

Culinary Business Resilience During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Case Study from Sanur Bali

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Abstract

Sanur tourism area as an international tourism area in Denpasar City, Bali, is suffering a reduction of tourist arrivals due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Culinary business is one a big affected sector because of the pandemic. This study aims to analyze the resilience strategies in facing the pandemic and its relations with sustainability using a descriptive qualitative method by primary data sources from interviews and observation. This study finds that the COVID-19 pandemic causes a decrease in the number of visiting tourists, as culinary businesses' customers, that has a big impact on expenses, workforce, and operational hours of the culinary business. Various efforts have been made by culinary business actors to be resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic by adaptation, innovation, strengthening networks, and sustainability planning. These efforts also support achieving sustainable tourism in Sanur tourism area, especially in management sustainability, economic sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability, and environmental sustainability

Keywords: *resilience, culinary business, Sanur gastronomy, COVID-19 pandemic*

Abstrak

Kawasan pariwisata Sanur sebagai kawasan khusus pariwisata serta kawasan pariwisata internasional di Kota Denpasar, Bali, mengalami penurunan jumlah kunjungan wisatawan akibat pandemi COVID-19. Hal tersebut menyebabkan terganggunya kegiatan kepariwisataan, salah satunya usaha kuliner. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi resiliensi usaha kuliner dalam menghadapi pandemi COVID-19 dan kaitannya dengan pariwisata berkelanjutan. Pengambilan data dilakukan wawancara dan observasi, kemudian dilakukan analisis secara deskriptif. Penelitian ini menjelaskan bahwa pandemi COVID-19 menyebabkan penurunan jumlah konsumen, yang menyebabkan perubahan pendapatan, tenaga kerja, dan jam operasional pada usaha kuliner. Berbagai upaya dilakukan agar usaha kuliner mampu resiliensi pada masa pandemi COVID-19 dengan melakukan adaptasi, inovasi, meningkatkan konektivitas sosial, dan merencanakan keberlanjutan. Upaya resiliensi tersebut juga mendukung tercapainya pariwisata berkelanjutan di kawasan pariwisata Sanur, yaitu pada aspek keberlanjutan pengelolaan, ekonomi, sosial-budaya, dan lingkungan.

Kata kunci: *resiliensi, usaha kuliner, gastronomi Sanur, pandemic COVID-19*

1. INTRODUCTION

Bali Province is one of Indonesia's best tourism destination. According to National Planning Development Ministry of Republic Indonesia (2015), one of the locations that is being developed for tourism in Bali Province is Denpasar City. Sanur tourism area is one of the tourist destinations, with many tourist attractions such as natural, man-made, or cultural. However, the tourism development can't be separated from external factors. One of such factors is the COVID-19 pandemic, which slows down the development of tourism. The COVID-19 pandemic that is currently happening has a very great impact towards the tourism in Bali Province.

In 2020, the number of visiting tourists in Bali Province is at the lowest point in the last 4 years. The number of visiting tourists in Bali Province during January-July 2020 is 1.050.139 people, with 69,65% decrease from 2019 (Indonesian Statistics of Bali Province, 2020). This causes a decrease in the demand for tourism services, such as accommodation, catering, or other tourism services.

Table 1: Number of Visiting Tourists in Bali Province 2016-2020
[Source: Indonesian Statistics of Bali Province]

Year	Number of Visiting Tourists (people)		Total
	Domestic	Foreign	
2016	8.643.680	4.927.937	13.571.617
2017	8.735.633	5.697.739	14.433.372
2018	9.757.991	6.070.473	15.828.464
2019	10.545.039	6.275.210	16.820.249
2020	4.596.157	1.069.473	5.665.630

Sanur tourism area being the one and only tourism area in Denpasar City that experienced quite a drastic decrease in the number of visiting tourists due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This causes disruption of the tourism industry because Sanur tourism area is a tourism accommodation zone according to the Regional and Spatial Planning (RTRW) of Denpasar City. So, the most of Sanur tourism area's infrastructures is built to facilitate tourism, such as hotels and restaurants.

This can affect the sustainability of the tourism industry as it experienced losses in many tourism businesses around the Sanur tourism area. One of them is the culinary business as a food and beverages services and the most liked activity by tourists. This loss is measured by the decrease in the number of customers in relation to the income and expenditure of the culinary business. In addition, 48,79% of the tourism workforce works in food and beverages services (Indonesian Statistics, 2017). According to a survey conducted by BPS Bali Province regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic towards the social demographic and businesses in 2020, there is a decrease in income of the food and beverages industry by more than 50% and an increase in expenditure up to 46,51%. This causes the culinary business to adapt, innovate, and be resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resilience of culinary businesses is also important to increase customer's trust so that the business can increase its number of customers (Madeira, *et al.*, 2021).

Baiquni (2002) explained that sustainable tourism is a new paradigm that combines the aspect of development with environmental conservation as an effort to increase living standards and ecological sustainability. According to UNWTO (2012), sustainable tourism collaborates with nature, respects the local culture and community, and is supported by stakeholders. In its implementation, sustainable tourism is associated with ecological maintenance, nature and biodiversity conservation, culture and local wisdom conservation, and giving socio-economic benefits for the stakeholders that contribute for reducing

poverty. Therefore, the effort done by tourism businesses, especially culinary businesses, during the COVID-19 pandemic can support the sustainability of tourism.

This study aims to analyze the strategies that have been implemented by culinary businesses in the Sanur tourism area to be resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic and its association with sustainable tourism. Hopefully, the results of this study can be used as a consideration in making policies or programs for the recovery of the tourism sector in Bali Province, especially in Denpasar City. In addition, this study can also be a reference for the other culinary businesses to survive and sustainable despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. METHODS

This study is conducted in Sanur, Denpasar, Bali Province. Sanur tourism area is chosen because of the following reasons:

- 1) The Sanur tourism area is the only tourism area in Denpasar City, which is one of the tourism developmental centers in Bali Province;
- 2) Sanur is one of the strategic areas of Denpasar City from economical aspect;
- 3) Sanur is being developed for international tourism; and
- 4) According to Regional and Spatial Planning (RTRW) of Denpasar City from 2011 to 2031, Sanur tourism area is located at the tourism accommodation zone.

This study is conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during January-April 2021. The data gained for this study is obtained from primary and secondary data sources. Primary data collection is conducted by field observation and interviews. The interview is conducted semi-structured with 16 culinary businesses in Sanur tourism area which still operates during the pandemic as the main subject, in-depth interviews are also conducted with domestic tourists which is local citizen of Denpasar City, experts in tourism or culinary sciences which consists of lecturers from the Faculty of Tourism in Universitas Udayana, and also government officials who oversees tourism which is the Denpasar City Department of Tourism.

Secondary data is obtained from data collected by Denpasar City Department of Tourism, Indonesian Statistics of Bali Province, Indonesian Statistic of Denpasar City, which includes data of the number of visiting tourists, culinary businesses, and other literatures or publications as complementary data. The variable used in this study is adopted from the resilience strategy models which is coined by Branicki, *et al.* (2018) which includes innovation, adaptation, social connectivity, and sustainable planning.

This study is a qualitative research with the descriptive analysis technique, based on the data collected from field observations and interviews. The data is collected, grouped, and shown using diagrams and descriptions, and finally, a conclusion can be drawn (Moleong, 2008). This research uses a case study approach which is very useful for investigating real-life phenomena and developing knowledge of sustainability (Yin, 2009; Creswell, 2009). According to Thomas (2011), the determinants of case study analysis include literature review, analysis of thematical report, legal documents, also press article.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Sanur Tourism Area During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Sanur tourism area is a tourist destination severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the central gateway for tourism in Bali Province, Sanur tourism area experienced a drastic decrease in the number of visiting tourists. Tourist destinations in Sanur tourism area, especially the beaches, barely have anyone visiting it, even though the coastline extends over 6 kilometers. As a tourist destination that heavily depends on international tourists, tourism activities in Sanur tourism area is halted due to the low number of international tourists during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, tourism activities in Sanur tourism area during the pandemic can only rely on domestic tourists and

residents. The condition of many tourist destinations in Sanur during the pandemic can be seen in the following picture.

Based on the field observation shown by the three pictures under, it is known that these tourist destinations in Sanur tourism area barely have any visitors due to the pandemic. This shows how the pandemic severely impact tourism activities in Sanur tourism area, especially the tourist attractions in coastal area.



Figure 1. Sanur Tourism Area Condition During the COVID-19 Pandemic;

(a) Tourist Attraction in Sanur Tourism Area Has No Visiting Tourists,

(b) Tourist Facilities in Sanur Tourism Area Was All Closed

[Source: Authors Documentation, 2021]

The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant impacts toward tourism activities in Sanur tourism area. The low number of visiting tourists caused some tourism services in Sanur tourism area, such as money changers, tourist information centers, tourist transports, surfing shacks, souvenir shops, accommodation businesses, and culinary businesses, to not operate optimally, making some of those businesses close temporarily until now, many of those closed businesses still haven't reopened yet.

Overall, Sanur tourism area is one of tourist destinations that rarely visited by tourists during COVID-19 pandemic. In contrast to tourist attractions in Badung Regency, tourist attractions there have experienced an increase in the number of visiting tourists in early 2021, especially on the beach. According to the informant who is an academician, that is possible because the geographical characteristics of the beach attractions in the area are more suitable for millennial generation because beaches in the south of Badung Regency have big waves with white sand and cliffs and beaches with big waves with black sand in the west of Badung Regency which is more suitable for enjoying sunset views. Meanwhile, beach attractions in Sanur tourism area tend to be in demand by elderly tourists who like tranquility because of the geographical characteristics of the beaches which has calm waves and is more suitable for enjoying sunrise views. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, beach attractions in Sanur tourism area were always crowded in the morning because of the sunrise views, even the beaches in Sanur tourism area were better known as sunrise beaches. However, the number of visiting tourists who came during COVID-19 pandemic decreased very sharply.

3.2 Sanur Tourism Area During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Culinary business is one of the most favorite tourist activities when visiting Sanur tourism area. There are 300 culinary businesses spread across the beaches of Sanur including restaurants, food courts, cafes, bars, and food markets. Culinary businesses provide many kinds of foods, such as snacks, seafoods, Indonesian foods (Javanese, Padang, Makassar, and the other Indonesian ethnicities food), fast food, special food of a country (Chinese, Italian, Mexican, Indian food, etc.), and also local Balinese food. Culinary businesses also provide many kinds of beverages, including alcoholic beverages.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the sustainability of culinary businesses in Sanur tourism area due to the low number of visiting tourists. This also caused some culinary

businesses to close temporarily until there is only 30 units remain operative during the COVID-19 pandemic. Generally, COVID-19 pandemic had some impact on the sustainability of culinary businesses due to the low number of visiting tourists, especially for economical sustainability. This pandemic caused a decrease in the number of customers, increased layoffs, decreased profits, altered operational hours, and affected the effectiveness and expenses of a business.

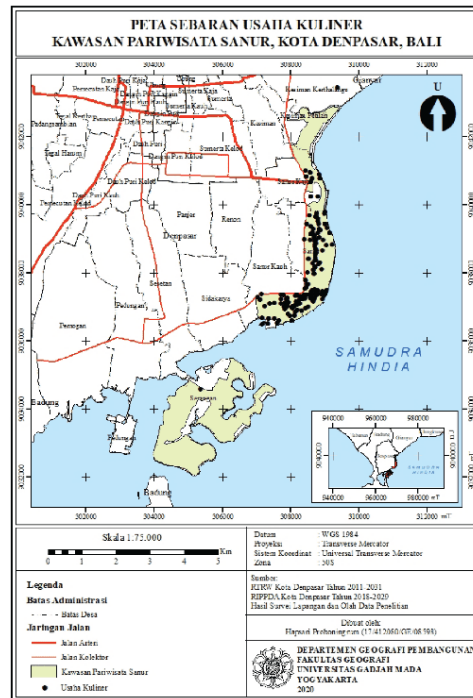


Figure 2. Distribution of Culinary Business in Sanur Tourism Area's Map [Source: Established form primary data, 2021]

The sharp decline in the number of customers is a very significant impact because almost all culinary businesses said that the decline in costumers due to the COVID-19 has reached 90%. Culinary businesses also often have no consumers at all. The graphs below show the difference between the average number of consumers before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

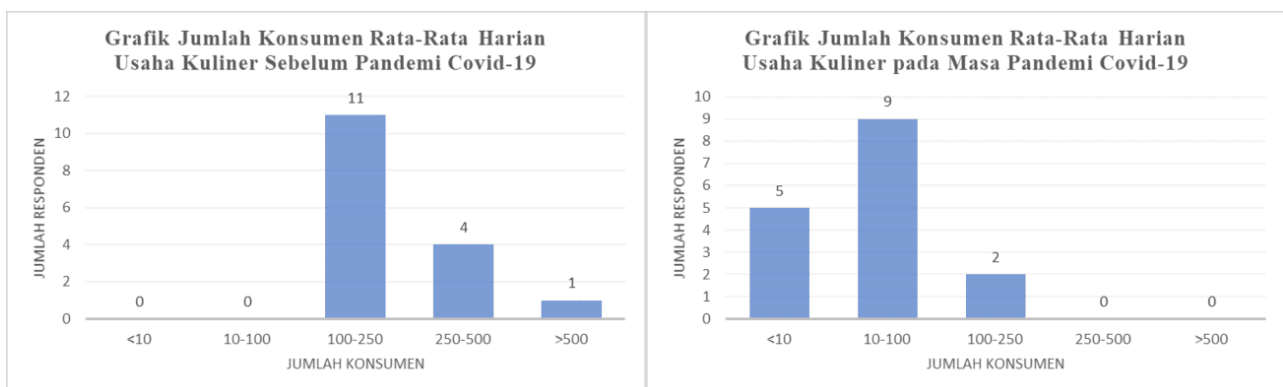


Figure 3. Average Number of Consumers in Culinary Business Before and During COVID-19 Pandemic Graph [Source: Established form primary data, 2021]

A sharp decline in the number of consumers has caused the number of people working in culinary business to be ineffective. Therefore, culinary businesses reduced the number of people working because the businesses had to cut down on expenses. This workforce decrease is done by sending them home temporarily and allowing them to work again later, permanent layoff, and a rolling system. Some businesses are overwhelmed when the number of customers suddenly increase because they had decreased their workforce.

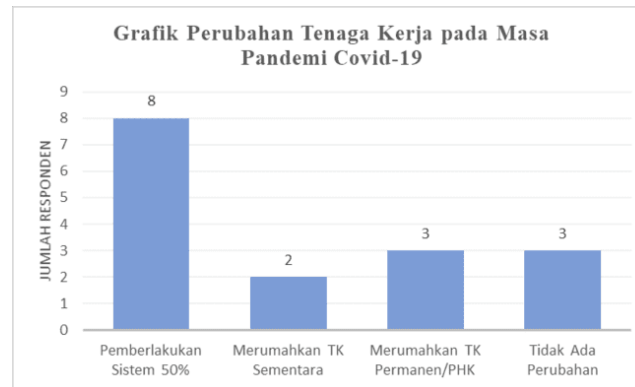


Figure 4. Labor Change in Culinary Business During COVID-19 Pandemic Graph
[Source: Established form primary data, 2021]

Reducing the number of workers in the culinary business at Sanur tourism area has a different impact on each business. Several culinary businesses said that reducing the number of workers was not a problem because of the small number of consumers. So, operational activities are still handled clearly. On the other hand, popular culinary businesses said that there was a problem due to the high number of consumers, especially on weekends or holidays. This causes the culinary business' services to be inferior and seem unprofessional. Culinary business sustainability can also be identified by the number of workers because it is related to the business' expenses.

During the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during March-June 2020, there is a lockdown imposed on tourist destinations in Bali Province so that culinary businesses are forced to close temporarily, rendering them inoperative. This lockdown is imposed according to The Governor of Bali's Instruction Number 8551 Year 2020 regarding the Strengthening of Prevention and Handling of COVID-19 in Bali in the second dictum which concerns shutting down operational tourist destinations, shutting down night-clubs, and canceling crowded activities. During July-August 2020, tourism activities in Bali Province start to be reopened again but with tight health protocols and some activity limitations. Therefore, tourist destination began to reopen and operate their services even with a very low number of visitors and relying on local citizens. In facing new normal, most culinary businesses in Sanur tourism area changed their operational hours so that their business could survive, but some businesses chose to stay closed to avoid increasing their loss.

Due to the decrease in the number of customers, culinary businesses must minimize their expenses so that they can survive with low capital and income. This can be done by decreasing workforce expenses, changing operational times, decreasing raw material supply, restocking raw materials only when needed, and decreasing marketing expenses.



Figure 5. Culinary Business in Sanur Tourism Area Has No Customers at All
[Source: Authors Documentation, 2021]

Economically, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a drastic decline in tourism profits. However, it can also increase environmental quality. Environmentally, the environment around the culinary businesses in Sanur tourism area became free of trash, with improved air quality and less light pollution at night. In addition, policies made by the government during the COVID-19 pandemic heavily influences the operating hours of culinary businesses in Sanur tourism area, such as operating hours limitation, limiting the number of working staff at 50%, and limiting the number of customers at 25%. Therefore, culinary businesses must implement a strategy, be it adapting, innovating, connecting socially, or planning sustainably so that they can remain operational during the COVID-19 pandemic. The efforts done by culinary businesses are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Culinary Business' Efforts to Survive During COVID-19 Pandemic
[Source: Established form primary data, 2021]

Variable	Efforts
Adaptation	Implementing health protocols Giving out discounts Organizing events
Innovation	Collaborating with the community Providing ready-to-cook meals and lending the utensils Providing delivery-order services Adjusting prices Digital marketing
Social Connectivity	Collaborating to expand the tourism market Connecting with a social network
Sustainability Planning	Chaning the food and beverages menu



(a)



(b)

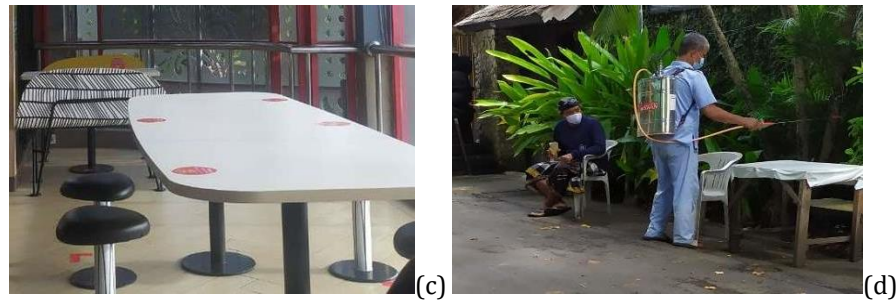


Figure 6. Implementation of Health Protocols in Culinary Business;
 (a) Addition of Trashcan, (b) Addition of Hand Washing Facilities,
 (c) Physical distancing, (d) Disinfection
 [Source: Authors Documentation, 2021]

As a form of adaptation during the COVID-19 pandemic, culinary businesses in Sanur tourism area implements health protocols according to the Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability (CHSE) guidelines released by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. This guideline includes the provision and addition of hand washing facilities, the provision of hand sanitizers, the addition of trashcans, body temperature inspections, the implementation of physical distancing, the implementation of a 25% quota for dine-in customer capacity, and routine sanitation. Customers and working staffs should also obey the enforced health protocols. PPKM, the policy being enforced to limit the spread of COVID-19, in Bali Province also forced culinary businesses to operate with many limitations, including the prohibition of crowding and operating hours is limited until only 20:00 WITA (Indonesia Central Time Zone).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, innovations are carried out in order to increase the number of customers. According to Sharma, *et al* (2021), innovations is one of the important efforts for culinary businesses to be resilient. In addition, it is important for the food or culinary businesses to build connections with other businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. A social network between culinary businesses in Bali Province used for sharing information, primarily related to the operational activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The social network is considered to have a positive impact due to the unpredictable nature of policies made by the Bali Provincial Government. Some culinary businesses also have networks with their communities. The network has positively impact both parties, as indicated by the cooperation to hold events located in the culinary industry. The influence created by the event is that more tourists visit these culinary businesses, and the community becomes better-known by more people.

The Sanur tourism area is an area that is directed for international tourism area, therefore its target market is international tourists. During the COVID-19 pandemic, tourist visits dropped sharply, with very few foreign tourists who is Sanur tourism area's target market. It causes a change the target market from foreign tourists to domestic tourists and local people, causing menu changes in the culinary business so that the menus offered can accommodate the needs of domestic tourists.

Based on the the results of interview with Denpasar City Government represented by the Denpasar City Department of Tourism, the government has provided funding grants for business actors in tourism sector affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for culinary businesses who are registered as taxpayers and whose businesses meet the requirements and criteria to receive. To provide funding grants as business capital, Denpasar City Department of Tourism cooperates with the Denpasar City Department of Small and Medium Business Cooperatives. In addition, the government also assisted the tourism business actors in implementing CHSE guidelines by providing technical guidance and certification. Tourism recovery in Sanur tourism area, the government also held a COVID-19 vaccine program for tourism businesses, including the culinary businesses. This

supports the achievement of sustainable management through the management of tourist destinations that involve adaptation and collaboration.

The government's strategy regarding the recovery of tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Sanur tourism area is still considered very lacking according to several culinary businesses. Several culinary businesses said there was no government aid for business operations even though electricity and labor costs were considered more critical for business sustainability. Culinary businesses expect that the policies issued by the government should also think of the culinary business's point of view so that it is mutually beneficial for both parties.

According to the academician, the handling of COVID-19 in the tourism sector in Bali Province during COVID-19 pandemic was still lacking, with any breakthroughs or concrete actions but only written appeals from the Bali Provincial Government and the local governments. This is considered unable to ease the burden on business actors in the tourism sector in general. The condition of Sanur tourism area which is very quiet has caused the culinary business to die. Therefore, there is a need for policy relaxation, one of which is tax relaxation. Until now, the recovery of tourism sector in Bali Province has only come from the central government of Indonesian Republic in terms of compensation for business actors. However, this is still unable to restore the tourism activities.

3.3 Culinary Business Resilience in Sanur Tourism Area in Supporting the Achievement of Sustainable Tourism

From the geographical point of view, especially regional development, culinary business resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic is a study that supports the achievement of sustainable tourism that takes into account aspects of sustainable management, culture, socio-economic, and the environment. Management sustainability is identified based on the destination management strategies, arrangements, policies, safety, security, and marketing. The management sustainability is seen in stakeholder involvement, including businesses, communities, academics, government, and media, or known as pentahelix. In addition, management sustainability is also identified by the availability of regulations and guidelines in running a culinary business.

Culinary businesses implement the CHSE-based health protocols. Implementing health protocols in culinary businesses is essential since it is an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while providing comfort for visitors. Culinary businesses that have implemented health protocols following CHSE guidelines will have a certificate as a guarantee to visitors that the products and services provided have complied with health, safety, and environmental sustainability protocols. Moreover, culinary businesses must also comply with the rules issued by the government regarding restrictions on operational activities as well as restrictions on the number of visitors and workers.



Figure 7. CHSE Labels at Culinary Business

[Source: Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2020]

In accomplishing management and socio-cultural sustainability, cooperation between culinary businesses and visitors is needed to apply health protocols. Local communities who are the *pecalang* (known as traditional or local police in Balinese village)

of the traditional village play a part in controlling the implementation of health protocols by guarding the entrance to tourist attractions, carrying out routine disinfection, and managing the operational hours of culinary businesses. The tourism promotion strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic is the slogan "Indonesia Care," as stated by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia. With adaptation, innovations, and collaboration efforts, through CHSE certification, vaccination, and providing excellent service, in order to attract tourists to visit the Sanur tourism area as one of the locations for reopening tourism after the COVID -19 pandemic.

The availability of health and safety services is also one aspect of sustainable management. It can be seen from the presence of the *pecalang*, temperature checks before entering the culinary business, and the provision of handwashing facilities, which also support health protocols under CHSE, particularly in the safety aspect. According to one of the informants who is local tourist, it is important for culinary businesses to strictly implement health protocols because it will provide a sense of security and comfort for consumers. One of the considerations of consumers in visiting culinary businesses is related to the adaptation during COVID-19 pandemic. Culinary businesses that strictly follow the health protocols tend to have a stable number of consumers.

Based on the information from academician, management sustainability in the Sanur tourism area can be considered relatively well with the cooperation of various stakeholders. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the absence of tourist visits caused a drastic decrease in income, so culinary businesses could not carry out operational activities. However, this cooperation has succeeded in increasing the number of visits and revenues, although not significantly.

Economic sustainability can be seen from the involvement of local communities, the development of the local MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise), especially in the culinary field, and efforts to increase income. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the dominance of domestic tourist visits, whereas previously, it was highly dependent on foreign tourists. It causes changes to the menu in the culinary business. According to the academician, Bali's MSME products during the COVID-19 pandemic have developed rapidly, as indicated by menu changes in culinary enterprises, which now serve a variety of local food and drink menus. Furthermore, the workforce in the culinary business is also dominated by local people, and even the menus served to visitors are directly processed by the local community.

Economic sustainability is also identified based on the efforts to increase income. As claimed by the data obtained from culinary businesses, efforts are being made to increase revenue, namely holding discounts, providing delivery services, and organizing events to attract visitors. In addition to supporting economic sustainability, organizing events in culinary businesses also supports socio-cultural sustainability. Collaboration with the community in organizing events can expand the market while preserving Balinese culture. It is shown by dancing classes, *Endek* (traditional Balinese fabrics) fashion shows, and the *Ogoh-Ogoh* exhibition. Socio-cultural sustainability can also be identified based on tourist behavior variables. During the COVID-19 pandemic, tourists must follow the health protocols according to the CHSE guidelines for restaurant/food stalls.



Figure 8. Poster Event Promotion to Attract Consumers and Preserving Culture
[Source: https://www.instagram.com/segara_theseaside/, 2021]

Environmental sustainability can be measured from cleanliness and energy use. During the COVID-19 pandemic, cleanliness is a critical aspect in managing a culinary business. It is also related to implementing health protocols, especially on cleanliness and environmental sustainability, which are required to provide additional trash bins; thus, the environment looks cleaner. Also, there are changes in operational activities that adjust according to the government policies. The policies can reduce energy use and light pollution by blackouts at night because culinary businesses must close before 20.00 WITA (Indonesia Central Time Zone).

Based on the management, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental sustainability aspects, the resilience of the culinary business in the Sanur tourism area during the COVID-19 pandemic is considered to have taken into account their sustainability. The achievement of sustainable tourism in the Sanur tourism area's culinary business cannot be separated from the cooperation of various parties. The efforts made by the parties involved in managing tourism in the Sanur tourism area are expected to be a guide for other tourism areas so that they can bounce back during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has many impacts in culinary businesses, such as a sharp decrease in number of consumers that affected the business' expenses, workforce, and operational ours, so that culinary businesses must be resilient. The resilience of culinary businesses in the Sanur tourism area is seen based on the variables of adaptation, innovation, social connectivity, and sustainability planning. Adaptation is carried out by implementing health protocols guided by the CHSE strictly and measurably. Various innovations have been carried out to attract consumers by giving discounts, online marketing, providing delivery services, and organizing events in collaboration with the community. Meanwhile, social connectivity provides the proper understanding regarding the COVID-19 pandemic so that culinary businesses can bounce back. As a result of the changes in the tourist market, which initially targeted foreign tourists to domestic tourists, menus change was made in the culinary business. It also aims to support the achievement of sustainable tourism, be it management, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental sustainability.

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