

Social Bonds in the Formation of Cibuntu as Sustainable Tourism Village

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Abstract

Although kinship, cultural norms, and community leadership are recognised as important resources in tourism village development, how these existing social relationships are mobilised into collective tourism action remains insufficiently understood. This study examines how community leadership mobilises social bonds in Cibuntu Tourism Village, Kuningan, West Java, Indonesia. Kinship creates a distinctive community ethic characterised by emotional attachment to the land and respect for local traditions, which help sustain collective identity and community relationships. Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observation, and document analysis. Ten informants were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling, and the data were analysed thematically through an iterative process combining deductive categories derived from Hirschi's Social Bond Theory with inductive codes grounded in participants' accounts. Source triangulation was used to compare evidence across participants and data sources. The findings suggest that social bonds operate through four interconnected dimensions: attachment, rooted in kinship and emotional ties to the village; commitment, reflected in responsibility towards shared cultural values and tourism development goals; involvement, expressed through participation in collective tourism and cultural activities; and belief, reflected in adherence to shared norms. Community leadership appears to help mobilise these existing relationships into collective action, although the evidence does not establish a direct causal relationship between social bonding and tourism sustainability. The study suggests that recognising local social relationships and leadership practices may help tourism village stakeholders strengthen community participation, while the inclusiveness and long-term sustainability of these arrangements require further assessment.

Keywords: community ethic; social bonding; sustainability; tourism village



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INTRODUCTION

Background

The process of social change in rural communities begins with the development of a shared understanding among villagers (Goa, 2017). This process is essential to minimize conflict and to establish a collective agreement that binds members of the community. Hirschi (1969) argues that social bonds consisting of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief help explain individuals' conformity to social norms and conventional values. In this context, rural communities tend to be reluctant or even fearful of deviating from agreements reached through deliberative processes (*musyawarah*) (Mondal, 2026).

Social bonding constitutes a core concept within sociology, encompassing the various ways in which individuals and groups form connections (EasySociology, 2025). Thus, social bonding can be understood as the process through which individuals reinforce social ties by establishing meaningful connections with others. Accordingly, the development of tourism villages is fundamentally community-based, requiring strong social bonds to facilitate collaboration in transforming and improving social conditions within the community (Godevi, 2026; Mayasari & Yoniartini, 2023).

However, Mayasari & Yoniartini (2023) also argue that forms of social bonding that are rigidly rooted in tradition, exclusivism, and resistance to innovation may hinder tourism village development. This contrasts with Putnam (1994) concept of bonding, which emphasises mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) as a form of a means of strengthening social solidarity and providing mutual support within the community. In this broader sense, social bonding extends beyond mere community participation; it also encompasses the cultivation of community pride, the enhancement of quality of life, and the equitable distribution of roles within the community

(Goa, 2017).

One participatory planning approach in tourism village development is the application of Community-Based Tourism (CBT). (Suansri et al., 2003) stated community-based tourism (CBT) as an approach that emphasises community participation and involvement in tourism development. Tourism villages generally adopt these principles as part of their development processes.

Cibuntu Tourism Village demonstrates a strong capacity for collective action that has supported its development (Khaeril, 2022). It is important collective strength for long-term continuity (Kashim & Zikri, 2024). Informants perceived that tourism development had been accompanied by improvements in tourism attractions and greater visitor awareness and appreciation of the village's identity. However, as the available evidence does not provide specific reporting periods, verified visitor statistics, or revenue figures, these changes are presented as informants' perceptions rather than independently verified outcomes.

Cibuntu Tourism Village is located on the western slopes of Mount Ciremai in West Java. The village possesses diverse tourism potential (Khaeril, 2022), which has led to its development as a tourism village since 2012. Informants reported that the development of Cibuntu Tourism Village had been accompanied by an increase in visitor numbers and village revenue. However, the available evidence does not provide a clearly specified reporting period, verified visitor statistics, revenue figures, or an identifiable documentary source to substantiate the scale of this growth. These statements are therefore presented as informants' perceptions of tourism development rather than as independently verified quantitative outcomes. The reported growth may indicate perceived economic benefits associated with tourism, but its magnitude and contribution to village welfare cannot be established without supporting visitor records, financial reports, or

other dated administrative documents.

Cibuntu Tourism Village is characterised by strong social bonds rooted in kinship, cultural norms, and community leadership, which provide an important foundation for tourism development. However, how these existing relationships are activated and translated into collective tourism action remains insufficiently explained. Although previous studies have identified kinship and leadership as important factors in tourism development (Arida & Pitanatri, 2023; Cross, 2003; Irawan, 2025; Irawanto et al., 2025; Kashim & Zikri, 2024), limited attention has been given to how leadership mobilises these relationships into Hirschi's four dimensions of social bonding: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. This process is important because strong internal ties can foster trust and solidarity but may also encourage social closure and resistance to innovation. Accordingly, this study examines how community leadership mobilises existing kinship relationships and cultural values into collective tourism practices in Cibuntu, moving beyond a description of community cohesion to explore the processes through which social bonds support tourism development.

Objectives of Study

This study aims to examine how community leadership mobilises kinship-based social bonds into collective action for the sustainable development of Cibuntu Tourism Village. Drawing on Hirschi's social bond framework, the study specifically analyses how attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief are formed, activated, and reproduced through community leadership and how these bonding processes support collective participation in tourism village development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Bonds

Hirschi (1969) introduced Social Bond Theory to explain why individuals

conform to social norms and conventional values. The theory identifies four dimensions of social bonds: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. These dimensions provide an analytical framework for examining how social relationships may influence individual behaviour and engagement in collective activities. Furst and Houser (2021) provide an example of how the theory has been applied in a different context, demonstrating its use beyond its original formulation. Attachment refers to residents' relational and emotional ties to family, fellow residents, and Cibuntu; commitment concerns their sense of responsibility towards shared goals and the long-term development of the village; involvement refers to actual participation in tourism activities, community meetings, cultural events, and environmental practices; and belief denotes acceptance of shared norms and cultural values, including trust in community institutions and leaders.

Previous studies have demonstrated the importance of social capital in community-based tourism. Sunkar et al. (2016), in their study of Cibalay, examined how social relationships and trust support collective action in heritage conservation. Nugraha et al. (2021), in their study of Serangan, highlighted the role of social capital and community participation in supporting sustainable tourism development. Building on these studies, the Cibuntu case focuses on how kinship ties and cultural values are mobilised through community leadership. Using Hirschi (1969) identifies four dimensions of social bonds: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. This study examines how relationships with family and the village, responsibility towards shared goals, participation in collective activities, and adherence to shared norms relate to collective tourism action. The contribution of the Cibuntu case is therefore its focus on the relationship between existing kinship-based social bonds and leadership in organising community action. However, the findings offer a

context-specific interpretation of this relationship rather than proof that social bonding causes tourism sustainability.

These elements function collectively as social bonds that regulate individual behaviour. Each of these core elements is explained as follows:

Attachment refers to the emotional bonds that emerge through socialisation within primary groups (e.g., family), which foster a strong commitment in individuals to adhere to social norms and rules.

Commitment denotes a strong sense of responsibility towards social norms, providing individuals with a future-oriented awareness. This includes the recognition that engaging in deviant behaviour may jeopardise one's future prospects.

Involvement encourages individuals to engage in participatory behaviour and to take part in socially prescribed activities. A higher level of involvement in conventional and normative activities reduces the likelihood of engaging in deviant or unlawful actions.

Belief refers to the internalisation of trust, loyalty, and adherence to social norms and societal rules. When these values are deeply embedded, social norms become self-enforcing, thereby strengthening their presence and influence within individuals.

Social bond theory explains that individual compliance with social norms is not solely determined by formal regulations, but rather by the quality of social relationships that individuals maintain within society. This perspective emphasises that behaviour is shaped by the strength of social attachments linking individuals to social institutions, collective values, and interpersonal networks. When these social ties are strong, individuals are more likely to conform to prevailing norms. Conversely, when such bonds weaken, the likelihood of deviant behaviour or social disengagement increases (Furst & Houser, 2021).

Contemporary developments in the field further suggest that social bonds

function not only as mechanisms of social control, but also as foundational elements in the formation of social cohesion and community solidarity. Strong social relationships enable the development of trust, empathy, and a shared sense of collective responsibility, all of which contribute to social stability and the long-term sustainability of communities (Rachmad, 2025).

Types of Social Bonds

Social bonds can be classified into several types, each playing a unique role in shaping human behaviour and societal organisation (Furst & Houser, 2021). Furst and Houser (2021) applied Hirschi's social bond theory to carceral dog-training programmes and discussed its four dimensions—attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief—rather than establishing a classification of kinship relationships. Therefore, their study is retained only as a reference for the application of social bond theory, while the primary, secondary, and tertiary kinship classification. In this study, the classification is used to distinguish levels of social relationships within Cibuntu, provided that the definitions are supported by the relevant source and are consistent with the kinship terminology reported by participants.

Social Bonds and Community Cohesion

Social relationships constitute a fundamental basis for the formation of community cohesion and the sustainability of collective activities within a community. In sociological and behavioural studies, the concept of social bonds is used to explain how individuals' attachment to their social environment influences behaviour, participation, and social integration. These bonds are formed through interpersonal relationships, shared values, and individuals' participation in various social activities, all of which foster a sense of belonging within the community (Furst & Houser, 2021).

Within the context of interpersonal relationships, social bonds develop through repeated interactions and shared

experiences that create emotional closeness among individuals. Intensive social interaction can lead to more stable and pro-social relationships, which in turn strengthen social support networks within a community. Such relationships not only generate a sense of connectedness among individuals but also build trust and social responsibility, thereby reinforcing social integration (Furst & Houser, 2021). Moreover, social bonds encompass important psychological dimensions, including empathy, care, and emotional attachment. These dimensions play a crucial role in fostering social solidarity and enhancing the quality of relationships among community members. Therefore, the formation of social bonds is shaped not only by social structures but also by the dynamics of everyday social interactions (Chriss, 2007).

In the context of community development, social bonds and social capital are key factors influencing the success of community-based initiatives. Social relationships grounded in trust, transparency, and

cooperation can strengthen a community's capacity to manage resources and respond to social and economic challenges (Wulan-sari, 2022). Studies on the management of village economic institutions indicate that the success of community organisations is strongly influenced by the quality of social relationships among stakeholders, including local communities, local governments, and organisational managers. Relationships built on trust and collaboration can enhance community participation and support the long-term sustainability of community-based development programmes.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the preceding theoretical discussion, this study examines how social bonds are mobilised through community leadership to support collective action in tourism village development as follows.

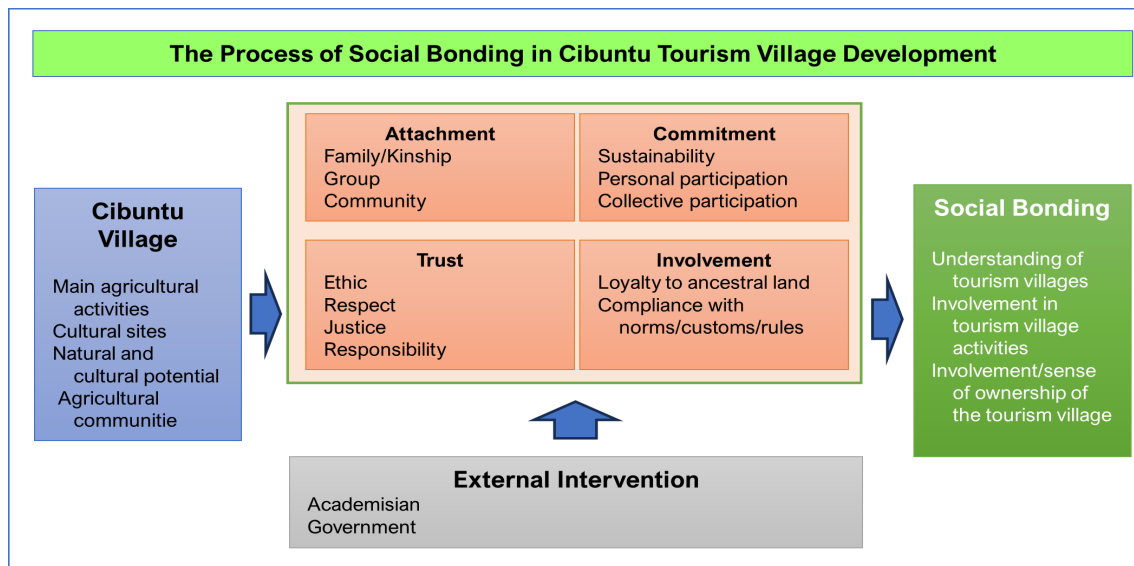


Figure 1. Social Bonding in Cibuntu Tourism Village Development

Figure 1 presents to ensure consistency between Hirschi's four social bond dimensions and the indicators used in the empirical analysis. The indicators are not treated as interchangeable behavioural outcomes but are assigned according to

their primary analytical meaning. In this study, involvement refers to the actual engagement of community members in collective activities related to tourism development, cultural preservation, and community initiatives. Participation is treated as

an observable indicator of involvement rather than as a separate analytical dimension. Accordingly, statements describing respondents' attendance, contribution of time or labour, or direct engagement in community activities are coded under involvement when they provide evidence of actual engagement. By contrast, commitment refers to an individual's expressed sense of responsibility, willingness, or intention to contribute to shared community goals, even when such intentions do not result in actual participation. This distinction helps maintain conceptual consistency and minimise double coding between involvement and commitment. This distinction ensures that each indicator has a clear conceptual function and that the same labels are used consistently across the conceptual framework, interview coding, findings, and discussion.

METHOD

Cibuntu Tourism Village was purposively selected as the study site. It provided a relevant and information-rich case for examining how community leadership mobilises existing social relationships through processes corresponding to Hirschi's four dimensions of social bonds. The village has developed tourism through strong kinship relations, shared cultural norms, community participation, and local leadership, making it particularly relevant to the study's focus on the mobilisation of social bonds. The development of Cibuntu as a tourism village also provides an appropriate empirical context in which attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief can be observed through residents' relationships, participation in collective activities, adherence to shared values, and interactions with community leadership. Thus, Cibuntu was selected not as a statistically representative tourism village, but as a case that offers sufficient contextual depth to examine the processes through which pre-existing social relationships are activated and organised for collective

tourism development.

A holistic single-case study design was considered appropriate because the research question asked in this study was how community leadership mobilised existing social bonds into collective action for tourism village development. The phenomenon cannot be adequately understood by examining individual social bonds or leadership practices in isolation, as attachment, commitment, involvement, belief, cultural norms, kinship relations, and leadership are interconnected within the community's social system. Treating Cibuntu Tourism Village as a single holistic case therefore enables these dimensions to be examined as interrelated elements of one bounded social setting. This design also allows the study to retain the contextual characteristics of Cibuntu while tracing how social bonds are activated, coordinated, and expressed through collective tourism practices. The purpose of the case study is consequently analytical rather than statistical generalisation: to develop a contextually grounded explanation of the mobilisation process that may provide transferable insights for understanding social bonding and collective action in other tourism village settings.

Ten informants were recruited through purposive sampling followed by snowball sampling. The purposive selection sought participants who possessed direct knowledge of the development of Cibuntu Tourism Village and its social, cultural, institutional, and tourism-related processes. The informants comprised a former village head (P1), the village secretary (P2), a homestay owner (P3), two community figures (P4; P10), a religious and cultural figure (P5), three participants of the Cibuntu diaspora (P6; P8; P9), including the chairperson of IWACI (P9), and one additional diaspora member (P7). This composition was intended to capture perspectives from local government, tourism-related activities, community leadership, religious and cultural domains, and the Cibuntu diaspora network. Snowball

recruitment was used to identify additional participants with relevant knowledge of these processes and to extend the range of institutional and community perspectives beyond the initial participants.

In addition to interviews and focus group discussions, the study used direct observation and documentary evidence to contextualise and cross-check participants' accounts. Observations focused on community and tourism-related practices that were directly relevant to the research question, cultural activities, environmental activities, rather than attempting to observe all aspects of village life. These observations were conducted during field visits in July 2025, with particular attention to interactions among community members, the involvement of local leaders, participation in tourism-related activities, and practices reflecting shared norms and collective responsibility. Documentary materials were selected purposively when they provided information relevant to the development and management of Cibuntu Tourism Village, including village tourism development documents. The three sources therefore served complementary purposes: interviews provided participants' interpretations and experiences, observations captured social practices and interactions as they occurred, and documents provided institutional and historical context. This triangulation strengthened the interpretation of how social bonds and community leadership were mobilised while reducing reliance on participants' retrospective accounts alone.

The data were analysed thematically through an iterative process combining deductive and inductive coding. Deductive codes were derived from the four dimensions of Hirschi's Social Bond while inductive codes were developed from patterns and meanings emerging from the participants' accounts. The coded data were then reviewed and organised into themes to examine how community leadership mobilised existing social relationships through processes corresponding to the four

dimensions. Descriptive accounts of participants' experiences and community practices were used to contextualise and illustrate the identified themes. Thus, thematic analysis served as the primary analytical approach, while descriptive presentation supported the interpretation of the findings.

Hirschi's four dimensions served as initial deductive categories, while inductive coding identified context-specific meanings and practices emerging from the interviews. For example, an excerpt from (P2, *In the past, we walked to school and did not wear shoes. The only primary and junior secondary schools were located in the sub-district. We would walk together with people going to the market early in the morning*).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Formation Process of Cibuntu Tourism Village

Prior to 2012, Cibuntu Village was primarily known as an agricultural village, where most residents worked as farmers and goat breeders. Nevertheless, Cibuntu had long been recognised as a relatively advanced village due to its strong emphasis on education.

"In the past, we walked to school and did not wear shoes. The only primary and junior secondary schools were located in the sub-district. We would walk together with people going to the market early in the morning. It was still dark, so we were afraid to go alone, especially when crossing rivers and forests. On the way back, if we were late or left behind, we sometimes had to stay overnight along the way. When it rained, we used banana leaves or plastic as makeshift umbrellas and raincoats." (Mulyana)

"As early as the 1960s, several residents of Cibuntu had already become teachers, school principals, and even school supervisors at the sub-district

level. As a result, the surrounding communities came to recognise Cibuntu as educated village” (Ibnu).

These accounts suggest that the people of Cibuntu have long valued education. Consequently, many residents migrated to other areas in search of better economic opportunities. Despite this, kinship ties and attachment to their homeland were maintained through the establishment of a migrant community organisation known as IWACI (*Ikatan Warga Cibuntu*).

IWACI contributes to tourism village development by connecting members of the Cibuntu diaspora with collective initiatives in their home village. Its contribution is particularly evident in the mobilisation of social and material resources, as well as in supporting coordination between diaspora members and local community actors. Through this network, diaspora members maintain communication with community leaders and participate in discussions concerning the development and promotion of Cibuntu as a tourism village.

IWACI also provides a channel through which members living outside Cibuntu can contribute resources and support for community and tourism-related activities, despite their physical absence from the village. Thus, IWACI extends collective action beyond the geographical boundaries of the village: attachment to Cibuntu is maintained through the diaspora network and is translated into continued support for local tourism initiatives. In this sense, IWACI represents a bridging mechanism between residents and the Cibuntu diaspora, strengthening the continuity of social bonds and collective commitment to tourism village development.

Through discussions within IWACI, an initiative emerged to develop Cibuntu as a tourism village. This initiative reflected a shared commitment among migrants to contribute to the advancement of their home village.

“I was born and raised in Cibuntu. My ancestors, relatives, and parents

lived and are buried here. I cannot forget the place where my childhood memories were formed. I want my village to develop like other dynamic and progressive villages.” (Jojo)

The decision to develop Cibuntu as a tourism village was based on the presence of several natural attractions and cultural sites with tourism potential, as well as its authentic rural atmosphere” (Kuwu)

A crucial step in initiating tourism village development was the village head’s decision to close sand mining activities (locally known as *galian C*) and relocate goat enclosures to a designated communal area on village land. According to informants, the closure of mining activities was intended to prevent further environmental degradation, while relocating livestock was reported to have improved household sanitation and community health. However, these reported environmental and health benefits were not independently verified through environmental assessments or health data.

These sites were later repurposed as tourism attractions. These policy changes illustrate community leadership in practice. According to informants’ retrospective accounts, the process involved the closure of mining activities, the relocation of livestock, community consultation and a persuasion process lasting approximately three years, followed by the conversion of the area to tourism-related uses. This extended process suggests that the transition required sustained engagement to build community understanding and agreement. However, the specific objections raised, how they were resolved, and the chronological sequence of decisions. Where available, these accounts should also be cross-checked against other participants’ testimonies and dated documentary records to strengthen the credibility of the reconstructed sequence.

Goat farming remains an important livelihood activity for the people of Cibuntu, supported by favourable environmental conditions. Over time, the former mining site and the relocated livestock area were transformed into tourism attractions, including camping grounds and educational livestock tourism sites.

The development initiative of Cibuntu Tourism Village gained further momentum when several village leaders engaged with a team from the Research and Community Service Institute (LPPM) of STP Trisakti. A range of programmers was subsequently designed to accelerate the realisation of the tourism village, which can broadly be categorised as follows.

Table 1. Identification of Potential and Design of Acceleration Programme for Cibuntu Tourism Village

Component	Conditions	Challenges	Recommended Actions
Tourist Attractions	<i>Curug Gongseng</i> waterfall; <i>Cikahuripan</i> spring; <i>Kampung Kambing</i> (Goat Village); Camping ground; Bamboo forest	Limited packaging and presentation of attractions	Identification of unique potentials; development of thematic tourism packages; tour guide training; internal discussions on tourism village development
Accessibility	Adequate village roads; Public transportation; Directional signage	Poor road conditions in some areas; Insufficient signage; Limited internet access	Road improvement; development of transportation facilities; provision of clear signage; enhancement of internet access
Amenities	Food stalls; Clean toilets; Parking areas; Information centre	Inadequate public sanitation; Sanitation issues; Lack of waste bins	Provision of adequate sanitation facilities and waste management infrastructure
Ancillaries	Active Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis); MSMEs; Women's groups; Tour guides; Village government; Farmer's group	Limited human resource capacity	Capacity-building programmes (management and service); strengthening tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis); multi-stakeholder collaboration

Source: primary data (2025)

The involvement of STP Trisakti complemented the engagement of other stakeholders in mentoring and developing Cibuntu Tourism Village. This collaboration accelerated the development process, culminating in a collective agreement to designate 17 February 2012 as the official founding date of Cibuntu Tourism Village. The initiative was reported to have supported community efforts to develop tourism in Cibuntu Tourism Village. Among these, two stand out as particularly significant: the revival of the annual *sedekah bumi* tradition and the recognition of Cibuntu as an independent tourism village. In addition to these milestones, various other achievements further indicate that, over the course of its 13-year development, Cibuntu Tourism Village has successfully implemented the core principles of tourism village development.

Social Bonding in Cibuntu Tourism Village

Drawing on the framework proposed by Hirschi (1969), the social bonds within the Cibuntu community are mapped to assess their significant role in supporting the development of the tourism village.

Attachment

According to Cross (2003), attachment can be explored through questions such as: *Where did you grow up? Why did you choose to move to or remain in Cibuntu? Do you feel at home here? What place do you consider home, and why? What is the ideal place to live, and why?* These questions indicate that attachment relates to the extent to which community members feel emotionally connected to, and take pride in, being part of a particular place. Hirschi (1969a) further explains that attachment can develop across different relational contexts, including close kinship, extended kinship, and even non-kin relationships. This perspective is particularly relevant in the case of Cibuntu, where:

“If we look more closely, almost all residents currently living in Cibuntu

still have some form of family ties, whether close or distant. In principle, people in Cibuntu are still connected through kinship.” (Awan)

“Although I am much younger than Mr Awan and Mr Jojo, in non-official matters they often position themselves as younger than me, because within the family hierarchy my lineage is considered senior.” (Ibnu)

These statements illustrate that the people of Cibuntu continue to perceive themselves as connected through kinship, whether through direct lineage or through marriage.

In this study, kinship is understood as a locally constructed system of family relationships that extends beyond the boundaries of the nuclear family. The term *keluarga batih*, as used by participants, requires contextual clarification because its local meaning may differ from its conventional analytical definition of a nuclear family, which generally refers to parents and their children. In the context of Cibuntu, participants' accounts indicate that family relationships may also encompass relatives who share a common great-grandparent.

Accordingly, the term *keluarga batih* is retained when reporting participants' own terminology, whereas the analytical discussion distinguishes between the nuclear family, extended kinship networks, and the wider village community. This distinction avoids treating relationships among descendants of a common great-grandparent as nuclear-family ties and enables a more precise analysis of how different levels of kinship contribute to social attachment, mutual responsibility, and collective action in tourism village development.

Relationships among relatives and the wider community continue to follow Sundanese kinship principles. In Sundanese culture, the concept of *pancakaki* refers to five relational pathways that

define kinship: (1) direct vertical relationships within the nuclear family; (2) indirect horizontal relationships; (3) combined direct and indirect vertical relationships; (4) kinship through marriage; and (5) other forms of familial association (Laila, 2025).

Beyond kinship, Cross (2003) also argues that attachment is shaped by shared places of origin or return. For both residents and migrants of Cibuntu, the village represents a place of devotion to ancestors, filial duty to parents, and a legacy that must be preserved.

"I worked as a civil servant in Tegal for ten years. During that time, my heart and mind were never detached from this land. When the opportunity arose to return, I did not hesitate. I came back to assist the village head, and I now dedicate my experience to Cibuntu." (Ibnu)

"I had built my career in the city for more than 25 years. When I was asked to become the village head, I felt I had no reason to refuse. I believed it was time to return and devote myself to this land." (Awan)

In relation to place attachment, Cross (2003) conceptualises community attachment as a positive affective bond between an individual and the place in which they reside, characterised by a desire to maintain closeness to that place. He further categorises place attachment into three dimensions:

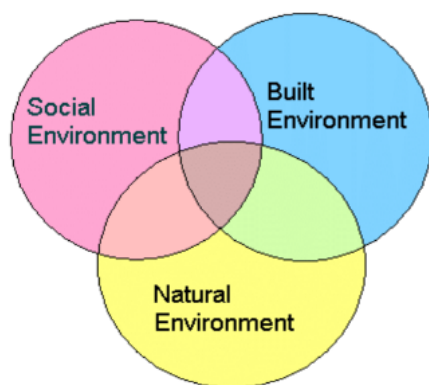


Figure 2. Concept of Attachment (Cross, 2003)

Cross (2023) explains that place attachment encompasses social environments, built environments, and natural environments. These dimensions can be further understood at different scales. In the context of the built environment, attachment relates to settlements such as villages or neighbourhoods. In the social environment, attachment refers to relationships with family and friends (Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974). In the natural environment, studies have shown that residents often develop strong attachments to their surrounding landscapes (Brehm, 2003). However, these dimensions are not independent; attachment to nature is often inseparable from attachment to the social environment (Eisenhauer et al., 2000).

In the case of Cibuntu, attachment is most appropriately understood as the community's emotional connection to family and kinship networks, the village as a place of residence, and the overall rural atmosphere. This strong attachment enables individuals associated with Cibuntu to proudly declare, *"I am part of Cibuntu."* Such pride is transmitted across generations through regular communal gatherings, including Eid celebrations, the *Sabumi* ceremony, and meetings within the IWACI network.

Commitment

According to Welch (2012) internal communication underpins organisational effectiveness since it contributes to positive internal relationships. For the community, effective communication among members will strengthen their commitment to remaining involved in various activities. Commitment to the sustainability of a tourism village is demonstrated when individuals prioritise their attachment to a person, idea, or group, and develop a sense of personal responsibility towards it. In this context, commitment refers to the actions taken by individuals as an expression of agreement with, and responsibility for, the development of Cibuntu Tourism Village, as illustrated by several informants:

"Whenever the Regent has the opportunity, he always mentions Cibuntu as a model village. Sometimes it feels a bit embarrassing, as if Kuningan has no other village to be proud of. For us here, we are simply grateful for what has been achieved. The tourism village has become a blessing for Cibuntu, and we hope it will remain so indefinitely." (Awan)

"I utilise this land for productive purposes. This former mining site had been abandoned for a long time. Rather than allowing activities that could be disruptive, I turned it into a camping ground. Part of the income is returned to the tourism village as additional village revenue." (Jojo)

These statements reflect tangible expressions of commitment, demonstrating both moral responsibility and active participation in realising the tourism village initiative. Regarding the revenue generated by the camping ground, this account indicates how revenue from tourism level benefits. However, the precise revenue-sharing mechanism, including the proportion allocated to the village, the recipient institution, and the use of the funds, is reported here as Jojo's account and should not be interpreted as a formally verified arrangement unless corroborated by relevant financial records.

Nikookar & Amgholinejad (2016) emphasise that affective commitment within a community is essential for cultural sustainability. Strong commitment among community members towards cultural preservation contributes to long-term sustainability, suggesting that stakeholder interventions should aim to foster enduring community commitment. This is evident in Cibuntu through initiatives such as:

"Art activities for children are regularly carried out as part of the tourism village programme. The pavilion is used weekly for dance practice, traditional music (degung), or children's

performances. During the tourism village assessment, this cultural space received strong appreciation from the evaluators." (Dede)

Community members concern for the continued development of the tourism village, demonstrated through active efforts to support various activities:

"Their attachment to Cibuntu remains very strong. This is evident during Sabumi. People arrive as early as three in the morning. During Eid, most of the vehicles have Jakarta number plates, and the roads become parking areas. They closely follow the village's development and feel responsible for contributing whenever needed." (Mulyana)

"The tourism awareness group encourages us to continue production. We are confident because tourism activities are ongoing. Many visitors come, some even stay overnight. This programme has been running for quite some time, and we believe it will continue to grow." (Een)

"Our target is to introduce something new every year. Unproductive land is gradually being utilised. We are currently developing approximately three hectares of coffee plantations. The crops have been planted, and we hope to harvest them next year." (Dadi)

These expressions illustrate both individual and collective commitment to the development of the tourism village. Personal commitment, in this sense, reflects a deep and sustained adherence to the idea of tourism village development, shaped by internal motivation, individual choice, and subjective evaluation. Such strong commitment serves as a driving force for continuous community engagement.

Allen & Meyer (1990) three-component model distinguishes affective commitment, based on emotional attachment;

continuance commitment, based on the perceived costs of leaving; and normative commitment, based on a sense of obligation to remain. In the Cibuntu context, residents' descriptions of the village as a desirable place to live are interpreted primarily as evidence of emotional attachment rather than continuance commitment. Continuance commitment would require explicit evidence that residents perceived significant costs associated with leaving or withdrawing from community life, such as the loss of livelihood, social support, or other valued resources.

As the available evidence does not sufficiently establish these perceived costs, continuance commitment is not treated as an empirically demonstrated category in this study. Instead, the analysis distinguishes the commitment dimensions supported by the interview data and acknowledges the absence of evidence for those that could not be substantiated. This approach ensures that Allen and Meyer's framework informs the interpretation without imposing theoretical categories that are not adequately supported by participants' accounts.

Involvement

Community involvement forms the foundation of sustainable village development, as it ensures that development initiatives are locally relevant, broadly supported, and more likely to be sustained over time (Kashim & Zikri, 2024). This is particularly important in tourism village development, which requires the active participation of all community members.

Involvement is often reflected in participation in tourism-related events and activities. While participation may take various forms, it is frequently manifested through physical presence and active engagement, as described by the following informant:

"Sabumi is our traditional ceremony. However, it disappeared around the 1970s, as no one took the initiative to organise it. With the development of

the tourism village, Sabumi is now held annually again—last year marked its twelfth implementation. Government officials, including the sub-district head and regent, attended, as well as visitors from other villages. The entire community participates voluntarily, and every household prepares a tenong filled with food to be shared." (Awan)

This reflects voluntary and enthusiastic participation by community members in supporting tourism village activities. During such events, traditional narratives are also performed through *degung* music, conveying village history and moral teachings:

"During Sabumi, the history of the village is recited in the form of degung or sasakala as an expression of gratitude to God. This is performed by village elders or their descendants who are authorised to do so. Not everyone is capable of delivering it, as it carries deep and sometimes mystical meanings." (Ibnu)

Participation in the Sabumi cultural event demonstrates residents' involvement in collective cultural activities, but it does not, by itself, establish community control over tourism governance. This study therefore distinguishes participation in cultural events from involvement in tourism decision-making, budget allocation, and the distribution of tourism benefits. The latter forms of involvement require evidence that residents have opportunities to express their views, influence collective decisions, contribute to financial planning, or participate in determining how tourism revenues and benefits are allocated.

Accordingly, Sabumi is interpreted as evidence of cultural participation, while claims regarding community influence over tourism governance and benefit distribution are made only where supported by interview accounts or documentary evidence. Where the available data do not

establish residents' influence over budgets or revenue allocation, these aspects are acknowledged as limitations rather than treated as demonstrated evidence of community control. This distinction provides a more precise assessment of the extent and forms of community involvement in the development of Cibuntu Tourism Village.

The strong adherence of the Cibuntu community to tradition remains evident, particularly in agricultural practices and life-cycle rituals:

"Our adherence to tradition is still very strong, especially in farming activities. All rituals related to agriculture and life stages are still performed. However, we have adapted some practices to fit current conditions, particularly for those who work outside the village." (Jojo)

Local communities act as custodians of traditions, customs, and local wisdom that constitute key tourism attractions. Through active involvement, cultural elements—such as performing arts, rituals, traditional cuisine, and handicrafts—can be preserved and introduced to visitors. Without such involvement, the risks of cultural commodification and the erosion of authenticity would increase (Godevi, 2026).

The case of Cibuntu Tourism Village demonstrates that community involvement plays a vital role in preserving traditions, sustaining cultural heritage, and maintaining local identity. Although some degree of adaptation and deviation is inevitable, these efforts have yielded tangible outcomes, as reflected in the village's recognition as a sustainable tourism destination.

Belief

The fourth component of social bonding is belief, which refers to the community's adherence to shared values, norms, and systems of trust. In Cibuntu, belief remains a deeply embedded element of social life. This is not only reinforced by

close kinship ties but also by the strong observance of cultural ethics, as reflected in the following accounts:

"For Sundanese people, ethics is something highly valued. I would not directly instruct Mr Jojo to do something. In the village hierarchy, I may have the authority, but in the family hierarchy he is older, so it would be inappropriate (pamali) for me to make such a request without first asking respectfully. In the governmental hierarchy I may be higher, but in the family hierarchy I am younger. I must uphold his dignity." (Ibnu)

"In Sundanese culture, there are four key ethical principles: respecting others, honouring elders, being hospitable to guests and speaking politely. These principles are strongly upheld and align closely with the values of tourism." (Ibnu)

"The customs we uphold promote mutual learning, mutual care, and mutual support (silih asah, silih asih, silih asuh). This includes respect for others, as well as for nature, land, and the community. We strongly avoid physical conflict and prefer to resolve issues through familial approaches." (Awan)

These findings indicate that cultural ethics not only shape behaviour but also foster responsibility in their implementation. Trust is built through the consistent enactment of these values in everyday life, as illustrated below:

"Customary values demand responsibility. We are afraid of violating them, so we try to uphold all practices associated with our traditions. That is why, when the idea of reviving Sabumi was proposed, we all supported it." (Awan)

"The tourism village will continue to develop as long as the tourism

awareness group (pokdarwis) has strong development programmes. So far, it has been very successful. The camping ground, Sabumi, and the revival of old traditions are remarkable achievements. As community members, we trust and follow the direction of the village head and the team, as they have designed the programmes very well.” (Nana)

In this context, belief can be understood as an individual's expectation and confidence in others' honesty, goodwill, and loyalty. At the early stage of tourism village formation, this belief was directed towards community leaders who initiated the transformation of Cibuntu into a tourism village. Over time, this trust has been sustained and reinforced by the tangible outcomes achieved, as reflected in the informants' statements.

The analysis distinguishes belief in the legitimacy of shared cultural norms and community values from confidence in particular community leaders. While shared norms may provide a common basis for cooperation, trust in leaders concerns perceptions of their credibility and decision-making. These dimensions should not be treated as interchangeable, since residents may uphold village values while

questioning particular leadership decisions. Where supported by the interview evidence, such critical engagement can be interpreted as compatible with continued community commitment rather than as a rejection of collective norms. This distinction is important because conformity alone does not demonstrate collaborative governance; meaningful collaboration also requires opportunities for residents to express disagreement and participate in decision-making while maintaining a shared commitment to the community.

Belief is a fundamental aspect shaping individuals' perspectives and behaviours in everyday life (Jamaludin et al., 2025). In the case of Cibuntu, belief emerges from multiple sources, including religion, tradition, education, and personal experience. The relatively isolated geographical setting of Cibuntu has enabled these elements to converge and reinforce one another, resulting in a strong sense of community cohesion and interconnectedness.

Discussion

Based on Hirschi's (1969) framework, the four components of social bonding within the community are integrated into the following conceptual model:

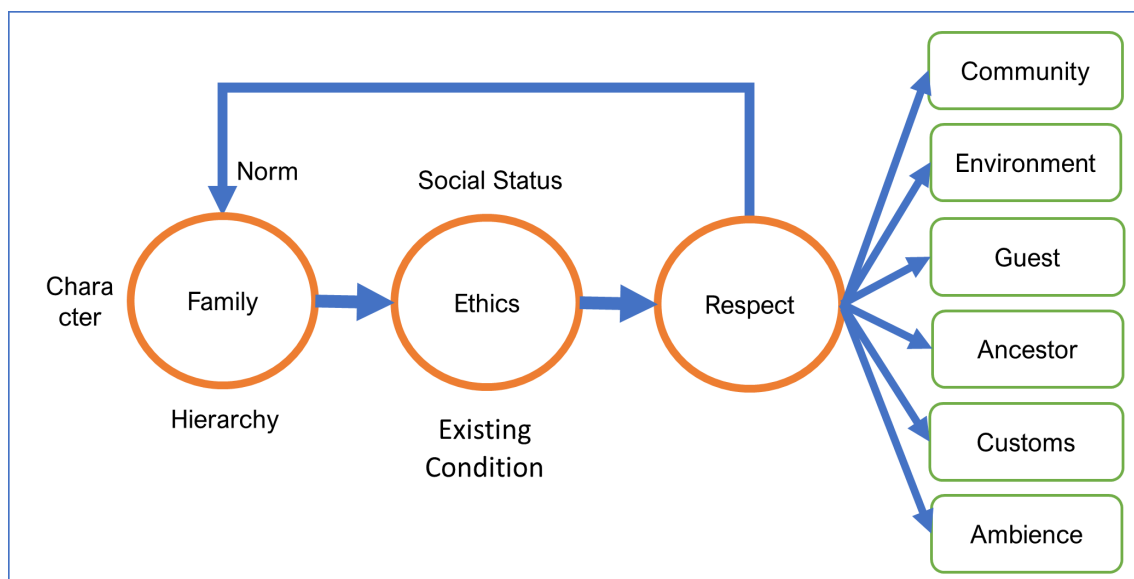


Figure 3. Social Bonding Formation in Cibuntu Tourism Village

Figure 3 presents a proposed analytical interpretation of how family relationships, cultural ethics, and mutual respect contribute to social bonding in Cibuntu Tourism Village. Family relationships primarily reflect attachment, while cultural ethics and shared responsibilities relate to commitment; participation in customary practices and collective activities reflects involvement, and acceptance of shared values and legitimate norms represents belief. These relationships should be supported by relevant interview excerpts and, where available, observational or documentary evidence. Each arrow therefore represents an interpreted relationship derived from the qualitative findings, rather than a verified causal relationship. The direction and labels of the arrows indicate the relationships proposed in the analytical framework and should be consistent with the definitions and empirical evidence associated with Hirschi's four dimensions of social bonds.

Commitment, on the other hand, is largely determined by the prevailing social ethics within Cibuntu. These ethical values have developed in response to the village's exposure to modernisation and the varying social status of its members. At its core, the ethical framework of the community is rooted in Sundanese cultural values, which are subsequently shaped by these contextual influences. The presence of community members with higher social standing who actively uphold these cultural ethics constitutes an important form of social capital.

In this context, commitment is reflected in a strong respect for customs and the preservation of cultural norms. This respect reinforces social cohesion and significantly supports the development of the tourism village. Furthermore, this commitment manifests in active involvement in tourism-related activities, including mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), environmental stewardship, hospitality towards visitors, reverence for ancestors, adherence

to customary practices, and the creation of a harmonious and prosperous social environment.

The successful formation of strong social cohesion in Cibuntu appears to be closely supported by the role of local leadership. Leadership plays a fundamental role in shaping the development of social bonds within communities and organisations. Social bonds refer to the emotional and normative ties that connect individuals to one another and to the broader social structure, influencing their behaviour and commitment to collective life. According to social bond theory, individuals maintain conformity and social engagement through four key elements, which together form the moral and relational foundation of social integration (Furst & Houser, 2021).

Within this framework, leadership acts as a central mechanism that facilitates the emergence and strengthening of these bonds. Rather than functioning solely as an authority that directs collective action, leadership shapes the relational environment in which social interactions occur, thereby influencing the development of emotional attachment, social commitment, and shared values among group members. The formation of social bonds is closely associated with repeated social interaction and collaborative engagement. Relational cohesion theory suggests that when individuals participate in ongoing exchanges and shared activities, these interactions generate positive emotional experiences that gradually transform instrumental relationships into expressive ties characterised by trust, solidarity, and commitment (Thye et al., 2014).

In this process, leadership plays a critical role by organising collective activities, facilitating communication, and maintaining participation among community members. Leaders create the structural conditions that enable individuals to interact regularly, whether through collaborative work, community initiatives, or shared decision-making processes. Over time,

these interactions foster emotional reinforcement, allowing members to develop stronger relational attachments not only to one another but also to the collective entity they belong to (Cross, 2003). From this perspective, leadership functions as an enabling mechanism that activates the interaction–emotion–commitment sequence proposed in relational cohesion theory. Without such facilitation, interactions may remain sporadic or transactional, limiting the potential for deeper social bonding to develop (Rachmad, 2025).

While relational cohesion emphasises emotional processes generated through interaction, social bond theory highlights the normative and behavioural dimensions that sustain social attachment. The four components of social bonds, attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, represent different pathways through which individuals become integrated into a social system (Furst & Houser, 2021). Leadership contributes to the strengthening of these components in several ways.

- a. First, leaders foster attachment by cultivating trust-based relationships and emotional closeness among members. Through inclusive communication, recognition, and empathetic engagement, leaders create an environment in which individuals feel socially connected and valued.
- b. Second, leadership reinforces commitment by articulating collective goals and encouraging individuals to invest in shared outcomes. When members perceive that their contributions are meaningful within a broader collective purpose, their commitment to the group increases.
- c. Third, leaders promote involvement by encouraging participation in communal activities. Active participation reduces social distance among members and strengthens interpersonal familiarity, thereby reinforcing group cohesion.
- d. Finally, leadership helps maintain belief in shared norms and values.

Leaders often act as symbolic carriers of community ideals, shaping the moral framework that guides collective behaviour.

Through these mechanisms, leadership does not merely influence organisational performance but also shapes the moral and relational fabric of the community. Beyond individual-level bonding processes, leadership also contributes to the development of social capital. Social capital refers to the networks of relationships through which individuals access resources, information, and collective support embedded in social structures. These resources become available through social ties that facilitate cooperation and mutual assistance (Azad & Pritchard, 2023).

Leadership influences social capital formation by strengthening the density and connectivity of social networks. Leaders often serve as coordinators, mediators, or brokers who connect individuals and groups that might otherwise remain socially distant. In community contexts, leadership may also bridge relationships between local actors and external institutions, thereby expanding the community's relational resources (Hummon, 1992; Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974; Kashim & Zikri, 2024). This bridging function is particularly important in collective initiatives where cooperation among diverse stakeholders is required. Through leadership, local networks can evolve from fragmented interpersonal ties into more cohesive relational systems capable of supporting collective action (Azad & Pritchard, 2023).

The Cibuntu case indicates that community leadership played a role in facilitating collective action through consultation, persuasion, and coordination during the village's transition towards tourism development. The reported three-year persuasion process concerning changes in land use illustrates how sustained engagement was used to build community understanding and agreement. However, the available evidence does not yet establish precisely

who convened meetings, mediated specific disagreements, or mobilised particular resources, nor does it demonstrate directly how these actions changed residents' participation or trust. Accordingly, the proposed interaction–emotion–commitment sequence is presented as an interpretive mechanism derived from the qualitative findings, rather than as a verified causal pathway. It offers a possible explanation of how social interactions may be associated with emotional attachment and a sense of commitment to collective goals, although the sequential relationships among these elements were not independently established by the study.

However, this strong bonding dynamic also produces a paradox. While leadership enhances internal cohesion, it may simultaneously contribute to elitism and concentration of power. The possibility that strong kinship ties and deference to senior community figures may concentrate decision-making power should also be considered in the Cibuntu context. Although family seniority and respect for community leaders may facilitate cooperation, they may also make it more difficult for younger or less influential residents to propose changes, refuse participation, or challenge decisions. The available interviews provide insights into the roles of community leaders and established social networks in sustaining collective action, but they do not sufficiently establish whether residents with different levels of social influence have equal opportunities to participate in decision-making or express disagreement. Therefore, the findings should not be interpreted as definitive evidence of inclusive governance. Rather, the possibility that strong social bonds may simultaneously support cooperation and constrain dissent represents an important issue for further investigation, particularly through interviews with women, younger residents, and community members less involved in tourism or leadership networks.

This integrative perspective suggests that leadership should be understood

not only as a managerial function but also as a relational process that shapes the emotional, normative, and structural foundations of collective life. When leadership successfully fosters interaction, trust, and participation, the resulting social bonds enhance both community resilience and the sustainability of collective initiatives (Kurniawan et al., 2025).

The findings of this study further indicate that kinship plays a decisive role in the formation of social bonding within the Cibuntu community. The kinship system can be understood as a key element of social institutions that shapes social structure, values, and patterns of interaction. In the Indonesian context, kinship functions not merely as a network of blood relations but also as a sociocultural mechanism through which identity, power, and social norms are reproduced (Shofwan et al., 2025). Kinship constitutes one of the primary foundations of bonding social capital, as familial relationships provide the most immediate, stable, and enduring social networks within community life. From a social capital perspective, kinship operates as an initial mechanism for building trust, shared norms, and social solidarity, which in turn reinforce community cohesion (Putnam, 1994).

In rural contexts, kinship relations often serve as the main basis for collective cooperation. Family ties foster a shared sense of responsibility that encourages individuals to participate in community activities, including economic, social, and cultural initiatives. These kinship networks form strong internal bonds (*bonding ties*) that enable communities to maintain solidarity and provide mutual support in addressing various social and economic challenges (Mayasari & Yonartini, 2023).

The findings from this study in Cibuntu Village, based on a series of in-depth interviews, indicate that kinship patterns constitute a crucial component of bonding social capital. The kinship structure in Cibuntu operates across three layers of social organisation: (i) the nuclear family layer,

comprising relationships among immediate family members connected through birth, marriage, or adoption; (ii) the extended family layer, based on broader familial ties; and (iii) the community layer, rooted in wider social relationships. The empirical evidence suggests that the first layer, the nuclear family, serves as the core foundation, which subsequently expands into broader layers, from extended family networks to the wider community.

Values such as trust, encompassing ethics, respect, fairness, and responsibility, embedded within the nuclear family form a fundamental basis for individuals to “bind” themselves through attachment. This, in turn, evolves into commitment and involvement, which represent key parameters of social bonding within the first layer.

In practice, key actors within this initial layer play a significant role in extending social bonding to the second layer, particularly through kinship ties formed by marriage. These actors utilise shared family values to facilitate social bridging with other individuals or families connected through marital relations. Consequently, trust, attachment, commitment, and involvement are not confined to the nuclear family but gradually expand into broader social layers. This evolving kinship pattern gives rise to the notion of an extended “family” within Cibuntu Village.

The ties discussed in this study should be distinguished according to the relationships they connect and the resources they provide. Family bonding arises from kinship, shared ancestry, and family obligations, whereas community bonding extends to relationships among residents based on shared cultural values, mutual respect, and collective responsibilities beyond immediate family ties. By contrast, relationships with academic institutions and government agencies are external partnerships that provide access to knowledge, institutional support, resources, and broader development networks. These partnerships should therefore be analysed separately from family and

community bonding, as they connect Cibuntu residents with external actors rather than primarily reflecting internal social cohesion. This distinction helps clarify how internal social bonds and external institutional relationships may complement one another in supporting tourism village development.

These kinship dynamics further influence community-level social bonding. The family-based approach strengthens social ties across the community, as values such as ethics, respect, fairness, and responsibility, initially rooted in the nuclear and extended family layers, become embedded within the broader community context. In practice, the initiative to develop Cibuntu as a tourism village can be understood as a manifestation of bonding social capital. Similarly, the management of the tourism village demonstrates that kinship-based approaches. These collective practices may support the development of Cibuntu Tourism Village. Chriss (2007) further explains that social bonds within society are formed through multiple dimensions of interpersonal relationships, including family, friendship, and community ties. These relationships generate emotional attachment and social commitment, which strengthen social stability. Within this framework, kinship functions not only as a biological connection but also as a value system that shapes norms, moral responsibility, and loyalty among group members.

Empirical studies on social capital in rural communities also demonstrate that kinship networks play a critical role in fostering collective mechanisms and coordinated action. For instance, research on farming communities shows that bonding networks formed through family ties and social proximity enhance collective adaptive capacity through trust, communication, and social learning among community members. These bonds facilitate coordinated actions such as joint planning, knowledge sharing, and collective decision-making (Mayasari & Yoniartini, 2023).

Furthermore, kinship contributes significantly to encouraging community participation in development activities. Individuals' involvement is often influenced by pre-existing social relationships, particularly those embedded within family networks and immediate social environments. Such participation may take the form of voluntary work, social engagement, or contributions to community decision-making processes. This engagement not only enhances social solidarity but also strengthens the community's collective capacity to achieve shared goals (Stukas & Dunlap, 2002).

However, while kinship can reinforce social cohesion, several studies suggest that excessively strong bonding social capital may also lead to social exclusivity. Over-reliance on internal networks can limit openness to innovation and reduce collaboration with external stakeholders. In the context of tourism village development, for example, overly strong internal social bonds may generate resistance to change and hinder the innovation processes required for community-based tourism development (Mayasari & Yoniatini, 2023; Shofwan et al., 2025).

In conclusion, kinship plays a crucial role in building social bonding through the development of trust, solidarity, and collective commitment within the community. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of kinship-based bonding social capital needs to be balanced with the expansion of broader social networks to ensure that communities remain adaptive to ongoing social and economic changes.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how social bonding emerges and operates within the development process of Cibuntu Tourism Village. Using Hirschi's social bond framework, the findings suggest that collective tourism action is associated with tourism village development in Cibuntu. It is strongly supported by four

interconnected elements of social bonding: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief.

First, attachment is largely formed through strong kinship relations and emotional ties between community members and their place of origin. Informants described widespread family ties among Cibuntu residents are connected through extended family relations, while migrants maintain their emotional connection to the village through diaspora networks such as IWACI. This sense of belonging strengthens collective identity and reinforces individuals' willingness to contribute to village development.

Second, commitment emerges from shared values rooted in Sundanese cultural ethics and community norms. These values encourage individuals to prioritise collective interests and maintain moral responsibility toward the village. The commitment of local leaders, migrants, and community members has played a significant role in sustaining tourism development initiatives and preserving local traditions.

Third, involvement reflects the active participation of the community in tourism-related activities and cultural events. Community participation is particularly visible in collective activities such as Sabumi ceremonies, cultural performances, environmental maintenance, and tourism service provision. This participation strengthens community cohesion while ensuring that tourism development remains culturally grounded.

Fourth, belief or trust functions as the moral foundation that sustains collective cooperation. Trust in community leaders, local institutions, and cultural values may facilitate collective decision-making and help manage conflict. The strong cultural ethics embedded in Sundanese traditions—such as respect, mutual care, and conflict avoidance—help maintain social harmony and support collaborative governance.

In this study, sustainable tourism is understood as tourism development that

supports community well-being, meaningful participation in local governance, the fair distribution of tourism benefits, the preservation of cultural values, environmental responsibility, and the capacity of local institutions to sustain tourism activities over time. These dimensions were examined through available interview accounts, observations, and documentary materials, where relevant evidence existed. The findings provide insights into how kinship, shared ethics, cultural respect, and community leadership may support social cohesion and collective action in Cibuntu Tourism Village. However, awards and the continuation of cultural events are not sufficient evidence of environmental performance, equitable benefit distribution, or long-term institutional resilience. Where these outcomes were not directly assessed or adequately corroborated, they are acknowledged as limitations rather than treated as demonstrated achievements. Accordingly, social bonding is interpreted as a potential enabling condition for sustainable tourism development, not as proof that strong social bonds cause tourism success. The findings are context-specific to Cibuntu and should be understood as an analytical contribution that warrants further investigation across different tourism village settings.

This study has several limitations. First, its focus on a single case, Cibuntu Tourism Village, provides contextual depth but does not support statistical generalisation to other tourism villages. Second, the findings rely partly on retrospective accounts, which may be influenced by participants' memories and interpretations of past events. Third, recruitment through purposive and snowball sampling resulted in a sample dominated by senior male actors connected to community leadership, tourism, cultural institutions, and the diaspora; consequently, the perspectives of women, younger residents, newcomers, and residents less involved in tourism may be underrepresented. Fourth, the available evidence on tourism outcomes is limited,

particularly regarding environmental performance, the equitable distribution of economic benefits, and long-term institutional resilience. These limitations also shape the transferability of the findings. Cibuntu's relatively dense kinship networks, Sundanese customary norms, organised diaspora through IWACI, and established local leadership may facilitate social bonding and collective mobilisation in ways that differ from villages with more fragmented family networks, different cultural traditions, weaker diaspora connections, or less centralised leadership. Therefore, the proposed relationship between social bonds, community leadership, and collective action should be understood as a context-dependent analytical interpretation rather than a universal or causal explanation of tourism sustainability. Future comparative research involving more diverse participants and longitudinal evidence is needed to examine how these mechanisms operate under different social and institutional conditions.

Implications

This study contributes to the literature on social bonding and community-based tourism by demonstrating how Hirschi's social bond theory can be applied to explain community cohesion in tourism village development. The findings show that social bonding functions not only as a mechanism of social control but also as a potential enabling condition for collective action and community resilience in tourism development.

The research also highlights the importance of kinship-based bonding social capital in rural community contexts. Strong family ties and cultural norms play a crucial role in shaping trust, commitment, and participation within the community. At the same time, the study emphasises the need to integrate bonding social capital with bridging and linking social capital to support sustainable tourism development and adaptive community governance.

Furthermore, the study enriches discussions on leadership within social bonding frameworks by illustrating how community leaders can facilitate interaction, reinforce shared values, and mobilise collective participation.

To strengthen the contribution of social bonding to sustainable tourism development, Cibuntu's village government and tourism management should establish regular community consultation meetings in which residents can propose initiatives, question decisions, and discuss the allocation of tourism revenues. Participation should extend beyond established leaders and tourism actors by actively involving women, younger residents, newcomers, and households with limited involvement in tourism.

The village government should also introduce transparent records of tourism income, expenditure, and benefit distribution, alongside periodic reviews of environmental management and community welfare. IWACI could support these initiatives by connecting diaspora members with local development priorities and documenting their contributions.

Finally, future evaluations should monitor specific indicators, including the diversity of residents participating in decisions, the distribution of tourism benefits across households, community-reported trust in leadership, and progress in environmental management. These measures would help determine whether strong social bonds translate into more inclusive governance and sustained tourism outcomes, rather than assuming that community cohesion alone guarantees sustainability.

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AI USE STATEMENT

The authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to assist with language editing, grammatical refinement, and to improve the clarity and readability of selected passages in the manuscript. The tool was not used to generate research data or fabricate findings. The authors reviewed and verified the AI-assisted revisions and take full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, interpretation, and final content of the manuscript.

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