



## Leveraging Development Communication for Stakeholder Engagement in Arjowinangun's Batik Tourism and Creative Economy Growth

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### Abstract

*This study explores the role of development communication in fostering stakeholder engagement in Arjowinangun Village's batik tourism initiatives. Researchers aim to position the village as a central hub for batik tulis and establish Woro Srikandi as a leading brand in Pacitan Regency. Using a qualitative, phenomenological approach within development communication, the team gathered data through participant observation, FGDs, and analysis of key documents, including 2023 village data and the RPJMDes (2019-2023). Twelve key informants contributed insights, including village officials, community leaders, youth, artisans, business owners, and government representatives. The study identifies three significant outcomes: (1) the successful integration of batik tulis into the village's development plan by the local government and Bumdes, (2) the establishment of Woro Srikandi batik tulis as an educational tourism destination, and (3) increased tourism awareness among residents, which has fostered the growth of a creative economy that supports the batik tulis tourism initiative. The findings highlight that development communication serves as a strategic tool for building inclusive discourse, enhancing participation, and cultivating community identity. These insights are crucial for promoting sustainable tourism and the creative economy in rural areas.*

**Keywords:** batik tourism, development communication, stakeholder engagement, creative economy, Arjowinangun

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Arjowinangun Village, located in Pacitan Regency, East Java, is renowned for its traditional batik craftsmanship, particularly for its esteemed Batik Woro Srikandi. The villagers have meticulously passed down the intricate art of hand-drawn Batik, which has preserved the village's cultural heritage. Batik Woro Srikandi Batik plays an important role in providing cultural identity for the village of Arjowinangun as evidence of the preservation of the inheritance of cultural wealth and traditional artistic skills, which are the ancestors' legacy (Murtini, Sutedjo, and Ibrahim 2023).

The first batik artisans in Arjowinangun Village started from a family named Pak Imam, who pioneered hand-drawn Batik. The hand-drawn batik business was passed down from generation to generation; until now, it is the fourth generation. This family has spread the expertise of Batik, and it still runs batik production with the Woro Srikandi brand. This batik business, which has a legal entity CV (Commanditaire Vennootschap), is a partnership with one or more general partners. It has the best hand-drawn Batik in Pacitan because it has a creation technique, a complicated manufacturing method, maintains the quality of the materials, and traditional batik motifs. The advantage of hand-drawn batik art is its effort to maintain the hand-drawn batik technique to maintain its quality and authenticity as an original Indonesian culture (Evno, Setiawan, and Dimi 2024).

Arjowinangun Village, as the original birthplace of hand-drawn Batik, is not enough to rely only on the ability of the Woro Srikandi Batik business to guard cultural heritage. It requires various batik introduction and training programs for the younger generation, training in mastering traditional batik tools and the latest hand-drawn batik technology, training to introduce the importance of using natural dyes to protect the environment from pollution due to waste chemical dyes that are wasted and seep into groundwater (Wibisono et al. 2024).

The village officials are trying to start collaborative activities with local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that produce processed foods as a display location for the promotion of Batik Woro Srikandi. This form of collaboration contributes to the growth of the economic income of village residents. However, up to five snack SMEs have collaborated with Batik Woro Srikandi. The effort is still

in small scope and is manageable. Arjowinangun Village needs the role of universities to map potential and connect with SMEs and tourism service managers to achieve a broader consumer segment (Lita, Faisal, and Meuthia 2020).

This study, in addition to analyzing community involvement to support the tourism sector, also encourages community understanding of the importance of giving birth to the pioneering Arjowinangun Village as a batik tourism village. A plasma batik business will impact residents' economic and social dynamics around the batik business. Batik Woro Srikandi, as the most important cultural commodity for Arjowinangun Village, requires participation and community involvement for its sustainability as a Batik Tourism Village in the future. Community groups that have the same understanding of increasing income from opening batik tourism destinations will later be able to collaboratively produce, promote, and market batik products to attract tourists as consumers (Raya et al. 2021). These efforts are part of building a tourism destination ecosystem.

Furthermore, developing Batik Woro Srikandi as a global commodity and cultural product requires a comprehensive approach. This includes effective cultural promotion efforts, the creation of new batik motifs that innovate from traditional Javanese batik motifs, and the establishment of intellectual property rights. Therefore, realizing batik tourism village destinations necessitates a holistic approach that facilitates economic growth and ensures sustainable economic benefits (Chidtian et al. 2021).

As a supporting force for batik tourism villages, it is necessary to consider the availability of infrastructure and facilities to expand the scope of hand-drawn batik crafts as cultural tourism. Various studies on developing or revitalizing tourist areas require road access, easy access to public transportation, accommodation options with various budget ranges, tourist information centers, and comfortable public facilities for tourists (including parking lots, public toilets, and places to eat). Another supporting force currently quite effective is promoting the trend of going viral with unique cultural and culinary experiences on social media (Niqotaini et al. 2024; Yang et al. 2020).

Experience in other areas that develop batik educational tourism is the involvement of local communities and tourists through interactive activities. For example, offering hands-on experience in drawing batik patterns, making Batik with traditional tools, introducing various batik coloring techniques, and washing

batik cloth as an educational tourism experience workshop that gives a lasting impression to tourists (Suryani et al. 2021). The batik works of tourists can be displayed at batik tourism locations or purchased at a reasonable price.

This study uses previous studies as a strong theoretical basis and research method for developing Arjowinangun Village as a batik tourism destination. The results of a review of various research articles explain the importance of insight in synergizing cultural preservation, tourism innovation, community empowerment, and management of tourist destination areas to guarantee the success of batik tourism development in Arjowinangun. As in previous studies on batik tourism in the Pekalongan Regency, the biggest challenge is to create a balance between innovation in building batik tourism villages and efforts to preserve culture (Evno et al. 2024). The first step in the study was to educate the village community about efforts to innovate tourism villages. Besides improving the villagers' economy, there are also important efforts to maintain the authenticity of traditional batik culture. So, efforts to develop villages as Batik tourism destinations become collaborative efforts to advance the economy and preserve the authenticity of Batik as a cultural heritage.

After the educational phase, the next step is to cultivate community participation. Community participation is a vital element in the success of sustainable tourism development, as it requires a collective commitment for long-term success. One part of the villagers is the younger generation, which can be involved in tourism management activities. Their involvement in activities such as digital media promotion and the establishment of creative economic businesses can significantly contribute to the support of Batik tourism villages.

The various successes of batik tourism village strategies inspired this study to apply them in Arjowinangun Village. Many opportunities are open to encourage the active participation of villagers in developing Arjowinangun Village as a batik tourism destination. Moreover, support from the village government apparatus, village-owned enterprises, PKK mothers, youth organizations, and community leaders is important capital that has the power to manage community-based tourism (Hutnaleontina, Bendesa, and Yasa 2022).

The inspiration for community-based tourism management from the study by Mtapuri, Camilleri, and Dłużewska (2022) requires the involvement of all stakeholders using a participatory approach. Collaboration is mandatory to create a memorable tourist destination so that the village government, local government, batik artisans, and all elements of the village community can work together harmoniously to give tourists a meaningful tourism experience. One of the efforts of this research is to provoke the birth of a multi-party communication forum involving village leaders, batik artisans, Bumdes, local UMKM actors, youth organizations, community leaders, and villagers. The goal is to create a vision of tourism development that aligns with the plan to develop batik tourism destinations in Arjowinangun village.

In the next stage, Arjowinangun Village can utilize Batik and local UMKM as innovative tourism products. Universities are important partners in planning educational batik tourism packages. For example, tourists can participate in the process of producing hand-drawn Batik, either in whole or in part. There are steps in creating batik tulis, drawing motifs, painting Batik with canting, washing the batik cloth, coloring the batik cloth, and drying and packaging the Batik.

Arjowinangun Village, with its participatory approach, is not just a tourist destination but a beacon of batik education, particularly hand-drawn Batik. It stands as a guardian of the batik cultural heritage, a role that instills a sense of pride and responsibility in the local community and beyond. As more and more tourists gain simple skills in hand-drawn Batik, the village's unique position is further solidified.

This study utilizes theories from development communication studies as a basis for analysis. Several applicable theories for producing a comprehensive and holistic discussion on developing Arjowinangun as a batik tourism village include community empowerment, social capital, and media convergence theories.

The community empowerment theory emphasizes the importance of carrying out capacity building for residents to foster a spirit of collaboration and participation. Some forms of activity are tourism awareness group training, batik drawing skills training, digital marketing training, promotion and public speaking training, and tour package training. Other sustainable skills development includes introducing non-chemical natural coloring technology, electronic beauty technology, and batik image design technology. Various other trainings, such as

financial management and batik marketing strategies, aim to ensure the long-term benefits of tourism for the community (Suryani et al. 2021).

The social capital theory can provide direction in identifying the strength of social networks, collective norms and values, local wisdom, the central role of community leaders, and customs that unite residents (Rocca and Zielinski 2022). Arjowinangun Village has substantial social capital through kinship ties between village leaders, community leaders, batik artisans, religious leaders, youth organizations, and local MSME business owners. This strength can encourage collaborative work and facilitate the achievement of mutual trust. The experience that still needs assistance is bridging external partnerships with tourism service operators and managers, including accommodation and hotel businesses, culinary and restaurant businesses, travel businesses, and nature tourism operators. External partners synergize to help promote Arjowinangun Village Batik and expand the tourism market. Other social capital is the cognitive strength that Arjowinangun Village is the birthplace of batik art in Pacitan Regency, as well as a shared understanding that Batik is an art and culture that is important to preserve.

The media convergence theory lays the foundation for discussing new forms of communication due to the intersection of traditional and digital media (Vizcaíno-Verdú, De-Casas-Moreno, and Tirocchi 2023). This theory is relevant to analyzing the development of batik tourism destinations in Arjowinangun Village. The success of tourism promotion in the digital era requires communication skills on digital platforms. To promote Batik as Indonesia's cultural heritage to the global audience, Desa Arjowinangun needs digital marketing training, social media content management training, and creative content design. Increasing the visibility of Arjowinangun village as a tourist destination can attract domestic and international tourists. Previous research by Putri and Achmad (2024) shows that "digital platforms are important in promoting cultural products and increasing tourist involvement." Together, these three theories form the basis of a valuable strategy to increase Arjowinangun's potential as a sustainable batik tourism destination. Comprehensively, various mentoring activities after this study can ensure that, besides maintaining cultural heritage, batik tourism promotion can

improve the villagers' economy and become a source of original income for the Arjowinangun Village government.

## **METHODS**

This qualitative research uses a phenomenological approach to explore the potential of Arjowinangun Village to be developed as a batik tourism destination (Achmad et al. 2024; Fatmawati and Prasetya 2021). The data acquisition process is comprehensive, utilizing sources from Focus Group Discussions, Data Desa 2023 document from the Directorate General of Village Governance of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, and 2019–2023 Arjowinangun Village Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMDes) document sources. The perspectives of 12 informants consisting of village heads, Bumdes managers, batik business owners, religious leaders, community leaders, Family Welfare Movement (PKK) mothers, youth organizations, cultural figures, batik artisans, and tourism service managers help provide insight into batik tourism destinations as an effort to preserve culture while increasing the economy. The researchers observed the interaction among the government, batik artisans, and tourists through participant observation to obtain information on how Batik in Arjowinangun village is communicated for tourism purposes (Kasih et al. 2023).

FGD is a collaborative space for stakeholders to discuss challenges and strategies for pioneering batik tourism destinations in Arjowinangun Village. The secondary data is the Data Desa 2023 and the 2019–2023 RPJMDes document, containing demographic, economic, infrastructure, and budget information. The data will be analyzed to contextualize findings from observations and FGDs (Mas'udah et al. 2022). Data Desa 2023 is a comprehensive data collection (demographics, topography, human resources, workforce distribution, income levels, and citizen access to public services) and plays an important role in assessing the village's capacity to realize the batik tourism village destination as sustainable tourism. Data analysis about education, employment, and infrastructure can reveal opportunities for economic diversification in Arjowinangun Village, mainly through developing its tourism sector.

Meanwhile, the 2019-2023 RPJMDes data containing the village's strategic priority programs can show the village's commitment to facilitating local cultural preservation programs, infrastructure development, and supporting

community-based batik tourism god initiatives. The design of those strategic programs is to foster optimism about the future of Arjowinangun Village.

The combination of phenomenological data and document analysis provides a holistic understanding of the potential and design of Arjowinangun's development as a batik tourism village. The incorporation of life experiences (phenomenology) into the planning of village development strategies in this research offers a guiding framework for fostering economic growth and safeguarding Batik as a cultural heritage within the tourism sector (Murtini et al. 2023).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The development of Arjowinangun Village as a batik tourism destination requires a participatory and collaborative approach to the involvement of stakeholders, namely the district government, village government, batik entrepreneurs, batik artisans, Bumdes, mass media, community leaders, tourism service managers, youth organizations, PKK mothers, and tourism awareness groups. Each entity makes optimal efforts to support the realization of a batik tourism village and, at the same time, preserve culture. This results and discussion section explains each stakeholder's contribution, what alternative activities can be carried out, and the interactions to achieve a sustainable batik tourism village.

The district government and Arjowinangun village government have a role in compiling and producing regulations, development plans (human resources and infrastructure), financing designs, and tourism promotion support. The regulations must provide certainty of effective governance to support the development of the tourism sector, adequate infrastructure (access to transportation and public facilities), tourism business licensing, tourist location levies, and increasing the capacity of tourism service managers. Especially in the digital era, the Pacitan district government must promote Arjowinangun village as a batik tourism destination using digital platforms to increase domestic and international tourist visits (Liu et al. 2023). Policy support and harmonious relations from the Pacitan district government will be a guarantee for the Arjowinangun Village government to obtain the resources needed to realize a Batik Tourism Village, which aims to



increase local revenue, improve the economy of village residents while preserving the cultural heritage of their ancestors (Wahba and Chun 2021).

Batik business owners and batik artisans in Arjowinangun Village are the key to the success of the batik tourism village program. Their contribution is very real in producing high-quality Batik and educating the younger generation on the art of Batik so that it can be passed down from generation to generation. The expertise, skills, and love of batik artisans for traditional batik making are invaluable and authentic resources, so they can attract tourists to learn traditional batik writing and get the best experience in their lives (Sabhanayah and Rachman 2023).

For this reason, batik artisans need assistance through various trainings and get incentives from various exhibitions and cultural promotions to transfer knowledge and preserve batik culture to the next generation. Every effort to make batik art a tourism commodity must take time to abandon the uniqueness and integrity of culture. Quang et al. (2023) research proves that the involvement of central and regional government policies as ongoing support for batik artisans directly impacts the quality of batik commodities and the success of initiatives to realize sustainable tourism destinations.

The coordination between the village government and several district government agencies concerned with trade, culture, and the creative industry is important for the effectiveness of batik tourism village development (Suryani et al. 2021). This support must be oriented towards the process and results. Government agencies often involve MSMEs and the batik creative industry during an exhibition. Even then, the government agencies must provide financial support for batik entrepreneurs who fill the exhibition booths owned by the district government (FGD, July 13, 2024). This small support is important for batik entrepreneurs and artisans because it can encourage the growth of innovation in the batik industry. As a result, for Batik to have competitive value in the global market, innovation and commodification of Batik as a cultural commodity are needed (Sabhanayah and Rachman 2023).

The batik industry is not just a cultural commodity but has also developed into a fashion commodity. For this reason, the need for innovation and commodification of Batik must not sacrifice aspects of culture and tradition. Furthermore, the challenge of the batik industry is the integration of marketing

strategies by utilizing contemporary technology for business purposes while preserving the art of Batik culture as an ancestral heritage (Wibisono et al. 2024).

Youth organizations, PKK mothers, community leaders, tourism awareness groups, Bumdes, and community organizations are involved through participation in various tourism agendas, positive feedback, and consistent support in efforts to develop the potential of Arjowinangun village as a batik tourism destination (Achmad et al. 2024).

Community leaders and organizations play a crucial role in preserving the harmony between cultural values and community norms in every tourism initiative. Furthermore, youth organizations and tourism awareness groups contribute their resources to providing relevant training for community-based tourism practices, promoting cultural products as tourism commodities, strengthening batik tourism village strategies, and continuing to strive to increase community participation (Benu et al. 2020).

Partnerships with tourism service managers from the private sector are beneficial; they are necessary for marketing and promoting facilities for Arjowinangun Village as a batik tourism destination. The most vital private sector for tourism cooperation is travel agents, nature tourism operators, hotels, and restaurants (Quang et al. 2023). These partnerships can significantly increase the visibility of Arjowinangun village as a batik tourism destination, increase tourist visits, and expand the reach of the batik sales market. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) provide a valuable foundation for examining the interaction among development communication, community-based tourism (CBT), and community empowerment. This analysis applies a theoretical framework to understand how communication strategies, tourism development models, and cultural preservation promote sustainable tourism in Arjowinangun Village.

Communication regarding the development of batik tourism destinations is an important strategy to mobilize villagers to realize sustainable tourism. Development communication requires consistency and commitment from the present generation to future generations. For this reason, Villagers need a strategy to encourage the younger generation's involvement in the batik industry.

The biggest challenge in realizing Arjowinangun as a batik tourism village is ensuring that future generations have the skills and expertise to make Batik and can maintain the sustainability of the batik tradition as a tourist attraction (Mr. Agus, Village Leader, July 13, 2024).

Development communication activities require a participatory approach when local stakeholders can actively participate in development initiatives. Every stakeholder contribution is integral to realizing development goals, in this case, a batik tourism village. The participation of stakeholders must be seen as an inclusive strategy for developing tourism initiatives (Aditama et al. 2021),

The decreasing number of batik artisans requires empowerment through education and skill development for the younger generation. In line with the theory of community empowerment, to maintain the development process's sustainability, local communities need to have increased capacity (Benu et al. 2020; Hutnaleontina et al. 2022).

“We need more introduction and training in Batik, which is primarily aimed at the younger generation. They need to be awakened to their love for Batik, that Batik is worthy of being a source of livelihood, and that they are able to market Batik on the latest digital platforms so that the original Batik from Arjowinangun Village is widely known and attracts tourists” (Ms. Linda, Batik artisan, July 13, 2024).

In the context of Arjowinangun Village, realizing a batik tourism destination requires gradual efforts. At each stage, training is always provided to batik artisans, in addition to producing quality batik, and digital marketing and tourism management are also provided to empower the community so that they can fully participate and benefit from tourism growth. Increasing digital literacy for villagers is important to maximize the involvement of roles in the value chain of batik tourism destinations. In short, traditional batik skills and batik sales need the support of appropriate technologies (Wibisono et al. 2024).

The realization of the Batik Tourism Village destination hinges on the crucial support of the district government and the private sector. Their active involvement is a fundamental principle of community-based tourism (CBT). As underscored in the CBT theory, the community's initiative to develop destinations

that aim for a fair distribution of benefits is a necessity and a powerful opportunity for the community to take the lead in shaping their future (Mtapuri et al. 2022).

The village government plays a crucial role in promoting Arjowinangun batik as a high-quality cultural commodity. It is essential for them to encourage Bumdes to support batik entrepreneurs and foster partnerships with agencies in the creative industry, travel agents, hotels, souvenir centers, and the mass media (Wandi, Owner Batik Woro Srikandi, July 13, 2023).

Arjowinangun Village, which can implement a collaborative tourism governance model (involving the village government, batik entrepreneurs, batik craftsmen, and other local businesses), will be able to design a roadmap for developing batik tourism destinations that are in line with the community's needs and values.

The infrastructure sector has yet to escape the stakeholders' attention as a supporter of the development of batik tourism villages. Consistent with the theory of sustainable tourism, which emphasizes the importance of providing tourism infrastructure, it must go hand in hand with efforts to preserve culture and protect the environment. Infrastructure and public facility support to provide access to tourist destination locations can also support the production of cultural commodities and increase the possibility for tourists to get the best and most memorable tourism experiences (Arumugam, Nakkeeran, and Subramaniam 2023).

If we want to pioneer a batik tourism village, we need to attract tourists' attention. We need adequate infrastructure and public facilities, such as road access for both public and private vehicles to the Woro Srikandi batik production house, large vehicle parking spaces, public toilets, prayer rooms, and public spaces for rest. The Woro Srikandi Batik house needs a spatial design for product displays and educational spaces for batik practice (Mr Suparno, Bumdes Arjuna Mulya manager, July 13, 2024).

This study also examines the cross-sectional themes identified in the FGD. The findings of focus group discussions confidently assert that Arjowinangun's potential as a batik tourism destination depends on skillfully combining important aspects. These include fixing human resource inadequacies, updating infrastructure, getting government backing, and encouraging tourism innovation while preserving

tradition. The formidable village leadership and geographical location provide a solid foundation for building Arjowinangun as a batik tourist hotspot. To capitalize on these prospects, stakeholders must collaborate and make strategic investments across sectors. To successfully promote Arjowinangun as a batik tourism destination, an integrated approach combining tradition and modernization would be required, focusing on sustainable experiences that attract tourists and support local economic prosperity. This economic prosperity includes increased revenue from tourism, job creation, and the potential for investment in the local economy.

**The Village Vision and Human Resource Gaps.** The village administration of Arjowinangun is unwavering in its dedication to developing Batik as a key tourism attraction rooted in the village's cultural heritage. This steadfast commitment, however, is challenged by the need for more skilled human resources. The declining number of batik artisans, many of whom have transitioned to other occupations or left the village, has created a gap in generational continuity. This issue is compounded by the limited interest among younger individuals in pursuing batik-making, mainly due to the labor-intensive nature of the craft and the lack of financial stability it offers. Despite the village's efforts to integrate batik training into school curricula, attracting and retaining artisans remains a significant obstacle. The opportunity here lies in integrating educational initiatives with practical incentives, such as scholarships or business grants, to make the craft more appealing to young people. Additionally, emphasizing vocational training programs could help bridge the gap between the village's vision and the availability of artisans needed to sustain the craft.

**Infrastructure Deficiencies and Market Expansion.** The outdated infrastructure and production methods present a significant challenge to transforming Arjowinangun into a batik tourism hub. The artisans face limitations in the quantity and quality of their output, hindering their ability to meet market demands. Additionally, the lack of media exposure has contributed to the relative obscurity of Arjowinangun's Batik outside the region. However, establishing the village's new Bumdes (village-owned enterprise) offers a promising opportunity to address these issues through investments in modern equipment and digital marketing strategies. Enhancing production efficiency and increasing the visibility of Arjowinangun batik could attract more tourists and elevate the village's revenue

streams. (Mr. Wandy, Owner of Woro Srikandi Batik and Mr. Suparno, Bumdes manager, July 13, 2024).

**Government Support and Policy Integration.** The village administration has shown impressive dedication to promoting batik tourism by integrating Batik into village development plans (RAPBDES) and seeking support from the local government. However, a more comprehensive and consistent policy framework is needed to ensure sustained growth. One potential solution is to advocate for the mandatory use of traditional Pacitan Batik in local government uniforms. This policy could create a stable market for artisans and elevate the presence of the craft in official settings. Furthermore, hosting frequent government-sponsored exhibitions and batik training programs could enhance the village's ability to attract tourists and cultivate a skilled workforce. The key opportunity lies in establishing stronger partnerships between the village, regional governments, and private sector entities to integrate Batik into broader economic and tourism development strategies. This collaborative approach would offer financial and institutional support for Arjowinangun's aspiration to become a prominent batik tourism destination. (Mr. Agus, Village Leader and Mr. Wandy, Owner of Batik Woro Srikandi, July 13, 2024).

**Balancing Tradition with Innovation in Batik Production.** The batik production in Arjowinangun is steeped in tradition, adding cultural authenticity to the village's tourism appeal. However, the reliance on traditional, manual methods has preserved the heritage and constrained the ability to produce Batik efficiently and at a larger scale. Artisans have expressed the need for technological advancements, such as machinery for dyeing and pattern making, to enhance production efficiency without compromising the quality and traditional techniques that define Arjowinangun's Batik. Striking a balance between tradition and innovation presents a significant opportunity for growth, appealing to tourists interested in cultural heritage and investors seeking a sustainable business model. Integrating modern technology while preserving the artistic value of Batik could secure the industry's sustainability and profitability (Mr. Wandy, Owner of Batik Woro Srikandi Batik, and Mr. Henry, Cultural Figures, July 13, 2024).

**Role of Bumdes and Cross-Sector Partnerships.** Establishing Bumdes Arjunamulya in Arjowinangun provides a strategic platform for fostering economic growth and tourism development. Its potential to play a crucial role in facilitating partnerships between local artisans, educational institutions, and external collaborators such as universities and tourism agencies is significant. While unsuccessful, previous attempts to collaborate with ITN Malang underscore the promise of forming valuable partnerships. Reinvigorating these relationships and broadening them to involve other educational and industry stakeholders could result in establishing batik training centers, robust marketing platforms, and immersive tourism experiences that would benefit artisans and the broader village economy. The key lies in fully leveraging Bumdes as an economic and tourism innovation engine, positioning it as the bridge between traditional artisans, modern infrastructure, and external tourism operators. (Mr. Suparno, Bumdes Manager, and Ms. Ayu, Professional Tours and Travel Manager, July 13, 2024).

**Strategic Location and External Collaborations.** Arjowinangun's strategic location as a centrally situated village near important markets, such as local fruit and snack industries, presents a distinctive opportunity for tourism. Since visitors frequent these neighboring economic hubs, attracting them to Arjowinangun's batik workshops and stores becomes feasible. However, it is imperative to establish stronger partnerships with external tourism operators and industry experts in order to leverage this advantageous position fully. Introducing a comprehensive tourism package that integrates batik production with nearby attractions, such as food markets and traditional craft centers, can significantly enhance the village's visibility and tourist allure. Furthermore, collaborating with regional tourism boards and universities could lead to joint marketing initiatives and the development of batik-related tourism infrastructure, ultimately enriching the overall visitor experience. (Mr. Wandy, Owner of Batik Woro Srikandi Batik, and Ms. Ayu, Professional Tours and Travel Manager, July 13, 2024).

**Education as a Driver of Tourism and Heritage Preservation.** Education plays a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of batik production in Arjowinangun. Previous efforts have shown the potential to cultivate an appreciation for this traditional craft among younger generations by incorporating batik-making activities into extracurricular programs. However, there is a need for more consistent and formalized educational programs. Reviving and formalizing these

initiatives, particularly by integrating them with tourism, could be instrumental in preserving the craft and attracting visitors interested in learning about traditional Batik. Additionally, promoting Batik as part of local school uniforms and expanding community-based learning opportunities would help sustain interest in the craft. Collaboration between the village administration, local schools, universities, and tourism boards could establish educational tourism packages offering hands-on batik experiences for visitors while nurturing a new generation of artisans. (Mr. Yusuf, Arjowinangun Village Youth, and Mr. Yono, Arjowinangun Village Resident, July 13, 2024).

This study also analyzed secondary data from two document sources: (1) Data Desa 2023 from the Directorate General of Village Government, Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, which includes data from Prodeskel (Aplikasi Profil Desa dan Kelurahan) dan Epdeskel (Aplikasi Evaluasi Perkembangan Desa dan Kelurahan), and other relevant sources, which contain detailed information on the socio-economic profile of Arjowinangun Village; and (2) The 2019-2023 Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMDes) Arjowinangun village.

These documents serve as a basis for evaluating the village's potential for developing a Batik Tourism Village. The documents examine the village's human resource capacity, infrastructure, and budget conditions. Together, they provide a strong framework for understanding current conditions and future development strategies to drive economic growth through cultural tourism. However, the village's reliance on agricultural activities underscores the necessity for economic diversification, particularly as it endeavors to develop a Batik Tourism Village. This initiative can broaden local revenue sources and lessen the community's agricultural dependence. The literature on rural tourism emphasizes the role of economic diversification as a strategy to reduce poverty and improve rural livelihoods (Agustina et al. 2023; Aldora et al. 2021).

The village's demographic structure, which consists of older and younger residents, further strengthens its capacity for diversification. Access to education and literacy have gradually improved due to local initiatives, a positive factor for improving vocational training in tourism and hospitality. Studies have shown that



improving education is critical to the success of tourism in rural areas, as it increases local capacity to manage tourism businesses and encourages innovation. The role of education in the success of rural tourism cannot be overstated. The gradual improvement in education puts the village in a good position to implement training programs targeting the skills needed in tourism management, marketing, and hospitality, which are critical to the success of a tourism-based economy (Achmad et al. 2024; Dong and Khan 2023; Mtapuri et al. 2022).

While the village's infrastructure, including its roads, markets, and public spaces, is functional, further investment in utilities and connectivity is crucial to attract tourists and ensure the success of the Batik Tourism Village. Research consistently shows that infrastructure development is significant in driving tourism, dramatically affecting accessibility and the overall visitor experience (Rasoolimanesh et al. 2021). Improving transportation networks, constructing visitor centers, and upgrading utilities such as water and electricity are necessary to increase tourism. Without these infrastructure improvements, the village risks stagnating in attracting and retaining visitors.

The successful development of the Batik Tourism Village in Arjowinangun depends on the availability of skilled human resources. Training residents and the younger generation can lead to modernization and innovation in the tourism sector (Aesthetika et al. 2023; Niqotaini et al. 2024). The younger generation's digital skills in using digital communication platforms can enhance the Batik Tourism Village's visibility to a global audience. Digital platforms are crucial for promoting tourism commodities (Putri and Achmad 2024).

Adequate funding is essential to transform Arjowinangun village into a tourism-based economy. The village has access to financial support from the central government through village funds allocated for infrastructure projects, tourism, and community empowerment. Developing access to funding from the private sector is also necessary (Rocca and Zielinski 2022). A combination of state and private sector funding can sustainably support tourism programs (Suryani et al. 2021; Wahba and Chun 2021).

Other funding sources, such as microfinance institutions and cooperatives, can support batik entrepreneurs and artisans in increasing production scale. Tourism sector funds can be allocated to finance education and training programs to develop the capacity of batik entrepreneurs and artisans. Some alternative programs include

batik skills, tourism management, hospitality, and digital literacy. Targeted education programs can significantly contribute to maintaining sustainable tourism (Dong and Khan 2023).

Arjowinangun Village has immense potential to develop Batik tourism. The rich heritage of Batik crafts is a potential strength of cultural tourism. The RPJMDes document states that community adherence to traditional values, the practice of gotong-royong (working together), and love for customs strengthen cultural tourism. The advantage of the village's geographical location as a strategic trade center poses Arjowinangun as a melting pot for various levels of society.

However, Arjowinangun also faces several challenges that can hinder the growth of its tourism sector. The slow development of infrastructure is a significant area for improvement. The RPJMDes has not allocated a budget for revitalizing access roads in the village, thus limiting tourist access to the Woro Srikandi Batik business location. In addition, there are no public facilities for sanitation and toilets, which poses a challenge in building a comfortable environment for tourists. Another problem is the educational gap due to the many residents not graduating from high school. This condition can affect the village's ability to provide skilled workers for tourism services.

Arjowinangun Village can take advantage of support from the central and district governments for rural development. RPJMDes 2019-2023 mentions funding sources from Village Fund Allocation (Alokasi Dana Desa) and village-owned enterprises (BUMDes), valid for investment in tourism infrastructure development and education to increase villagers' capacity.

Some external threats that are obstacles are competition from other areas of Pacitan that offer similar cultural commodities, including Batik. Batik Woro Srikandi and Arjowinangun Village must join hands to develop strategic differentiation and effective branding. Village government officials and Bumdes, with the ability and experience in governance, can use effective funding strategies to promote Arjowinangun as a batik tourism destination, improve the local economy, and encourage the improvement of local originals through a sustainable tourism sector.

## CONCLUSION

The successful development of Arjowinangun Village as a batik tourism destination hinges on collaboration among key stakeholders. Local government involvement is needed for regulations and infrastructure, while batik artisans contribute craftsmanship and cultural knowledge to preserve authentic batik-making traditions. Cooperation between the village government and the private sector is crucial to promoting Arjowinangun as a tourism destination. This collaborative approach supports sustainable tourism development and protects cultural heritage. Findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGD) underscore the importance of community-based tourism and empowerment, highlighting participatory communication to align tourism growth with local needs. Cultural commodification theory is applied to balance modernizing batik production with cultural authenticity, while media convergence theory highlights digital platforms' role in promoting Arjowinangun globally. Research gaps persist in optimizing digital promotion for rural tourism and ensuring inclusivity in community participation, especially for women and youth. Future studies should also explore tourism's long-term economic impacts on traditional artisans to support sustainable, equitable growth strategies.

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