Implementation of Governance and Partnership Collaboration on the Competitiveness of Cibunar Village

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Abstract

The competitiveness of rural tourism destinations is strongly influenced by the effectiveness of governance and the quality of multi-stakeholder collaboration. However, many villages in Indonesia still face challenges in integrating governance structures with inclusive partnerships that involve government, community, private sector, academia, and media. This study explores the implementation of governance and partnership collaboration in strengthening the competitiveness of Cibunar Village, Garut Regency, West Java.

A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation with key stakeholders across the pentahelix model. Findings indicate that governance practices in Cibunar are characterized by community-centered decision-making, supported by village government as facilitator, micro-business actors as economic drivers, and academics and media as catalysts. Partnership collaboration has enabled diversification of tourism products, improvement of local branding, and stronger community participation. Nevertheless, challenges remain in aligning short-term economic goals with long-term cultural preservation and sustainability.

This study contributes to the discourse on sustainable rural tourism governance by presenting a community-driven collaborative model that emphasizes cultural values as the foundation of competitiveness. The results provide practical implications for policymakers, development practitioners, and village tourism managers in designing strategies that balance governance, partnership, and cultural sustainability.

Keywords: rural tourism; governance; partnership collaboration; competitiveness; pentahelix

Introduction

Rural competitiveness is increasingly recognized as a critical factor for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities), and Goal 17 (partnerships for the goals). Villages that are able to integrate good governance with effective partnership collaboration are better positioned to enhance their economic resilience, cultural sustainability, and tourism attractiveness (Harsanto & Wahyuningrat, 2024; Purnomo & Purwandari, 2025).

Previous research has highlighted the role of local governance in promoting rural development, yet many studies remain focused on either economic growth or cultural preservation in isolation (Gargano, 2021; Mu & Aimar, 2022). Few have explored how governance structures and multi-actor partnerships—covering

government, communities, private sector, academia, and media—can jointly improve the competitiveness of rural destinations.

Cibunar Village, located in Garut Regency, Indonesia, provides a relevant context. While the village possesses strong cultural and natural assets, its competitiveness as a tourism destination depends on the synergy between governance practices and collaborative partnerships. This study aims to analyze the implementation of governance and partnership collaboration in strengthening the competitiveness of Cibunar Village.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative case study design to capture the dynamics of governance and partnership collaboration in Cibunar Village. The research focused on the interaction between governance mechanisms and multi-stakeholder partnerships that contribute to the competitiveness of rural tourism.

Participants. Informants were selected purposively to represent five key stakeholder groups (pentahelix model)(Azwar et al., 2025) :

1. Village government officials,
2. Community leaders and cultural practitioners,
3. Local entrepreneurs and micro businesses,
4. Academics and facilitators involved in community empowerment, and
5. Local media actors and digital content creators.

The participants of this study were selected using a purposive and snowball sampling technique to ensure representation from all elements of the pentahelix model (Leighton et al., 2021): government, academics, business actors, community leaders, and media practitioners. The demographic profile of the informants, including age, gender, and role in the village, is presented in **Table 1**. This profile provides an overview of the diversity of perspectives contributing to the analysis of Cibunar's governance and collaborative practices.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Informants

Code	Age	Gender	Role in Village	Short Description
I1	54	M	Cultural Leader	Leads traditional rituals and martial arts (silat buhun)
I2	28	F	Youth Activist	Active in cultural arts and tourism promotion
I3	47	M	Village Official	Responsible for tourism development programs
I4	33	F	Entrepreneur	Owner of homestay and bamboo crafts
I5	40	M	Farmer	Involved in local rice cultivation and ruwat bumi rituals
I6	25	F	Culinary Actor	Producer of traditional snacks (rengginang, bangkerok)
I7	51	M	Community Leader	Coordinates cultural events and neighborhood security
I8	36	F	NGO Activist	Supports community empowerment and training

Source: Research data (2025)

Data Collection. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews (average 45 minutes per session), participatory observation during cultural and tourism activities, and review of secondary documents such as village reports, media coverage, and previous studies (Roller, 2020).

The research design and stages of data collection are illustrated in **Figure 1**, which highlights the integration of in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and focus group discussions.

Figure 1. Research Design and Data Collection Flow

Source: Developed by Authors (2025)

Procedure. Interviews were conducted between May and June 2025. Field observations included community festivals, traditional rituals, and tourism-related activities. Triangulation of data was ensured by cross-checking interview responses with documentation and field notes (Lim, 2020).

Data Analysis. Data were analyzed manually using thematic analysis (Christou, 2022). The process included transcription, coding, identification of themes, and cross-comparison among stakeholder groups. To enhance validity, findings were validated through member checking with selected informants and peer debriefing .

Result and Discussion

Governance Implementation in Cibunar Village

The findings show that governance practices in Cibunar Village emphasize participatory decision-making and local consensus. The village government functions more as a facilitator rather than a dominant actor, ensuring that cultural values remain the foundation of tourism planning. Policies are often formulated through village meetings (musyawarah desa), which guarantee transparency and inclusivity.

"Local government always aligns tourism programs with traditional values such as rice cultivation rituals and cultural preservation." (Village Official, I3)

This governance model has created trust among stakeholders, which is a critical factor in maintaining community engagement and sustaining cultural-based tourism initiatives.

Partnership Collaboration Across Pentahelix Actors

The partnership framework involves five main actors:

1. Government ; provides regulations, funding, and infrastructure improvements (e.g., road access to tourism sites).
2. Academia ; supports research, documentation, and knowledge transfer through training.
3. Business Actors ; integrate cultural elements into products (culinary, crafts, homestay services).
4. Community ; serves as the cultural guardian and initiator of local tourism activities.
5. Media ; promotes Cibunar through digital platforms, especially Instagram and TikTok.

The synergy among these actors has resulted in collaborative events such as cultural festivals, training programs for youth, and digital promotion campaigns.

However, frictions remain:

1. Different orientations between community leaders (focused on preservation) and business actors (focused on profit).
2. Limited digital content creators among local youth.
3. Collaboration often relies on large events rather than continuous interaction.

Competitiveness of Cibunar Village

The integration of governance and partnership has significantly improved the competitiveness of Cibunar Village as a cultural-based tourism destination:

1. Economic dimension: diversification of income sources through tourism-related businesses (culinary, homestay, handicrafts).
2. Social dimension: strengthened community solidarity and pride in local identity.
3. Cultural dimension: revival of endangered traditions such as silat buhun and ruwat bumi rituals.
4. Marketing dimension: increased visibility through social media campaigns managed by village youth.

Overall, the governance model and pentahelix partnership have positioned Cibunar Village as a competitive and sustainable rural tourism destination, while maintaining authenticity and local wisdom.

Acknowledgment

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