



SHAPING SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM THROUGH ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR: LESSONS FROM THE BANYUWANGI BATIK FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how organizational behavior shapes the sustainability of cultural tourism through the case of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF), held annually since 2013 in East Java, Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach with interviews, observations, and secondary data, the research highlights the role of adaptive leadership, community participation, and cross-sector collaboration in ensuring the festival's continuity. Findings show that BBF's success is not solely rooted in Banyuwangi's rich batik heritage but also in inclusive organizational practices that emphasize collaboration, effective communication, and shared ownership. The annual thematic innovation based on local batik motifs strengthens cultural identity while maintaining public interest and attracting wider markets. Active involvement of artisans, SMEs, and local communities fosters both cultural preservation and economic empowerment, positioning BBF as a driver of the local creative economy. Moreover, cross-stakeholder collaboration—among government, private sector, community, and media—ensures cultural, social, and economic benefits are well distributed. The study concludes that BBF contributes significantly to sustainable cultural tourism by integrating cultural continuity, economic opportunities, and social cohesion. These insights offer a replicable model for other regions seeking to develop cultural festivals as engines of sustainable tourism and local development.

Keywords: Organizational Behavior, Cultural Tourism, Sustainability, Banyuwangi Batik Festival, Community Participation.

1. Introduction

Cultural tourism has become one of the fastest-growing tourism sectors worldwide, combining the tourist experience with the preservation of local cultural identity (Sari et al., 2022). Globally, the success of cultural tourism development is determined not only by the potential of its attractions but also by the behavior of the organizations that manage, support, and develop these cultural events. Organizational behavior, encompassing values, norms, collaboration, and the dynamics of interactions between actors, plays a crucial role in creating synergy between local governments, communities, businesses, and tourists to achieve tourism sustainability (RUMBIA, n.d.).

In Indonesia, specifically in Banyuwangi Regency, there is a festival called the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF), an annual cultural event held since 2013 as part of the Banyuwangi Festival Calendar (Rosyidah, 2022). Since its inception, BBF has become a strategic platform for introducing and promoting the distinctive Using batik, which is steeped in Banyuwangi's local philosophy and identity. The festival is designed not only as a fashion show or exhibition of batik products, but also as a platform for collaboration between the local government, batik artisans, designers, cultural communities, and tourism stakeholders.

Since 2013, the ongoing BBF demonstrates Banyuwangi's consistency in emphasizing culture as a key driver of tourism development. Year after year, the festival continues to innovate in its presentation, from open-air batik fashion shows and exhibitions of local artisans to community engagement as part of its attractions. Not only does BBF strengthen cultural identity, it also significantly contributes to the regional economy by increasing demand for Banyuwangi batik and expanding its marketing network to

the international market (Ningrum & Khamdan, 2020).

Since its inception in 2013, the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) has consistently introduced innovation in each event. One of the festival's unique characteristics is its use of a different annual theme, each based on a distinctive Banyuwangi batik motif. This not only provides artistic variation and a new experience for visitors, but also serves as an educational tool to introduce the philosophy and meaning inherent in each batik motif (Gusmanto, 2025).

According to Rosyidah (2022), Banyuwangi batik motifs possess a rich symbolic richness rooted in the local wisdom of the Using people, such as Gajah Oling, Kopi Pecah, Kangkung Setingkes, Sekar Jagad, and Gedhegan. By adopting themes based on batik motifs, BBF successfully maintains the continuity of tradition, strengthens local cultural identity, and encourages designers' creativity in interpreting these motifs in modern fashion. By packaging a different theme each year, BBF is not only a showcase for batik art, but also a cultural journey that connects the past, present, and future. This strategy keeps the festival relevant, attracts the attention of domestic and international tourists, and supports the development of sustainable cultural tourism in Banyuwangi Regency (Sudarmono, 2021).

With over a decade of implementation since 2013, BBF has developed into a symbol of Banyuwangi's success in integrating cultural values, the creative economy, and sustainable tourism. However, the success of cultural festivals like BBF is not solely due to the attractiveness of the arts and culture displayed, but is also influenced by how local organizations are organized and run (Mariana, 2008). Collaboration between the Banyuwangi Regency government, the batik artisan community, the Sekar Jagad Association, cultural associations, tourism actors, and the general public reflects effective organizational behavior practices. This interaction is key to maintaining sustainability, both from a cultural (cultural sustainability), economic (local empowerment), and environmental (eco-friendly tourism) aspect.

Several previous studies have shown a close relationship between organizational behavior and the success of cultural events. For example, research by Mair & Whitford (2013) highlighted the importance of organizational coordination in maintaining the sustainability of cultural festivals in Australia. Meanwhile, research by Zhang & Su (2020) found that community participation facilitated by inclusive organizational behavior enhances the sustainability of cultural tourism. This aligns with research (Putra & Aji, 2021) in Indonesia, which emphasized that cross-sector collaboration in cultural festivals contributes to improving the well-being of local communities.

Although numerous studies have explored the relationship between cultural festivals, tourism, and sustainability, studies specifically emphasizing organizational behavior as a key variable in the context of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival are limited. This is despite the fact that since 2013, the festival has demonstrated consistency and innovation in combining cultural preservation, economic empowerment, and tourism promotion. Therefore, this study fills this gap in the literature by examining how organizational behavior plays a role in shaping sustainable cultural tourism through a case study of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival in Banyuwangi Regency.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of organizational behavior in supporting the sustainability of sustainable cultural tourism through the implementation of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival since 2013 and to identify the forms of collaboration and participation of various stakeholders (local government, batik artisans, cultural communities, tourism actors, and the community) in building sustainable values through the Banyuwangi Batik Festival.

Thus, examining the role of organizational behavior in shaping sustainable cultural tourism through a case study of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival is important, not only to provide academic contributions to the literature on cultural tourism and organizational behavior, but also as practical recommendations for managing cultural events in various parts of the world.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organizational Behavior and Cultural Tourism

Organizational behavior (OB) focuses on understanding the dynamics of individual, group, and structural behavior within an organization to achieve common goals (Robbins et al., 2019). In the tourism context, OB plays a crucial role in managing collaboration across actors, such as government, local communities, businesses, and tourists, to create synergy in destination development (Khalilzadeh & Pizam, 2021). Previous research has shown that inclusive and participatory organizational behavior can strengthen cultural tourism management (Chen & Rahman, 2018). This is particularly relevant for cultural events such as festivals, which require coordination between stakeholders for long-term success.

2.2 Sustainability in Cultural Tourism

Sustainability in cultural tourism emphasizes not only economic aspects but also the preservation of cultural values and the empowerment of local communities (Canton, 2021). According to Richards (2018), sustainably managed cultural festivals can serve as a means of strengthening local identity while increasing a destination's global competitiveness. A study by van den Munckhof et al. (2019) also emphasized the importance of striking a balance between commercialization and cultural authenticity to ensure cultural events remain relevant without losing their traditional meaning. In this regard, organizational behavior that emphasizes transparency, participation, and innovation plays a key role in driving sustainability.

3. Research Methods

3.1 Research Approach

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design (Yin, 2018). This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of organizational behavior in the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) and its relationship to the sustainability of cultural tourism. The case study allows researchers to understand the social, cultural, and managerial contexts involved in the festival.

3.2 Research Location and Subjects

The research location is Banyuwangi Regency, East Java, Indonesia, with a focus on the implementation of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival since 2013 until now. The research subjects include the main actors involved, including: the Regional Government, namely the Manpower, Transmigration and Industry Office of Banyuwangi Regency, the Organizing Committee from the Sekar Jagat Association, and local batik artisans.

3.3 Data Collection Techniques

Data was collected through the following techniques:

- a. In-depth interviews with festival committees, batik artisans, and cultural communities to understand organizational behavior practices and collaboration between stakeholders.
- b. Participatory observation of the series of festival events, to record interactions, coordination, and dynamics of the organization.
- c. Documentation study, including archives, official local government publications, mass media, and BBF promotional materials since 2013.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively descriptively with data validity, namely the validity of the data was maintained using triangulation techniques, both source triangulation (comparing data from various informants), method triangulation (interviews, observation, documentation), and time triangulation (data collection at several stages of the festival).

4. Research Findings and Discussion

4.1 Organizational Behavior as the Foundation of Festival Management

The research results show that the success of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) depends not only on the richness of local culture, but also on the organizational behavior that has been built since the festival was first held in 2013. The local government, through the Department of Culture and Tourism,

displays adaptive leadership by involving various parties, ranging from the batik artisan community, designers, tourism business actors, to the local community. This participatory leadership pattern demonstrates organizational behavior practices that emphasize collaboration, effective communication, and clear division of roles. This was expressed by one of the organizing committee members:

"From the beginning, we didn't want BBF to be just a government event. Everyone needs to be involved, from batik artisans and designers to communities and the general public. That's the key to this festival's consistency every year" (BBF Ita Committee, 2025).

These findings align with Robbins & Judge (2019), who emphasized that effective organizational behavior can enhance collective performance and achieve collective goals. In the context of BBF, organizational behavior serves as a framework for maintaining cross-sector coordination, enabling the festival to run consistently for over a decade.

4.2 Batik Motif-Based Themes as an Innovation Strategy

Each year, BBF carries a different theme inspired by typical Banyuwangi batik motifs such as Gajah Oling, Gedhegan, and Kopi Pecah. This strategy not only strengthens local cultural identity but also serves as a sustainable innovation that keeps the festival relevant. Interviews with the committee revealed that this theme selection strategy has proven effective in increasing public participation while providing space for designers and artisans to express their creativity. One local designer and also a batik UMKM actor said:

"If we had the same theme every year, visitors could get bored. By using batik motifs as our theme, we can showcase new works and introduce the philosophy of Banyuwangi batik to the younger generation" (Batik Designer Sam, 2025).

This supports Getz's (2010) view that festivals that promote thematic innovation will more easily attract tourists and expand the market. At BBF, the use of batik motif-based themes is a form of *cultural branding* which strengthens Banyuwangi's position as a cultural tourism destination at the national and international levels.

Table 4.2 Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) Theme Table since 2013

Year	BBF Theme
2013	Get Gajah
2014	Setingkes Water Spinach
2015	Chubby level
2016	Sekar Jagad
2017	Broken Coffee
2018	Trembling
2019	Blarak Sempal
2020	Kutah Rice
2021	Covid-19 Pandemic (Not Implemented)
2022	Semebyar Sisik Blambangan
2023	Worm Smear
2024	That's it
2025	BBF will be held in October, but the BBF theme has not been launched yet.

Source: Secondary Data

4.3 Community Participation and Local Economic Empowerment

Research has found that local community participation is key to the sustainability of BBF. Batik artisans are directly involved in product exhibitions and sales, local MSMEs receive promotional space, and the community plays a role as both attractions and event supporters. These activities reflect organizational behavior that emphasizes inclusivity and economic empowerment. A batik artisan and MSME owner explained:

"Banyuwangi batik used to be less well-known, but after the festival, sales increased. We even got buyers from abroad who were interested after watching the BBF."(Mela Batik Craftsmen, 2025).

One of the key strengths of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) since its inaugural event in 2013 has been the active involvement of the local community in every event. The festival is positioned not only as a local government agenda but also as a collaborative space that provides opportunities for the community to become key actors. Batik artisans, local designers, MSMEs, and traditional arts groups are given a platform to showcase their work, creativity, and potential.

Community participation in BBF creates a multi-layered effect. From a cultural perspective, community involvement strengthens a sense of ownership (*sense of belonging*) to the Using batik tradition, so that the younger generation will become more familiar with and proud of local cultural identity. Economically, this festival opens up new opportunities for batik artisans and MSMEs to market their products more widely, even reaching international markets.

This finding aligns with a study by Li et al. (2020), which asserted that sustainable cultural tourism is strongly influenced by community participation in planning and implementation. BBF demonstrates that when communities are empowered, festivals become not only entertainment venues but also drivers of the local economy.

4.4 Cross-Stakeholder Collaboration and Sustainability

The success of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) cannot be separated from the cross-stakeholder collaboration that has been consistently built since its first event in 2013. The Banyuwangi Regency Government acts as the main initiator and facilitator, but the sustainability of this festival is highly dependent on the support of various parties, starting from the batik artisan community, local designers, MSMEs, academics, media, to the private sector who also support it through sponsorship and promotion.

This collaboration serves as a crucial foundation for ensuring the sustainability of BBF, from a cultural, social, and economic perspective. Culturally, community involvement keeps the festival rooted in local identity by embracing themes based on Banyuwangi batik motifs. Socially, the participation of the public and arts groups creates a strong sense of ownership, making the festival not merely a government event but a shared responsibility. Economically, support from the private sector and tourism players encourages the development of a creative industry ecosystem, providing tangible benefits to batik artisans and local businesses.

As expressed by one of the organizing committee members:

"BBF has been able to survive for over a decade because everyone feels they have a role to play. The government facilitates, the community supports, the business sector supports, and the public celebrates (BBF Committee, 2025).

This approach is consistent with Richards (2018), who emphasized that the sustainability of cultural tourism is determined not only by the cultural attractions themselves, but also by the organization's capacity to build networks and collaborative innovation. BBF has been able to maintain its existence for over a decade because it has successfully created mutually beneficial cross-sector synergies.

4.5 Contribution to Sustainable Cultural Tourism

The Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) has made a significant contribution to the development of sustainable cultural tourism in Banyuwangi Regency. Since its inception in 2013, the festival has served not only as a batik fashion show but also as a platform to introduce the philosophy, values, and cultural identity of the Using people to a wider audience. By adopting an annual theme rooted in local batik motifs, BBF has successfully maintained the continuity of tradition while presenting innovations relevant to modern dynamics.

- a. From a cultural perspective, BBF plays a role in preserving Banyuwangi's batik heritage by making it a focal point at every event. This gives the younger generation a platform to learn, recognize, and appreciate batik as a regional identity, enabling the process of cultural regeneration to proceed smoothly.
- b. Economically, this festival strengthens the local creative industry ecosystem. Batik artisans, MSMEs, and tourism stakeholders benefit significantly through increased demand for batik products, increased job opportunities, and expanded marketing networks, both nationally and internationally.
- c. From a social perspective, BBF fosters a sense of togetherness and collective pride in the community. Community participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the festival makes the public not just spectators, but key participants.



Figure 4.1 BBF Demonstration in 2022 and 2024

The integration of these three aspects makes BBF a concrete example of sustainable cultural tourism practices, where preserving traditions goes hand in hand with empowering the local economy and strengthening social cohesion. This model demonstrates that cultural festivals, when managed with a collaborative organizational behavior approach, can create positive long-term impacts for tourist destinations.

5. Conclusion

Research on “Shaping Sustainable Cultural Tourism through Organizational Behavior: Lessons from the Banyuwangi Batik Festival” shows that the success of the Banyuwangi Batik Festival (BBF) since 2013 is not only determined by the richness of local culture, but also by effective and collaborative organizational behavior practices.

5.1. Organizational Behavior as a Foundation

Participatory leadership, effective communication, and a clear division of roles between government, communities, and businesses have enabled BBF to endure for more than a decade. Organizational behavior provides a cross-sector coordination framework that maintains the festival's consistency.

5.2. Innovation through Batik Motif Themes

The strategy of using an annual theme based on Banyuwangi's distinctive batik motifs establishes cultural identity while encouraging sustainable innovation. This creates cultural branding that strengthens Banyuwangi's position as a national and international cultural tourism destination.

5.3. Community Participation and Local Economic Empowerment

The active involvement of batik artisans, MSMEs, local designers, and traditional arts groups creates a

multi-faceted effect, contributing to cultural preservation, economic empowerment, and strengthening the community's social identity. This festival serves as a driving force for the regional creative economy.

5.4. Cross-Stakeholder Collaboration

The sustainability of BBF is strongly supported by the synergy between local governments, communities, the private sector, academia, and the media. This collaboration ensures that the festival is not just a government agenda, but a shared responsibility that benefits many parties.

5.5. Contribution to Sustainable Cultural Tourism

BBF has played a significant role in creating sustainable cultural tourism by integrating cultural, economic, and social aspects. The festival has successfully preserved batik traditions, strengthened the local creative industry ecosystem, and fostered a sense of community togetherness and collective pride.

Overall, BBF serves as a best practice model for managing cultural festivals based on collaborative, innovative, and inclusive organizational behavior. This model can be replicated in other regions as a strategy for developing sustainable cultural tourism that not only benefits the economy but also strengthens local identity and social cohesion.

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