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Stakeholder Collaboration in Tourism Village Branding: The Case of Gombengsari

Yuslinda Dwi Handini*, Abul Haris Suryo Negoro, Adhiningasih Prabhawati, Jaymei Yoseka, Ari Ahmad Tamami, Muhammad Nurul Muflikhin

University of Jember, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: yuslinda.fisip@unej.ac.id

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Abstract

This study argues that cross-stakeholder co-creation, which aligns internal and external branding capabilities, is most effective in converting local assets into a coherent place brand; however, it is still limited by formalistic participation and institutional disharmony. Tourism village branding in Indonesia generally emphasizes promotion without integrating branding capabilities and co-creation, especially in the context of tourism villages. Therefore, we examined Gombengsari (Banyuwangi), which is based on coffee and Etawa goats, as a representative case. The research objective is to develop an integrated, co-creation-based lens to explain how assets are mobilized through the branding process to achieve economic outcomes and destination identity. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, documentation, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with the government and community (purposive–snowball sampling), coded in NVivo, and analyzed interactively. The findings reveal three key assets, including natural, institutional, and social, driven by top-down (tiered policies) and bottom-up (community participation and the slogan "Come–Feel–Enjoy–Stay") processes. Two brief pieces of evidence: (1) the budget of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) of around Rp200 million/year limits funding for events and promotions; (2) a farm with ±200 Etawa goats produces ±300–500 liters/week, which has been successfully packaged as an educational experience. This article presents a co-creation ecosystem framework that integrates branding capabilities (both internal/external) and co-creation to enhance place branding and local economic benefits. Its limitations are its single case study and short temporal horizon, opening up space for comparative studies across destinations.

Keywords: co-creation; tourism village; branding capability; stakeholder; Gombengsari

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Gombengsari is one of the tourist urban villages in Banyuwangi Regency that utilizes local commodities in its tourism branding and has been included in the 29 best tourist villages in East Java, as well as one of the 300 best tourist village destinations in Indonesia in 2023 and 2022 through the Indonesian Tourism Village Award (ADWI) organized by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Jadesta, 2023; Kominfo.jatimprov, 2023).

The coffee commodity and etawa goat farm in Gombengsari Urban Village is a natural asset that can be utilized as a tourist branding and to improve community welfare through tourism villages. No specific data mentions the increase in income after tourism. However, the inclusion of this tourist village in the developing category is one indicator of job creation due to existing tourist destinations (Jadesta, 2023). To support tourism development, the Gombengsari Urban Village Government specifically involves internal community participation through the Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) consisting of farmer groups, arts groups, homestay business actors, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) groups, and youth groups.

Over the past few years, there has been a slight increase in the number of visitors entering through the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis).

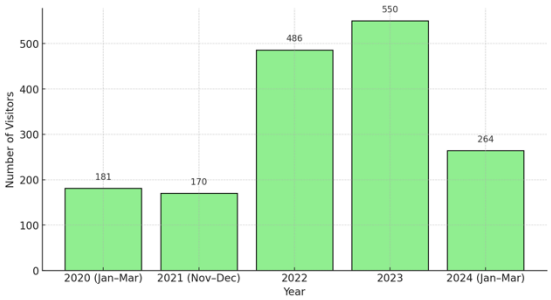


Figure 1. Number of visitors to Gombengsari Urban Village (2020-2024) (Source: Gombengsari Pokdarwis records, 2024)

The number of visitors to Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village decreased in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but saw a significant surge in 2022 as restrictions eased. Visitor numbers have continued to increase, with 264 visitors in the first 3 months of 2024, exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Based on researchers' findings in the field, it is known that the existence of tourist villages has had little impact on community income, especially for MSME actors. The average income of MSME actors is now almost equal to the minimum wage in Banyuwangi, which is 2.5 million rupiah. Many job opportunities have arisen due to the presence of tourist villages. People who previously worked as laborers or held odd jobs with uncertain incomes can now open their own businesses, earning better incomes.

Unfortunately, participation in Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village is only formal, with some institutional disharmony. In fact, the assets and co-values created by Gombengsari tourism actors have brought economic benefits to the community. It is expected that with community participation combined with tourism branding, Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village will not only develop tourist attractions but also offer unforgettable tourism experiences that become the place identity of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village. Reflecting on the above phenomenon, the creation of tourism branding in Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village is driven by co-creation factors with cross-sector stakeholders. Therefore, this article will identify and explore the role of stakeholders in creating the branding of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village. Reflecting on the above phenomenon, the creation of tourism branding in Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village is important to be encouraged by the co-creation ecosystem with cross-sector stakeholders. Therefore, this article will identify and explore the role of stakeholders in creating the branding of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village.

Research on rural tourism development cannot be separated from the role of collaboration between various stakeholders. Basyar et al. (2025) emphasize that collaborative governance in cultural heritage tourism requires the active involvement of local communities, governments, and community organizations to overcome complex challenges, ranging from preservation to development needs. Through a multi-stakeholder approach, their research shows that effective coordination and community participation are key factors in building tourism resilience. In line with this, Pham et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of co-creating value in destination branding. They found that collaboration between tourists, local communities, and other stakeholders can create a stronger brand identity while increasing tourist loyalty to the destination. Thus, the integration of the concepts of collaborative governance and co-creation of value is a crucial foundation for understanding how tourism village brands are built participatively, as seen in the context of Gombengsari Urban Village.

When looking at studies focusing on tourism village branding in the Scopus database, most of the direction of discussion is about the digital brand destination (Mardhiyani & Budiastuti, 2021; Wulandari et al., 2025), the relationship between tourist village branding strategies and village image (Karta et al., 2020, 2021), ecological tourism village branding based on customary systems (Mastika & Nimran, 2020), and the impact of tourism village branding on the local economy (Fajri et al., 2024; Noverani et al., 2023). Few discuss branding strategies in tourist villages through co-creation schemes with stakeholders, especially in Banyuwangi Regency, which has the most tourist villages in East Java Province. In addition, most of these studies on branding strategies were studied using mixed-method methods (Karta et al., 2021; Wulandari et al., 2025), and one quantitative-based article (Noverani et al., 2023), only two articles using qualitative (Karta et al., 2020; Mastika & Nimran, 2020), so this research enriches qualitative research methods with case studies.

Therefore, this research will contribute conceptually to branding capability in tourist villages integrated with co-creation stakeholders to offer a new framework for branding capability. To achieve an independent and developing tourist village, it is necessary to support the co-creation of tourism stakeholders who synergize and are firmly committed to the progress of tourist villages.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Branding Capability

Branding capability is the ability of institutions to gather a series of interrelated organizational routines to carry out marketing activities and programs to convey consistent brand meaning to consumers (O'Cass & Ngo, 2011). Furthermore, Odoom et al. mentioned that branding capability consists of internal and external branding. Internal branding consists of the ability to identify brand meaning by using the brand as a tool of the institution that is consistently able to communicate the meaning of the brand. Then, employees also can support the brand of the institution. Furthermore, external branding means the ability of the institution to mobilize resources from external associations with the support of strong connections with suppliers. In addition, it includes the ability to relate well with stakeholders and gain additional skills from partners (Odoom, et al., 2017a).

Odoom, et al. (2017b) explained that branding capability consists of the ability to utilize institutional knowledge to create new brands that meet consumer demand, as well as creativity in brand branding and mobilizing a set of interrelated institutional routines to carry out branding activities. Furthermore, Handini et al. (2021) stated that developing brand-building capabilities is crucial, especially in dynamic environ-

ments, such as tourist villages. Tourism villages need to develop their village branding to create a distinct and unique entity with comparative advantages and a strong identity, showcasing their charm (Karta et al., 2021). Local economic development is a collaborative process between local governments and communities aimed at promoting and maintaining economic activities that create jobs (Nancey et al., 2017). Local economic development can also be defined as a collaborative effort among government, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and the community to identify and utilize resources effectively, thereby boosting and developing the local economy (Sishadiyati & Wahed, 2020).

Co-Creation Stakeholder

Co-creation in stakeholder engagement is a collaborative process in which different parties play an active role in the development and improvement of a product, service or brand (van den Broek et al., 2020). This approach emphasizes collaborative co-creation of value through shared vision and responsibility, which drives innovation and sustainability (Rema & Srivastav, 2024). As collaboration involves stakeholders, co-creation will produce solutions that are more innovative and relevant to the times (Treasure-Jones et al., 2019). In addition, this collaborative co-creation process requires commitment, trust, effective and open communication to share ideas, resources, and expertise, as a result each party can contribute maximally (Barandiarán et al., 2019; Bichler & Lösch, 2019).

In the context of tourism, this co-creation of stakeholders enables a more personalized and authentic experience (Mathis et al., 2016). In addition, co-creation benefits in tourism branding, such as improved destination image, higher visitor satisfaction, and economic growth (Rita et al., 2024). The concept of co-creation in tourism emphasizes the importance of creating shared value through the involvement of various stakeholders, including the government, the private sector, and tourists, with information and communication technology as a strategic instrument to strengthen meaningful and sustainable tourism experiences (Alharmoodi et al., 2024).

The study demonstrates that value co-creation occurs when collaboration, participation, and knowledge exchange take place between tourism service providers and tourists. Through this involvement, added value is created that not only increases tourist satisfaction but also strengthens the sustainable competitiveness of tourism destinations. Thus, value co-creation can be understood as a conceptual framework that emphasizes that the success of modern tourism depends on the ability of various parties to deliver meaningful experiences through joint involvement (Hardini et al., 2015; Solakis et al., 2024).

Conceptual Framework

This study develops an analytical framework that integrates branding capabilities and stakeholder co-creation. Assets, including natural, social, and institutional resources, form the basis of branding capabilities (Parmawati et al., 2018). These assets are mobilized through internal branding (community empowerment, Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis)) and external branding (government policies, market relations). Through the co-creation of values between stakeholders, including the government, community, private sector, and tourists, the branding of Gombengsari can be shaped to generate impacts in terms of economic benefits, sustainable tourism, and a unique cultural identity.

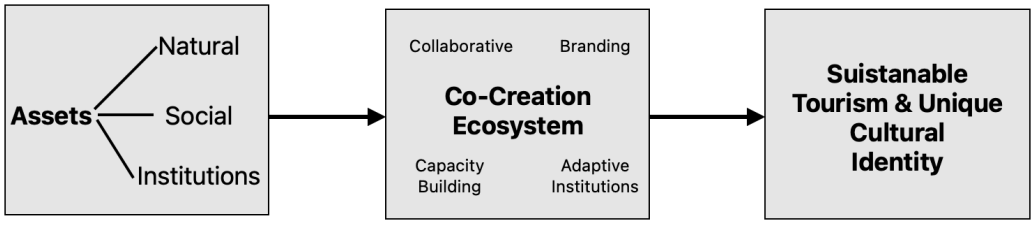


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework
(Source: Processed by researcher, 2024)

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles & Huberman., 2014). The research objective explored tourism urban village branding carried out by stakeholder actors in Gombengsari in tourism development. Data collection was conducted using observation and documentation methods, as well as face-to-face interviews and semi-structured Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

This research was conducted in Gombengsari Tourism Village for six months (May-October 2023) with eight informants representing the Tourism and Culture Office of Banyuwangi Regency, the Gombengsari Urban Village Government, the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), the Farmers Group, the Homestay Group, the Youth Group, the Arts Group, and Micro, Small, Medium Entreprises (MSME) actors. In addition, to support the validity of the interview data, the researcher conducted a two-day focus group discussion to discuss issues related to the dynamics of synergy between institutional elements in Gombengsari Tourism Village.

The FGD invited twenty-two people consisting of elements who had been interviewed in depth by the researcher. Meanwhile, the observation protocol used during the two days in the village involved researchers becoming fully engaged with tourism stakeholders in Gombengsari. This helped researchers establish stronger relationships with the individuals being observed (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The selection of interview informants and the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) employed purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The criteria for determining purposive and snowball sampling techniques were informants who understood the development of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village branding and were directly involved in the tourism business processes within Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village. Key informants included those from the Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village, and additional informants were sourced from the Banyuwangi Regency Government, specifically those in charge of tourism. The sociogram of research informants can be seen in the chart below.

Based on figure 3, variations in data collection were carried out to obtain valid data according to data triangulation techniques. The interview results will be transcribed first to get an overview of the sub-sub themes using software Nvivo 12 regarding the co-creation between stakeholder actors in developing Gombengsari Urban Village branding. Then, the data is analyzed using interactive data analysis techniques that include data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion to deepen the phenomenon of research findings (Miles & Huberman., 2014).

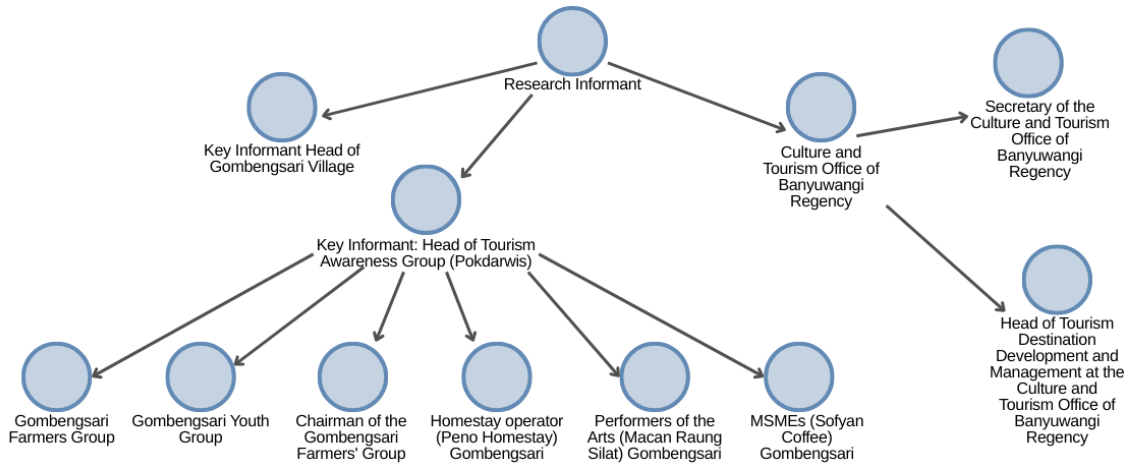


Figure 3. Sociogram of research informants
(Source: processed by researcher, 2024)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identification of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village Assets as Local Tourism Branding

Identification, inventory, and management of community assets are effective strategies to utilize assets as potential in tourist destinations (Dureau, 2013). Assets are something valuable that can be used to increase dignity or well-being (Kim & Sumberg, 2015). The results of the research analysis coding using NVivo 12 plus show that out of the seven assets in theory, Gombengsari Urban Village has three community assets that can help optimize the development of a tourist village, namely natural, institutional, and association (Dureau, 2013), as shown in Figure 4 below.

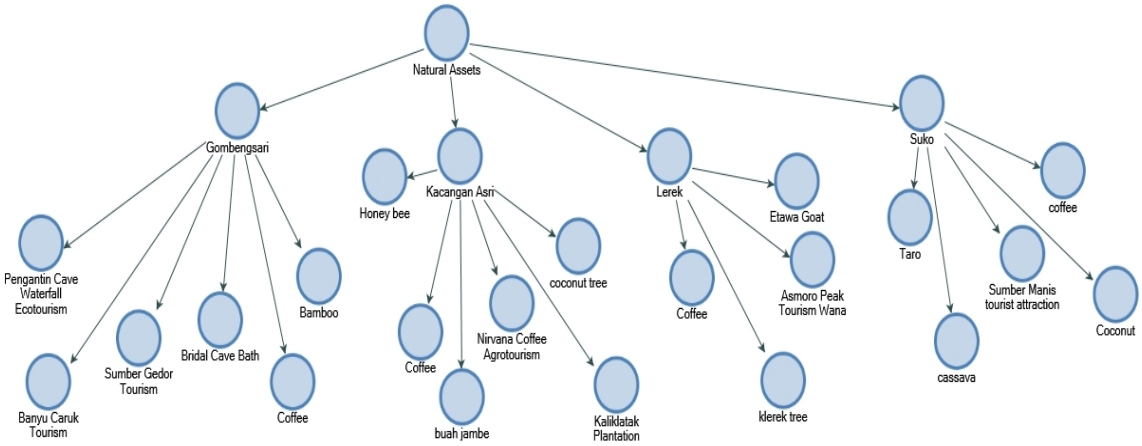


Figure 4. Sociogram of local natural assets
(Source: Processed by researcher, 2024)

Based on the field study results, this village has four sub-urban villages: Gombeng, Kacangan Asri, Lerek, and Suko. Potential tourism value assets can be seen in each of these sub-urban villages. Each sub-urban village has its uniqueness, natural attractions, and products produced by nature. However, a prominent resource found in all sub-urban villages is the coffee plant. Coffee is a commodity of superior production in Gombengsari Urban Village, bringing high economic effects to the community (Musliha, 2022). In comparison, based on observing several coffee brands that can

be identified in each sub-urban village (Table 1) and products other than coffee that include superior assets of Gombengsari Urban Village (Table 2).

Table 1. Identification of Coffee Potential for each Sub-Urban Village of Gombengsari Urban Village

Sub-urban village of Gombengsari	Name of Coffee Brand	Other-business	Partner products	Ownership	Advantages
Gombeng	Suwandi Coffee	Bamboo Wicker Products	-	Individual with farmer	Has been mass-produced to cafes and restaurants
Kacangan Asri	KASELA Coffee	-	-	Individual	Coffee types that have many variants
	Triskele Kahyangan	Plaited sticks, GNC Agrotourism, Bagiak Coffee	Organic fertilizer, plant seeds, and honey cattle products	Individual with farmer	Traditional processing without machines
Suko	Seblang Coffee	-	-	Individual	
	Dua Putra Coffee	Traditional coffee shop	-	Individual	Has a coffee shop made of woven bamboo
Lerek	Lego Coffee	Plantation education tour	-	Individual with farmer	Holding a Coffee Flower Festival every harvest season
	Rejo Coffe	-	-	Individual	Superior certified coffee quality

Source: Result of observation and proceed by researcher (19 May-13 December 2023)

Table 2. Identification of Potential Asset Other than Coffee Products in Gombengsari Urban Village

Product	Description of potential asset strengths of the village	Employment	Cost Range
Etawa Milk	The Etawa goat farm serves to sell and buy goats and their milk products. The farm has around 200 goats, Etawa can produce an average of 300 to 500 liters each week. The farm also offers educational tours of Etawa milk processing, so visitors can experience milking and drinking milk directly from the goats.	1 person	1 liters costs IDR 20,000 – IDR 24,000
YAKIN Chips	This individually-owned chips MSME is produced with cassava and taro as the basic ingredients. These chips have a savory taste and distinctive garlic aroma that distinguishes them from other chips.	1-2 persons	IDR 5,000 per 200 gram
Jambe NOM Juice	This product was initiated because the price of jambe is getting cheaper, so an innovation emerged to make a nom jambe juice drink at an affordable price.	1-2 persons	IDR 7,000 per cup

Source: Result of observation and proceed by researcher (19 May-13 December 2023)

The development of natural and rural tourism areas is expected to contribute to local income, create business and employment opportunities, and simultaneously support the conservation and preservation of natural and biological resources (Kusuma & Oktawirani, 2024). In line with this, the identification of superior assets of Gombengsari Urban Village, as shown in Tables 1 and 2 highlights natural assets and processed products as key potential asset. Therefore, these assets have great potential to be developed into high-value-added products to improve the village community's welfare (Kim & Sumberg, 2015).

However, it should be noted that the utilization of these natural assets needs to be done carefully, meaning that it needs sustainability aspects by paying attention to the balance between exploitation and conservation to maintain the environment. This needs to be done with a community-based asset management strategy (García, 2020). Community-based asset management is supported by effective institutional governance because these institutions play an important role in creating a business ecosystem conducive to optimally managing community assets (García, 2020). Therefore, the institutional aspect needs a more formal structure to strengthen collaboration between sectors.

Institutionalization is an important community asset for the growth of Gombengsari tourism because the existence of this institutional asset can encourage collaboration between various stakeholders in formulating policies, managing resources, and increasing the competitiveness of tourist destinations. Tourism development policies become the basic guidelines for implementation at the local level. 4 institutions directly or indirectly play a role in tourism development in Gombengsari Urban Village, namely vertically from the central government institutions, local governments, provincial governments, district governments, and village governments. The results of the NVivo 12 plus analysis can be seen in Figure 5 below.

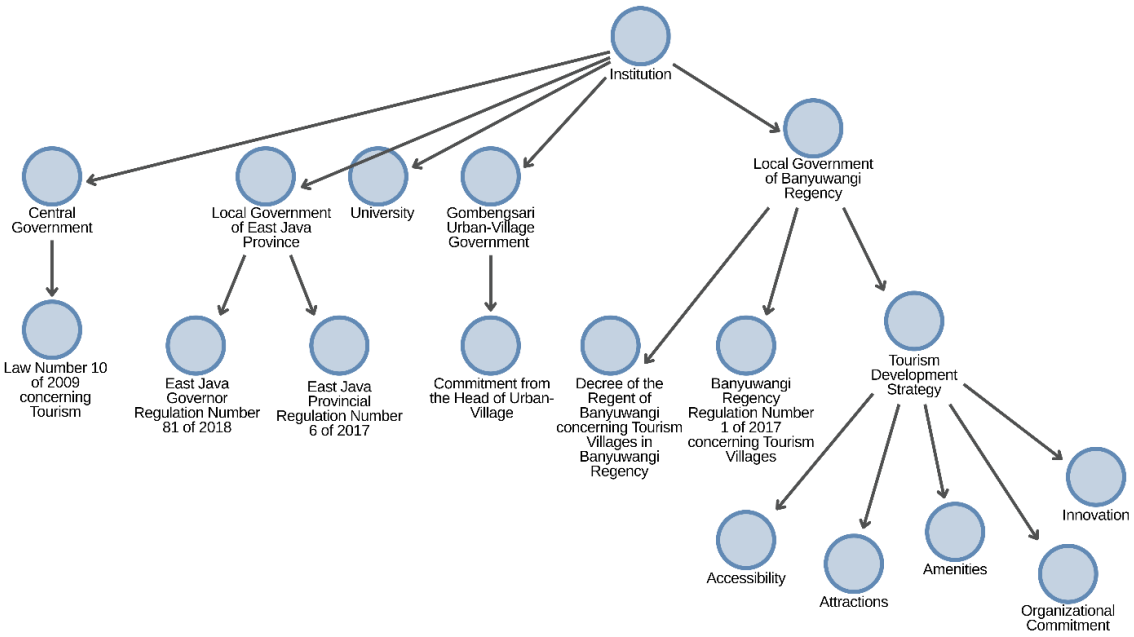


Figure 5. Sociogram of local institutions
(Source: Processed by researcher, 2024)

Based on the review of research results in the development of tourism in Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village, the central government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, prioritizes the Village policy as a tourist destina-

tion through Law No. 10 of 2009, so one of the focuses of its policy direction is to make the village the center of the local economy through optimizing the potential of the village with tourism through Law. No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages. Furthermore, the East Java Provincial Government conducts policy accommodation, integration, coordination, and synergy with the central government through the framework of the East Java Province Regional Tourism Development Master Plan 2017-2032.

The Banyuwangi Regency Government further elaborated the Tourism Master Plan in Regional Regulation No. 1 of 2017 concerning tourist villages with technical regulations through Banyuwangi Regent Decree Number: 188/202/Kep/429.011/2021 concerning the Determination of Tourism Villages in Banyuwangi Regency. The decree states that the superior tourist destination objects of Gombengsari Urban Village is coffee commodities and etawa goat farming education. Then, supporting destinations are natural tourism in the form of Asmoro Peak, Tirto Kemanten Waterfall, Kaliklatak Plantation, and Suko Pine Tourism Area. In implementing this policy, the Banyuwangi Regency Government implements a tourism development strategy through 3A, namely attractions, accessibility, and amenities, and adds elements of the uniqueness of Banyuwangi Regency. Banyuwangi Regency has created a branding image, namely "Majestic Banyuwangi," which means splendor, and "the Sunrise of Java" (Efendi, 2017; Riswari, 2018) . As a form of local government commitment to Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village, the Banyuwangi Regency Government regularly organizes an annual event entitled "B-fest," one in Gombengsari Urban Village. This is a means to introduce Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village as an educational tourism destination focusing on coffee, from picking, sorting, drying, and roasting to brewing coffee (tempo.co, 2023).

In addition to the commitment and policies driven by the Regency Government, one of the main drivers of tourism development lies with the Gombengsari Urban Village Government. The commitment of the Head of Gombengsari Urban Village to develop tourism became the entry point for organizing tourism development in Gombengsari Urban Village. This commitment is reflected in various initiatives, such as strengthening the tourism urban village institution, empowering the community through tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis), and managing natural and cultural resources as tourism assets. To create a sustainable tourism branding strategy, the village head acts as a facilitator between the interests of the local government, local businesses, and village communities. In addition, the program strategy is also oriented towards strengthening human resource capacity, improving supporting infrastructure, and promoting tourism. This is done to attract more tourists and improve the welfare of the local community.
As part of the village government's commitment, the existence of the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) is an association of social assets that can contribute to tourism development in Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village. Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) Gombengsari plays an important role by organizing community groups to participate in village tourism development activities, as analyzed using NVivo 12.

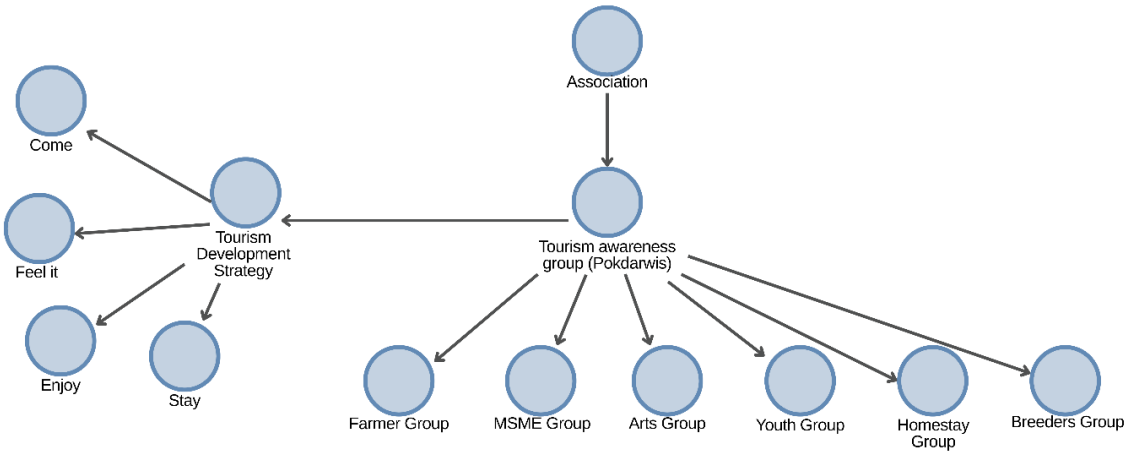


Figure 6. Sociogram role of Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis)
(Source: Processed by researcher, 2024)

Based on the research results, six community groups play a role and synergize with the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), namely a combination of farmer groups, MSME groups, arts groups, youth groups, homestay groups, and breeder groups. The integration of these diverse community groups illustrates the process of community development, which involves strengthening internal capacities and fostering external collaboration. This holistic approach contributes to the achievement of smart community outcomes, including smart tourism, smart economy, smart collaboration, and smart sustainability (Sarmita & Hu, 2024). Synergy is carried out structurally by integrating these community groups into the Gombengsari the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) structure. As the following informant explained, the branding strategy that has been carried out and has become a shared value of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) in tourism management is to come, feel, enjoy, and stay.

> *"We have done four, and the concept has come, feel, enjoy, and stay. So, how do we make tourists come to our village to learn about the potential of Gombengsari? The first branding is coming; how do people come; what we do is create events, so by creating events, we consider one way to bring in people at events we create interesting, unique concepts not yet in other places so that people who come there not only come to see but also do things like this there is a coffee festival event. When people come, what do they do? They participate in the picking process, which is a process of roasting, mashing, and brewing until drinking; there are also bazaars and art performances... The second is the feeling of being in Gombengsari. What we present is the concept of an unspoiled village. We do not build objects or destination places; we are more natural, for example, a community garden like this, because feeling a new atmosphere is unique, so people coming to Gombengsari feel a new one. In the city, they see tall buildings and fancy houses. However, if they come to our village, they are invited to the community garden; for example, we use a pickup truck, and the food menu is traditional, so there is something new because people will be interested in us. They feel a new atmosphere, coming with an event, feeling something new. The third is that there is an enjoyment that people if they have felt, will enjoy what they enjoy in Gombengsari Urban Village. We have prepared the culinary, and several MSME products are presented for tourists to enjoy so that when they enjoy staying, people usually feel that they enjoyed this stay. So, we pre-*

pare the homestay" (business actor and head of the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis), male, 2023).

The branding movement carried out by the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) forms a shared value system that supports tourism development in Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village. However, the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) space for movement is limited to fulfilling tourism strategies due to the limited resources that the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) lacks in managing tourism in Gombengsari Urban Village. This results in weak solidity of support from members, as can be seen from the following information.

"Well, most of these POKDARWIS manage one destination object, but in Gombengsari, it is different; Gombengsari manages several existing potentials from the agricultural sector, natural tourism sector, homestays, and MSMEs. However, branding processing systems and financial management are based on several groups. Indeed, the development of potential is carried out independently. However, because this emerged from the initiative of the actors, this remains their capital. So, we from POKDARWIS also do not directly intervene in the financial aspects. However, regarding development, POKDARWIS has its role and strategy" (business actor and head of the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis), male, 2023).

The management of POKDARWIS is also affected by limited access to resources, especially funding for operational activities. Financially, the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) activities come from the Gombengsari Urban Village Government's budget of approximately Rp 200 million annually. The budget is considered less than optimal because it must still be shared with other activities. Therefore, the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) uses an independent fundraising strategy. For example, through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) schemes, networking with the private sector, state-owned enterprises, and banks. However, these funds can only be accessed for incidental activities and directly to business groups. So, the role of the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) is only as a forum to introduce tourism in Gombengsari Urban Village, and the managerial is left to each business actor. However, this CSR scheme is limited to physical development grants, so it cannot support organizing tourism events.

"Nowadays, CSR is not funding but direct development, so I built it, like in Kemiren. Meanwhile, we also have limited land. Once, PLN and Pertamina wanted to make a laboratory about coffee, so they needed land to be donated. They do not want to buy land but with grants" (business actor and the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) Management, male, 2023).

Unfortunately, the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) strategy that provides flexibility for its members to manage their respective businesses is considered weak. the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), as a forum for tourism development, has not optimally and integrated promoted the existing tourism potential, which is the responsibility of the business actors in Gombengsari Urban Village.

In addition, Gombengsari's status as a village instead of a village also affects the performance of the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis). This makes the performance of the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) not optimal because institutional policies and regulations have not supported tourism development in the village area. However, Gombengsari Urban Village 's tourism activities are supported by the local government's physical facilities and in-

frastructure, including the Tourist Information Center (TIC), Kalipuro Coffee Center, and traditional roasting equipment used to process coffee.

This tourism development has a positive impact on improving the community's economy (Musliha, 2022). Knowledge transfer is obtained directly from tourism activities either through festivals with the government, baristas, academics, or business people from other regions, such as the following information from informants.

> *"Before we engaged in coffee tourism, the price was low. Among farmer middlemen, the price was low. Because it is necessary to increase farmers' knowledge in marketing, we need information about marketing this coffee when the price is high, so we combine it with our destination tourism education. The more understood educational visits can increase the potential or opportunity for direct buyers. As a result, making this coffee has a few stages directly to the barista restaurant, so our goal is to hold the education so that many people come to the restaurant" (business actor and the Tourism Awareness Community Group (Pokdarwis) Management, male, 2023).*

Identifying natural, institutional, and social assets in tourism development in Gombengsari Urban Village has succeeded in improving the community's economy. Coffee has grown into a shared value by the community because the community indirectly agrees on the economic and social impacts of coffee utilization(Tucker, 2017). The presence of coffee indicates this in almost every resident's yard. The existence of tourism development provides the community with an understanding of the added value of coffee. In addition, coffee packaged as a tourist experience can provide value that becomes a visitor's memory (Widowati et al., 2019). Likewise, other objects, if each tourist attraction consistently implements the shared value formed by the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) institution in coming, feeling, enjoying, and staying, the economic and social effects for the community will come along with the development of the assets owned (Qin et al., 2024).

Although assets are important to optimize, the flexibility of tourism asset management in its management also has weaknesses that are limited in management to intervene (Dwyer et al., 2014). This results in the dynamics of relationships between actors in tourism management, causing the dominance of certain actors with more control over the resources and capital compared to those with limited elements (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). Therefore, it is important to study further research findings related to the balanced approach to tourism governance in Gombengsari Urban Village.

Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village Branding Strategy with Bottom-Up & Top-down Approach

Strategies in determining the branding of tourist villages affect the economy of the community, the uniqueness of the community, and the sustainability of tourist destinations (Aidoo et al., 2024). Based on field findings, there are two managerial strategies in developing the branding of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village, namely bottom-up and top-down processes. The top-down strategy in branding Gombengsari Tourist Village is the process of creating branding carried out by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Provincial Government, Culture and Tourism Office of Banyuwangi Regency, and then integrated into tourism policies in the Gombengsari Urban Village Government. Meanwhile, the bottom-up strategy is the creation of branding that comes from the aspirations of community participation based on the assets owned by the community, which has the potential to develop tourism urban village branding. The two strategies complement each other, as the following information from the informants

shows.

"Actually, if you look at it from the (branding) side, the name depends on the community and the local village government, not us. We will back up, meaning that they are the ones who run; for example, when we formed the Kemiren Safari Park Tourism Village, friends in this institution attracted several stakeholders who were mentioned earlier to be able to realize a tourist village. Is that suitable? Like in Gombengsari, if we are top-down like this, if the community does not move, it is also difficult" (Secretary of the Banyuwangi Regency Tourism Office, male, 2023).

The top-down strategy is carried out through policy directions and several regulations regarding tourism originating from the central government, which are translated into the East Java Province Regional Tourism Development Master Plan 2017-2032. Connected to the master plan, the Banyuwangi Regency Government passed a regional regulation on tourist villages. This is strengthened implementatively through the Regent's decision on tourist villages in Banyuwangi Regency, namely Gombengsari Urban Village, which can be shown by the commitment of the Head of Gombengsari Urban Village to creating Village branding. The supportive leadership role of the Head of Gombengsari Urban Village is very important in implementing tourism policy because it is a key factor in realizing the identity and attractiveness of tourist villages (Tresiana & Kartika, 2024).

In addition, the bottom-up strategy that creates tourism urban village branding built by the community shows that two parties have succeeded in building the branding of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village, namely business actors and the Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) as tourism drivers, as information from the following informants.

"We are just moving. Yes, the capital is reckless. Why reckless? Yes, because it is different from what is called our insufficient provision, especially from the scientific and academic side, as well as other sides, such as funding. Therefore, out of desperation at that time, we branded Gombengsari for the first time in 2015. We designed it in 2015, and starting in 2016, we launched the Lego Coffee Festival, which, at that time, Lego Coffee itself stood for the village's "Kopi Lerek Gombengsari." Deliberately, we and the team at that time raised the name of the village but did not leave the name of the village because what we wanted to introduce was potential in Gombengsari, which at that time we started from the Lerek sub-urban village at the end of the pack, from the Kacangan sub-urban village to the west end" (Tourism Business Actors of Gombengsari Urban Village , Chairman of the Farmers Group Association, male, 2023).

The creation of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village branding began with a series of festivals that were held consistently from 2015 to 2023. The event was also a stage for introducing the community to the potential of superior products in Gombengsari Urban Village. In addition, each year, the festival carries a different theme, such as the historical theme of the beginning of people's coffee, the traditional coffee processing process, the competition for the selection of little baristas, and the launch of a digital-based integrated information center for Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village.

In addition, the Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) also implemented a tourism management strategy with the slogan, "Come, Feel, Enjoy, and Stay," which became a shared value among tourism actors in Gombengsari Urban Village. The existence of this slogan indicates that the branding of Gombengsari Urban Village also pays attention to tourist destinations from the point of view of the visitor expe-

rience. As a result, from the combination of traditional uniqueness, community stories, and consistency of the branding strategy of tourism actors in Gombengsari Urban Village, the place has its branding value for the community because it has presented a tourism experience that focuses on something consistent based on its local wisdom (Mastika & Nimran, 2020).

While top-down strategies provide a clear framework for tourism development, their success depends on synergizing with bottom-up approaches. Regulations from the government need support and active involvement by the community in determining the identity and narrative to be built in tourism village branding (Qin et al., 2024). This is in line with the statement of the Secretary of the Banyuwangi Regency Tourism Office, who emphasized that without community participation, the policies above will not run optimally. Therefore, the branding of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village is the result of a combination of government policy direction and local initiatives that complement each other (Widowati et al., 2019).

To ensure the sustainability of the branding strategy undertaken by the government and local community, broader collaboration between key stakeholders is required. Therefore, the creation of a co-creation ecosystem with stakeholders is a crucial aspect in ensuring sustainability branding has implications for tourism competitiveness, which will be discussed further in the next section.

Shaping a Stakeholder Co-Creation Ecosystem for Tourism Branding of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village

The existence of potential community assets and co-values branding strategies in the community makes it necessary for Gombengsari Urban Village to create a co-creation ecosystem between stakeholders in Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village. This is to realize Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village, which can develop into a sustainable and adaptive community-based tourism development model (Treasure-Jones et al., 2019). The ecosystem can be realized through the creation of shared value based on the participation and active involvement of all stakeholders (Rema & Srivastav, 2024). Four pillars need to be built to realize the stakeholder co-creation ecosystem.

First, there is a need for joint commitment and collaborative governance through synergy between the government, local communities, academics, the private sector, and digital media. This collaboration needs to be carried out in a balanced manner through equal distribution of roles and functions in cooperation, without the domination of any one actor (Leal et al., 2022). In addition, to ensure the collaboration process continues, it is necessary to encourage local figures as policy entrepreneurs to bridge the interests of various parties. This is to create inclusive and sustainable collaborative governance(Svensson, 2019).

In detail, the role of the government is to facilitate various stakeholders through policies that support the development of tourism villages (Rita et al., 2024). Local communities play a role in implementing tourism strategies through authentic and local culture-based experiences (Mastika & Nimran, 2020). Academics can play a role in developing human resources and institutions through workshops or training. In contrast, tourism industry players and MSMEs play a role in supporting the development of tourism supporting infrastructure and developing tourism services (Mathis et al., 2016).

Second, innovation in branding and tourism promotion. This is to increase the attractiveness of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village through the branding identity that has been previously developed by the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), namely "Come, Feel, Enjoy, and Stay." The branding strategy must be strengthened with supporting strategies to be more effective and recognized, such as conducting digital marketing on social me-

dia through advertisements and the involvement of influencers, travel bloggers, and travel agents (Leung et al., 2013; Musliha & Adinugraha, 2022). In addition, it is necessary to develop innovations in travel packages that offer agrotourism and culture-based tourism experiences that can attract tourists. With this branding strategy, Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village will become not only a tourist destination object but also a center for agritourism education and authentic cultural experiences (Yin et al., 2024).

Third, community empowerment and strengthening local capacity are important factors so that the effects of tourism can provide economic benefits equally (Widowati, Ginaya, & Triyuni, 2019). Therefore, training programs are needed for MSMEs, farmers, and tourism businesses related to marketing skills, homestay management, and product innovation based on village potential. In addition, diversification of tourism products, such as agrotourism packages based on Gombengsari coffee or educational tours of etawa goat farms, can enrich the attractiveness of this destination. By increasing the capacity of the community, they can be more independent in managing a sustainable tourism business and able to adapt to changing tourism industry trends (Treasure-Jones et al., 2019).

Finally, adaptive and sustainability-oriented institutions. The sustainability of the co-creation ecosystem also depends on flexible and adaptive institutions. Institutionally, the government needs to be adaptive in terms of bureaucracy to enable it to set a broader tourism sector collaboration agenda (Sharma & Malik, 2024). In addition, it is also necessary to formulate regulations that allow synergies between stakeholders, both in the form of tax incentives for local tourism businesses and easy access to capital schemes for MSMEs. In addition, a system of regular monitoring and evaluation of tourism urban village policies should be implemented to adjust strategies to market developments and tourist preferences (Rio & Nunes, 2012). With a dynamic institutional approach, tourist villages can develop organically without losing their local branding identity.

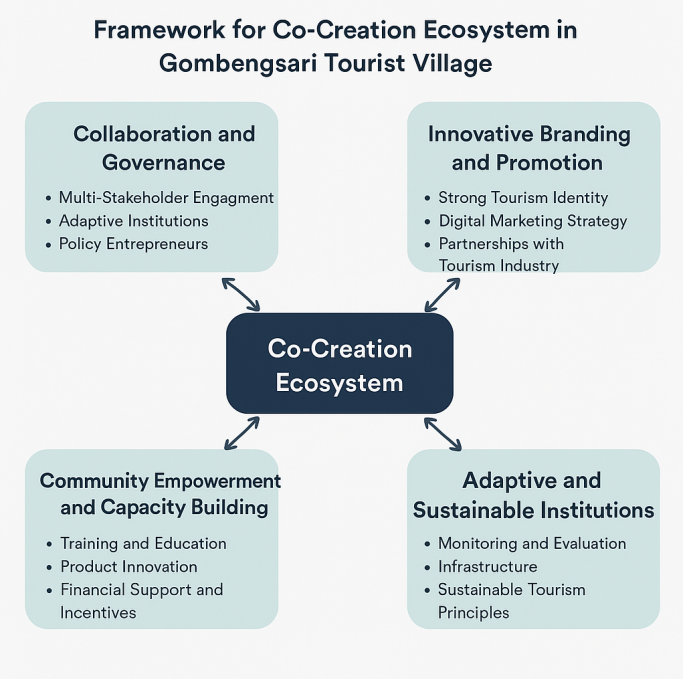


Figure 7. Framework for Co-Creation Ecosystem
(Source: Processed by researcher, 2024)

By considering these four main factors, the collaboration between govern-

ment policies and local initiatives is the main foundation for building adaptive and resilient tourist village branding stakeholder co-creation (Widhianthini, 2014). Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that an effective tourist village branding strategy does not rely solely on promotion but also the integration of several actors involved in the tourism ecosystem (Rita et al., 2024). By adopting this framework, it is expected that Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village can develop a branding system that is not only based on government policy (top-down approach) but also accommodates local community initiatives (bottom-up approach).

CONCLUSION

This study answers the research question by showing that the branding of Gombengsari Tourism Urban Village relies on natural, institutional, and social assets that are mobilized through a combination of tiered policies and community participation in a stakeholder collaboration ecosystem; this mechanism strengthens the destination's identity but is still constrained by formalistic participation, fragmented promotion, and limited funding. Notable evidence includes the sustainability of the festival from 2015 to 2023, the allocation of a the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) budget of around two hundred million rupiah per year, the integration of six community groups, the utilization of around two hundred Etawa goats with a production of three hundred to five hundred liters per week as an educational package, and a volume of two hundred and sixty-four tourist visits in the first quarter of 2024, indicating recovery and a positive trend. On the economic side, the average income of MSME actors is close to the regional minimum wage.

In practical terms, these findings underscore the importance of strengthening collaborative governance, developing an annual event calendar that aligns with MSME participation targets, enhancing digital branding and homestay management capacity, and monitoring progress based on indicators such as visits, length of stay, MSME turnover, and collaboration intensity over a six- to twelve-month horizon. The study's limitations include a single location, qualitative design, and potential memory bias; however, the resulting framework has the potential to be applied to agro-tourism destinations with similar institutional configurations and warrants testing through multi-site research using a mixed-methods approach to measure the socio-economic impact and brand resilience of the destination.

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