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Development of Visual Branding for Bajulan Village, Nganjuk Regency, as a Tourism Identity Based on Local Culture

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ABSTRAK

This study aims to design a visual branding for Bajulan Village, Nganjuk Regency, as an effort to strengthen tourism identity based on local culture. The background of this research lies in the lack of optimal branding and promotion despite the village's strong potential in nature, culture, and religious tourism. This study uses a qualitative method with a constructivist approach through observation, interviews, and data analysis based on the five-stage destination branding framework. The results show that Bajulan Village has strengths in tolerance, cultural diversity, and well-preserved natural attractions. The resulting branding concept is "Nitya Sahitya Dharmika," representing sustainable culture and harmonious community life. The implementation is carried out through visual media such as logos, brochures, social media, and merchandise. The study concludes that the destination branding strategy can strengthen the village's image as a sustainable and culturally harmonious tourism destination.

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INTRODUCTION

Destination branding has increasingly emphasized the construction of distinctive destination identities, in which visual representation plays an important role in communicating the characteristics and meanings associated with a place (Balázs & Kitti, 2024; Hanna et al., 2021). Competition among destinations is no longer determined solely by the availability of natural resources or cultural heritage, but also by a destination's ability to establish a distinctive, authentic, and recognizable identity. In this context, destination branding is defined as a strategic process of shaping public perceptions of a destination through the management of its identity, image, and tourism experiences, thereby creating a unique differentiation from competing destinations (Blain et al., 2005; Hanna et al., 2021; Pike & Page, 2014). Recent research emphasizes destination brand identity as a multidimensional construct that requires alignment between the distinctive characteristics of a place and their communication to target audiences (Escobar-Farfán et al., 2024). Accordingly, the success of destination branding is not measured solely by the strength of its logo or slogan, but by a destination's ability to establish and consistently communicate a meaningful and coherent identity.

The development of destination branding studies reflects a paradigm shift from a promotion-oriented approach toward the development of destination identity. Public perceptions of the quality of a destination are strongly influenced by how its image and identity are constructed and communicated (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Stylidis et al., 2017). Kavaratzis and Ashworth argue that a destination's identity is shaped through the interaction of its physical characteristics, cultural heritage, local community, and the collectively constructed narratives that give meaning to the place (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). Recent studies specifically highlight the importance of visual identity in translating distinctive place characteristics into coherent representations that facilitate destination recognition and communication (Balázs & Kitti, 2024). Therefore, branding should not be regarded merely as a marketing activity, but as a process of identity representation that reflects the social and cultural values of the local community.

Adapting Simon Anholt's City Branding Hexagon theory, which comprises six key dimensions ; tourism, people, governance, exports and industry, investment, and culture this framework is used to map a city's brand dimensions and identify the factors that influence the success of branding initiatives in real-world contexts (Karachalis & Sarantakou, 2023). Recent studies have demonstrated that the implementation of city branding and the development of a positive city image significantly contribute to the formation of city identity, which subsequently influences tourists' decisions to visit the destination (Amrullah, Nurbaeti, Heny Ratnaningtyas, David Manumpak, Muh. Rajesh Singh, 2022). This strategy is specifically implemented through cultural festivals, which, according to Syafitri et al. (2023), serve as a means of promoting regional potential and generating widespread tourist interest (Twenty Mariza Syafitri et al., 2023). Furthermore, Pivac et al. (2022) emphasize that cultural events play a crucial role in shaping a city's image and supporting urban development, as they function as communication instruments for fostering positive perceptions among the public and local residents (Pivac et al., 2022). More comprehensively, Sarma (2023) highlights that large-scale cultural flagship projects serve as catalysts for the visitor economy and urban regeneration. In the short term, these initiatives strengthen the city's image and generate immediate economic benefits, while in the long term, they contribute to the sustained transformation of the city's reputation and economic structure (Karachalis & Sarantakou, 2023).

Currently, city branding and destination branding strategies are no longer confined to cities or countries but have also expanded to and been implemented at a smaller scale, particularly in villages (Yurisma, 2021). Recent studies of tourism and cultural villages demonstrate that visual identity can translate local characteristics into a coherent representation of tourism identity and support the communication of local cultural potential (Putri et al., 2025; Suparyono et al., 2024). This development highlights the importance of visual representation in establishing recognizable identities for rural destinations with diverse cultural and tourism resources. Visual representation also contributes to how tourism destinations are communicated and perceived, particularly through the selection and presentation of landscape and destination attributes (Cerić et al., 2024)

Bajulan Village in Loceret District, Nganjuk Regency, is a traditional village known for its distinctive culture, religious diversity, and strong values of tolerance. It is home to the only Hindu temple in Nganjuk and has significant natural, historical, and cultural tourism potential. Its designation as a Traditional Village in 2022 further strengthened its prospects for community-based tourism. However, these assets have not yet been integrated into a strong destination identity. Tourism promotion remains fragmented, the village lacks an official visual identity, and its cultural, religious, historical, and natural assets have not been unified within a consistent destination branding strategy. As a result, its competitive advantage has not been fully optimized.

The urgency of this study lies in the need to establish a distinctive and culturally grounded visual identity for Bajulan Village as its tourism potential develops. Although the village possesses diverse cultural, religious, historical, and natural assets, these have not yet been represented through a unified visual identity, creating a gap between its local resources and tourism representation. This need became more significant following Bajulan's designation as a Traditional Village in 2022, providing a stronger basis for developing its cultural tourism identity. Therefore, this study seeks to transform local cultural values and destination characteristics into a systematic visual branding identity that strengthens recognition, consistency, and cultural representation while supporting a differentiated destination image.

Against this background, a gap exists between Bajulan Village's rich local cultural resources and their visual representation as a tourism destination. While destination and city branding research emphasizes identity, culture, and symbolism, their translation into a coherent visual identity at the village level remains underexplored. In Bajulan, cultural diversity, religious tolerance, historical heritage, and natural attractions have yet to be integrated into a distinctive visual branding system. Therefore, this study focuses on translating these local characteristics into coherent visual elements that strengthen recognition and cultural distinctiveness.

Rather than examining destination branding as a comprehensive strategic process, this study specifically addresses the development of visual branding as a representation of Bajulan Village’s local cultural identity. According to Anholt, as cited by (Pamungkas & Sultoni, 2020), Three main approaches shape a city’s image: strategy, substance, and symbolism. Strategy defines destination positioning and implementation planning, substance translates it into cross-sector programs, and symbolism presents memorable and aesthetically appealing elements. This study examines how Bajulan’s local cultural assets are transformed into a destination identity through visual communication design and proposes a local culture-based destination branding model integrating destination branding, city branding, and brand identity.

Based on this background, the study addresses two research questions: (1) What local cultural, social, religious, historical, and natural characteristics of Bajulan Village can be identified as the basis for developing its tourism visual identity? and (2) How can these local characteristics be translated into a coherent visual branding identity that represents Bajulan Village as a culture-based tourism destination?

Accordingly, this study aims to develop a visual branding identity for Bajulan Village based on its local cultural, religious, historical, and natural characteristics. The study focuses specifically on how these local assets can be translated into visual identity elements that represent the distinctive character of Bajulan Village as a tourism destination. Theoretically, the study contributes to the discussion of destination identity by examining the role of visual communication in representing local cultural values within a rural tourism context. Practically, it provides a visual identity framework that can support local authorities, tourism managers, and community stakeholders in communicating Bajulan Village consistently and recognizably as a culture-based tourism destination.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a constructivist paradigm with a qualitative research approach to explore and construct the visual identity of Bajulan Village based on its local cultural characteristics. The constructivist paradigm was selected because the identity of a tourism destination is not understood as an objective and predetermined entity, but is constructed through interactions among local cultural values, community experiences, environmental characteristics, historical narratives, and stakeholder perceptions. Therefore, the research focuses on interpreting the meanings associated with Bajulan Village and translating these meanings into a coherent visual branding identity.

The research was conducted through four main stages: (1) identification and exploration of local potential, (2) data collection and cultural interpretation, (3) qualitative data analysis and visual concept formulation, and (4) development and evaluation of the visual branding identity.

This approach requires the researcher to possess a comprehensive theoretical understanding. During field observations, the researcher also applies an emic perspective by interpreting phenomena based on participants' experiences, perceptions, and viewpoints rather than the researcher's own assumptions (Yurisma, 2021).

The study was conducted in Bajulan Village, Loceret District, Nganjuk Regency, East Java. The site was purposively selected because Bajulan is a traditional village with interconnected cultural, religious, historical, and natural tourism assets, making it relevant for developing local culture-based destination branding.

Research participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct knowledge, involvement, or experience related to Bajulan Village's cultural identity and tourism development. The informants consisted of the village head, cultural and community leaders, tourism destination managers, MSME actors, and tourists who had visited Bajulan. Village authorities provided information on institutional identity and development priorities; cultural and community leaders contributed knowledge of local values, traditions, and social characteristics; tourism managers and MSME actors provided perspectives on tourism assets and local economic activities; while tourists provided external perceptions of destination characteristics and memorable attributes. The selection of these informants enabled the study to obtain complementary internal and

external perspectives relevant to identifying the cultural attributes to be represented in Bajulan's visual branding identity.

Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. Observation recorded the physical environment, tourism attractions, facilities, cultural activities, existing visual identity, and promotional media. Interviews with village officials, cultural leaders, tourism managers, community representatives, MSME actors, and tourists explored local cultural values, distinctive characteristics, tourism experiences, and perceptions of Bajulan's identity. Documentation provided supporting visual and contextual data, including village archives, cultural activities, tourism sites, and existing promotional materials. Questionnaires captured community and tourist perceptions of Bajulan's recognizable and representative cultural attributes.

The instruments were developed based on destination identity and visual branding concepts. The indicators were directly matched to the data collected: cultural values, traditions, tolerance, and uniqueness for interviews; physical and visual characteristics for observation; existing visual materials for documentation; and recognition, memorability, and perceived distinctiveness for questionnaires. These data were used to identify the core attributes to be translated into Bajulan's visual branding identity.

Data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which comprises data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Waris, 2022). Interview and observation data were coded to identify themes related to cultural identity, destination potential, differentiation, and public perceptions. These themes were then interpreted using Morgan and Pritchard's destination branding framework (Morgan & Pritchard, 2004) Five Stages of Destination Branding framework: market investigation, brand identity development, brand launch, brand implementation, and monitoring, evaluation, and review. The framework served as the basis for formulating the branding and visual communication strategy.

Data trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking (Adler, 2022). Source triangulation compared information from village authorities, traditional leaders, local communities, tourism stakeholders, and visitors. Method triangulation compared findings from observations, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires, while member checking verified the researchers' interpretations with key informants. These strategies enhanced the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Description

Overview of Bajulan Village's Destination Branding Potential

Field findings indicate that Bajulan Village's tourism potential can be classified into four main categories: cultural, religious, natural, and historical tourism. Its destination identity is therefore shaped not by a single attraction, but by complementary assets that create an authentic character. Kertabhuwana Giri Wilis Temple represents religious tourism and symbolizes interfaith tolerance, while Roro Kuning Waterfall and Jolotundo Glamping strengthen the village's image as an ecotourism destination. The General Sudirman Monument adds a historical dimension through the legacy of Indonesia's struggle for independence.

These findings show that Bajulan Village's competitive advantage lies in integrating its cultural, natural, religious, and historical assets into a unified tourism experience. Accordingly, its destination branding should consistently represent these characteristics. The collected data were subsequently analyzed and used as the basis for developing Bajulan Village's destination branding.

Analysis of Cultural Assets as Destination Branding Assets

From a destination branding perspective, a destination's potential does not automatically become part of its brand identity. It functions as a brand asset only when it can shape perceptions, create differentiation, and deliver memorable tourist experiences (Blain et al., 2005; Hanna et al., 2021).

Bajulan Village's destination identity is built upon four complementary assets. First, local traditions, cultural rituals, and preserved wisdom strengthen the Culture and Heritage dimension of Anholt's City Branding Hexagon and support an authentic image. Second, religious diversity and community tolerance, symbolized by Kertabhuwana Giri Wilis Temple, reinforce the People dimension and reflect harmonious multicultural life.

Third, Roro Kuning Waterfall and Jolotundo Glamping create nature-based experiences that support a green and sustainable destination image. Fourth, the General Sudirman Monument adds historical and educational value to the tourism experience. Thus, Bajulan's differentiation lies not in a single attraction, but in the integration of culture, religion, history, nature, and harmonious community life into a unified destination brand identity.

Five Stage Desbrand Development

1. Market investigation, analysis and strategic recommendations

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of Bajulan Village (Source: Researchers' Processed Data, 2026)

Factor	Description
Strengths	Nganjuk's only customary village, featuring a Hindu temple, natural attractions, traditional arts, and a culture of tolerance.
Weaknesses	No formal visual identity, limited promotion, inadequate accessibility, underdeveloped facilities, and low public awareness. (based on observation, interviews, and documentation).
Opportunities	Culture- and nature-based tourism, Jolotundo Edupark, and clove commodities can support economic growth and strengthen the destination image.
Threats	Weak tourism management, inconsistent digital promotion, competing destinations, and low community participation may hinder branding development. (based on observation and interviews).

The SWOT analysis indicates a Strength–Opportunity (SO) strategy focused on developing Bajulan Village through cultural preservation and the digital promotion of its natural potential. Its cultural heritage, community tolerance, and natural assets are positioned as core identities through digital branding, visual communication, and culture-based tourism experiences. This strategy is expected to create sustainable differentiation and strengthen Bajulan Village's image.

Table 2. Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning (STP) Analysis of Bajulan Village (Source: Researchers' Processed Data, 2026)

Component	Aspect	Analysis
Segmentation	Demographic	Local and international tourists interested in cultural, religious, and nature-based tourism.
	Geographic	Visitors from Nganjuk, surrounding regions, Indonesia, and abroad.
	Psychographic	Tourists seeking authentic, educational, cultural, and tranquil experiences.
	Behavioral	Visitors traveling for family recreation, religion, education, photography, and exploration.
Targeting	Primary Target	Domestic families, religious and cultural communities, and students.
	Secondary Target	International tourists, researchers, academics, and cultural communities.
Positioning	Identity	A harmonious cultural village.
	Destination Image	An authentic cultural, religious, and nature-based destination rooted in tradition, tolerance, and preserved nature.
	Differentiation	Nganjuk's only customary village with a Hindu temple, cultural diversity, historical sites, tolerance, and natural attractions.

Demographically, Bajulan Village targets visitors aged 20–45, families, educational communities, and domestic tourists interested in cultural and nature-based tourism. Geographically, its primary market includes East Java and neighboring provinces, with potential to attract national and international tourists interested in Indonesian local culture.

Psychographically, the target market consists of travelers seeking authentic experiences, cultural preservation, outdoor activities, and direct interaction with local communities rather than mass tourism. Accordingly, Bajulan is positioned as a cultural tourism village that integrates culture, religion, nature, and community life into an authentic and sustainable visitor experience.

Table 3. Unique Selling Proposition (USP) Analysis of Bajulan Village (Source: Researchers' Processed Data, 2026)

Component	Analysis
Unique Selling Proposition (USP)	"Nganjuk's only customary village integrating culture, religion, nature, and tolerance."
Core Uniqueness	A customary village with a Hindu temple, living traditions, cultural richness, and preserved natural attractions.
Differentiating Value	An authentic integration of cultural, religious, and nature-based tourism in one destination.
Emotional Value	A peaceful and harmonious experience that promotes diversity and interfaith tolerance.
Visitor Benefits	Recreational and educational experiences in culture, history, diversity, and environmental preservation.

Based on the analysis, Bajulan Village's Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is formulated as: "The only traditional village in Nganjuk Regency that embodies harmony among culture, religion, and nature through the spirit of tolerance." This USP reflects Bajulan's distinctive character as a village that preserves local traditions, features a Hindu temple as a religious icon, and maintains sustainable natural tourism assets. These strengths reinforce its identity as a cultural, religious, and nature-based tourism destination.

2. brand identity development

The second stage of the Five Stages of Destination Branding develops a brand identity that reflects a destination's core character through visual elements, cultural values, community traits, and visitor experiences.

From Kapferer's perspective (Kapferer, 2017), these attributes form Bajulan Village's brand essence as a sustainable, harmonious, and authentic cultural tourism village. Its brand personality is reflected in a friendly, religious, open, and tolerant character. These values guide the development of its verbal and visual identity, ensuring consistency across all communication media.

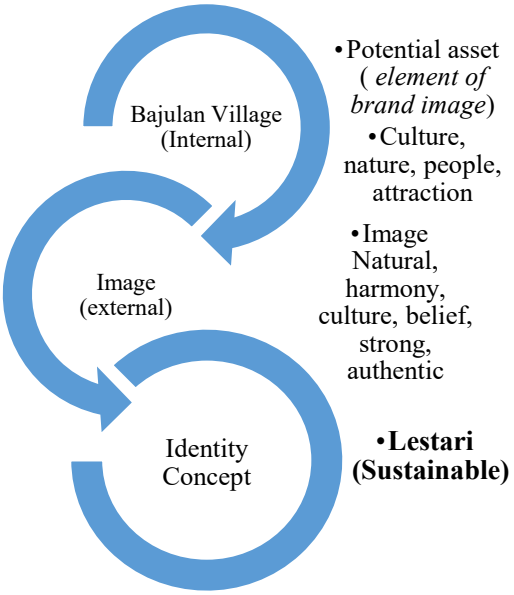


Figure 1. Mind-Mapping Analysis
(Source: Researchers' Documentation)

Mind-mapping analysis shows that Bajulan Village's cultural assets provide a strong foundation for destination branding. Preserved traditions, religious tolerance, harmonious diversity, and inherited rituals form its distinctive cultural identity. Four main domains religion, tourism, culture, and community serve as strategic strengths for building a strong destination image and differentiating Bajulan from other tourism villages.

Integrating these four aspects led to the destination branding concept of "LESTARI" or Sustainable which represents the harmony of culture, diversity, local wisdom, and community life as Bajulan Village's core identity. This concept emphasizes the preservation of culture, nature, and a tolerant society as a distinctive image experienced

by visitors. A positive destination image is expected to strengthen tourist recognition, satisfaction, perceived value, intention to recommend, and interest in visiting Bajulan Village (J & Rahmawati, 2015).

Verbal Concept

The research developed "Nitya Sahitya Dharmika" as the core verbal identity of Bajulan Village's destination branding. The tagline reflects the village's cultural values and strengthens its differentiation. *Nitya* signifies continuity, *Sahitya* culture and civilization, and *Dharmika* harmonious life grounded in virtue. Together, they convey enduring culture within a harmonious community.

As a brand promise, the tagline represents the experience offered to visitors through local traditions, religious diversity, community interaction, and preserved natural surroundings. Thus, "Nitya Sahitya Dharmika" functions not merely as a promotional slogan, but as a conceptual expression of Bajulan Village's destination identity.

Visual Concept

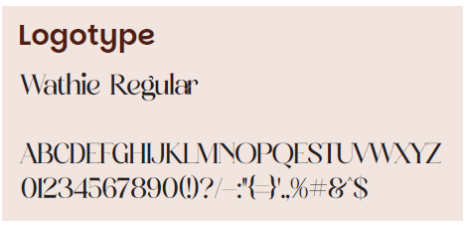
The brand image derived from the data analysis was then translated into a visual form. To effectively introduce and promote Bajulan Village's diverse potential to a wider audience, a destination branding logo was developed as its visual representation.



Gambar 2. *Moodboard colour*
(Sumber: Dokumentasi Peneliti)

The color palette for Bajulan Village's branding reflects a peaceful, natural, harmonious, and sustainable image. Brown conveys warmth, stability, closeness to nature, and local wisdom, while cream creates a soft, simple, and elegant impression.

The visual identity uses two typefaces, Wathie Regular and Timeless Regular, to distinguish the logotype from the tagline while maintaining a consistent and recognizable brand character.



Gambar 3. *Font Logotype*
(Sumber: Dokumentasi Peneliti)

Wathie Regular gives the logotype an elegant, artistic, and classic-modern character. Its decorative letterforms strengthen Bajulan Village's distinctive visual identity while representing local culture and wisdom. Within the destination branding, this typeface conveys an elegant, warm, and memorable village image.

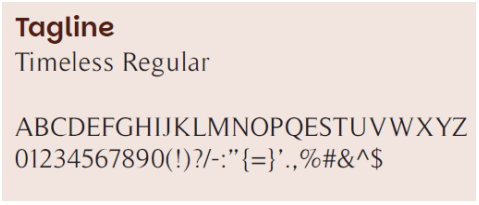


Figure 3. Logotype Typeface
(Source: Researchers' Documentation)

Timeless Regular gives the tagline a clean, simple, and highly readable appearance, creating a modern and elegant impression. It balances the more artistic Wathie Regular logotype while maintaining a professional and consistent visual identity. Overall, the typeface supports clear communication and reinforces Bajulan Village's image as a harmonious and sustainable tourism destination.



Figure 5. Bajulan Village Logo
(Source: Researchers' Documentation)

The logo serves as a visual representation of Bajulan Village's identity to support recognition and promote its potential. It consists of a logotype in Wathie Regular and a tagline in Timeless Regular.

The logogram visualizes the concept of *Nitya Sahitya Dharmika* and is interpreted through visual semiotics, in which each graphic element functions as a sign linking form and meaning. Its main element, the lotus flower (*padma*), symbolizes purity, balance, and continuity, reinforcing Bajulan's image as a cultural destination that preserves tradition

amid change. The infinity element represents the sustainability of cultural and customary values, while the circle signifies unity, tolerance, and continuity. These meanings align with the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*, which emphasizes harmony among humans, God, and nature. Brown reflects closeness to nature and local wisdom, while cream conveys simplicity and harmony. Overall, the logo represents the concept of *Nitya Sahitya Dharmika* as a symbol of sustainable and harmonious culture.

3. Brand Launch And Introduction

Kusrianto, as cited in Saputra et al (2022) explains that message delivery in visual communication media is determined by the concepts or ideas formulated by designers, including typography, color, and layout, which enable messages to be communicated and understood effectively.

Table 4. Bajulan Village Brand Activation (Source: Researchers' Processed Data)

No.	Branding Stage	Program	Media	Timeline	Objective
1	Awareness	Cultural events, rituals, performances, and festivals	Posters, banners, billboards, Instagram, YouTube	Annual	Build awareness of Bajulan's culture and tolerance-based identity.
2	Interest	Cultural packages, live-in programs, workshops, and tours	Website, Instagram, videos, brochures	One year	Increase visitor interest in Bajulan Village.
3	Engagement	Festivals, MSME exhibitions, and educational tours	Social media, YouTube, offline events	Ongoing	Encourage interaction and emotional engagement.
4	Brand Experience	Ritual participation and community interaction	Videos, testimonials, tourism blogs	Ongoing	Create memorable experiences and strengthen destination image.
5	Loyalty and Advocacy	Tourism communities, user-generated content, and influencer collaborations	Social media, website, Google, TripAdvisor	Ongoing	Encourage repeat visits and recommendations.

4. *brand implementation*

This implementation demonstrates that branding extends beyond the logo to encompass a consistent visual experience.



Figure 6. Bajulan Village Brochure Design
(Source: Researchers' Documentation)

The brochure is a tri-fold promotional medium presenting Bajulan Village's tourism potential through concise text and visuals. Dominated design creates a natural impression aligned with the village's nature, cultural, and religious tourism concept.



Figure 7. Bajulan Village X-Banner Design
(Source: Researchers' Documentation)

The X-banner is a vertical promotional medium displaying Bajulan Village's identity and key tourist attractions. Its brown color scheme reinforces the natural and cultural concept, while destination photographs enhance visual appeal.

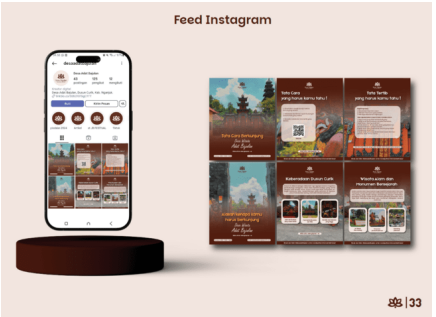


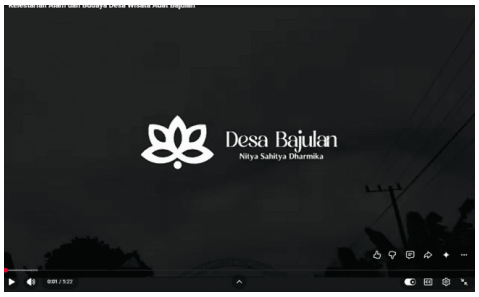
Figure 8. Bajulan Village Instagram Content Design
(Source: Researchers' Documentation)

The Instagram feed is a digital promotional medium designed with a consistent grid layout featuring Bajulan Village's attractions, culture, and facilities. Its brown color palette aligns with the village's natural and cultural identity, supported by photographs and concise informational text.



Figure 9. Bajulan Village Merchandise Design
(Source: Researchers' Documentation)

The four merchandise item; spins, t-shirts, caps, and tote bags form part of Bajulan Village's physical branding strategy to strengthen its visual identity and increase awareness. Beyond serving as souvenirs, they also function as mobile promotional media that extend the village's visibility through everyday use.



Gambar 10. Tampilan awal video promosi
(Sumber:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeVvSf2KS9g)

Conceptually, the video integrates Bajulan Village's natural, cultural, and religious assets as the foundation of its locally rooted destination brand. Through natural landscapes, cultural activities, and harmonious community life, it builds an authentic, green, and tolerant destination image. Based on the City Branding Hexagon, the video represents the dimensions of tourism, culture, people, and place.

5. Monitoring, Evaluating, And Review

Evaluation Results

Table 5. Results of Visual Branding Evaluation (Source: Researchers' Processed Data)

Indicator	Items	Mean	Achievement (%)	Category
Recognition	1–5	4.23	84.68%	Very High
Memorability	6–10	4.13	82.56%	High
Distinctiveness	11–15	4.20	84.00%	High

Cultural Representation	16–21	4.43	88.53%	Very High
Natural & Tourism Representation	22–25	4.30	86.00%	Very High
Consistency	26–30	4.17	83.36%	High
Overall Perception	31–35	4.23	84.52%	Very High
Overall Evaluation	1–35	4.25	84.94%	Very High

The evaluation used a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The mean scores were interpreted using five rating categories: 1.00–1.80 = very low, 1.81–2.60 = low, 2.61–3.40 = moderate, 3.41–4.20 = high, and 4.21–5.00 = very high. This classification provides a basis for interpreting respondents' perceptions of the proposed visual branding identity.

The proposed visual identity achieved an overall mean score of 4.25 (84.94%), categorized as very high. Among the six indicators, Cultural Representation scored highest at 4.43 (88.53%), followed by Natural and Tourism Representation at 4.30 (86.00%), Recognition at 4.23 (84.68%), Distinctiveness at 4.20 (84.00%), Consistency at 4.17 (83.36%), and Memorability at 4.13 (82.56%). Although memorability recorded the lowest score, it remained within a high category, indicating that the identity contains identifiable visual characteristics but may require stronger visual reinforcement to achieve more immediate recall. This can be supported through repetition of distinctive graphic elements, consistent color and typography, and uniform application across tourism communication media. Overall, the findings indicate that the identity effectively represents Bajulan's cultural, natural, and tourism characteristics, while the overall perception score of 4.23 (84.52%) supports its suitability for tourism communication.

Importantly, the evaluation does not measure changes in tourist arrivals, destination awareness at the population level, visitor satisfaction, economic impact, or the effectiveness of a comprehensive destination branding strategy. The findings are therefore limited to respondents' perceptions of the proposed visual identity. This limitation is consistent with the research scope, which focuses specifically on the development of visual branding as a representation of Bajulan Village's local cultural identity.

Recommendations

The proposed visual identity is recommended for gradual implementation as a destination visual branding system for Bajulan Village, beginning with the development of brand guidelines covering the logo, color palette, typography, graphic elements, and visual applications. The identity can then be applied consistently across key tourism communication media, including digital platforms, promotional materials, signage, and local tourism facilities. Future research should extend the evaluation beyond perceived visual identity by examining its implementation in actual destination contexts, including visitor recognition and recall, stakeholder perceptions, and consistency across tourism touchpoints. Broader studies may subsequently investigate destination awareness, visitor responses, and other tourism-related outcomes using appropriate longitudinal and field-based methods. Such research would complement the present study while maintaining a clear distinction between visual identity evaluation and the broader effectiveness of destination branding.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Bajulan Village has potential as a local culture-based tourism village, supported by religious diversity, tolerance, and preserved natural and traditional resources. Using a five-stage destination branding approach, the "LESTARI" (SUSTAINABLE) concept was developed to represent Bajulan as a sustainable, harmonious, and authentic destination.

The proposed visual identity translates the village's cultural, religious, historical, and natural characteristics into a coherent tourism representation. Evaluation results showed a mean score of 4.25 (84.94%), categorized as very high, with the highest scores for Cultural Representation (4.43; 88.53%), Natural and Tourism Representation (4.30; 86.00%), and Recognition (4.23; 84.68%). These findings indicate a high perceived suitability of the identity in representing Bajulan's local and tourism characteristics.

From a design perspective, the study contributes a coherent visual branding framework that integrates local cultural, religious, historical, and natural references into a unified system for consistent application across tourism communication touchpoints. However, the findings are limited to respondents' perceptions and do not measure tourist arrivals, population-level destination awareness, visitor satisfaction, economic impact, or the effectiveness of a comprehensive destination branding strategy.

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