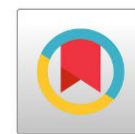


The Dynamics of Collaboration in Developing Sustainable Cultural Heritage Destinations



Dinamika Kolaborasi dalam Pengembangan Destinasi Warisan Budaya Berkelanjutan

Wiwid Fitriani^{1,*}, Retno Sunu Astuti²

¹² Faculty of Social and Political Science, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

¹² Jl. Prof. Soedarto, Tembalang, Kec. Tembalang, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah 50139

wiwidfitr@students.undip.ac.id^{1*}; retnosunu@lecturer.undip.ac.id²;

Corresponding Author: wiwidfitr@students.undip.ac.id^{1*}

ARTICLE INFORMATION	
<p>Keywords Temple; Multi-actor; Tourism;</p>	<p>ABSTRACT Gedongsongo Temple is a multi-actor tourism site (involving Government, MCB, Perhutani, Private Sector, and Community) that requires sustainable development to effectively balance economic priorities with cultural and environmental preservation. This qualitative descriptive study utilizes the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) theory (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015) and the Government of Canada's framework to analyze the collaborative dynamics and their hindering factors. Findings conclude that collaboration is suboptimal, characterized by the persistent pull-and-push of competing interests. Specifically, Principled Engagement faces structural imbalance, Shared Motivation is fragile and pragmatic due to emerging trust issues, and Capacity for Joint Action is constrained by deviance and suboptimal knowledge/resource management. The identified inhibiting factors are rooted in cultural, institutional, and political aspects. The study ultimately concludes that the dynamics remain structurally weak, primarily due to asymmetric power relations and a profound lack of trust, failing to fully optimize the sustainable development goals.</p>
<p>Kata Kunci Kuil; Banyak Aktor; Wisata;</p>	<p>ABSTRAK Candi Gedongsongo merupakan situs wisata yang melibatkan multi-aktor (Pemerintah, MCB, Perhutani, Sektor Swasta, dan Masyarakat) yang menuntut pengembangan berkelanjutan untuk menyeimbangkan prioritas ekonomi dengan pelestarian budaya dan lingkungan secara efektif. Studi deskriptif kualitatif ini menggunakan teori <i>Collaborative Governance Regime</i> (CGR) oleh Emerson & Nabatchi (2015) dan kerangka <i>Government of Canada</i> untuk menganalisis dinamika kolaborasi dan faktor penghambatnya. Hasil penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa kolaborasi belum optimal, ditandai dengan tarik-menarik kepentingan yang saling bersaing secara terus-menerus. Secara spesifik, Penggerakan Prinsip Bersama menghadapi ketidakseimbangan struktural, Motivasi Bersama bersifat rapuh dan pragmatis karena munculnya isu kepercayaan, dan Kapasitas Melakukan Tindakan Bersama terkendala oleh penyimpangan dan pengelolaan pengetahuan/sumber daya yang suboptimal. Faktor penghambat yang teridentifikasi berakar pada aspek budaya, institusi, dan politik. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa dinamika kolaborasi secara struktural tetap lemah, terutama akibat relasi kekuasaan yang asimetris dan kurangnya kepercayaan yang mendalam, sehingga gagal mengoptimalkan tujuan pembangunan berkelanjutan.</p>
<p>Article History Send 20th October 2025 Review 20th November 2025 Accepted 7th December 2025</p>	<p>Copyright ©2026 <i>Jurnal Aristo (Social, Politic, Humaniora)</i> This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC-SA license. Akses artikel terbuka dengan model CC-BY-NC-SA sebagai lisensinya.</p>



Introduction

Indonesia possesses immense potential in the tourism sector, leveraging its status as an archipelago rich in unique and diverse cultures to attract global interest. This potential holds significant strategic value, as tourism is recognized as one of the strongest industries in global economic financing, particularly in the era of globalization (Supriono, 2017). Consequently, the development of this sector is essential to increase foreign exchange revenue, create employment opportunities, and stimulate broader economic growth (Samimi et al., 2011). Furthermore, tourism acts as a catalyst, opening development opportunities for other related sectors (Dediansyah & Wibowo, 2023).

Currently, tourist traffic in Indonesia remains predominantly concentrated on Java Island, which accounts for 68.45% of total visits, while other regions share the remaining 31.55% (Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia, 2024). Given this high level of regional interest, Central Java holds a significant opportunity to maximize its tourism potential. To achieve this, tourism development must be conducted synergistically through multi-stakeholder engagement encompassing the public sector, the community, and the private sector a practice defined as collaborative governance (Oktaviyani, 2020). This concept aligns with the Central Java Provincial Regulation (Peraturan Daerah – Perda) No. 10 of 2012 concerning the Master Plan for Tourism Development 2012-2027, which mandates sustainable tourism through partnership schemes.

In the regional context, Semarang Regency is recognized as a rapidly developing tourism destination (Oktaviyani, 2020). This region ranked fifth in the number of tourist visits in Central Java in 2024. This statement is supported by research indicating that tourism is the third-largest contributor to Local Own-Source Revenue (Pendapatan Asli Daerah - PAD) (Rahman et al., 2022).

The Semarang Regency Government enacted Local Regulation (Perda) No. 8 of 2019 concerning the 2020-2025 Master Plan for Tourism Development as the core basis for achieving sustainable tourism. Among the attractions managed by the Semarang Regency Tourism Office (Dinas Pariwisata - Dispar). the Gedongsongo Temple stands out as the flagship destination with the highest visitor numbers, designated as a strategic tourist area in Semarang Regent Regulation No. 81 of 2021. Gedongsongo Temple is a complex destination combining cultural heritage and natural landscapes on the slopes of Mount Ungaran. This duality necessitates a multi-layered management structure involving three government institutions: the local government (Dispar) for tourism management, the Museum and Cultural Heritage (Museum dan Cagar Budaya - MCB) for site preservation, and the State

Forestry Company (Perusahaan Umum Kehutanan Negara- Perhutani) for forest area preservation. These three aspects are inseparable and integrated into a single Tourist Attraction (Daya Tarik Wisata- DTW) system.

The dynamics of this site became increasingly complex with the introduction of Ayanaz Gedongsongo, a modern photo spot managed by the private sector, in mid-2018. Despite differences in management systems, the government and the private sector collaborate through a partnership pattern in the entrance ticket retribution system (Dhamara, 2020) The presence of Ayanaz initially succeeded in doubling tourist visits by expanding visitor segmentation to those interested in modern tourism concepts.

However, the urgency of this study lies in the critical challenge of maintaining sustainability amidst economic expansion. Sustainable tourism transcends mere economic success; it requires rigorous attention to environmental and socio-cultural perspectives. Gedongsongo Temple is a sacred site actively used for Hindu worship and is a designated National Cultural Heritage Site (Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture – Surat Keputusan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan No. 195/M/2015), demanding strict protection and preservation efforts. Every development activity must undergo a Cultural Heritage Impact Analysis as stipulated in Law (Undang-Undang – UU) No. 11 of 2010.

Furthermore, tourism activities pose risks to environmental sustainability, particularly in forest areas. This tension is exacerbated by recent trends showing a decline in tourism at Ayanaz Gedongsongo, marked by stagnation and a lack of innovation following the Covid-19 pandemic. This condition indicates that the development of Gedongsongo Temple tourism still faces significant obstacles in realizing the concept of sustainable tourism development.

This research aims to address a gap in the existing literature by offering a new perspective on these obstacles. Previous research by Ermawati (2021) identified that the development of Gedongsongo is hindered by weak coordination between the government, tourism actors, and business players. Additionally, the community's position remains marginalized due to institutional constraints, fragmented into service groups without bargaining power in policy formulation. One primary reason is the lack of facilities for the formation of Tourism Awareness Groups (Kelompok Sadar Wisata-Pokdarwis), which limits community participation to the operational level rather than as active subjects in planning.

While previous studies have highlighted coordination issues and focused on barriers to tourism development, the novelty of this study lies in its in-depth analysis of the

collaboration dynamics and stakeholder relations underlying these failures. This study argues that the multi-stakeholder nature of Gedongsongo, characterized by conflicting interests, power imbalances, and institutional constraints has resulted in suboptimal collaboration dynamics. Therefore, this study focuses on dissecting these dynamics alongside their inhibiting factors.

The theoretical framework employed is the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) by Emerson et al. (2012), specifically analyzing *Principled Engagement*, *Shared Motivation*, and *Capacity for Joint Action*. This framework is highly appropriate for the complex phenomenon at Gedongsongo, which involves multi-actor relationships, limited communication, and weak representation. Concurrently, the hindering factors are analyzed using the Government of Canada's framework, comprising cultural, institutional, and political factors.

Method

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach to comprehensively reconstruct the dynamics of collaboration in the development of Gedongsongo Temple tourism. This method was selected to capture the complexity of multi-stakeholder interactions that cannot be quantified, focusing on the depth of social relations, power dynamics, and institutional friction.

The data sources are categorized into primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from key informants selected through purposive sampling, chosen based on their strategic roles and direct involvement in the governance regime. These key informants represent four core pillars: (1) Government Authority: The Head of the Tourist Attraction Development Section and the Head of the UPTD from the Semarang Regency Tourism Office (Dispar) as the leading sector; (2) Preservation Authority: The Coordinator of the Museum and Cultural Heritage (MCB) and the Supervisor of PT. Perhutani Alam Wisata (Palawi) representing asset owners; (3) Private Sector: The Manager of Ayanaz Gedongsongo representing the business partner; and (4) Community Representatives: Heads of the Parking, Horse Service, Photography, and Traders Associations, representing grassroots actors. To ensure representativeness, snowball sampling was also applied to identify additional informants based on recommendations from initial subjects. Secondary data were gathered from official documents, including the Memorandum of Agreement (NK), Semarang Regency Regional Regulation No. 8 of 2019, and visitor statistics, to provide regulatory context.

Data Collection Process was conducted through three triangulated techniques. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were performed to explore stakeholder perspectives on trust, commitment, and shared motivation. Second, participatory observation was carried out by directly observing the interactions at the site, the condition of facilities, and the operational dynamics between the government, private sector, and community. Third, documentation study was used to analyze the gap between formal regulations (*de jure*) and field implementation (*de facto*).

Data Analysis and Validity The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model by Miles et al. (2014) consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To ensure scientific rigor and data validity, this study employed source triangulation. This involved cross-checking information obtained from different strata of informants—comparing statements from the government against the private sector and community—and verifying them against physical evidence and regulatory documents. This process ensures that the findings accurately reflect the objective reality of the collaborative dynamics rather than subjective bias.

Results and Discussion

The Dynamics of Collaboration in the Development of Gedongsongo Temple Tourism, Semarang Regency

The research findings demonstrate that the collaborative dynamics in developing Gedongsongo Temple tourism remain suboptimal, characterized by a persistent tug-of-war between economic pragmatism and conservation imperatives. By applying the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) framework by Emerson et al. (2012), this study uncovers a structural fragility within the governance system. This fragility is evidenced by systematic failures across three critical dimensions: Principled Engagement, Shared Motivation, and Capacity for Joint Action.

Principled Engagement

Discovery and Definition

The discovery and definition stage reveals a fundamental fracture in the collaborative foundation: stakeholders hold opposing interpretations of Gedongsongo's core identity. The dynamic is characterized by a tug-of-war between the economic modernization regime led by the local government and private sector, versus the sacred conservation regime mandated by preservation authorities.

The local government (Dispar) and the private sector explicitly define the site through the lens of revenue generation and modernization. The introduction of artificial attractions is viewed not as a deviation, but as a strategic necessity to diversify tourism products. The Head of the Technical Implementation Unit (UPTD) of Dispar stated:

“The main goal of Gedongsongo is for tourism, cultural preservation, and religious activities... However, the presence of Ayanaz serves as an alternative attraction... to enrich the variety of rides, as its basis is more contemporary (kekinian).” (Interview, July 2, 2025).

This definition of development as modernization is validated by field observations, which confirm the dominance of modern artificial structures within the cultural landscape. As visualized in Figure 1, the area is populated with replica hot air balloons, bubble tents, and seats in the middle of a pond. These structures are physically designed to attract the selfie tourism market, aligning with the private sector’s goal to create commercial art for mass enjoyment (Interview, Manager of Ayanaz, July 10, 2025).



Figure 1 Comparison of Gedongsongo Temple and Ayanaz Gedongsongo Tourism

In stark contrast, the Museum and Cultural Heritage (MCB) defines the site strictly as a sacred National Cultural Heritage area where preservation must override profit. The MCB Coordinator strongly challenged the government’s definition, arguing that the commodification of the site through non-historical elements risks degrading its essential value:

“Gedongsongo is designated as a cultural heritage area, so tourism development cannot be partial... Remember, this is managing a National Cultural Heritage site, not just a tourist destination. We must first identify and study its essential values... whether adding non-historical elements aligns with its value.” (Interview, September 11, 2025).

This counter-perspective is legally substantiated by Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 195/M/2015, which designates Gedongsongo as a National Cultural Heritage Site, and Law No. 11 of 2010, which mandates that any utilization must be preceded by a comprehensive impact analysis. Furthermore, Perhutani reinforces this

conservationist definition by highlighting critical environmental risks. The Perhutani Supervisor emphasized that massive tourism development threatens water sustainability for the surrounding community, stating:

"According to the Environmental Services Law, water must be managed... people here cannot possibly build wells because there is a lot of gas here" (Interview, September 8, 2025)

Thus, the collaboration begins on a fragile foundation, polarized between a definition of development based on revenue and modernization versus one based on legal compliance and ecological survival.

The findings indicate a failure in the discovery phase of the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR). According to Emerson et al. (2012), successful collaboration requires the identification of shared interests and common goals. However, in Gedongsongo, the actors are not united by a shared theory of change, but are polarized. The government's pursuit of economic value often overrides the conservation value mandated by the preservation authorities, creating a structural asymmetry that hinders the formation of a principled engagement.

Deliberation

Ideally, deliberation within a collaborative regime requires open and inclusive dialogue to process differences and build consensus (Emerson et al., 2012). It should be a process of weighing options through consultation where all parties have equal standing (Fariyah & Wahyuni, 2015). However, the research findings reveal that the deliberation process in Gedongsongo is fragmented, reactive, and operates primarily as a one-way socialization channel rather than a substantive consultative forum. The interaction between the government and the community is characterized by a top-down approach, where decisions regarding infrastructure are often finalized before being communicated to the grassroots level. This disconnect is starkly evident in the revitalization of the horse stables. The community argues that forums are merely symbolic, as their practical knowledge was ignored in favor of aesthetic designs that proved functionally unsuitable. The Head of the Horse Service Association described this mismatch:

"Actually, discussions happen often, but our ideas are rarely used. For example... the association asked for a standard design safe from rain and wind... but the government built a luxurious one that isn't comfortable. When it rains, water enters everywhere... we had to fix it ourselves." (Interview, July 18, 2025).

This functional failure is visually confirmed by field data presented in Figure 2, which shows the open-concept design of the stables. While aesthetically modern, the structure fails to protect the animals from the mountain's strong winds and rain, forcing the community to intervene independently by installing makeshift tarpaulins.



Figure 2 horse stable at Gedongsongo Temple

In a reactive contrast, the government dismisses these technical grievances by framing the project as a rigid directive from the central government (Ministry of Public Works and Housing/PUPR) that must be accepted. The Head of the Development Section of Dispar justified the lack of accommodation:

“Regarding the pros and cons... they are just demanding rights... that cannot be accommodated because it is a program from the central government (PUPR). So, it cannot be changed... As long as we facilitate a space... it shouldn't be a problem.” (Interview, July 25, 2025).

A similar pattern of exclusion is evident in the arrangement of trader kiosks. The Head of the Traders Association highlighted a historical cycle of resistance due to unilateral planning, recalling the rejection of the initial kiosk construction in the year 2000 because the location at the exit route was detrimental to sales turnover. Current observations confirm that this issue persists today. The revitalization in 2023 resulted in a shortage of kiosks, forcing a one kiosk for two traders arrangement that triggers latent conflict and dissatisfaction among local entrepreneurs.

The triangulation of interview data and physical evidence confirms that the quality of deliberation is suboptimal. Although Shintani & Gohong (2020) argue that the government should act as a facilitator providing services, in this context, the government acts more as a regulator enforcing a "top-down" approach. The relationship reflects a hierarchy between asset owners and tenants rather than equal partners. Consequently, community participation is limited to the operational level, lacking the bargaining power to influence policy formulation, forcing them into a state of forced self-reliance to correct infrastructure failures

Determination

Determination refers to the procedural and substantive process of setting joint goals. The study reveals that this process in Gedongsongo is structurally unbalanced, displaying distinct patterns of failure across different stakeholders. First, in the relationship with the private sector (Dispar - Ayanaz), both primary and substantive determinations have not formed, creating a state of deep uncertainty. There is no formal written agreement to govern the partnership. Critical operational determinations specifically the two-ticket policy where visitors must pay separate entrance fees for the temple and Ayanaz were decided solely through informal verbal discussions. The Manager of Ayanaz confirmed this precarious informality:

“So entering Ayanaz requires paying twice... there was no [written] discussion, it was the leadership's initiative... Because there is no agreement regulating it, we are confused about what is allowed and what is not.” (Interview, July 10, 2025)

Second, determination with the community (Dispar - Society) is characterized as reactive and less participatory. The determination of goals is often decided unilaterally by the government (top-down), placing the community in a position where they can only react *after* a decision is made. This is starkly evident in the determination of parking revenue targets. The government determined a fixed monthly deposit target (~IDR 32 million) without considering fluctuations in visitor numbers, forcing the community to cover deficits (nombok) during low seasons. The Head of the Parking Association lamented:

“The local government made a new decision... we must deposit 32 million per month... we are gasping for air. In March, we only netted 500,000 rupiah... we had to cover the 32 million deficit first.” (Interview, July 15, 2025)

Third, within the internal government sphere (Dispar - MCB - Perhutani), determination tends to be formal and structured but is colored by sectoral ego. While primary determination exists in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement (NK) which sets specific revenue sharing percentages (60% Dispar, 25% MCB, 15% Perhutani), substantive determination is contested. Instead of uniting for a holistic vision, the agencies use the agreement to assert territorial boundaries (based on readiness criteria of land certificates), leading to a tug-of-war where each agency refuses to build facilities outside their specific designated plots. Consequently, the pattern of determination is fundamentally asymmetric. The private sector operates in a legal void, the community operates under rigid top-down targets, and the government agencies operate in silos, preventing the formation of a cohesive collaborative regime.

Shared Motivation

Trust

Trust, as the fundamental capital of collaboration, appears fragile and transactional rather than substantive. According to Nawawi (2012), trust is built on pillars such as responsiveness, transparency, and accountability. However, the findings reveal that these pillars are crumbling, creating a pseudo-trust driven merely by mutual dependency rather than genuine faith in partners' credibility.

In the relationship with the community, trust is eroded by the government's low responsiveness to field needs. While the Tourism Office (Dispar) claims to build trust through guidance forums, the community perceives a lack of support in critical situations. This has forced the community to develop a forced self-reliance mechanism, bypassing the government to fix infrastructure problems independently. The Head of the Horse Service Association stated:

“Yes, slow or unsatisfactory responses often cause trust to fade... we don't want to bother, so we try to fix it ourselves... If we wait for the government, the process takes too long, whereas we need to pass through [the road].” (Interview, July 18, 2025) .

This do-it-yourself attitude confirms that trust in the government's capability is low. The community collaborates not because they trust the bureaucracy, but because they are economically dependent on the site's operation.

Parallel to this disconnect, a more critical trust deficit is found within the internal government sphere, particularly between the Museum and Cultural Heritage (MCB) and Dispar. Trust is severely undermined by issues of transparency in revenue management. MCB explicitly questions Dispar's credibility due to the refusal to implement an integrated digital ticketing system, which raises suspicions about revenue leakage. The MCB Coordinator bluntly expressed this skepticism:

“The local government's ticketing... is not yet automatic. We offered an automatic system that we could access together, but they refused... We are sometimes puzzled; if they are transparent, why wouldn't they want to use an automatic system from the start?” (Interview, September 11, 2025) .

Observations reveal that the barrier gate is often left open without strict guarding, allowing visitors to enter without tapping tickets, a practice that renders the manual counting system unreliable and prone to manipulation . Consequently, the lack of transparency and discipline exhibited by Dispar serves as a tangible barrier that erodes mutual trust among the involved parties.

This finding supports the view of Sarundajang (cited in Azhari, 2017)), who posits that successful collaboration requires synergy and trust among stakeholders to effectively execute their roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, building synergy demands a reciprocal relationship between trust and cooperation; when transparency is absent, this reciprocal relationship breaks down, leaving the collaboration held together only by the physical integration of assets rather than mutual integrity.

Mutual Understanding

Mutual understanding requires stakeholders to not only agree on goals but also to respect the underlying values of their partners. Ideally, effective communication forms the bedrock of this understanding, fostering coordination and harmony (Qomariyah, 2023). However, the study reveals a fundamental failure to achieve this state, characterized by inconsistent communication that triggers latent and open conflicts.

At the community level, the failure to achieve mutual understanding was starkly evident during the 2025 Lantern Festival (*Festival Lampion*). Instead of fostering a shared sense of celebration, the event sparked resistance because the community felt excluded by sudden policy changes, such as the imposition of entry quotas. The Head of the Parking Association expressed the community's frustration regarding this exclusion:

“Last year was peaceful... this year lacked coordination with the grassroots. There was no joint discussion (jagongan)... The local community was only given a quota of 50 people, whereas we are indirectly involved in supporting this event.” (Interview, July 15, 2025).

In a parallel contrast, the government views these restrictions not as exclusion, but as a necessary disciplinary measure against opportunistic behavior. The government argues that the community lacks tourism awareness, often taking unilateral advantages that disrupt the event's order. The Head of the Development Section of Dispar justified the policy:

“The community is not fully aware, so some took unilateral advantages... selling lanterns [illegally], diverting parking fees to private pockets... So the quota restriction was enforced because of that.” (Interview, July 25, 2025).

The conflict surrounding the Lantern Festival indicates that mutual understanding remains unachieved. The crux of the issue lies in inconsistent communication. As noted by Amin (2017), inconsistent communication generates discord that ultimately escalates into vertical or horizontal conflicts; furthermore, indications of dominance practices exacerbate interpersonal friction. The marginalization of community participation contributes to this communication failure, aligning with Sofyandi & Garniwa (2007), who assert that effective

communication is constructed through trust and active participation. Consequently, the exclusion felt during the festival triggered disappointment and conflict.

However, on the other hand, the government's concern regarding opportunistic behavior by certain community members represents a critical gap. According to Emerson et al. (2012) such unilateral actions damage the foundation of shared trust—which is ideally built through continuous interaction and proven reliability. This deviation erodes Dispar's trust in the community, prompting the enforcement of less participatory policies.

Within the internal government sphere, a critical gap exists between the Tourism Office (Dispar) and the Museum and Cultural Heritage (MCB) regarding the definition of development. Dispar interprets development primarily as physical construction to enhance amenities, whereas MCB views it through the lens of conservation ethics. The MCB Coordinator highlighted this systemic misinterpretation:

“There is something that is not understood... development and utilization are more valued as physical development, such as the construction of Ayanaz [or toilets]...” (Interview, September 11, 2025) .

The divergence in interests creates conflicting viewpoints among the three government agencies. These differences must be bridged by clear instruments that regulate management principles—balancing economic tourism with environmental and cultural preservation. Harmonizing these differences is essential for synergistic collaboration, primarily through effective communication. This supports **Ansell and Gash (cited in Rozikin, 2019)**, who state that face-to-face communication, trust, and commitment are pivotal for supporting the success of the collaborative process.

Internal Legitimacy

Internal legitimacy refers to the conviction among stakeholders that their partners are credible and trustworthy. According to Irmadella (2018), this legitimacy is crucial for establishing mutual reliance, where actors acknowledge that they cannot achieve their goals independently. However, the study reveals that legitimacy in Gedongsongo is suffering a severe breakdown, fractured by structural tensions and capacity deficits. Within the government sphere, legitimacy is fractured by a palpable tension between "local authority" and central superiority. The Tourism Office (Dispar) perceives the Museum and Cultural Heritage (MCB) not as an equal partner, but as a rigid entity that leverages its status as a central ministry to dominate local actors. Dispar officials expressed frustration that MCB prioritizes regulation over support. The Head of the Development Section of Dispar stated:

“MCB sometimes feels superior to the local region... because they are a ministry, they consider us beneath them... When we organize events, they act as if they are regulating us rather than cooperating.” (Interview, July 25, 2025)

Conversely, Dispar’s own legitimacy as the leading sector is compromised by severe internal capacity constraints. With a vast heritage area to manage, Dispar operates with a skeleton crew, forcing them to rely on external actors for basic operations. The Head of the UPTD admitted this critical weakness:

“In terms of quality and quantity, we are still lacking... considering the extensive responsibility at Gedongsongo. Currently, we only have 11 staff members, including night guards.” (Interview, July 2, 2025) .

In addition, the legitimacy of Dispar has also been eroded due to its top-down communication style and non-participatory approach. Its legitimacy has become even more fragile due to the emergence of issues surrounding trust in Dispar, as explained in the section on trust. Meanwhile, Perhutani is considered to be less contributory because it only manages a small tourist attraction that has little impact on Gedongsongo Temple, namely Vanaprastha.

In the private sector, the legitimacy of Ayanaz has evaporated. Once hailed as a pioneer of modernization, it is now viewed as a stagnant entity. The internal admission of giving up confirms that they no longer possess the credibility to drive tourism growth. The Manager of Ayanaz revealed:

“ regarding innovation, we are stuck here. The lease will expire next year... Actually, the owners have often thought about closing it... but since the lease was still long back then, they hesitated.” (Interview, July 10, 2025) .



Figure 4 Image of stagnation and neglected facilities in Ayanaz Gedongsongo

This loss of legitimacy is visually confirmed by Figure 8, which shows the deteriorating condition of Ayanaz’s attractions. The lack of maintenance and innovation validates the perception that the private partner has mentally exited the collaboration, reducing their role from a strategic partner to a passive tenant.

The findings indicate that the mutual recognition required for internal legitimacy (Arrozaaq, 2016) has failed to materialize. The local government feels belittled by the central agency, the central agency doubts the local government's capacity, and the private partner has lost its strategic value. Consequently, the collaboration is held together only by administrative obligation rather than mutual respect.

Capacity For Joint Actions

Procedural and Institution Agreement

Ideally, complex collaborations require formal binding agreements to serve as a legal foundation (Astuti et al., 2020) and to prevent conflicts by clarifying responsibilities (Covey, 2004). However, the findings uncover a critical flaw: the procedural framework in Gedongsongo is marked by asymmetry and structural dysfunction, limiting the capacity for effective joint action.

In the relationship with the private sector (Ayanaz), the collaboration operates in a precarious state of informality. There is no formal cooperation agreement (PKS) governing the partnership; it relies entirely on unwritten, verbal understandings regarding ticket pricing. This lack of a formal legal framework creates high operational uncertainty. The Manager of Ayanaz candidly admitted the confusion caused by this phantom agreement:

“There is no agreement, discussions were direct without any black-and-white written contract... Because there is no written agreement, we are confused about what is allowed and what is not... because no agreement regulates it.” (Interview, July 10, 2025).

This finding aligns with Irmadella (2018), who argues that basic rules are essential to legitimize the collaborative process. The absence of a formal agreement delegitimizes the process, leaving the private partner vulnerable to arbitrary policy changes and hesitant to invest in long-term innovation, which explains the current stagnation of the site.

Conversely, within the internal government sphere (Dispar, MCB, Perhutani), a formal Memorandum of Agreement (Nota Kesepakatan - NK) exists. However, the document suffers from severe ambiguity due to the absence of spatial details (maps) and glossaries. This vagueness is weaponized by agencies to engage in blame shifting, particularly regarding facility maintenance. The Head of the Development Section of Dispar defended their refusal to repair damaged facilities in partner territories:

“Although we were the ones who built it, if it's damaged, the territory owner should fix it... but they don't want to use their revenue share to repair roads in their area.” (Interview, July 25, 2025)

This structural dysfunction is visualized in Figure 4, which shows damaged facilities (gazebos/pathways) that are left unrepaired because no agency is willing to claim responsibility, citing territorial boundaries in the agreement.



Figure 4. Poorly maintained facilities at the Gedongsongo temple tourist attraction.

Regarding the community, the procedural arrangement is defined by a lack of participatory mechanisms, forcing a reactive dynamic. Decisions regarding facility development often precede consultation, triggering resistance. This is evident in the community's rejection of the initial kiosk construction, which forced a renegotiation only *after* the project failed. The Head of the Traders Association recounted:

“The initial kiosk construction in 2000... no one wanted to occupy it. Finally, we protested... I was invited by the Head of Office... and I said we would occupy it only if the access road was improved.” (Interview, July 26, 2025)

Consequently, the relationship is formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that reflects a top-down pattern (Astuti et al., 2020). The agreement heavily emphasizes obligations (rent payments, targets) while remaining silent on rights or participation, essentially demoting the community from partners to mere tenants without bargaining power.

Leadership

Leadership within a collaborative regime is fundamentally tasked with acting as a catalyst for synergy, mobilizing diverse stakeholders toward a shared vision Noor et al. (2022). In the context of Gedongsongo, the Tourism Office (Dispar) is formally recognized as the *leading sector*. However, the study reveals that collaborative leadership has failed to materialize effectively, manifesting instead as a dualism of patterns: vertical dominance over non-state actors and "structural friction" among state agencies.

In its relationship with the community and the private sector, Dispar adopts a rigid top-down leadership style. Rather than acting as a facilitator who empowers partners, Dispar positions itself strictly as a regulator and supervisor. This approach creates a dependency loop wherein grassroots initiatives are stifled. The Head of the Development Section of Dispar explicitly defined this hierarchical relationship:

“Regarding the community, the Tourism Office's role is guidance (pembinaan) for tourism actors... Our relation to the community is as a supervisor and overseer.” (Interview, July 25, 2025)

This approach restricts the community's role to that of mere operational supporters rather than strategic partners. Similarly, with the private sector (Ayanaz), Dispar's leadership is administrative rather than strategic, confined to granting permits without fostering a shared vision for innovation. Conversely, within the internal government sphere, the leadership dynamic shifts from dominance to contested authority. Ideally, the relationship between Dispar, MCB, and Perhutani should be egalitarian. However, the reality is marred by acute friction between local authority (Dispar) and central power (MCB). Dispar officials perceive MCB not as a partner, but as a superior entity exercising ministerial arrogance. The Head of the Development Section of Dispar stated:

“MCB sometimes feels superior to the local region... because they are a ministry, they consider us beneath them... When we organize events, they act as if they are regulating us rather than cooperating.” (Interview, July 25, 2025)

This perception of inequality is also shared by Perhutani, which admits to adopting a passive stance due to the hierarchical nature of bureaucracy. The Perhutani Supervisor revealed: *“It seems there is dominance... because they (MCB) are the central government, we just bow down to them”* (Interview, September 8, 2025). On the other hand, MCB defends its assertive stance not as arrogance, but as the necessary enforcement of conservation rules mandated by the agreement.

Consequently, genuine collaborative leadership is absent. For the community, leadership feels controlling; within the government, it feels fractured. The *leading sector* (Dispar) is trapped in a paradox: it dominates the weaker parties but struggles for authority against the stronger ones (Central Agency), leaving the collaboration without a unifying figure to bridge these gaps.

Knowledge

Knowledge within a collaborative regime refers to the shared understanding of agreements, roles, and technical information necessary for joint action. However, the research identifies a critical failure in knowledge management, primarily caused by structural volatility within the local government. The rapid rotation of staff and officials at the Tourism Office (Dispar) has severed the institutional memory. New officials frequently assume their roles without a comprehensive transfer of knowledge regarding existing agreements (*Nota Kesepakatan*). Consequently, the collaboration proceeds merely as a hereditary tradition routines are followed blindly without understanding the binding legal terms or the rationale behind them.

This systemic disconnection is exacerbated by a steep bureaucratic hierarchy that prevents strategic information from reaching the operational level. Decisions made at the top often fail to trickle down to field staff, leaving them ill-equipped to enforce rules. The MCB Coordinator highlighted how this lack of knowledge continuity creates a governance void:

“The local government staff rotates very fast... even the previous Head of Office didn't understand the agreement because the people involved during the signing had all been replaced. They only realized the content of the agreement—like the cleaning duties—when we pointed it out during evaluation. They admitted they didn't know what was agreed upon back then.” (Interview, September 11, 2025)

Furthermore, the failure to transform information into accurate understanding leads to operational distortions. A striking example occurred regarding facility construction: a project communicated as a changing room materialized as a permanent toilet right at the temple entrance. This error stemmed from officials signing permits without detailed scrutiny or understanding of heritage zoning rules. This inconsistency confirms that while information distribution channels (meetings) exist, the transformation of that information into accurate shared understanding has failed, leaving the collaboration prone to unintentional violations.

Resources

Finally, regarding resources, the collaboration faces a critical disparity between the scarcity of formal resources and the abundance of informal social capital. However, the study reveals that the formal authority (Dispar) is operationally crippled, forcing reliance on informal community subsidies to maintain basic functions. The Tourism Office (Dispar) faces a severe deficit in human resources. Managing a national heritage site with extensive responsibilities, the office operates with a skeleton crew that is insufficient in both quantity

and quality. The Head of the UPTD admitted this vulnerability:

“In terms of quality and quantity, our human resources are still lacking... considering the extensive responsibility at Gedongsongo. Currently, we only have 11 staff members, including night guards.” (Interview, July 2, 2025)

This resource gap is informally filled by the community, who voluntarily take on security and cleaning roles. Driven by a deep sense of belonging (*sense of belonging*) rather than formal obligation, they mobilize their own funds to pay for guards, essentially subsidizing the government's operational duties. The Head of the Parking Association stated:

“In the past, the community swept the area every morning... like a picket duty. Now we even pay the guards ourselves... because we feel we own this place.” (Interview, July 15, 2025).

Meanwhile, the private sector (Ayanaz) has failed to manage its primary resource: innovation. Initially bringing the strategic resource of modernization, Ayanaz has fallen into stagnation. The Manager of Ayanaz confirmed this depletion:

“Regarding innovation, we are stuck here... The lease will expire next year. Actually, the owners have often thought about closing it... but since the lease was still long back then, they hesitated.” (Interview, July 10, 2025).

Consequently, the collaboration survives not because of adequate formal resources, but due to the informal subsidy provided by the community's labor and the physical inertia of the assets involved. While the physical assets (temple/forest) remain intact, the operational capacity to develop them is paralyzed by bureaucratic constraints and a lack of private sector reinvestment.

Hindering Factors in the Dynamics of Collaboration for the Development of Gedongsongo Temple Tourism

Cultural Factors

Cultural factors refer to the entrenched values, habits, and behavioral patterns within organizations that shape interaction. The study reveals that the collaboration is severely hindered by a culture of Bureaucratic Paternalism and Sectoral Ego, creating a toxic environment for genuine partnership.

In the relationship between the government and the community, the dominant culture is top-down paternalism. The Tourism Office (Dispar) positions the community as a beneficiary rather than an equal partner. This creates a cultural clash regarding decision-making. To demonstrate this validity, comparative data regarding the rejection of community feedback is presented below.

The community perceives this culture as authoritarian, where their feedback is systematically ignored. The Head of the Traders Association expressed frustration over the rigid planning of kiosks:

“But these kiosks do not match the community's wishes... the location at the exit does not fit the situation... I keep proposing [changes].” (Interview, July 26, 2025) .

In a parallel contrast, Dispar justifies this rigidity as adherence to central directives, dismissing community aspirations as mere demands. The Head of the Development Section of Dispar stated:

“Regarding the pros and cons... they are just demanding rights, but that cannot be accommodated because it is a program from the central government. So, it cannot be changed... As long as we facilitate a space for them to sell, it shouldn't be a problem.” (Interview, July 25, 2025) .

Simultaneously, within the internal government sphere, the hindering culture is characterized by acute sectoral ego. Agencies operate in silos (*jalan sendiri-sendiri*), communicating only when financial interests are at stake. The MCB Coordinator described this fragmented culture vividly:

*“The interaction intensity is poor because everyone walks alone (*jalan sendiri*)... Communication mostly happens only when talking about revenue sharing. For other matters like utilization... many activities are not communicated at all.” (Interview, September 11, 2025) .*

The lack of communication and coordination exemplified by the unilateral utilization activities conducted by Dispar illustrates the conditions triggering this sectoral ego. When a party perceives that their interests are not accommodated, they inevitably prioritize and fight for their own interests to achieve their goals. This dynamic fundamentally undermines the concept of collaboration, which is intrinsically oriented towards the creation of trust, participation, and synergy.

Institutional Factors

Institutional factors encompass the formal rules, organizational structures, and accountability mechanisms that govern collaboration. The study identifies that the institutional framework acts as a barrier due to Regulatory Rigidity for the community, Legal Void for the private sector, and Structural Fragmentation within the government. For the community, the institutional framework serves as a rigid constraint. This is evident in the absence of a Tourism Awareness Group (*Pokdarwis*), due to administrative regulations that

restrict its formation to Tourism Villages (Desa Wisata), disqualifying heritage sites like Gedongsongo. The Head of the UPTD confirmed:

"We follow the rules available [which restrict Pokdarwis formation]" (Interview, July 2, 2025) . Consequently, the relationship is formalized only through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that is structurally asymmetric, emphasizing obligations over rights.

Simultaneously, the private sector (Ayanaz) faces an Institutional Void. Unlike the community which is bound by rigid rules, the private partner operates without any formal Cooperation Agreement (PKS). The partnership relies entirely on verbal understandings, creating a fragile institutional basis. The Manager of Ayanaz admitted:

"There is no black-and-white agreement... discussions were direct and informal. So, we are also confused about what is allowed... because there is no agreement regulating it." (Interview, July 10, 2025) .

This lack of formal binding prevents long-term investment security and contributes to the stagnation of innovation. In a parallel contrast, within the government sphere, the framework is critically fragmented. A Dual Command structure exists between the Cultural Preservation Agency (BPK) and the Museum and Cultural Heritage (MCB), splitting protection and utilization duties. This design creates institutional confusion regarding authority boundaries. The MCB Coordinator criticized this:

"There is clearly an overlap... the three aspects of preservation cannot be separated structurally... But currently, the division is based on function, not locus, which causes confusion." (Interview, September 11, 2025) .

This institutional fragility is further exacerbated by Bureaucratic Volatility. The rapid rotation of officials at the local government level prevents the accumulation of institutional knowledge, keeping the partnership in a perpetual state of "restarting" whenever leadership changes.

Political Factors

Political factors refer to the dynamics of power, negotiation, and interest accommodation within the collaboration. The study reveals that the governance regime in Gedongsongo is dominated by Power Asymmetry and Contested Interests, rather than consensus.

In the relationship between the government and non-state actors, the political landscape is defined by stark inequality. The Tourism Office (Dispar) exercises dominant authority, enforcing a top-down approach that renders the community politically

marginalized. To demonstrate this validity, comparative data regarding the imposition of targets is presented below.

The community possesses low bargaining power and is often forced to accept unrealistic revenue targets. The Head of the Parking Association admitted the vulnerability of their political position:

“The local government made a new decision... we must deposit 32 million per month. As managers, we are gasping for air. In months like March, we only netted 500,000 rupiah... we had to cover the deficit ('nombok') first.” (Interview, July 15, 2025).

In a parallel contrast, the government maintains these rigid targets as a non-negotiable policy, leveraging their political authority to enforce compliance regardless of market fluctuations. This confirms that the relationship is governed by the logic of power rather than partnership.

Simultaneously, within the internal government sphere, political factors manifest as a persistent tug-of-war (*tarik-menarik kepentingan*) over resources. The friction is exacerbated by the Public Service Agency (Badan Layanan Umum- BLU) status of MCB and Perhutani, which politically compels them to fight for a larger share of revenue to self-finance their preservation duties. Comparative data regarding revenue dissatisfaction highlights this political clash. Perhutani argues that the current distribution is unjust given their initial efforts. The Supervisor of Perhutani stated:

“MCB is still asking for a higher percentage even though they have 25%, while we only have 15%. That is not comparable to our efforts in the beginning... The disappointment exists.” (Interview, September 8, 2025)

Countering this claim, MCB argues that they deserve the largest share due to asset dominance, dismissing the local government's majority claim. The MCB Coordinator asserted:

“Dispar gets 60% while owning only 2 hectares... whereas MCB owns 17.8 hectares but gets less... This creates a constant tug-of-war regarding revenue sharing that hinders collaboration.” (Interview, September 11, 2025)

This political conflict is validated by documentary evidence, specifically the Memorandum of Agreement (NK) Articles 4 and 5, which codify the contested revenue split (60:25:15). This document has become a source of friction rather than integration, confirming that the collaboration is politically fragmented by a zero-sum struggle for resources.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the collaborative governance in the development of Gedongsongo Temple tourism is suboptimal and operates primarily as an administrative formality rather than a substantive partnership. Utilizing the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) framework, the analysis reveals systemic fragility across all dimensions. Principled Engagement is distorted by a top-down approach and exclusive deliberation, where community aspirations are marginalized and private sector engagement is reactive. Shared Motivation is found to be transactional and fragile; trust is eroded by transparency deficits, and commitment is driven by "structural necessity" due to asset integration rather than a genuine shared vision. Furthermore, the Capacity for Joint Action is paralyzed by institutional amnesia caused by rapid staff rotation, ambiguous procedural arrangements, and a leadership style that prioritizes hierarchy over synergy.

The research identifies that these failures are rooted in three fundamental hindering factors. Culturally, the collaboration is inhibited by bureaucratic dominance and sectoral egos that prevent cohesive action. Institutionally, the framework suffers from fragmentation of authority (between protection and utilization agencies) and a lack of formal binding agreements with the private sector. Politically, the governance regime is governed by acute power asymmetry and conflicting interests regarding revenue sharing, leaving the weaker stakeholders (community and private sector) vulnerable to the logic of power exercised by the dominant authority.

To transform this fragile collaboration into a sustainable regime, this study recommends three critical actions: (1) Formalizing relationships, particularly by establishing a legal cooperation agreement with the private sector to ensure certainty; (2) Restoring trust through transparency, specifically by implementing an integrated digital ticketing system accessible to all government partners; and (3) Empowering the community by shifting from a mobilization approach to genuine participation through the establishment of a Tourism Awareness Group (*Pokdarwis*) or Community-Based Tourism (CBT) model.

Future Research Recommendations This study acknowledges several limitations that offer avenues for future research. First, as this research relies on a qualitative approach within a single case study, the findings may not be generalizable to all heritage sites. Future studies are recommended to employ comparative analysis with other heritage destinations (such as Borobudur or Prambanan) to benchmark successful collaborative models. Second, this study focuses on governance dynamics; further research could utilize quantitative methods to measure the direct economic impact of these collaborative failures on local

revenue and community income. Finally, a longitudinal study is suggested to monitor whether the proposed institutional reforms, such as the formation of Pokdarwis, effectively transform the power relations over time.

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