

Connecting Culture and Tourism: Leveraging Traditional Sports Events to Enhance Visitor Experience in West Bandung Regency, Indonesia

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Abstract

Traditional sports and games represent a vital component of cultural heritage while offering strategic opportunities for tourism development. In West Bandung Regency, indigenous traditional games contain both competitive and recreational values that can be leveraged into cultural-based events and hallmark attractions within the growing sport tourism sector. This qualitative study examines how traditional sports overseen by KORMI such as *Hadangan*, *Egrang*, and *Tarompah Panjang* can be institutionalized into structured tourism events to enhance visitor experiences and strengthen regional destination branding. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, direct observations, and document analysis. The findings indicate that traditional sports festivals possess multidimensional value, serving recreational, competitive, and cultural preservation functions. Moving beyond passive spectatorship, transitioning to active visitor participation through interactive trial zones and gamification creates memorable emotional connections for tourists. Furthermore, a balanced governance model that separates athletic selection (*Invitasi*) from open, mass-oriented festivals ensures sustainable youth regeneration alongside effective tourism packaging. Multi-stakeholder collaborations involving local government, educational institutions, private partners, and preservation communities are crucial to overcoming execution challenges, such as venue integration and calendar inclusion. The study concludes that moving from event-based entertainment toward an integrated strategy connects cultural preservation, community empowerment, and destination branding, positioning West Bandung Regency as a distinctive destination offering authentic cultural-based events.

Keywords: Sport Tourism, Traditional Sports, Cultural-Based Events, Destination Branding, Cultural Preservation.

A. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a strategic sector that is not only serves as an economic driver but also a mechanism for cultural preservation. The development of special events such as hallmark event has emerged as an approach, referring to planned, large-scale activities designed to attract visitors, enhance destination image, and generate added value for local communities. The diversification of event forms becomes essential to ensure both cultural relevance and visitor engagement, as this determines whether visitors perceive a cultural event as an attraction worth visiting.

Over the years, traditional games or traditional sports have evolved from mere recreational activities into competitive events that engage large numbers of people, involving both participants and spectators, particularly traditional sports that feature a competitive nature resembling conventional sports we often see today. It creates opportunities for their development as tourism attractions. This transformation does not diminish their cultural significance, rather, it reinforce their role as expressions of local identity and cultural heritage. Traditional games or traditional sports are recognized as indigenous cultural assets that incorporate elements of physical exercise rooted in local traditions (Reyhan et al., 2023). Beyond their physical and recreational dimensions, their connection to local traditions also position them as important vehicles for transmitting cultural knowledge and values across

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generations. Triansyah (2023) emphasizes that traditional games and sports in Indonesia represent a rich cultural heritage and a manifestation of the nation's diversity, containing values that contribute positively to individual growth, development, and character formation.

Traditional games and sports usually passed down through generations, these practices continue to thrive through community activities, cultural gatherings, and informal learning. Rather than presenting traditional sports solely as cultural performances or competitive activities, organizing them as tourism events can create opportunities for visitors to engage directly with local traditions and gain a deeper understanding of their cultural significance. This integration can also enrich visitor experiences by combining entertainment, cultural learning, and social interaction through activities such as traditional sports demonstration, hands-on workshops, and guided trial sessions. Visitors can move beyond passive spectatorship and become active participants in local cultural practices. Such experiences may foster meaningful interactions between visitors and host communities while strengthening appreciation of local identity and traditions. From this perspective, traditional sports events not only enhancing the attractiveness of the destination but also develop more engaging and culturally meaningful visitor experience.

According to UNWTO (2023), sport tourism accounts more than 10% of global tourism expenditure and is projected to grow at an annual rate of 17,5% through 2030, highlighting its increasing significance within the global tourism industry. Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2024) estimates the economic value of sport tourism at IDR 18,79 trillion representing approximately 20-30% of national tourism activity. Beyond its economic contributions, sport tourism provides opportunities to integrate local sporting practices into cultural tourism development. The integration of traditional sports and cultural events into tourism development strategies (Irfan et al., 2023) has also enabled destination such as Jayapura Indonesia to stimulate local economic revitalization, generate employment opportunities, and encourage infrastructure development, as highlighted by Guntoro et al. (2023).

Undang-Undang Nomor 3 Tahun 2005 Tentang Sistem Keolahragaan Nasional mentioned that recreational sports are differentiated from competitive sports by their emphasis on health, physical fitness, enjoyment, social intgerraction, and the preservation of cultural heritage, rather than on competition and achievement. The scope of recreational sports (community sports) in *Undang-Undang Nomor 3 Tahun 2005 Tentang Sistem Keolahragaan Nasional* is explained in Article 19 as follows: Recreational sports are carried out as part of: (1) the process of restoring health and fitness, (2) Recreational sports can be carried out by person, educational institution, association, or sports organization, (3) Recreational sports as referred in paragraph (1) aim to: (a) achieve health, physical fitness, and joy, (b) Build social relations, preserve, and enhancing regional and national cultural assets, so (4) the government and its community are obliged to explore, develop, and advance recreational sports. It can be concluded that traditional recreational sports extend beyond physical activity, it functioning as instruments for reinforcing cultural identity and fostering social interaction within communities.

Through the organization of traditional sports festival, children and adolescents are encouraged to participate in physically active and socially engaging recreational practices while simultaneously developing as appreciation for local cultural heritage, this aligned with *Undang-Undang Nomor 3 Tahun 2005 Tentang Sistem Keolahragaan Nasional*, which emphasizes health, enjoyment, and social development. Furthermore, such festivals function as a medium of public education, promoting awareness of the need to balance digital technology use with active and culturally grounded activities.

As one of the most popular tourism destination in West Java, West Bandung Regency (*Kabupaten Bandung Barat*) not only famous by its nature but also possess a rich and divers

cultural heritage, including a variety of traditional recreational sports that can be curated into festival formats. When traditional sports strategically developed as special events, it has the potential to enhance destination attractiveness, diversify tourism products, increase the community participation in tourism, and contribute to the advancement of sustainable tourism development.

The urgency of developing traditional sports festivals is further reinforced by The Regent of West Bandung Regency, Hengky Kurniawan, who underscored the importance of traditional sports and games especially those currently under the management of the *Komite Olahraga Masyarakat Indonesia* (KORMI). His emphasis reflects the need for greater institutional attention to traditional sports as part of the region's cultural and community assets (japos.co, 2023). The statement also reaffirms that traditional sports festivals should be understood not only as strategic instruments for safeguarding regional cultural heritage and strengthening community engagement but also as tourism-oriented events.

To revitalize local tourism and boost the economy for citizens, local governments must lead the way in executing sports tourism initiatives (Bradbury et al., 2022). Achieving this requires public officials and key stakeholders to first gain a comprehensive understanding of the sports tourism sector (Das et al., 2023). Building this knowledge, local governments need to formulate tailored, step by step strategies to cultivate locally grounded sport tourism (Giango et al., 2022).

To successfully implement sport tourism in tourist destination such West Bandung Regency, it is essential to foster active collaboration among youth and sport services, related government agencies, the communities, and the mass media for promotion (Šuligoj & Kennell, 2022). Ultimately, involving local residents, government authorities, and tourists throughout this process strengthens stakeholders relationships and ensures the long term sustainability of the event (Martin et al, 2022).

The effectiveness of traditional sports festivals in attracting tourists has been demonstrated in various countries, one of them is the World Nomad Games 2024, held in Kyrgyzstan, the event has successfully visited by roughly 85.000 to 100.000 visitors each year, both domestic and international visitors (The Astana Times, 2024). In Pakistan, the Shandur Polo Festival which held at extreme altitudes, has attract about 40.000 visitors and become both cultural and tourist attraction (Arab News, 2019). The Kirkpinar Oil Wrestling Festival in Turkey which also recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage has attracted thousands of spectators (Xinhua, 2026). Furthermore, during the Naadam Festival 2024, Mongolia welcomed 727,400 foreign tourists, with July as the peak of the curve because it's the Nadaam week (11-13 July). The visits itself generating USD 1,5 billion in tourism revenue (NSO/Xinhua, 2025).

The success of various traditional sports festivals worldwide provides a valuable reference for the advancement of special event-based tourism in West Bandung Regency. When organized through a systematic and strategic framework, this festival has significant potential to function as effective instruments for cultural promotion and as distinctive tourism product. This diversification of tourism attractions not only offering entertainment elements, but also educational and recreational value, while simultaneously preserving local cultural heritage in West Bandung Regency and increase both domestic and international tourist arrivals. Showcasing the local culture through curated festival experiences can position West Bandung Regency as a prominent cultural tourism destination within West Java.

Getz (2008) in *Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research* emphasized that events within the tourism context should not be perceived merely as temporary or incidental, but used as strategic role in enhancing destination image. Festivals as special events also has the capability to prolong length of stay and increase tourism related expenditure. Furthermore,

Oklobdžija (2015) emphasized that special events have great potential to enhance a destination's image and increase its tourist appeal. Unique events can create sense of exclusivity for tourists, encouraging them to make a special trip to participate.

Realizing traditional sports' potential requires an understanding of how these festivals are currently implemented and how they are perceived and received by potential visitors. In the case of West Bandung Regency, secondary data findings indicates that traditional sports festivals have not yet been institutionalized as a regular agenda as seen on the absence of traditional sports festivals from the official Calendar of Events published by both the West Bandung Regency Government and the local Tourism Office. There were cases where traditional sports function predominantly as ceremonial components or secondary attractions embedded within broader cultural events.

The scarcity of accessible information regarding traditional sports festivals in West Bandung Regency represents a significant barrier, impacting potential tourist interest and visitation rates. Furthermore, the absence of an integrated venue for these events compromises the quality of execution, resulting in inconsistent organizational standard and an underprepared presentation.

West Bandung Regency is famous for its stunning natural landscapes, making it a major tourist destination in West Java. However, its rich cultural heritage remains largely underutilized as a main draw for tourists. Regional leaders and organizations like KORMI recognize the value of these traditions, but there is still a missing link between local heritage and event based tourism. Turning these traditional games into well organized, signature sports festivals can bridge that gap, preserving local culture while giving West Bandung Regency a distinct edge in the tourism market.

Despite extensive literature on global sport tourism and traditional games, a critical empirical gap remains regarding how community based recreational sports can be strategically operationalized as hallmark tourism events at the regency level. Existing research focuses primarily on large scale mega events or traditional sports as static tools for cultural preservation. Further inquiry can provide fresh insights into scaling traditional sports into curated festival formats while safeguarding their indigenous authenticity. To address this gap, this study examine how regional level traditional sports overseen by KORMI in West Bandung Regency can be strategically institutionalized into structured hallmark tourism events. This research bridges the gap between top-down policy directive and ground-level execution. By evaluating both organizational execution challenges such as venue integration and calendar exclusion and visitor experience curation (shifting tourists from passive spectators to active participants).

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach to examine how cultural practices, community participation, and tourism interact across West Bandung Regency (*Kabupaten Bandung Barat*), West Java, Indonesia. Fieldwork took place in 2025, relying on three distinct data collection techniques: in-depth interviews, direct field observations, and documentation reviews. Primary insights came from semi-structured interviews with 4 key participants chosen through purposive sampling. These informants represented four key stakeholder groups: officials from KORMI West Bandung Regency ($n = 1$), representatives from KORMI West Java ($n = 1$), local traditional sports enthusiasts (*pegiat olahraga tradisional*, $n = 1$), and event organizers ($n = 1$).

To complement the oral testimonies, field observations were conducted independently at event venues across the regency. This allowed researchers to observe spatial setups and visual displays. In addition, a thorough document review was carried out using both primary records

such as official reports and event photos from KORMI; secondary sources, including online news coverage and academic literature.

The gathered data were systematically processed through a thematic analytical pipeline, moving from verbatim transcription and initial open coding to thematic categorization and narrative synthesis. Rather than simply asserting accuracy, the study backed its findings through method and source triangulation, routinely cross-checking interview statements against documents and on the ground observations. Interpretative validity was further supported through member checks with key KORMI representatives and traditional sports enthusiast.

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Cities have historically utilized mega-events, such as World Fairs, Expos, and major sporting-events, to stimulate economic growth, develop infrastructure, and strengthen their public image (Getz, 1991). Sport can be a powerful tool in the imaging, re-imaging, and branding of destinations, especially through the hosting of sport mega events (Getz, 2003; Higham and Hinch, 2009). Events have potential to generate diverse benefits for tourism destinations, however, research to date has largely focused on the impacts of mega-events, particularly the economic and financial effects of major sporting events (Knott, Fyall and Jones, 2015; Lee and Taylor, 2005; Preuss, 2007; Xing and Chalip, 2006). There are relatively little attention has been given to small-scale events, especially those rooted in local culture (Gursoy, Kim and Uysal, 2004). These kind of events are often closely tied to the communities and places where they take place, allowing them to reflect local identity while also supporting destination marketing effort (Litvin and Fetter, 2006; Olsen, 2010; Ritchie, 1984).

In Indonesia, traditional sports as part of cultural assets have been increasingly institutionalized through their inclusion in national-scale events such as the *Pekan Olahraga Rekreasi Nasional* (PORNAS) and the *Festival Olahraga Rekreasi Nasional* (FORNAS). Organized under the auspices of KORMI, these events consistently feature traditional sports as integral components of both competitive programs and ceremonial activities. By packaging cultural heritage into engaging recreational sport experiences, PORNAS and FORNAS have demonstrated a strong capacity to attract public attention, including both domestic and international tourists. This success highlights the significant of traditional sports festivals to be strategically developed as high-value tourism attractions.

Supporting this potential, *Persatuan Pelestari Olahraga Tradisional Indonesia* (PORTINA) has established standardized regulations for 15 traditional sports. Such standardization provides an essential foundation for the development of traditional sports festivals as tourism attractions by ensuring consistency in event organization, competition rules, and participant experience. Standardized traditional sports not only contribute to cultural preservation but also enhance the credibility and marketability of festival-based tourism.

KORMI and PORTINA have adopted an event portfolio approach, although it has not yet been supported by adequate strategic formalization. The tiered event structure (*Invitasi Sekolah Dasar* → *Festival Kabupaten* → PORPROV → FORNAS) reaches different participant and audience segments, however, inconsistent implementation, largely due to budget constraint remains a key weakness, although basically consistency is one of the main thing needed to develop the events as mentioned by Oklobdzika (2015) which emphasizes as an important prerequisite for building destination brand equity through events.

Many traditional games in West Java inherently involve competitive elements similar to modern sports, they serve not only as a means of entertainment and social interaction, but also recreational, competitive, and cultural values that can be developed within the context of traditional sport-based tourism. In West Bandung Regency, this potential is socialized through structured local events such as *Festival Olahraga Tradisional* (Traditional Sport Festival).

Organized through collaborative efforts between the regional government, local community groups, and the KORMI (*Komite Olahraga Masyarakat Indonesia*), these events institutionalize indigenous games like *Hadangan* (block-and-chase), *Tarompah Panjang* (long clogs), and *Egrang* (bamboo stilts) into competitive public spectacles. Held across district fields such as *Lapangan Cipeundeuy*, these festivals showcasing vibrant cultures that draw multi-generational spectators, active participant delegations, and regional supporters. With careful planning and appropriate promotion, such small-scale cultural sports events can offer tourists a more meaningful, participatory impression of the destination while stimulating local micro-economies through visitor spending (Liu, 2014).

The growing competition among cities to distinguished themselves has encourage many cities to differentiate branding strategies, including more intensive forms of "hard branding" (Evans, 2003; Meurs and Verheijen, 2003). West Bandung Regency which currently relies on its image as a nature tourism destination, amidst intensifying regional competition, particularly within the Greater Bandung area, has begun hosting small to medium scale traditional sports events, positioning them as an attraction and a means to develop sports tourism in the region. This is being done to address the increasingly high level of competition among regions, particularly in the Greater Bandung area. Communities increasingly recognize sport events as strategic marketing instruments that can support the long-term success of destination by raising awareness, strengthening destination image, and encouraging tourism business development that stimulates future visitors arrivals (Dimanche, 2003). Sports events can also complement other destination attractions in reaching both new and returning sport-oriented visitor markets (Dimanche, 2003).

In contemporary destination branding, transitioning from passive spectacle to active participation is critical for generating memorable visitor experiences. Traditional sports in West Bandung Regency offer a unique, highly participatory medium that allows tourists to step beyond the role of mere spectators and directly engage with local cultural practices. Unlike conventional mega-sporting events, where audiences are passive observers behind barriers, traditional sports like *Hadangan* (block-and-chase), *Egrang* (bamboo stilts), and *Tarompah Panjang* (long wooden clogs) possess low barriers to entry and high interactive potential.

To engage younger, digital-native visitors who might otherwise feel disconnected from traditional heritage, KORMI West Bandung Regency chapter has experimented with innovative gamification models such as partnership with the digital gaming platform *FC Mobile*, event organizers initiate a physical-to-digital challenge. Youth visitors and tourists attending the event were required to physically complete a trial run of an *Egrang* course or participate in a simplified *Hadangan* match before claiming digital in-game rewards. Gamified challenges, successfully bridging the gap between digital youth culture and physical traditional heritage.

During regional festival activations such as those hosted in the Cipeundeuy district, Sasana Budaya Ganesha, and MIKO Mall, organizers intentionally establish dedicated "interactive trial zones" adjacent to official competition fields. In these zones, tourists are invited to attempt the sports under the direct guidance of local practitioners (*pegiat olahraga tradisional*).

In a *Tarompah Panjang* trial, visitors do not simply observe local athletes, they can experience strap their feet onto shared, multi-person wooden clogs. Navigating the track requires synchronized rhythmic stepping and shared verbal cues (e.g., calling out "*Kiri, Kanan!*" or "*Left, Right!*"). When teams inevitably lose balance or fall together, shared laughter and physical coordination transform an abstract cultural display into a shared, high-emotion moment. This collective physical effort creates immediate camaraderie between host communities and visiting tourists.

Egrang trial zones at figure 1 and 2 below, allow tourists to attempt walking on elevated 2.5-meter bamboo stilts. Local instructors assist visitors with posture and footing, turning a simple trial into a personal micro-accomplishment. The physical sensation of navigating local terrain on handcrafted bamboo provides a tactile, sensory memory that cannot be replicated through passive photo-taking or digital media consumption.



Figure 1: *Tarompah Panjang* competition in Festival Olahraga Tradisional in cipeundeuy. Source: ANTARA Foto.



Figure 2: *Egrang* competition in Sasana Budaya Ganesha. Source: KORMI West Bandung Regency chapter.

The ultimate objective of developing these events in West Bandung Regency extends beyond temporary foot traffic or promotional exposure. When a visitor personally navigates the rhythm of *Tarompah Panjang* or successfully takes their first steps on *Egrang*, the experience shifts from simple entertainment to an emotional anchor. These participatory moments become core memories that define the visitor's personal narrative of the region, fostering long-term brand equity, organic social media word-of-mouth, and higher repeat-visit intentionality.

According to Rein and Shields (2006), sport possesses a unique ability to bring people together through the shared emotions experienced simultaneously by participants and spectators. This generated "emotional heat" captures the energy, vitality, and collective spirit of a community, creating an immersive, participatory experience that is difficult to replicate through passive cultural attractions. Beyond the excitement of competition, sport fosters lasting emotional connections between visitors and the host territory, fundamentally reshaping how places are perceived, represented, and authentically experienced (Higham and Hinch, 2009).

"Emotional Heat" depends heavily on spatial capacity and venue selection, as demonstrated at the 2025 Traditional Sports Festival held at the Cipeundeuy District Field. The scale, accessibility, and open layout of Cipeundeuy Field provided the physical foundation necessary to concentrate large crowds, generating an energetic atmosphere that informants explicitly compared to the intense passion of a soccer match. The venue successfully accommodated large audiences including organized supporter groups traveling from outside the host area, they collectively engaged in cheering, chanting, and celebrating regional traditional sports such as *Hadangan*. Ultimately, the Cipeundeuy field findings confirm that when an accessible venue provides sufficient spatial capacity, it acts as a catalyst for generating the very "emotional heat" and authentic socio-cultural connections envisioned by

Rein and Shields (2006) and Higham and Hinch (2009), transforming traditional sports into high-impact, memory-making destination attractions.

Getz (2008) classifies event tourism into several typologies, including sports events and cultural celebrations. In the context of West Bandung Regency, traditional sports festivals that is held are uniquely a hybrid of the two, they are both sporting events as they involve competitions, and also cultural celebrations because they serve as the expression and preservation of cultural heritage.

In organizing traditional sports events at figure 3 below, the West Bandung Regency government typically conducts two types of activities: the Traditional Sports Festival and the Traditional Sports Invitational (*Invitasi*). Although both aim to preserve cultural heritage and folk games, there are fundamental differences in how they are implemented, their ultimate objectives, and their target participants. Both events draws a diverse participant demographic, although spectator interaction, such as hands-on access to traditional sports equipment was still limited, this was due to an overarching emphasis on live competition especially in Invitational events.

Characteristic	Traditional Sports Invitation (<i>Invitasi</i>)	Traditional Sports Festival (<i>Festival</i>)	Schedule/Time of Event
Nature of Event	Official Competition / Selection. Focuses on tournament aspects and sportsmanship to find winners or champions.	Exhibition / Performance. Prioritizes creativity, preservation, entertainment, and cultural storytelling.	Organized periodically as an annual agenda by the local government (Dispora/KORMI KBB).
Ultimate Goal	To scout the best school/district athletes to represent KBB at the West Java Provincial level.	To boost public interest, minimize gadget addiction, and reintroduce folk games.	<i>Invitasi</i> : Usually aligned with the schedule of the West Java Provincial selection. <i>Festival</i> : Timing is more flexible throughout the fiscal year.
Target Participants	Generally limited to student categories (such as Elementary School level) for early-stage development.	Broader and mass-oriented, involving students (Elementary, Middle, High School) to the general public.	Historical Event Timeline in KBB: - Festival: June 2023 & February 2025 - Invitation: November 2025 & October 2026
Categories / Materials	Matches officially standardized national categories like <i>sumpitan</i> (blowpipe), <i>egrang</i> (stilts), <i>tarompah panjang</i> (long wooden clogs), <i>dagongan</i> (reverse tug-of-war), and <i>hadangan</i> (traditional tag).	Folk games and traditional sports presented in a more festive and flexible atmosphere.	The duration of the event typically lasts for 1 to 2 full days at the designated venue.

Figure 3: Types of Traditional Sports Events in West Bandung Regency. Source: Author, 2026.

Rather than treating local heritage as a static display, the local framework separates traditional sports activities into structured Invitations (*Invitasi*) for athletic development and open Festivals (*Festival*) designed for public engagement. This structural division bridges policy directives with practical tourism execution, allowing traditional games to function as flexible cultural assets that accommodate both local preservation goals and tourism demands.

The institutionalization of traditional sport festival as a recurring annual and biennial fixture reflects a sustained commitment by both the West Bandung Regency Government and KORMI to safeguard and promote traditional sports. Consistent execution is vital to ensuring the continuity of these preservation efforts, broadening public engagement, and cultivating a deeper civic appreciation for local cultural heritage. Furthermore, regular staging provides a structured framework for administrators and community stakeholders to evaluate and refine event operations, optimize public participation, and enhance the overall visitor experience. Consequently, the festival transcends a purely ceremonial function, evolving into an established cultural agenda with a distinct regional identity.

Sustained organization allows the event to build brand equity, expand its promotional reach, and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships across the local tourism and business sectors. Structuring the program around live demonstrations, educational workshops, hands-on visitor participation, and direct community engagement enriches the visitor experience while adding the intrinsic cultural values within traditional sport practices.

One of the research informant pointed out that while *Pencak Silat* remains the most popular traditional sport in West Bandung Regency, other traditional sports like *Hadangan*, *Egrang* (stilts), and *Tarompah Panjang* (long wooden sandals) hold a special place for the local community. Field observations show that while these three sports don't typically have dedicated private academies or standalone *sanggar*, their growth is kept alive naturally through schools, from elementary straight through to high school. Physical education classes and inter-school tournaments function as the real training grounds where local kids hone their skills and build team spirit.

Local practitioners (*pegiat olahraga tradisional*) and community organizers emphasized that *Egrang*, *Tarompah Panjang*, and *Hadangan* offer a distinct visual and competitive charm that sets West Bandung Regency apart from neighboring tourist spots in West Java. Because these games are woven directly into the everyday routines of local students and neighborhood life. Practitioners noted that by engaging this into school-based talent pool and staging regular, well-organized regional festivals, West Bandung can turn these traditional sports into exciting sports tourism attractions. In doing so, the regency not only sharpens its destination branding and competitive edge in West Java, but also ensures its living heritage stays vibrant and passed down to the next generation.

Hadangan has emerged as a traditional sport with the strongest potential to be developed as a tourist attraction and flagship event in West Bandung Regency. Most *Hadangan* festivals held in West Bandung Regency, even though held in a small-scale level, has generate spectators' interest and competitive atmosphere. The competitive nature of *Hadangan* provides an important basis for transforming the sport from a community-based recreational activity into a spectator-oriented event. The three-day league also strengthen this potential, creating opportunities for visitors to combine attendance at sporting events with other tourism experiences in West Bandung Regency.

For many small city or regency, local events have become an important means of attracting tourists and encouraging annual visits. The small-scale cultural events (derived from traditional games/sports) provide opportunities to introduce visitors to local traditions and cultural heritage. This has encourage cities (such as West Bandung Regency) to continually develop and promote their events in an effort to offer visitors richer and more memorable experiences (O'Sullivan and Jackson, 2002). The organization of *Hadangan* competition as a multi-day festival could contribute to the wider circulation of tourism expenditure within local economy. Its ability to attract spectators while generating economic activity for the local community suggest that *Hadangan* festival even has strong potential to be developed as a hallmark event for West Bandung Regency, its existing audience appeal,

community support, and potential to attract visitors from outside the region align with the hallmark event criteria proposed by Ritchie and Beliveau (1974).

Another interesting aspect of traditional sports is the diversity of materials, artistic ornaments, and symbolic motifs embedded in traditional sports equipment distinguishes one region from another, enriching the authenticity and cultural value of traditional sports festivals. The flexibility in regards to the artistic ornaments of the equipment fosters visual diversity and strengthens the cultural distinctiveness of traditional sports, transforming them into attractions that enhance spectators experiences while increasing their appeal as cultural tourism assets. The combination of athletic performance, cultural symbolism, and aesthetic presentation contributes to a more immersive visitor experience. All of these unique aspects create an enriched experience for tourists because they will experience a wide range of visual and cultural due to the variety of traditional sporting equipment and performance practices used by athletes from various regions.

Beyond merely admiring these artistic elements as passive spectators, visitors can also engage with them through interactive, creative opportunities. The strong decorative appeal of traditional sports equipment offers ideal potential for hosting hands-on workshops during festivals. In these interactive sessions, attendees can purchase plain or semi-finished traditional sports gear on-site as authentic souvenirs and decorate them according to their own creative vision, all under the gentle guidance of a skilled facilitator. This hands-on approach mirrors the successful cultural practice at Saung Angklung Udjo, where tourists learn to decorate bamboo-based crafts with their own personalized designs supported by local artists. By taking home a uniquely decorated piece of sports equipment, visitors transform a visual attraction into a deeply personal memory, bridging the gap between spectator appreciation and active cultural participation.

As traditional games can now be considered as traditional sports, we can apply the concept from Gibson (1998) to identify sport tourism in three forms as follows: a) Active sport tourism; 2) Event sport tourism; and 3) Nostalgia sport tourism. This suggest that the traditional sports festivals in West Bandung Regency has the potential to bring these forms together:

- Active sports tourism: athletes from other regions travel to West Bandung Regency to compete in the festival.
- Event sports tourism: spectators and supporters from outside the region come to watch the competitions and support participating teams.
- Nostalgia sports tourism: visits to traditional sports festivals/communities and try the games could give visitors an opportunity to reconnect with traditional games and memories from childhood.

This triple category coverage makes the West Bandung Regency's traditional sports festivals a comprehensive and high-value sports tourism product.

The analysis of the data at figure 4 below also reveals that the effort to develop traditional sports festivals as tourist attractions in West Bandung Regency have been supported by initiatives involving KORMI and PORTINA which carried out various collaborations that can be seen as development models with the aim of amplifying the buzz, something like a "road to" campaign as follows:

Collaborating Partners	Forms of Collaboration	Results/Impact
ITB (Institut Teknologi Bandung)	IGEO Event – Traditional Games with Participants from 100 Countries	International exposure of Indonesian traditional sports
Universitas Padjadjaran (UNPAD)	Research & Documentary/Marketing Video Production	Digital promotional materials for traditional sports
FC Mobile (Government)	Event Collaboration as a Venue and Licensing	Expanding the reach of participants and spectators
MIKO Mall	Traditional Sports Events in a Commercial Environment	Trialing urban formats (limited by area size)
DISPORA Jawa Barat	Partnership for Elementary School Invitationals & Teacher Referee Training	Human resource development and regeneration of traditional sports activists
Kemenparekraf	Discussion on the Potential of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) for Traditional Tool	Initial steps towards international recognition (UNESCO)

Figure 4: Collaborative Partnership and Their Contribution to the Development of Traditional sports. Source: Author, 2026.

To follow up on the public's enthusiasm for the traditional sports festival, West Bandung Regency Government have plan to develop a dedicated venue or area for traditional sport in Lembang, this plan is important because it shows that the local government starting to see traditional sports not only as a recreational activities for local communities, but also as a potential part of the tourism experience. The plan suggest that the government recognizes the connection between traditional sports, local culture, recreation, and tourism. A dedicated venue could provide more consistent space for traditional sports activities and festivals while also giving visitors as opportunity to experience local traditions in a more accessible and organized setting.

The placement plan of traditional sports facilities in Lembang also provides an important advantage because it is already well-known tourist destination and receives a considerable number of visitors. Placing a traditional sports facility within an established tourism zone could provide greater opportunities for tourists to encounter and participate in traditional sports, even if they did not originally visit the area specifically for this purpose. This could be an opportunity to broaden festival's audience from participants and traditional sports enthusiasts to general tourist and families looking for recreational and cultural experiences.

However, building the facility alone will not be sufficient to make traditional sport a tourism attraction, the facility need to be supported by attractive festival programs, effective promotion, convenient access, and collaboration among government institutions, tourism businesses, communities, and event organizers. While Lembang are strongly associated with nature-based and recreational tourism, traditional sports could introduce a stronger cultural and participatory dimension to the visitor experience. Visitors not only observing a cultural practice but potentially learn about and participate in traditional games and sports.

Realizing this potential requires a shift from simply providing infrastructure to developing traditional sports as a properly packaged tourism product. It highlights an important challenge for future development, how the government and other stakeholders can transform their current infrastructure plan into a sustainable tourism experience that attracts visitors beyond the existing traditional sports community.

One of the most significant challenges identified is limited diversification of traditional sports festival’s audience. Although traditional sports festivals in West Bandung Regency have generated relatively high levels of enthusiasm, this interest remains concentrated among individuals and communities who are already familiar with traditional sports. Limited audience reach may be associated with challenges in festival promotion, tourism-oriented event packaging, communication of the cultural and recreational value of traditional sports, and the development of experience that are accessible and appealing to visitor unfamiliar activities.

This condition indicates a gap between at figure 5 and figure 6 below the festival’s existing audience base and its potential market as a tourism attraction. From organizational perspective, the main challenges is not in generating interest, but transforming existing interest into broader tourist engagement. As cities transform into venues for ongoing cultural events, traditional sports festivals need to be evolved into creative participation to create dynamic public spaces that attract visitors and stimulate entertainment driven economic growth. By leveraging existing tourist volume, stakeholders can turn traditional sports (*olahraga tradisional*) into immersive, experiential cultural tourism by implementing several strategies as follows:

Strategy	Activities
Experiential Product Design & Active Cultural Co-Creation	- Interactive "Try-It-Yourself" Cultural Hubs: establish dedicated trial zones where casual tourists learn games like <i>Egrang</i> (bamboo stilts), <i>Bakiak</i> (giant wooden clogs), <i>Gasing</i> (spinning tops), and traditional archery (<i>Sumpit</i>). Value is co-created as visitors actively master physical skills alongside local experts. - Gamified Cultural Passport: Issue a physical or digital passport tracking visitor participation across traditional games, redeemable for local food or craft discounts. - Family & Corporate Packages: Offer 30 to 60 minutes structured team mini-tournaments tailored for weekend family travel and corporate retreats.
Event Programming	- Anchor Annual Festivals & Weekly Micro-Events: Combine a major annual <i>Festival Olahraga Tradisional</i> with predictable, weekend-only showcases (e.g., "Sunday Cultural Games") to continuously capture walk-in tourists. - Supplemental tourism activities layering (Ito & Higham, 2021): Integrate traditional music (<i>Angklung</i>, <i>Gamelan</i>), regional culinary bazaars, and local craft markets into event days, offering a multi-sensory lifestyle destination.

Strategy	Activities
Destination Ecosystem & Cross-Sector Synergy	• Cross-Promotional Bundling: Partner with nearby established destinations to offer unified pass packages. • Hotel & Resort Partnerships: Collaborate with local lodging providers to offer traditional sports workshops as guest amenities. • Tour Operator Integration: Work with regional travel agencies to build a 1-hour "Sundanese Cultural Games Experience" into standard day-trip itineraries.
Local Wisdom & Community Governance	• Community-Led Facilitation: Employ local preservation groups (<i>Komunitas Olahraga Tradisional</i>) and youth organizations (<i>Karang Taruna</i>) as paid referees, instructors, and heritage hosts. • Public-Private-Community Partnership (PPCP): Form a joint management board between the West Bandung Tourism Office (<i>Disparbud</i>), local businesses, and community leaders to maintain facility standards and authentic programming. • Hospitality Training: Train local hosts in basic visitor management, safety protocols, and cross-cultural communication.

Figure 5: Enhancing Visitors’ Experience Strategy. Source: Author, 2026.

Phase	Strategic Focus	Key Deliverables
Phase 1: Experience Design	Interactive venue layout & trial zones	Safe trial areas, equipment, trainer onboarding, bilingual signage
Phase 2: Ecosystem Integration	Itinerary inclusion & cross-promotion	Hotel/tour bundling, digital passport system, unified attraction ticketing
Phase 3: Event Programming	Dynamic scheduling & lifestyle layering	Weekly micro-events, annual flagship festival, culinary/craft market integration
Phase 4: Local Governance	Authentic community management	Local facilitator payroll, PPCP board creation, hospitality workshops

Figure 6: Strategy Roadmap & Conceptual Alignment (2020–2025). Source: Author, 2026.

D. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that developing traditional sports tourism in West Bandung Regency requires a balanced governance model that combines athletic standardization with flexible cultural packaging. West Bandung Regency government and KORMI manage this through a structural separation: *Invitasi* formats which enforce national rules (PORTINA) for athletic selection, while open festivals prioritize public engagement, creative storytelling, and mass participation.

Open district venues such as Cipeundeuy Field or facilities planned to be built in the Lembang area can be developed as an interactive traditional sports facility by developing trial

zones to transform visitors into active participants. A key contribution of this research is documenting how cross-sectoral partnerships resolve operational bottlenecks. Another finding is how digitalization helps traditional sports to be effectively communicated and introduced to the younger generation, a generation that is increasingly becoming detached from traditional sports and games. Event-based gamification in collaboration with FC Mobile successfully prove that digital platforms can serve as entry points and ultimately increase public interest in traditional sports. Partnerships with universities such as ITB and UNPAD also commercial trials at MIKO Mall, builds an institutional ecosystem that drives continuous regeneration.

Another challenged faced are the limited capacity to communicate, package, and promote the existing cultural and sporting assets as an attractive visitor experiences, it required a more integrated approach involving local government, communities, organization, tourism stakeholders, educational institutions, and the private sector.

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