret and adapt cultural practices to new contexts. Consequently, local wisdom remains relevant through its continuous practice, negotiation, and reinforcement in everyday community life.

CONCLUSION

Local wisdom Kampung Naga shows that transformation and sustainability are not opposing processes but interconnected dynamics embedded in everyday social life, especially in the context of Kampung Naga's development as a tourism village. The findings indicate that local wisdom functions as a living normative system that is continuously interpreted, negotiated, and reorganized through interactions among customary leaders, community members, younger generations, visitors, and other external actors related to tourism activities. Core values such as simplicity, mutual cooperation, self-reliance, and respect for nature remain fundamental, while their everyday expressions gradually adapt to the growing presence of tourism, governance changes, and broader social dynamics. Rather than weakening tradition, transformation in Kampung Naga reflects the community's ability to manage and filter change through deliberation and customary authority, ensuring that tourism development remains in line with shared cultural values. By viewing local wisdom as a dynamic and relational system rather than a fixed cultural inheritance, this study shows that sustainability emerges from the community's own capacity to reinterpret and maintain tradition within the context of tourism-related social change, positioning Indigenous society as an active agent in shaping its own path of adaptive development. This study contributes to the literature on local wisdom by showing that cultural sustainability in customary communities relies on both preservation and adaptive transformation, supported by customary institutions and shared values.

Acknowledgement. The authors sincerely thank the customary community of Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya Regency, for their time, insights, and cooperation during this research. We also appreciate the informants whose participation and perspectives enriched the study. This research was independently funded, and the authors declare no financial or non-financial conflicts of interest.

Conflict of Interest. The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Declaration of Generative AI Use. While preparing this manuscript, the author used Grammarly to improve grammar, language clarity, and writing quality. The author then reviewed and revised the manuscript as needed and takes full responsibility for its accuracy, originality, and integrity.

CRedit Contribution. AN conceptualized and designed the study, developed the conceptual framework, conducted the literature review, designed the methodology, carried out fieldwork, collected and analyzed data, interpreted findings, drafted the manuscript, and revised it throughout the writing process. S contributed to the study's conceptual development, supervised field research, refined the interview guide, and critically reviewed the data analysis and manuscript. LMK strengthened the methodological approach, refined the questionnaire, critically reviewed the data analysis and discussion, revised the manuscript, and provided academic supervision. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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