

Sangkuriang: The Tourism Potential of Folklore in the Bandung Basin

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Abstract

'Sangkuriang' has become a folktale inherent in the Sundanese people; its presence as a medium for education, entertainment, social, and culture has also encouraged tourism in Mount Tangkuban Parahu. Several settings in the story of 'Sangkuriang' are believed to be related to places in the Bandung Basin Area that still exist today. Exploration of places associated with this tragic romance story must be done to map tourism potential and develop tourism marketing strategies, especially for tourist attractions spread across the Bandung Basin Area related to 'Sangkuriang.' This study involved five informants, consisting of cultural experts, academics, local people, and tourism stakeholders, with data analysis techniques in the form of thematic analysis to explore the potential of folklore-based tourism. Exploration was carried out using literature studies and interviews. Field observations were conducted to identify tourism potential in areas relevant to the story. The exploration results showed the potential for developing tourist destinations in several locations based on the geomythology and topography of the Bandung Basin. This study's main findings are identifying locations that can be used to promote 'Sangkuriang' as an intangible cultural heritage—folklore while developing storytelling-based tourism marketing strategies.

Keywords: Sangkuriang folklore, Bandung basin, intangible cultural heritage, storytelling marketing, geomythology

A. INTRODUCTION

Effective marketing strategies are essential in promoting tourism destinations and have increased an area's attractiveness (Mulec, 2010). Tourists are starting to feel bored with mass tourism because they do not feel directly interacting with their surroundings, including social, cultural, and environmental elements (Ghaderi et al., 2022; Grabowski et al., 2016). Motivation is essential to tourists' travel choices, with recreation preferences ranging from rest to active recreation, education, and cultural experiences (Douglas et al., 2024) influencing their likelihood to participate in certain activities (Seyfi et al., 2020). Cultural diversity in tourism is related to the creation of added value through increasingly active tourist experiences so that it can help in tourism development from the tourist perspective (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2019; López-Guzmán et al., 2011; Sugandini et al., 2019; Yu & Xu, 2019). Additionally, thematic tourism concepts have emerged as effective strategies to deliver memorable experiences by crafting new narratives and activities grounded in local histories and cultural heritage packaged in contemporary formats (Handayani et al., 2018). Such concepts cater to changing tourist preferences and serve as an essential tool in tourism marketing, providing opportunities to differentiate destinations through compelling storytelling techniques (Moscardo, 2020).

The Ministry of Tourism has launched a tourism concept that can provide extraordinary experiences to tourists. It encourages the emergence of thematic tourism concepts that focus more on forming and creating new experiences from places and activities that can represent stories of the past packaged in a contemporary way (Handayani et al., 2018). This strategy can be applied to travel patterns or the preparation of tourism programs aligned with themes, narratives, or stories (Moscardo, 2020). This tourism concept is related to tourism based on folklore that develops in an area known as folklore tourism

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(Everett & John Parakoottathil, 2018; Ironside & Massie, 2020; Xiao, 2002). Folklore encompasses various cultural expressions, from popular beliefs and customs to myths, legends, and other genres of oral literature/oral art (Marzolph, 1998). Folklore is quickly adopted and recycled into other contexts, such as fiction, poetry, visual arts, tourism promotion, and intellectual conceptualization (Caro, 2013). Intangible cultural heritage serves as a source of attraction, a conservation tool, and a driver of culturally and naturally sensitive tourism behaviour in protected natural areas (Esfehani & Albrecht, 2018) of which folklore is a part (Jhamb & Kaur, 2021; Stefano, 2016).

Tourists are currently very active in their efforts to fulfill the need for tourism by seeking knowledge about new, unexplored destinations to searching for destinations to focus more on the local customs, history, ethics, and culture of a particular destination (George, 2016; López-Guzmán et al., 2011; Novelli, 2005). This shift in tourist behavior highlights the importance of activities that can simplify decision-making for tourists while providing culturally enriched experiences. Concept storytelling has been used in destination marketing activities. Some research on implementation storytelling as an activity that has been carried out to improve the reputation and image of tourism destinations (Akgun et al., 2016; Bassano et al., 2019), implementation as one of the integrated marketing communications, namely promotional media and destination differentiation (Youssef et al., 2019). In addition to tourism activities, it can be used as material and interpretation media for tour guides (Kartika & Riana, 2020), as marketing content on social media in the digital era (Lund et al., 2018), and as a basis for developing tourism destinations (Mossberg et al., 2010). Therefore, storytelling has emerged as a comprehensive strategy in tourism marketing, allowing destinations to connect with potential tourists through emotionally engaging narratives that emphasize unique cultural elements (Bassano et al., 2019). Gamil (2017) found that the potential of a story and the ability to put it into practice storytelling as an innovative medium for documenting, safeguarding, and marketing intangible cultural heritage through organized events/activities and using the findings as implications for the government, local communities, and the tourism industry to consider this strategy.

Stories related to an event, such as the naming of places or things closely related to socio-cultural aspects of society in the past (Light, 2014). In general, the socio-culture of a place can influence tourists to visit tourist destinations (Baruadi et al., 2017; Baruadi & Eraku, 2019). Therefore, the socio-cultural life of the community needs to be investigated from the historical and legendary aspects of the formation of a site/location/place, including the legend of the formation of several mountains and other locations for local people and tourists who know the story. Apart from that, Chakraborty (2011) said that tourism and folklore have a deep connection from a theoretical and applied point of view, which is multidisciplinary and can potentially solve socio-cultural and socio-economic problems in society. These intersections between tourism and folklore illustrate the need for deeper exploration of how local narratives can be integrated into tourism offerings, providing sustainable benefits to communities and tourists.

One of the areas associated with folklore is the Bandung, administratively known as the Bandung Basin Metropolitan Area. From an economic perspective, this area is a national strategic area consisting of the core urban areas such as Bandung City and Cimahi City and the surrounding urban area, which forms the Metropolitan Area (Regulation of the President of the Republic of Indonesia No. 45 of 2018). This area is very close to one of the folklore that spreads in Tanah Pasundan and even Indonesia, namely "Sangkuriang." Sangkuriang folklore is very closely associated with the existence of Mount Tangkuban Parahu because it tells the legend of the formation of the mountain itself (Supriadi, 2012). The folklore represents a cultural asset and holds potential as a central theme in developing thematic tourism experiences that can be uniquely positioned within regional tourism strategies. Planning for intangible cultural heritage in tourism requires addressing accessibility and perceived appropriateness and

involving stakeholders to co-create value for both tourism and heritage preservation (Esfehani & Albrecht, 2019).

Research regarding the relationship between 'Sangkuriang' and tourism has often been discussed, especially regarding its relationship with Mount Tangkuban Parahu (Kartika & Riana, 2020; Raharjo, 2017; Rahayu, 2018; Sulistyorini, 2018). Abdurahman & Kadarisman (2022) explain that the story of 'Sangkuriang' is an example of geomythology in West Java, especially in the Bandung highlands. The author's previous research underlines further research regarding applying the 'Sangkuriang' folklore in other contexts (Rinaldi & Yusuf, 2024). These studies emphasize the significance of exploring the broader implications of such folklore, particularly in integrating it into tourism strategies that promote sustainable cultural tourism. Therefore, exploring the potential of 'Sangkuriang' folklore in developing tourism destinations in the Bandung Basin Area is essential for creating distinctive tourism experiences that resonate with domestic and international audiences.

Culture-based tourism plays an important role in destination development, especially by utilizing folklore as the main attraction (Cvijanović et al., 2023; Pariong, 2024). 'Sangkuriang,' a folklore closely related to Sundanese culture, has great potential to be developed into a thematic tourism product. Locations such as Mount Tangkuban Parahu, Citarum, and the Bandung Basin area are inseparable parts of this narrative. However, this potential has not been optimally utilized in a culture-based tourism marketing strategy. This study starts with the problem of how the 'Sangkuriang' folklore can be integrated with developing tourism destinations in the Bandung Basin, what locations are directly related to the narrative, and how this connection can be utilized to support a storytelling-based marketing strategy. In addition, this study also considers how understanding geomythology, the Bujangga Manik manuscript, and topography can strengthen the narrative of folklore-based tourism. This study aims to explore and map locations in the Bandung Basin related to the folklore of 'Sangkuriang,' analyze the relationship of the narrative with the context of geomythology, topography, and the Bujangga Manik manuscript, and develop a culture-based storytelling strategy to promote tourist destinations in the Bandung Basin area. In addition, this study also aims to present findings related to folklore, as tourism attractions based on intangible cultural heritage. The study is expected to produce strategic guidelines for developing culture-based tourism in the Bandung Basin area while preserving folklore as part of intangible cultural heritage.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses an exploratory and descriptive approach to explore tourism potential based on the 'Sangkuriang' folktale in the Bandung Basin area. The exploratory approach aims to understand complex phenomena and explore in-depth qualitative data, while the descriptive approach documents factual conditions related to relevant locations. The theories that form the basis include the concept of storytelling in destination marketing (Gamil, 2017), geomythology (Abdurahman & Kadarisman, 2022), and the value of intangible cultural heritage (Esfehani & Albrecht, 2018). The research procedure includes a literature study, semi-structured interviews, and field observations. The research activities are designed to align with the theories mentioned and to ensure that the data obtained can be used to support the research objectives. The research procedure is designed to align with these theories, focusing on relevant research activities.

This research was conducted from June 3 to July 26, 2024, to ensure that the data obtained is relevant and in the study context. Research activities include literature studies, semi-structured interviews, and field observations at locations related to the folklore of 'Sangkuriang.' This research explored the relationship between the narrative of the folklore of 'Sangkuriang' and geographical elements

such as mountains, rivers, and caves in the Bandung Basin area. The main focus is identifying relevant cultural and historical elements and their potential in developing culture-based tourism.

Data Collection

The data collected consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with five informants: cultural experts, academics, tourism stakeholders, and local communities. Interviews were conducted to explore information about the relationship between the 'Sangkuriang' folklore narrative and physical locations in the Bandung Basin area. The information collected included informants' views on the relevance of topography, history, and culture to the folklore narrative and the potential for tourism development. Secondary data were obtained through literature studies that included Bujangga Manik manuscripts, historical documents, scientific articles, and other relevant references. This study aims to understand the context of the folklore narrative and its relationship to geomythological and topographic elements in the research area.

Field observations were conducted at locations such as Mount Tangkuban Parahu, Citarum, and ancient caves in the Bandung Basin area. These observations aimed to document the geographical and cultural conditions of the location and validate the interview results. Data obtained through observation included analysis of physical conditions, the relationship of the location to the folklore narrative, and identification of the location's potential as a tourism attraction.

Data were analyzed using a thematic approach to identify key patterns or themes from the interview and observation data. This analysis ensured that the collected data supported the research objectives, as reflected in the sub-headings of the findings and discussions. The results of this thematic analysis were used to group information based on relevance to the research location's cultural narrative and geographical conditions. With this approach, this study produced structured documentation from the results of interviews and observations, which provided insight into the relationship between folklore and physical locations in the Bandung Basin area. The analysis results also provided a basis for developing storytelling strategies that can be applied in promoting culture-based tourism.

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This study reveals the great potential of the 'Sangkuriang' folktale as a basis for developing culture-based tourism in the Bandung Basin area. The study results show a close relationship between the folktale narrative and geographical elements, such as Mount Tangkuban Parahu, Citarum, and ancient caves. Data collected from interviews with five informants revealed that the 'Sangkuriang' narrative could be a storytelling tool to promote tourism destinations. However, developing this culture-based storytelling requires a more comprehensive strategy, including integrating local cultural elements into a format that is more attractive to tourists.

Folklore and Historical Narratives: The Role of Bujangga Manik

The results refer to the Bujangga Manik Manuscript, which contains the travel notes of a prince from the Pakuan Palace in Cipakancilan, with the title Pangeran Jaya Pakuan (the Great Prince of Pakuan), better known as Bujangga Manik, who is also known as the wandering poet from Pakuan. The *Bujangga Manik* manuscript complements the *Sangkuriang* narrative by offering historical and cultural context. This ancient travelogue describes geographical features in the Bandung Basin, including references to the Citarum River and Bukit Pategeng, which are integral to the folklore. The manuscript bridges the mythological and historical narratives, enhancing the depth of storytelling-based tourism. One fragment of the story tells that after a long journey, Bujangga Manik arrived at a place that is considered to be the current Bandung Basin Area, which is described in his poetry and reads as follows.

	<i>Translation</i>
...	...
<i>leu(m)pang aing ka-baratkeun,</i>	I walked west
<i>datang ka Bukit Pategeng,</i>	came to Bukit Pategeng
<i>sakakala Sang Kuriang,</i>	Sangkuriang legend
<i>masa dek nyitu Citarum,</i>	time will stem Citarum
<i>burung te(m)bey kasiangan,</i>	but failed because I was late
...	...

The fragment of the story above is the beginning of the story of 'Sangkuriang' or Sang Kuriang. In the story fragment above, several locations exist today in the Bandung Basin Area, such as the Citarum, the longest river in West Java. This aligns with the folklore's account of Sangkuriang's attempt to dam the Citarum River. Incorporating these historical references into guided tours or interpretative content can enrich tourists' understanding of the region's cultural and historical heritage. The relationship between the 'Sangkuriang' folklore and several locations in the Bandung Basin Area will be analyzed based on the 'Sangkuriang' folklore. In some literature, the exact location of the 'Sangkuriang' folklore needs to be explained or described. Several areas in the Bandung Basin Area are said to be related to folklore, whether written in books or related to the toponymy of a region or region.

Integration of Folklore and Geographical: The Story and the Bandung Basin

The topography of Bandung, characterized by its basin-like formation surrounded by hills and mountains, supports the geological theory of an ancient lake, now recognized as the Bandung Basin Area. This unique geological feature is framed by historical and cultural narratives, particularly the *Sangkuriang* folklore, which ties directly to the area's formation and identity (Brahmantyo & Bachtiar, 2009; Office of Highways and Spatial Planning, 2019). Geologists have identified the Bandung Plateau, situated at approximately 709 meters above sea level, as evidence of the remnants of a large prehistoric lake. This lake was formed by the damming of the Citarum River due to the eruption of Mount Sunda Purba. Supporting this theory, the *Sangkuriang* folklore depicts Sangkuriang damming the river to create a lake for sailing boats, suggesting a cultural memory of this significant geological event (Brahmantyo & Bachtiar, 2009; Lauder et al., 2023; Syafiqah et al., 2022).

In Sundanese tradition, this ancient lake is known as Situ Hiang, or Purba Bandung Lake, estimated to have formed around 105,000 years ago during the Pleistocene epoch, coinciding with the emergence of the Lembang Fault (A & Setiawan, 2018). Geological theories regarding its formation include eruptions from Mount Tangkuban Parahu and Mount Sunda, with evidence pointing to the shrinking of the lake as the Citarum River flowed freely again through the Rajamandala Hills and the Sanghyang Tikoro natural tunnel (Abdurahman & Kadarisman, 2022; Dam et al., 1996). These geological findings align closely with the *Sangkuriang* folklore, which describes the dam breaking and the lake draining due to Sangkuriang's actions (Bachtiar et al., 2008).

Interviews with residents from Pagerwangi Village and Empleeegi Village further illuminate the connection between the Lembang Fault and the folklore. Community members believe the fault's existence is linked to Sangkuriang's felling of a giant tree, with the fallen trunk symbolizing the fault stretching in a west-to-east direction. This fault, an active geological feature in West Java, spans 29 kilometers from Padalarang to Mount Manglayang, morphologically appearing as an elongated escarpment (National Earthquake Study Center, 2019).

Beyond the folklore, local knowledge includes natural disaster signs tied to the region's geological conditions. The story of Sangkuriang felling a tree correlates with the physical characteristics of the Lembang Fault and the adjacent Mount Bukit Tinggi and Mount Burangrang. These features align with historical accounts of activities described in the folklore, particularly in areas like Cisarua, Parongpong, and Lembang Districts (A & Setiawan, 2018).

Additionally, toponymy findings in Karyawangi Village provide further evidence of the folklore's integration into the cultural and geographical landscape. Names like '*Panyampaian*' and '*Panyairan*' highlight this connection:

"Panyampaian" is derived from the Sundanese word *nyampai* (to hang), this name reflects the belief that Dayang Sumbi's shawl once hung on a tree branch in this area.

"Panyairan" originates from *nyair* (netting), this name is tied to local lore that Dayang Sumbi engaged in fishing here.

Such toponyms are deeply rooted in traditional legends, offering geographic information and ethnocultural insights into the indigenous narratives of the Bandung Basin. These names underscore the importance of folklore as a tool for understanding the interplay between culture and environment and the differences in Indigenous storytelling practices (Feltault, 2006). Integrating folklore, geological history, and local traditions creates a comprehensive narrative that bridges the tangible and intangible aspects of the Bandung Basin's heritage. This connection between *Sangkuriang* and the region's physical geography provides a unique platform for cultural tourism development, emphasizing the interplay of myth, history, and natural science in shaping local identity.

The Ancient Rivers, Caves, and Lakes: Where Did It All Begin?

The *Sangkuriang* story provides a vivid explanation of how natural features in the Bandung Basin are deeply interwoven with mythological narratives. According to the legend, Dayang Sumbi, upon realizing that Sangkuriang was her biological son, set an impossible condition to deter him from marrying her. Sangkuriang was tasked with damming a river to create a lake for large boats to sail by dawn. This narrative prominently features the Citarum River, an essential element in Sundanese culture and history, and appears as a significant setting in the *Bujangga Manik* manuscript (Noorduyn, 2019; Noorduyn & Teeuw, 2006).

The Citarum River, the longest river in West Java (297 km), originates at Situ Cisanti in Gunung Wayang, Bandung Regency, and flows through the Bandung Basin before emptying into the Java Sea (Dharma & Savitri, 2023; Idris et al., 2019; Sholeh et al., 2018). Its name is derived from the Sundanese words "*Ci*" (water) and "*Tarum*" (Indigofera plants), which were historically used as natural dyes in traditional fabrics (Budimansyah et al., 2018; Wessing, 2011). This river holds immense historical significance, serving as the lifeline for the ancient Tarumanegara Kingdom, the oldest Hindu kingdom in West Java, and forming the foundation of its civilization along its banks (Wessing, 2011).

Despite its rich history, the Citarum River faces significant environmental challenges today, including being labeled the world's most polluted river (Djelantik, 2023). However, its geo-diversity still holds potential as a tourism attraction. Various points along the river, such as Sanghyang Heuleut, Sanghyang Poek, and Sanghyang Tikoro, have been developed as geo-tourism sites, showcasing the geological and cultural richness of the region (Rohaendi et al., 2021; Wulung et al., 2021).

Geological and Mythological Intersections—Sanghyang Tikoro is a crucial site in both the *Sangkuriang* folklore and the region's geological history. According to the legend, Sangkuriang, in a fit of rage, destroyed the dam he had built, causing the waters of the ancient lake to drain through Sanghyang Tikoro. This act symbolizes the volcanic and tectonic processes that shaped the Bandung Basin. Sanghyang Tikoro, which translates to "the sacred throat," is an underground cave where the Citarum River flows

below the surface, forming part of the region's rich geomythological tapestry (Abdurahman & Kadarisman, 2022; Widjaja et al., 2020).

Other formations associated with the *Sangkuriang* narrative include Sanghyang Heuleut and Sanghyang Poek. These caves and water bodies meet geo-tourism criteria and represent the interplay of natural history and cultural heritage. Sanghyang Tikoro itself, while inaccessible due to safety concerns, remains shrouded in mystery and local myths. Among these myths is the belief that items thrown into the cave's river produce eerie screams, reinforcing its mystique and cultural significance.

A Fragment of Myth: Sangkuriang's Anger and the Landscape—One of the most evocative fragments of the *Sangkuriang* story describes Sangkuriang's rage upon discovering his failure to complete his tasks by dawn:

"Sangkuriang was very angry. He felt he had been cheated. He threw himself into the dam at Sanghyang Tikoro with mounting anger. The bottom land of the Citarum River was then thrown to the east, forming Mount Manglayang. He then kicked his large boat far away, which rolled over and became Mount Tangkuban Parahu..." (Narawaty, 2023)

This mythological explanation aligns with the geological processes that shaped the region. The creation of Mount Tangkuban Parahu, Sanghyang Tikoro, and other formations illustrates the community's interpretation of the dynamic natural forces in their environment.

The interplay of tangible landmarks like rivers, caves, and mountains with the *Sangkuriang* myth provides a compelling narrative for cultural tourism. The region's geo-mythological features—Sanghyang Tikoro, Sanghyang Heuleut, and Sanghyang Poek—serve as focal points for exploring how folklore and geology intertwine. By preserving these locations and incorporating them into storytelling-based tourism, stakeholders can highlight the natural and cultural significance of the Citarum River and its surrounding features. Promote sustainable tourism that respects the environmental and cultural heritage of the Bandung Basin. Foster community engagement by empowering residents as storytellers and stewards of these sacred sites. This approach not only preserves the mythological essence of the region but also underscores its geological and historical importance, creating a multidimensional experience for tourists and locals alike.

Sangkuriang and the Mountains: The Boat, the Process, and the Ending of the Story

The legend of Mount Tangkuban Parahu, an iconic feature of the Bandung Basin, embodies the mythological and geological intersections in West Java's history. According to the *Sangkuriang* folklore, Mount Tangkuban Parahu was formed from a massive boat kicked over in frustration by Sangkuriang, symbolizing the region's volcanic and tectonic activity (Kartika & Riana, 2020). Beyond this legend, the story also connects other prominent mountains—Mount Bukit Tunggul, Mount Burangrang, and Mount Putri—with the process of boat-making described in the myth. These mountains serve as both geological markers and cultural symbols of ancient volcanic activity, defining the topography of West Java.

Mount Bukit Tunggul: Stumps of the Past—Mount Bukit Tunggul, rising to 2,209 meters above sea level, is the highest peak in the North Bandung Mountains. In the folklore, this mountain represents the wood stumps left behind by Sangkuriang after felling trees to construct his massive boat (Abdurahman & Kadarisman, 2022). Geologically, Mount Bukit Tunggul is part of the ancient Sunda Mountain volcanic system, its eruption significantly contributing to the region's formation. Located in Cibodas Village, Lembang District, the area around Mount Bukit Tunggul is managed by PT Perkebunan Nusantara VIII (PTPN VIII), which offers eco-tourism experiences. Attractions include quinine plantation tours, camping grounds, and waterfalls such as Batu Sangkur and Batu Bedegul. The nearby Situ Sangkuriang, a lake believed to be where Sangkuriang washed his hands, further integrates the region's natural and cultural narratives (Fauzi, 2017).

In addition to its folklore significance, the mountain's toponymy enhances its tourism appeal. For example, geological studies have identified Mount Bukit Tunggul as part of the Bandung volcanic complex, linking it to Mount Palasari and Mount Manglayang as central volcanic units, while Mount Tangkuban Parahu and the Lembang Fault are classified as extrusive volcanic formations (Ervina et al., 2020). This combination of cultural and geological features makes Mount Bukit Tunggul a multidimensional tourism destination.

Mount Burangrang: Twigs and Branches—Mount Burangrang, standing at 2,050 meters, represents the twigs and branches Sangkuriang used to build his boat. This mountain, part of the same volcanic chain as Mount Bukit Tunggul, serves as a nature reserve and a hub for outdoor recreation. Tourist attractions in the area include waterfalls such as Panganten, Cijalu, Cipurut, and Cipalasari, along with campsites and eco-tourism spots like Dusun Bambu and Natural Hill (Cahyanto et al., 2023; Edison et al., 2019). The mountain's volcanic origins reflect the geotectonic history of the region, characterized by cycles of volcanic activity and erosion. Its proximity to vibrant eco-tourism facilities enhances its appeal, making it a key component of the Bandung Basin's integrated tourism strategy.

Mount Putri: A Place of Disappearance—Mount Putri, known as the site where Dayang Sumbi disappeared into the forest, stands at 1,587 meters in Lembang District. Locally referred to as "Geger Bintang Matahari," this mountain has been developed as a popular destination for beginner climbers and eco-tourism enthusiasts. Managed by the North Bandung Forest Management Unit, the mountain offers panoramic views and insights into the ecological history of the Bandung volcanic complex (A & Setiawan, 2018; Fauziyyah, 2024). The mountain's connection to Southeast Asian folklore themes of forests and the supernatural adds a mystical layer to its tourism appeal (Wessing, 2020). Mount Putri exemplifies how cultural and ecological narratives can coexist, providing visitors with a deeper understanding of the region's natural and mythological heritage.

The mountains associated with Sangkuriang—Tangkuban Parahu, Bukit Tunggul, Burangrang, and Putri—serve as geographical markers and embody the fusion of folklore and geology. This integration provides a unique narrative for developing thematic tourism, offering cultural education—the folklore invites visitors to explore Sundanese myths and traditions tied to the landscape. Geo-tourism opportunities to the volcanic history of these mountains enhance their scientific and recreational appeal. Sustainable development combining cultural and ecological tourism can preserve the natural environment while promoting local heritage. By weaving together these elements, stakeholders can transform the Bandung Basin into a destination that celebrates its mythological roots and geological grandeur, attracting tourists while fostering cultural and environmental sustainability.

Storytelling in Developing 'Sangkuriang' Tourism Potential

The Bandung Basin area hosts seven key tourist attractions associated with the *Sangkuriang* folklore, including the Citarum River Area, Sanghyang Tikoro Area, Mount Burangrang, Mount Bukit Mogul, Mount Tangkuban Parahu, Mount Putri, and the Lembang Fault Area. These natural landmarks offer immense potential for cultural tourism but require significant improvements in infrastructure and facilities to fully develop their attractiveness. The lake created by Sangkuriang in the legend, often associated with the Ancient Bandung Lake, represents a central theme for crafting thematic tourism itineraries.

This research employs Gamil's (2017) storytelling framework as a strategic tool for protecting and marketing intangible cultural heritage. The model highlights seven essential elements: objectives, stakeholder involvement, storytelling stages, outcomes, dimensions of tourism development, preparatory tasks, and evaluation processes (see Table 1). These components are designed to integrate local resources,

strengths, and stakeholders into a cohesive decision-making process to enhance storytelling-based tourism.

Storytelling as a Tourism Marketing Strategy—Storytelling has emerged as a powerful tourism marketing strategy (Karzen & Demonja, 2020; Papcunová et al., 2021), offering a way to forge emotional connections between tourists and destinations. By weaving the narratives of *Sangkuriang* with the natural topography of the Bandung Basin—such as Mount Tangkuban Parahu, the Citarum River, and the region's ancient caves—a unique and immersive tourism experience can be created. This approach not only highlights the cultural richness of the area but also invites visitors to engage deeply with its mythological and geographical heritage.

One promising avenue is the use of local tour guides, who, when trained in the folklore of *Sangkuriang*, can bring the story to life at significant sites (Kartika & Riana, 2020). Their narration enriches the visitor experience, transforming a simple tour into an engaging cultural journey. Additionally, digital storytelling offers the opportunity to extend this narrative to a global audience, using online platforms to share the legend of *Sangkuriang* and promote the Bandung Basin as a destination steeped in culture and history.

Another vital component of this strategy lies in organizing thematic events that blend performing arts with folklore. Festivals and performances based on the *Sangkuriang* story could captivate audiences, creating a vibrant cultural atmosphere that draws both domestic and international tourists. However, the implementation of cabaret and similar cultural performances remains underexplored, and further research is needed to understand how such initiatives could be effectively integrated into the region's tourism framework. Informants suggest that pairing *Sangkuriang*-themed performances with existing local festivals could provide an immersive cultural experience, celebrating the area's intangible heritage while attracting a broader audience. These efforts underscore storytelling's potential not just as a promotional tool but as a means to preserve and celebrate the rich cultural tapestry of the Bandung Basin.

Storytelling Applications and Performance as a Medium—Storytelling, as highlighted by Kartika & Riana (2020), has demonstrated significant potential in cultural tourism. For instance, tour guides can interpret *Sangkuriang* narratives at Mount Tangkuban Parahu, offering immersive experiences for tourists. Additionally, the theatrical performance *Dayang Sumbi Ngagurat Pamadegan Sangkuriang*, held on May 20, 2022, showcased the story's potential in blending traditional storytelling with modern theatrical techniques (Rinaldi, 2022). However, this initiative has not been institutionalized and remains a one-time event. Regular performances, cabaret shows, and folk festivals themed around *Sangkuriang* could serve as both educational and entertainment mediums for promoting folklore-based tourism.

The integration of folklore into performing arts—whether through theater, cabaret, or festivals—allows communities to engage actively with their cultural heritage. For example, Folk Parties and Festivals — could feature traditional ceremonies or modern festivals with *Sangkuriang* themes, enabling communities to showcase their culture in diverse ways (Baron, 2016). Public Folklore Projects — dialogic initiatives like folklife festivals and community self-documentation projects empower locals to present their cultural narratives authentically. The study underscores the importance of promoting *Sangkuriang* folklore as marketing content, whether online or offline, to educate tourists while protecting intangible cultural heritage. Locations such as the Ancient Bandung Lake and Sanghyang Tikoro can become focal points for thematic tourism strategies, emphasizing the folklore's cultural significance.

Community Involvement in Narrative Tourism —Field observations and interviews reveal that local communities are key to the success of narrative tourism in the Bandung Basin. Locations like Mount Tangkuban Parahu and the Citarum River rely on the cultural knowledge and personal connections of residents, making them ideal guides and storytellers who can bring the *Sangkuriang* folklore to life. Their

Table 1. Application Storytelling as a Marketing Tool for ‘Sangkuriang’ Folklore Tourism

Objective	Stakeholder (Local/Non-Local) (Public/Private)	Process Storytelling	Results of the Process Storytelling	Dimensions of Tourism Development	Task	Evaluation
1. Creating added value to the intangible cultural heritage of Tatar Sunda;	Initiator and decision maker a. Central government b. Local government; c. Local community; and d. Academy.	Duration a. One time b. Structured	Advanced development concept a. Increase tourist visits;	Economy a. Increased tourist visits Destination branding;	Before Booking confirmation, payment, and travel planning	After activities a. Providing input and suggestions to storytellers
2. Innovatively documenting intangible cultural heritage;	Committee of directors a. Local government; b. Regional tourism promotion agency;	Location a. Indoor b. Outdoor	b. Increasing community knowledge and skills;	b. Thematic tourism; c. Job opportunities;	During Welcoming and orientation of storytellers and tourists	b. Forward visitor comments
3. Providing performances to entertain tourists;	c. Public; and d. Private companies.	Tourist participation a. Directly b. Indirectly (as a spectator)	c. Improving the abilities of local tour guides; and	d. Area collaboration; and e. Sustainable business.		
4. Providing engaging learning media;	Actor a. Hotel/Accommodations; b. Eatery/Restaurants;	Number of participants a. There is not any b. A little several c. Lots	d. Improving and discovering community talents.	Socio-cultural a. Identity defense; b. Training for local communities;		
5. Promoting the Bandung Basin Area as an authentic tourist destination;	c. Event/Festival; d. Tourist attraction; e. Tour guide; and f. Traveler.		Marketing a. Media engagement;	c. Local pride; d. Destination image and identity;		
6. Creating a new brand for the destination; and	Type storytelling a. Local storytellers; b. Local guide interpretation;	Types of participation a. Music b. Art c. Story d. Show e. Theater	b. Promoting the Bandung Basin Area as an authentic tourism destination;	e. Increasing public awareness of tourism potential;		
7. Inspiring the people of the Bandung Basin Area and creating a sense of pride in their intangible	c. Travel pattern; d. Festivals and events; e. Theatre/Cabaret/Performing arts; and f. Marketing content.		c. Collaboration between each stakeholder;	f. Community tourism development; and g. Protecting cultural heritage is not a thing.		
		Agenda a. Sangkuriang folklore b. Selection of settings	d. Improving the local	Environment a. Sustainable tourism;		

Objective	Stakeholder (Local/Non-Local) (Public/Private)	Process Storytelling	Results of the Process Storytelling	Dimensions of Tourism Development	Task	Evaluation
cultural heritage.		c. Story identification d. Selection of stories based on relevance on location Storytelling Concept Design a. One overall storyline; b. Sangkuriang souvenir design; c. Branding; d. Tour package development; and e. Internal and external marketing communication.	community's economy; e. Transfer of knowledge and skills; f. Developing new networks; and g. Develop ways to utilize local resources.	b. Storytelling activities will make tourists more environmentally aware and change behavioral patterns at the destination; c. More respect for local culture; and d. New facilities and infrastructure will be built		

Source: Adaptation of Gamil (2017)

involvement adds authenticity to the tourism experience and fosters pride and ownership of their cultural heritage. Aligned with Gamil's (2017) storytelling framework, this research emphasizes clear objectives, stakeholder collaboration, and structured storytelling practices. Empowering residents as storytellers not only preserves intangible cultural heritage but also creates economic opportunities. Participation in these initiatives enhances cultural skills while generating income, strengthening the connection between heritage and modern tourism practices.

Community involvement also supports socio-cultural and environmental sustainability. Through storytelling, folklore is preserved for future generations, while landmarks such as the Lembang Fault, Mount Burangrang, and Sanghyang Tikoro gain recognition as sites of cultural memory and ecological preservation. These deeply rooted connections ensure that storytelling remains authentic and respectful of natural and cultural resources. Institutionalizing storytelling practices is essential for long-term success. Reviving regular performances like *Dayang Sumbi Ngagurat Pamadegan Sangkuriang* and integrating modern technologies such as augmented and virtual reality can expand the reach of these narratives. Community-led projects, such as documenting local versions of the Sangkuriang story, provide contemporary interpretations while safeguarding oral traditions. Collaboration among stakeholders is crucial. Governments can provide infrastructure and policy support, private entities can invest in facilities and events, and educational institutions can train guides and performers. By embedding storytelling into tourism, the Bandung Basin can position itself as a premier cultural tourism destination, blending the rich traditions of Sangkuriang folklore with sustainable, community-driven experiences.

Limitations and Recommendation—This study faced several limitations that highlight areas for future research. A small sample size of five informants limited the generalizability of findings, as it excluded diverse perspectives from stakeholders such as local artists, historians, and tourism officials. Additionally, the two-month research period restricted the depth of data collection, particularly regarding community readiness to adopt storytelling as a cultural and economic activity. Insufficient data on storytelling formats, such as cabaret and theatrical performances, further hindered exploration of their feasibility and implementation.

Future research should broaden qualitative approaches through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with a wider range of stakeholders to uncover diverse interpretations of the Sangkuriang folklore. Quantitative methods, such as surveys, could evaluate storytelling's impact on tourist satisfaction and engagement, providing actionable insights for strategic planning. Developing comprehensive storytelling frameworks is essential, detailing steps such as guide training, event organization, and digital content creation. On a practical level, institutionalizing cultural performances like *Dayang Sumbi Ngagurat Pamadegan Sangkuriang* through regular scheduling and thematic tours linking folklore to landmarks like Mount Tangkuban Parahu would enhance visitor experiences. Community engagement is key; by training locals as storytellers or performers, they can co-create narratives, preserve heritage, and generate income through storytelling activities. Addressing these gaps will enable Sangkuriang-based tourism to become a sustainable model, preserving intangible heritage while driving economic growth in the Bandung Basin.

D. CONCLUSION

The study reveals the immense potential of folklore-based tourism, particularly through the 'Sangkuriang' legend, as a strategic tool for cultural and tourism development in the Bandung Basin. The narrative not only reflects the essence of Sundanese cultural identity but also weaves together layers of geomythology, topography, and historical elements, creating a rich foundation for tourism. Through its exploration of geomythological landmarks such as Mount Tangkuban Parahu, the Citarum River, and the

Sanghyang Tikoro cave system, the study showcases how folklore and geological features can merge into a compelling narrative, inviting visitors to engage deeply with the region's natural and cultural heritage.

The integration of storytelling with tourism is further enriched by the historical insights offered by the Bujangga Manik manuscript. This ancient travelogue provides vivid descriptions of the Bandung Basin, offering a bridge between myth and history. These connections enable the folklore to transcend mere storytelling, anchoring it in tangible locations that evoke both wonder and curiosity. The legend's ties to geographical landmarks such as Mount Bukit Tunggul, Mount Burangrang, and Mount Putri deepen the visitor experience by highlighting the interplay of natural forces and cultural imagination.

Events and festivals emerge as powerful tools for bringing this folklore to life. Theatrical performances and festivals centered on the Sangkuriang narrative offer a vibrant medium for storytelling while fostering community involvement. Productions like the *Dayang Sumbi Ngagurat Pamadegan Sangkuriang* demonstrate the potential of blending traditional storytelling with modern theatrical techniques. Regularly held folklore-themed events, combining music, dance, and interactive storytelling, could transform the Bandung Basin into a dynamic cultural hub, drawing both domestic and international audiences. These events provide opportunities for visitors to experience the legend through a multisensory lens while immersing themselves in Sundanese traditions.

Storytelling, both in-person and through digital platforms, remains at the heart of this tourism strategy. Local guides narrating the legend at key sites can create meaningful, authentic experiences that deepen visitors' connection to the destination. Meanwhile, the use of augmented and virtual reality can expand the reach of the narrative, allowing global audiences to engage with the folklore from afar. These approaches not only enhance tourism but also preserve the cultural heritage of the region, ensuring that the stories are passed down to future generations.

Collaboration among all stakeholders—government, local communities, the tourism industry, and academics—is essential for realizing the full potential of this folklore-based tourism model. Infrastructure improvements at significant locations, training programs for local storytellers, and innovative marketing strategies can ensure the sustainability of these initiatives. The community's active involvement, from storytelling to event organization, not only fosters cultural pride but also creates economic opportunities, reinforcing the bond between heritage and modern tourism. Ultimately, the Sangkuriang narrative offers a unique opportunity to position the Bandung Basin as a premier cultural destination. By integrating mythology with history, geology, and community engagement, this approach celebrates the region's intangible heritage while promoting sustainable tourism practices. Folklore becomes not just a story but a living, breathing experience that connects people, places, and traditions, leaving visitors with a profound appreciation for the beauty and depth of Sundanese culture.

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