

Culture and Community in Agri-Tourism: Contributions of Cultural and Creative Resources to Strawberry Tourism

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Abstract

Agritourism is currently thriving as many modern visitors favor returning to rural nature over visiting metropolitan destinations. This evolving tendency might stoke locals' enthusiasm to start and develop agri-based tourism by using their farms, gardens, and other physical natural assets for both primary and secondary employment, such as by opening their properties up as agri-tourism destinations. These activities may improve the local population's ability to support themselves and their well-being as tourism has the potential to have multiplier effects. The growth of agritourism, however, might not be entirely dependent on a destination's natural or environmental resources. By using its cultural potential, it can instead be strengthened. The purpose of the research is to investigate how culture and community creativity can improve agritourism. The study is carried out at Lumbung Strawberry Tourism in Batu, Malang. The study finds that culture, when combined with natural resources, may support the growth of agritourism by enhancing the ethno-authenticity of the destination, highlighting its distinctiveness, communicating it, fostering locals' creativity, fostering innovation, boosting its popularity, and facilitating marketing. Along with utilizing its local rural agriculture, Lumbung Strawberry embraces the current of digital culture by creating destination Instagram accounts and offering locations for taking selfies and pictures.

Keywords



agri-tourism; cultural asset; creativity; rural culture; strawberry tourism

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1. INTRODUCTION

Culture plays several significant functions in community life. It serves as a vehicle for expressing not only what people are thinking and experiencing, but also how a particular community satisfies its members' social, emotional, and physical needs. Culture is also perceived as an outcome of a particular group and is a tool used by people or communities to adapt to changing environments. Culture also serves as both the product of a society and as the set of shared values that guide how its members

ought to act, think, and feel. As a set of guiding principles, this culture can direct, regulate, or control the actions of the society. Frequently, culture serves as the local code of conduct, especially regarding how to relate to others (human or otherwise) and how to engage with the natural world. As a result, societal values frequently shape a community's perception or point of view on things.

Culture also serves the purpose of defining the collective identity of a society. It conveys the distinctive qualities of a certain community. These distinctive qualities can be used as a resource for particularism or powerful promotion. The easier it is to recall a culture, the more distinct or different it is. Culture may therefore serve as a distinguishing characteristic. It reflects the diversity of the society. This shows that culture may persist in various forms and across different communities. The other function of culture is to distinguish one set of people from another, to show who belongs in one group and who belongs in another, or to produce distinctive traits. Additionally, culture serves as a tool for attaining objectives, such as social or economic ones. Culture may also be the source of community pride. This pride can be sparked by a distinctive culture that is well-liked and generally acknowledged by other people in the community and even by world citizens. Additionally, this sense of pride may ignite a desire for protecting the environment and developing programs or actions for it. Culture also serves as a means for social bonding. While simultaneously projecting diversity through individuality, culture can bring diversity among individuals together.

The study seeks to investigate the role that culture, and community creativity play in the growth of a community-based agritourism. As mentioned by Loots and Vermeulen (2022, p. 24), a hot debate and controversy still occurs on how cultural and creative industry raise or enhance substantial values to community. Previous studies highlight the significance of local culture to support local development. Cultural activities empower local community, grow sense of place, and activate social dynamics (OECD, 2018). Furthermore, local culture can inspire and empower local community to develop through various aspects, including economy, social cohesion, natural and cultural-based tourism (Huraerah et al., 2023), sense of local ownership and social pride (Wallace & Beel, 2021), increase community engagement which stimulates collective cognitive and changes in community attitudes (Azevedo, 2017). Thus, culture can be vehicle for sustainable development (Adebola et al., 2022; Hernández, 2019; Naibei, 2014; Nocca, 2017; UNESCO, 2010, 2012). The research was conducted at the strawberry agritourism Lumbung Strawberry. It seeks to examine the cultural potential for developing strawberry agriculture tourism, which could improve the standard of living for locals or farmers.

The study acknowledges prior studies which relate to community development and tourism, particularly community-based tourism. The study acknowledges the importance and urgency for local community to build their local competitive advantage. One of the significant ways to develop the competitive advantage of local area is through going back to the local culture. As mentioned by OECD (2018), the competitive advantages of certain territory can be produced through local culture uniqueness. The study proposes that tourism centred on local resources and culture can foster community development. Therefore, using strawberry tourism as a case study, the study attempts to investigate and demonstrate how local culture can enrich local people's lives. Below are the findings of previous studies which are relevant and underpin the data interpretation.

1.1 The Potentials of Agritourism for Rural Community

Many rural areas are now shifting their focus from meeting the agricultural requirements of urban areas to improving their agricultural output to draw more people to their villages. This suggests that rural areas are beginning to empower themselves rather than depending on towns for their economic survival. Rural people are beginning to recognize their natural and living resources as assets that can serve as the foundation for their own survival.

One of invaluable assets which may support rural people's living improvement is rural natural environment and their socio-cultural environment. The natural beauty and cultural distinctiveness that many rural areas are endowed with can be important tools for developing nature-based tourism. Many new forms of tourism are currently emerging that provide a wider range of entertainment choices for tourists, such as community-based tourism, agrotourism, and environmental-based tourism (Mungkhun et al., 2021). These new versions of tourisms arise as preferences to add tourists' quantity and expand the diversity of tourists' activities and attractions (Mungkhun et al., 2021). The changing trend of tourism, which is now going back to nature, enables rurals to start competitively creating village-based tourism.

One of rurals' unexplored potential is their agricultural sector. Agriculture has been primary sector in rurals. For a very long time, agriculture has supported the economic, social, and cultural activities of rural people. Agriculture becomes the primary occupation of rural people. Rural people typically plant, harvest, and process their agricultural products, but today's possibilities for them to improve their agricultural values are more extensive.

Numerous existing studies identify the potentials of agriculture. Agriculture can be a promising source of natural capital for tourism in addition to supplying agricultural raw materials. Today's rural-based tourism popularity is retained by tourists' preference to relax and enjoy peaceful environment. According to Javakheti and Kartli (2016), modern travellers are looking to get away from urban environments, are more interested in natural environments, are traveling to less expensive alternatives to traditional vacation destinations, and are becoming more interested in authentic culture, farming heritage, fresh local foods, and rural people's natural lifestyles. This is supported by Dionysopoulou (2020), who notes that agritourism is one form of tourism that meets the needs of contemporary people to reconnect with nature, engage with it, and experience a simpler, more traditional way of life, while also promoting sustainable development, boosting local economies, increasing employment, maintaining natural authenticity, and emphasizing natural and social uniqueness.

The emergence of agri-tourism is also encouraged by farmers' internal situation. According to Burr et al. (2012), agri-tourism allows farmers to diversify their crops in order to increase their income. This is heightened by an increasing tourists' demand to travel from non-rural areas to rural environment for enjoyment (Javakheti & Kartli, 2016). Agritourism may also develop as a result of farmers' efforts to better their financial situation (Burr et al., 2012). Farmers today are fighting to live against their worsening economic circumstances as a result of fluctuating prices, changing environmental conditions, changing weather, and the global race (Burr et al., 2012). Therefore, farmers all over the world often experience a pressing need to expand the capabilities of their farms and agricultural products in order to generate more or additional agricultural income (Javakheti & Kartli, 2016).

Numerous current research investigates the uniqueness and distinctive forms of agri-tourism. Rambodagedara et al. (2015) define agritourism as the convergence between agriculture and tourism. Agricultural Council of Tanzania (2018, p. 1) mentions that It is becoming more common to combine or link the agriculture and tourism sectors to create new, lucrative farming services and product sales ventures. Rural people today are becoming more inventive and imaginative in enhancing their agricultural attractions. In addition to marketing agricultural goods today, they also provide tourists with entertainment by showcasing rural lifestyles and nuances. Agritourism hosts become more creative by providing visitors several natural attractions, such as experiencing farming works, horticultural and agricultural education or participating in farming activities (Javakheti & Kartli, 2016), farm tours, leisurely self-harvesting, fishing,

hunting, taking in wildlife, and engaging in outdoor activities (Wilson, 2007, cited in Pavić et al., 2018, p. 245).

Agritourism also has the appeal of providing real tourism, especially real or authentic agritourism. According to Pavić et al (2018), authentic agritourism effectively operationalizes working farms where agricultural activities predominate over tourism activities and where tourism activities are conducted in unaltered farming environments. Authentic agritourism may offer real farms, educational travel, quality services, enough public amenities, a safe, accessible environment, and a strong sense of community (Burr et al., 2012). Agritourism can take many various forms, according to the kinds of locations, the veracity of the agricultural experiences, and the activities offered (Dionysopoulou, 2020).

Agritourism can be promising alternative solution for rural people's poverty and living discrepancy issues. According to Agricultural Council of Tanzania (2018), agritourism is one type of tourism that can benefit the underprivileged (pro-poor tourism). Existing research indicates that tourism may enhance not only economic development but also general quality of life. According to WTO (1988, cited in Balogun, 2020, p. 2), sustainable tourism is a crucial factor or strategy for managing all resources to satisfy social, economic, and aesthetic requirements while maintaining cultural authenticity, biological diversity, life quality, and significant ecological processes. Tourism may boost the GDP, create more employment, and boost local economy and investment (Javakheti & Kartli, 2016).

Some studies also highlight the economic and non-economic benefits of agritourism. As revealed by Mungkhun et al (2021), farmers in the area may profit from agritourism because it allows them to engage in tourism-related activities, practice mixed farming, take better care of their agricultural lands, encourages local community involvement, and generates extra or additional income for the community. Agritourism boosts rural people' productivity by fostering rural entrepreneurship growth, which may increase family and community income, unlocking tourism potentials, and teaching the public about the value of rural agriculture and the environment (Javakheti & Kartli, 2016). This is supported by Chase et al (2012), who find that, rather than transforming or destroying land for other kinds or uses of development, agritourism boosts the productivity of the land while also providing economic benefits to rural residents. Agritourism also raises the worth of agricultural goods, experiences, and services (Burr et al., 2012). The linkage between agriculture and tourism may not only widening economic chances, but also strengthening rural communities' resilience and agricultural sustainable development (Siringoringo et al., 2022).

1.2 Culture and Creativity

Frequently, the development of community-based tourism is enhanced by destination uniqueness. Its distinctiveness may originate from nature and be accentuated by human invention. In addition to natural attractions, many tourist locations also offer man-made attractions. Many tourist destinations today are pushed to develop more distinctive and alluring services, or to improve their destination by providing more innovative services and goods to gain competitive advantages. Thus, creativity becomes skill and asset to develop destination's attraction.

Numerous existing studies explore the nature of creativity. A creative act is one that involves actively coming up with new concepts, methods of approaching problems, new goods, or ways to enhance the value of existing ones (Cambridge Assessment. International Education, n.d.). Creativity relates to diversity as creative thinking or ideas can be emerged from divergent ideas or divergent ways of thinking (Hondzel & Gulliksen, 2015; Vezzali et al., 2016). Creativity also links to innovation (Cambridge Assessment. International Education, n.d.; Rubio-Arostegui et al., 2016).

Some studies tend to perceive creativity as a learnt capacity. Capacity needs to be enhanced through several efforts, including encouragement, contemplation, efficacy, and responsibility (Cambridge Assessment. International Education, n.d.). Similarly, Unesco (2022) lists several methods for fostering creativity, such as assisting the cultural and creative industries, encouraging the use of various media, developing the digital environment, and working with civic society. Cambridge Assessment. International Education (n.d.) highlights a number of factors that stimulate the growth of creativity, including viewing unusual combinations, engaging metacognition, exploring alternative solutions, challenging the conventional wisdom, believing in one's ability to think creatively, answering questions, taking reasonable risks, trying, experimenting, and connecting. Additionally, creativity is linked to invention, which calls for exerting effort, perseverance, and persistence (Cambridge Assessment. International Education, n.d.).

Today, creativity is considered as both internal and external functioning. As mentioned by Sawyer (2015), creativity is both psychological and sociocultural phenomenon. This also means creativity is both individual and social processes. However, a lot of research tends to focus on the individual viewpoint, which sees creativity as the product of an individual's process rather than taking into account its social components (Rubio-Arostegui et al., 2016). According to Csikszentmihalyi (1996, cited in Greffe, 2020, p. 14), creativity arises from the interaction of three factors, including the expertise that a person has mastered, the cultural context in which they

live, and the performance opportunities made available by their social environment. However, numerous previous studies agree that creativity functions at an individual domain. According to the individualistic perspective on creativity, an individual is most likely to be innovative when working on their own and is an individualistic endeavor (Sawyer, 2015). Additionally, creativity is ingrained in a person's inner or mental process and manifests itself during a time of insight (Sawyer, 2015). This is also supported by Kumari (2020), who emphasizes that creativity is an individual capacity to create new forms of art by using novel mechanism or produce novel product to solve certain problems. Additionally, Hondzel and Gulliksen (2015) stress that creativity develops as a result of people responding to their needs and the supportive, encouraging, and encouraging roles of their environment. This is confirmed by Luo (2022), who believes that creativity relates to ideas and brains. Additionally, the individual perspective maintains that creativity is not exclusive to certain demographics or mental states. Instead, it emerges from individuals who use right techniques (Rubio-Arostegui et al., 2016). The personality approach to creativity holds that creativity arises from creative personalities and involves the overlapping of paradigms, beliefs, and references (Grefe, 2020).

Differently, social perspective of creativity considers the role of social environment. The socio-cultural perspective views creativity as a social process that frequently arises in groups, develops from group discussion, is incorporated into joint works, and is demonstrated through practices (Sawyer, 2015). This approach believes that creation is a collective process (Rubio-Arostegui et al., 2016). The act of being creative is not an individual activity. Instead, what produces creative ideas is the result of interaction among society, environment, and the individual (Rubio-Arostegui et al., 2016). Kumari (2020) stresses that a variety of factors, including sex, cultural upbringing, and socioeconomic status, influence creativity. The community approach to creativity, which is consistent with the socio-cultural perspective, sees creativity as the result of co-creation, participation, information dissemination, and the transfer of knowledge from one person to another (Sawyer, 2015).

1.3 Culture and Creative Industry

The function of culture in modern society is more extensive. Offering intrinsic worth alone does not result in aesthetic function. Frequently, this intrinsic and aesthetic function are associated with art. Loots and Vermeulen (2022) note that art priceless because it includes aesthetic essence. This aesthetic quality may vary from person to person and rely on personal experiences (Loots & Vermeulen, 2022). As culture has both

aesthetic and instrumental values, its' values can rely on aesthetic or instrumental aspect or both. As mentioned by Averill et al. (2001), the value of something relies on the range of creativity involved; for example, a painting is valued for its aesthetic value, a scientific discovery is valued for its theoretical merit, and a business is valued for its profitability.

Besides serving aesthetical function, culture plays instrumental roles. The most common method for understanding art and culture is to look at its instrumental values, such as what it aims to accomplish or create, what it serves, and what it is useful for, regardless of its intrinsic values (Loots & Vermeulen, 2022, p. 21). Similarly, Holden (2006, cited in Loots & Vermeulen, 2022, p. 21) defines the instrumental value of art as its functional social, economic, or political roles. Loots and Vermeulen (2022, p. 21) also contend that cultural products may be priceless despite having no inherent worth. Instead, they benefit from social construction that renders them desirable. This further suggests that worth and value judgments are justified through social processes involving social conversation and interaction (Throsby, 2001, cited in Loots & Vermeulen, 2022, p. 21). This also confirms the social roles in creativity.

People or communities can benefit from using culture as one of their creative components by utilizing the external or instrumental values of culture. The practical values of a culture can help meet the unique requirements of a person or a group of people, including those related to the economy, education, and politics.

Culture has recently made a major contribution to the tourism industry. It improves the diversity and draws in tourism. Furthermore, it can be asset for increasing tourism destination competitiveness. EY (2015) affirms that culture contributes to the development of creative industries through several sectors, including advertising, music, video, architecture, movie, tv, books, newspapers, magazines, visual arts, performing arts and gaming. Furthermore, Unesco (n.d., cited in EY, 2015, p. 11) confirms that the terms "creative industries" and "culture" are used to describe endeavors that seek to create or duplicate, market, disseminate, and sell goods and services based on culture. Culture and creative industries can be a promising strategy for boosting development as well as tightening their competitiveness (EY, 2015). Furthermore, EY (2015) confirms that culture can contribute to communities' development through creative industries. EY (2015) affirms that culture and creative industries also flourish business and content creation in a number of ways, including increasing content diversity, adding more personalized contents, providing aggregation and recommendation, emerging community-based digital economy, changing services from offering to engaging, and building social relationships. Besides benefiting content creation business, culture also brings about contribution in tourism sector. According to

EY (2015), cultural diversity can be used as a resource to grow tourism, attracting visitors from around the world and generating demand for creative, talented workers in the creative industries.

2. METHODS

The study adopts a qualitative inquiry method. It seeks to investigate how culture and creativity might aid in the growth of strawberry tourism. The study is conducted in Lumbung Strawberry Malang, Jawa Timur. Lumbung Strawberry is located at Desa Pandanrejo, Kecamatan Bumiaji, Batu, Malang. It is an agritourism that provides a variety of tourist sites, such as strawberry gardening, strawberry picking, eating fresh strawberries or strawberries processed into other foods, and learning how to grow and care for strawberry plants.

The data are collected in natural environment by visiting Lumbung Strawberry as tourists. The data are gathered using a variety of data gathering techniques. The first way is through natural direct observation. During this observation, the team of researchers are visiting Lumbung Strawberry as tourist researchers. The researchers are taking part in various (tourism-related) activities during their stay, such as picking strawberries, dining at the café, and taking pictures. The research team also takes some field notes and observes the Lumbung Strawberry's natural surroundings during these activities. The second technique involves talking to some Lumbung Strawberry employees to gather data (tourist guides). Purposive sampling is used in the selection of the tour guide informants. Purposive sampling is used when researchers need informants who can purposively provide information related to the research problems (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). The informants are chosen based on several factors, including the fact that the informants assist the researchers during their natural direct observation, are assigned by the tourism operational manager, and are knowledgeable about the circumstances surrounding the planting, harvesting, and treatment of strawberries. The criteria are centred on three main aspects: the natural context, the informants' experiences and knowledge, flexibility and based on the actors or informants' selves. Communication is established while participating in tourist activities, especially when picking strawberries and serving food at Lumbung Strawberry *Cafetaria*. The conversation is held in informal situation and natural environment.



Figure 1. The process of data collection in natural strawberry tourism

The research team is preparing some aspects to be observed prior to performing observation. Some of the key areas that were observed during the visit are shown in the accompanying table (Table 1).

Table 1. Direct observation aspects

No	Observed Aspects
1	Environmental Preservation: Water resources management, methods of maintaining natural agriculture, farming gland management, management of plantation and animal treatment
2	Cultural dynamics: The existence of cultural (elements) which are relevant to the development of agritourism, the availability of tourism products and services for supporting destination sustainability
3	Tourism destination management: The mechanism of tourism destination management, roles and participations of stakeholders, tourist management (based on their perspectives, visiting motives and responses/reviews)

The study's primary emphasis is aspect 2, which can be backed up by aspects of environmental management and tourist destination management. The first factor (environmental management) could have an impact on strawberry tourism because the attractiveness and health of the environment (including water quality, pollution, and infrastructure) could affect the quality of the tourism destination. The environment frequently puts pressure on tourism, especially in some aspects, like transportation, water utility, physical impacts, wastes, and energy, as stated by Drosos and Skordoulis (2018). It also relates to the third aspect as the success of destination is likely to be

influenced by the destination management. As mentioned by Ortigueira and Gómez-Selemeneva (2011), the success of tourism industry depends on its management aspects, some of those are systemic management of tourism events, knowledge of the agents and tours operators.

Several cultural components have been identified based on the field notes that were taken during direct observation and communication with Lumbung Strawberry's employees. The observed cultural elements are classified based on Koentjoroningrat's universal cultural elements (Koentjaraningrat, 2000). As mentioned by Koentjaraningrat (2000), there are seven main universal elements which can be found in all types of culture, including religion, social organization system, occupation, language, art, system of knowledge and technology and living tools. The researcher team discovers that not all those components were visible during the observation. Several aspects of cultural expression at Lumbung Strawberry are represented in the table below (Table 2).

Table 2. Observed Cultural Elements

No	Cultural Elements
1	Social organization: Women farmer group, strawberry farmers group, collaboration with educational institutions
2	System of knowledge: Traditional strawberry farming, traditional tools, tourism physical facilities,
3	Language: Some terminologies/words, such as strawberry, <i>kampoeng</i>
4	Art: <i>Panen Raya</i> (Harvesting Festival), some cultural-based architecture, including <i>joglo</i> and traditional building for enjoying food, some artistic ornaments
5	Occupation: Strawberry farmers, strawberry tourism owners, strawberry tourism management
6	Technology and living tools: Traditional farming tool, organic fertilizing, traditional irrigation, some food products, including fresh harvested strawberry, fresh strawberry juice and fresh packaged strawberry

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research discovers that culture primarily has two effects on the growth of strawberry tourism. The first way that culture contributes to a place is by enhancing

tourist attraction and showing its uniqueness. The second contribution is promoting the destination's emblems, character, and image.

3.1 Attraction, Uniqueness, and Aesthetic Enhancement

The study finds that Lumbung Strawberry combines nature and culture as its attraction. The data show that its' main attraction, traditional strawberry farming, is supplemented by several cultural manifestations. Traditional Javanese culture, mixed with strawberry undertones, enhances Lumbung Strawberry.

The following figures (Figure 1 and 2) show several pictures taken by the team of researchers during visitation for both tourism and research. Both images imply some meanings that highlight the roles or purposes of culture in strawberry agritourism.



Figure 2a Cultural elements represented in the design of building and an Instagram spot. **Figure 2b** Bamboo as shelter and agri-culture presentation

Figure 2a shows how traditional bamboo culture increases the beauty and destination attractiveness. Figure 2b shows bamboo and local wood as one of famous indigenous or local plant in East Java. Even bamboo can be managed into bamboo tourism. It can be designed into many cultural products in the tourism sectors.

Some spots in Lumbung Strawberry are also embellished with bamboo crafts, which come in a variety of designs, including the traditional hat worn by farmers (*caping*), bamboo huts (*gubuk*), houses used for welcoming guests (*pendopo*), farming implements (strawberry shelters, irrigation systems), and ornaments for specific locations. This suggests that Lumbung Strawberry makes use of locally available natural resources, like bamboo, to boost its agricultural and cultural attractions. In addition to enhancing local cultural attractions, bamboo can be used as a healthful, environmentally friendly, readily available, and reasonably priced resource (Chandrashekara et al., 2019).

Besides symbolizing wisdom and aesthetic qualities, bamboo serves practical purposes. This is as shown in figure 2b. Figure 2b shows the practical functions of

bamboo for sheltering strawberry plants. This supports Belcher's (1996, p. 4) conclusion that bamboo is a natural resource that can support rural sustainability by being incorporated into farming tools or systems and increasing revenue and raw material production for small and medium rural businesses. The contributions of bamboo to agricultural development through preservation of the ecosystem's natural sustainability and regional biodiversity are also highlighted by Yuming et al. (2004) and Li and He (2019).

Bamboo also increases the traditional aesthetics of Lumbung Strawberry. It is advantageous for providing natural protection for plants and harvesting tourists, as well as for displaying rural agriculture, which is closely linked to wood, environment, simplicity, and custom. According to Yu (2007), who also believes that bamboo may help the region grow sustainably in terms of its economy, environment, and culture. The traditional uses of bamboo go beyond its environmental ones. Bamboo may contribute to the enhancement of physical and non-physical cultural enhancement. Bamboo can be used in ritual performances or ornamental plant (Singha & Timung, 2015). Moreover, it reinforces wisdom of life as part of cultural element as bamboo is the symbol of integrity and consistency (Chongtham, 2018). Thus, bamboos are indispensable from rural lives, as it is deeply immersed into their (rural people's) economic, traditional, cultural, and social living aspects (Liese & Kohl, 2015, cited in Chongtham, 2018).

This shows that a region's natural resources, such as strawberry plants, are essential to the growth of the region as an agritourism destination. The research also demonstrates the need for managing natural and cultural assets in agritourism development. There is causal relationship between natural and cultural assets or environment and culture. The abundance of local resources, such as bamboos, or the environmental asset can be used to create cultural materials that will improve the aesthetic appeal of the location. Native natural resources or products are also more accessible, less expensive, and renewable. Additionally, it might reflect the local identity.

Natural environment and culture can significantly support the growth of Lumbung Strawberry. The environment supplies the raw ingredients. Culture, meanwhile, may offer creative design or social ideals and meanings. A certain type of (physical creative goods, like food and beverages) can be produced when environmental and cultural assets are combined.

3.2 Symbol, Identity, and Image of Destination

The observational data also demonstrates that the cultural asset that is combined with environmental (natural) asset in agritourism is not only working to increase attraction, but also forging certain identity and presenting distinctive destination image.



Figure 3a, b. Physical attributes containing strawberry images.

Figure 3 depicts a strawberry image that serves as a destination symbol and signifies the identity of the place. It communicates to the tourists that they are entering the tourism spot (as represented by strawberry symbol in Lumbung Strawberry gate) and information board to notify kinds of attractions in Lumbung Strawberry. This supports some earlier studies that emphasize the importance of place identification in tourism. Place identity may increase a location's capacity for competition, serve as a catalyst for marketing, and serve as inspiration to increase attraction (Foroudi et al., 2020). Additionally, identity may project a potential unique experience that visitors will appreciate and promote the image of a recognizable place (Foroudi et al., 2020). Besides impacting on destination's popularity, identity can increase locals' pride and happiness as well as shape their personalities and social standing. (Foroudi et al., 2020). Additionally, locals who feel proud and happy are more likely to give more to the development of their community (Sani & Mahasti, 2012, cited in Foroudi et al., 2020, p. 6).

The research also reveals how Lumbung Strawberry agri-tourism classifies place identities. The strawberry's character is represented in two main ways: physical and social representations. The strawberry symbol is physically represented by the Lumbung Strawberry brand in a number of locations or amenities, including the destination gate, photo spots, mural art, resting spots, information boards, café brand, food and beverage brand (including fresh harvested strawberry, fresh harvested juice,

and processed food), symbol in online media, symbol in strawberry harvesting festival, and decorative elements in front of locals' homes.

Socially, strawberry farming becomes the social construction of the local community's character on a social level (including social activities and behaviour). In Lumbung Strawberry, strawberry becomes the precursor to societal organization. For instance, it promotes the development of social organizations like women farmers groups, strawberry farmers groups, and partnerships between strawberry tourist management boards and educational institutions. This suggests that strawberry becomes a part of farmers' and local community's character, which is reflected in tourism's physical and social attributes. This is in line with Bernardo et al. (2015), who claim that collective identity encompasses both social and physical aspects of a place that show its uniqueness.

According to observational data, strawberries are also used by Lumbung Strawberry Tourism as markers of identification at some locations for selfies and photos. This shows that Lumbung Strawberry Tourism embraces technology and digital culture as a new, global trend in tourism. Figure 4a depicts a few locations where visitors may flock in order to photograph their priceless moments. It is shown that strawberries have evolved into a tourism symbol that visibly indicates that visitors have spent time at the Lumbung Strawberry destination. Figure 4b displays some pictures taken from Lumbung Strawberry's Instagram.

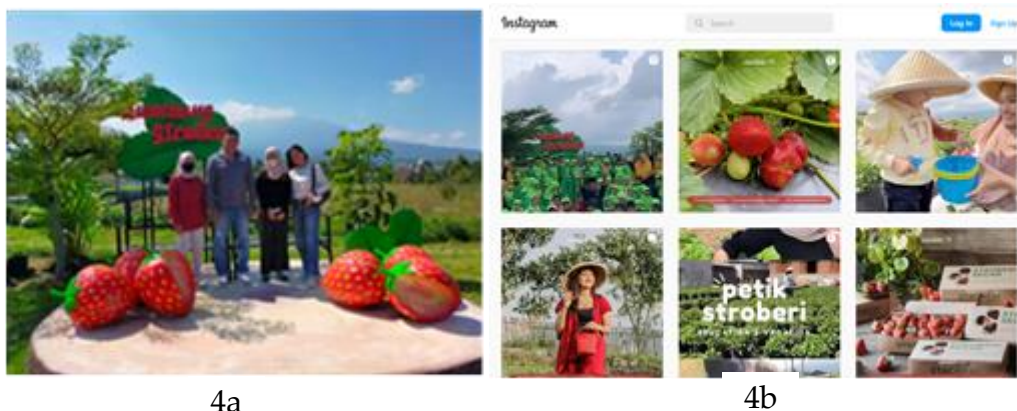


Figure 4a. Researcher team take a picture at a photo spot in Lumbung Strawberry;
Figure 4b. Some images extracted from Lumbung Strawberry's Instagram

The research demonstrates how Lumbung Strawberry supports both rural agriculture and digital culture. It fuses digital and technological culture with conventional rural society. There are two primary ways to respond to digital technology, according to Stankov and Gretzel (2021), through digital acceptance and through digital

avoidance by creating tech-scarce tourism environments, such as travel without internet and with few smartphones.

The adoption of digital technology by Lumbung Strawberry also indicates that the agritourism component of Lumbung Strawberry is adjusting to the current tourism trend. There are two primary ways in which this is manifested.

The first strategy is creating spots where tourists can take selfies and pose for group photos. Today's tourism is increasingly characterized by the culture of photographing and sharing travel experiences. In modern tourism, photography plays a significant part (Mkwizu & Mtae, 2018; Yuniarso et al., 2018). The selfie or picture spot in Lumbung Strawberry is a sign of the destination management team's efforts to improve and diversify the destination's attractions. Additionally, it is shown that Lumbung Strawberry has grown by not only introducing new attractions but also by enlarging its target market to include young tourists. This is because millennials frequently engage in photo behaviour. This is supported by earlier research showing that millennials who intentionally seek out immersive experiences and take selfies while visiting tourist destinations, who have a special interest in digital culture, friendships, and fun, are more likely to be drawn to particular qualities like sustainability, fulfilment, and authenticity (Sofronov, 2018). Other studies contend, however, that earlier and younger generations as well as millennial tourists develop the photo culture. Today's travellers, according to Mkwizu and Mtae (2018), want to share their travel experiences with others. Selfie or photo activities are also a method for people to boost their self-esteem and satisfy their need to actualize themselves.

The second strategy involves promoting Lumbung Strawberry tourism through internet media. Figure 4 demonstrates that Lumbung Strawberry employs Instagram as a media to inform and attract potential tourists. Lumbung Strawberry's Instagram features some travel activities that centre primarily on strawberry harvesting, as well as some of its fresh strawberry and beverage offerings. Besides showing its' main attractions, it also depicts some of the social and emotional interactions that previous visitors had while they were there, such as time spent with friends and family while consuming food, drinks, or gathering strawberries. Additionally, it shows several images of how past visitors enjoyed their free time and the beauty of nature while also feeling the thrill of strawberry picking. This might encourage online viewers to come and have similar experiences by projecting positive images. This supports the findings of Karyatun et al. (2021), who claim that many modern destinations' instagrammable spots or attractions may offer distinctively impressive images that may entice selfie tourists to visit and affect their behaviour in terms of seeking attention by sharing

pictures. Furthermore, according to Karyatun et al. (2021), selfie travellers prefer to travel to attractive locations that offer distinctive features and opportunities to share their experiences on social media.

The data also show that Lumbung Strawberry accepts digital culture while preserving their rural traditions and natural culture. The digital culture (manifested in destination Instagram) reflects the combination of both the natural beauty of Lumbung Strawberry and the aesthetic of the online image. Instagram might encourage the Lumbung Strawberry destination administration to use creativity when handling online media. Instagram can offer a productive environment for the innovation development that results in a diversity of aesthetic styles, as stated by Agung and Nugraha (2019, p. 97).

The availability of some attractive locations and natural cultural ornaments for selfies (taking pictures) may also have some advantages. The first advantage is that it encourages the growth of agri-selfie tourism by embracing technology and protecting the local ecosystem. With the quick growth of technology and multimedia (communication media), selfie-tourism has emerged (Isdarmanto et al., 2019). The second benefit is indirectly promoting Lumbung Strawberry destination. Images and photographs published online may serve as marketing and promotional tools as well as educational resources about the natural beauty of Lumbung Strawberry. This supports some earlier studies that highlight the advantages of selfie (culture) on destination marketing through sharing travel experiences, disseminating knowledge, (Mkwizu & Mtae, 2018; Velayuthan & Hashim, 2022) and elevating destination products (Mkwizu & Mtae, 2018; Yuniarso et al., 2018).

Selfie and digital culture may elevate Lumbung Strawberry's destination popularity and attract more visitors to come, due to the emotional contagiousness of selfies and digital culture. Tourists may project their joyous emotions and rural experiences through happy pictures, which may encourage viewers to visit Lumbung Strawberry by spreading positive emotions. This indicates that the image may convey happiness, inviting the viewer to come and have comparable experiences.

3.3 Roles of Cultural Asset Mediated by Community Creativity in Agri-Tourism

The research demonstrates that agritourism (Lumbung Strawberry), not only has potential natural (environment) assets but also cultural assets. It shows that Lumbung Strawberry has a traditional rural culture that contributes to its distinctive character. This local distinctiveness is displayed by local strawberry cultivation practices, rural facility design or architecture, local cuisine, and the use of local or indigenous materials like bamboo.

This traditional rural culture is also enhanced by modern culture, as Lumbung Strawberry welcomes the use of technology. It is indicated by some spots provided for selfie or taking photos together and destination Instagram. This also demonstrates the use of aesthetic online culture through Instagram's layout and the presentation of appealing pictures.

The research also shows that the local community and the management board's inventiveness underpin the richness of Lumbung Strawberry's natural and cultural potentials. They cultivate and implement creativity when developing online media, adorning buildings, organizing cultural events, making cultural products, and using local goods.

The research also demonstrates how community creativity and culture are interconnected. The strawberry rural culture serves as a creative inspiration for the design of buildings, cafés, murals, and decorations. As mentioned by Robinson and Picard (2006), culture can be the sources of innovation and creativity. The strawberry rural culture serves as a creative inspiration for the design of buildings, cafés, murals, and decorations. This also implies that cultural goods (creation) represent the creativity of individuals and the local and destination management boards. According to Marujo et al. (2020), culture also represents the artistic endeavours and creativity of its inhabitants.

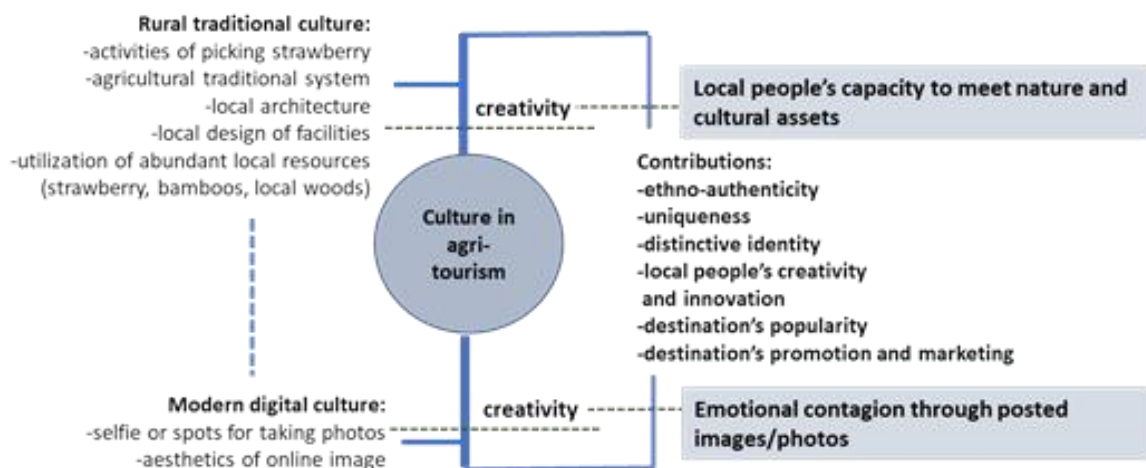


Figure 5. Roles of culture and creativity in agri-tourism development
(A model developed by the researchers/authors based on findings and analysis)

Figure 5 describes that in developing strawberry agri-tourism, local people's creativity serves as a mediator between various roles played by rural traditional culture and contemporary digital culture. The capacity of locals to combine natural and cultural resources and the degree of emotional contagion engendered by artistic image or

pleasant experience portrayed in posted photos serve as mediators of the potential positive effects on agri-tourism.

Culture in agri-tourism has some contributions. It is expanding and diversifying types of local attractions. This supports the findings of Robinson and Picard (2006), who find that culture and natural beauty are assets for development, especially for non-industrialized areas because they present chances to draw visitors. Culture in agri-tourism may influence other alternative forms of tourism, such as cultural, agri-selfie, and agri-gastronomic tourism, in addition to influencing destination sites. Utilizing local culture also strengthens ethno-identity, fosters creativity, and provides genuine or authentic experiences while increasing the sustainability of local or indigenous culture. The contemporary culture that has been adapted also enhances online aesthetics, makes promotion easier, and fosters the growth of online creativity.

4. CONCLUSION

The research concludes that agritourism can benefit from utilizing its cultural resource. The natural resource of farming or gardening can be combined with and strengthened by cultural resources. The effective management of environment and culture in agritourism may have several advantages. These include enhancing the ethno-authenticity of the destination, enhancing local distinctiveness or identity, encouraging the development of local people's ingenuity and innovation, boosting the popularity of the destination, and enhancing marketing and promotion. The contribution of cultural assets in agri-tourism development tends to be mediated by local people's creativity. This includes, for instance, how they plan abundant local resources of material to increase attraction or create aesthetically pleasing facilities like artistic ornaments or food stalls. The research also demonstrates that the observed agri-tourism destination, Lumbung Strawberry, is open to the new social media and selfie culture trends. This social media culture may boost a destination's appeal, marketing, and promotion using aesthetically pleasing online media design and emotional contagion generated by Instagram pictures.

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