

## **Ruwatan dreadlocks ritual: branding Dieng as a cultural tourism destination in Wonosobo**

Marwan Mahmudi<sup>1\*)</sup>, Suraya Mansur<sup>2</sup>, Haekal Fajri Amrullah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Faculty of Communication Science, Universitas Mercu Buana*

*1 Meruya Selatan Street, Kembangan, Western Jakarta, Indonesia*

<sup>2</sup>*Institut Komunikasi dan Bisnis LSPR*

*Kav 35 KH Mas Mansyur Street, Central Jakarta, Indonesia*

Email: marwan.mahmudi@mercubuana.ac.id, Phone: +62 21 5840816

**How to Cite This Article:** Mahmudi, M. et al. (2025). Ruwatan dreadlocks ritual: branding Dieng as a cultural tourism destination in Wonosobo. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 9(3). doi: 10.25139/jsk.v9i3.9731

Received: 08-02-2025, Revision: 09-09-2025, Acceptance: 06-10-2025, Published: 22-11-2025

**Abstract** Identity is entirely a social construction and cannot exist outside cultural representation and acculturation because identity is within the social and cultural environment. In the context of tradition, identity is related to the position and social position of the community. Dreadlocked children are believed to have more daring personalities than humans who are destined to have normal hair. This phenomenon is not limited to dreadlocks who live in Dieng. Several cases were also found in individuals who had direct descendants of the Dieng population, even though they were domiciled outside the Dieng area. This research used Cultural Identity Theory and city branding. What is their social identity? How does the ritual transformation of dreadlocks contribute to the activation of Dieng's brand as a tourist destination? This study employed the constructivism paradigm and analysed systematically meaningful acts socially, especially on the dreadlocks in Dieng, Central Java. The methodological approach is qualitative. The informants are six parents, public figures, and officials. The result shown: For the people of Dieng Plateau, the number of dreadlocked children correlates with people's welfare. The greater the number of dreadlocked children, the better their welfare. The misunderstanding is that the dreadlocks are special, smart, hyperactive because the dreadlocks are guarded by supernatural beings. Related to tourist destinations, the local government uses it as part of a cultural tourism destination that is economical in purpose.

**Keywords:** cultural identity; dreadlocks; ruwatan tradition; tourism destination

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of the consequences of regional autonomy is that the regional government should be independent in terms of revenue and not rely on the central government (Putra & Hidayat, 2016). Every region has its revenue potential, including the tourism sector. In regard to the sector, Arief Yahya as the Minister of Tourism stated that regional governments must be able to find their market, especially tourists and investors (Alfadhil et al., 2021). The opportunity is widely opened along with the globalisation trend recently. Several regions create a brand to be acknowledged and remembered as a tourism destination, for instance, Yogyakarta utilises the brand of 'Never-Ending Asia' and 'Solo' is known as The Spirit of Java (Adjie & Anggina, 2020).

The focus of this research is to analyse the ritual activity of Ruwatan Rambut Gimbali as the main branding tool for Wonosobo City, specifically the Dieng area, by investigating how all the processions and local wisdom values in the tradition are activated, communicated, and capitalised—not in the sense of commercialisation that reduces sacredness, but as a core strategy—to form a unique image, increase tourist attraction, and strengthen Wonosobo's position on the map of Indonesian cultural tourism with an authentic and sustainable identity.

<sup>\*)</sup> Corresponding Author

Brand creation is generally conducted by holding an event where the brand targets are involved (Aji & Juwita, 2023). Therefore, the brand will be actively remembered by those who experienced the event. Through this, one of the events related to brand activation is Dieng Culture Festival (DCF) VII, which had been held several times. When the event was centered in Dieng Arjuna Temple in Banjarnegara Central Java (2016), *Pikiran Rakyat* Newspaper described the event as below (Eviyanti, 2016). *Furthermore, fireworks will be launched at midnight. "The peak of DCF is on Sunday, namely the ritual of cutting dreadlocks. As usual, the ritual starts from the midst of Dieng Kulon Village. The kirab group then moved towards the Arjuna Temple, where the ritual of cutting dreadlocks was carried out", said Alif Fauzi as the Chairmain of Pokdarwis Dieng Pandawa.*

The description above implied an underlying issue regarding dreadlock. The dreadlocks of local children will be cut on a ritual. Furthermore, the ritual of cutting dreadlocks was said to be the peak of the Dieng Cultural Festival (DCF). The problem is dreadlocks who were ready for the ritual were not always available every year since some of the parents still cannot prepare the dreadlocks' requests including the budget to conduct the *ruwatan* ritual (Satria, 2017). Besides, the construction process of dreadlocks identity is not happening on the micro-level, but on the meso level by Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), and macro-level by the local government, who provide formal legitimation (Febriyanto et al., 2018).

In other parts of the world, there are also hair-shaving rituals. In Thailand, for example, the 'Poi Sanglong' or 'Poi Lern Si' tradition is celebrated every March and April. The major Tai Yai festival is called 'Poi Sanglong'. This festival celebrates boys being ordained as novices. Their parents and pseudo-parents tonsure the boys. The boys then change into their clothes and wear crowns like princes. A procession is then held to announce that all the boys will soon become monks. This hair-shaving ceremony symbolises the release from vanity, worldly beauty, and attachment to self. The ceremony is performed solemnly in the presence of senior monks and family. After the ritual, as monks, the boys must study Buddhist philosophy and Tai Yai cultural norms (Namtham & Gogoi Konwar, 2021).

Regardless of the similarity in dreadlocks, the issue that arose is different. The *ruwatan* ritual in DCF is more likely to express that dreadlock is unwanted. The question now is why? A report by *Pikiran Rakyat* implied the point of view of the locals regarding dreadlocks. The journalist did not only employ the term dreadlock, but also '*rambut gembel*' (*homeless hair*). The term connotatively puts the dreadlocks as homeless people. However, do the locals also perceive dreadlocks negatively?

Taylor explains that knowledge about ourselves comes from various sources such as religion, ethnicity, or cultural activities (Taylor et al., 1997). Socialisation is the origin of knowledge about ourselves. It is all about how someone can gain rule, standard, group value, and culture. Social identity is defined as an individual's knowledge of belonging to a particular social community, along with some emotional and value significance to that particular community membership (Wibisono & Sasia, 2020). Individuals derive part of their identity from membership in particular social groups (Sakroni et al., 2024).

In relation, it can be deduced that identity is a fully social construction and not possible to exist outside the cultural representation and acculturation as identity is formed within a social and cultural environment. None of the cultures that do not have a conception of self and selfhood. However, the identity of a culture is always different from the identity owned by other cultures (Berger & Luckmann, 2016); (Littlejohn et al., 2012).

Barker urged, "Identity is an 'essence' that could be understood through taste, belief, attitude, and lifestyle" (Barker, 2004a). Identity is perceived through expression in many representative forms known by others and ourselves.

There is a difference in understanding identity between traditional context and modern human understanding. According to the traditional context, identity is related to the position and level in society. On the other hand, identity to modern humans is a formation process of narration on self and selfhood. Barker (2004) stated, "In the traditional context, self-identity is mostly about social position. Meanwhile, for modern human identity is a reflective project where self-identity is built by the reflective arrangement of self-narration".

An individual in this matter is trying to construct an identity narrative where one-self forms a certain development timeline from the past to the expected future. Thus, self-identity is

not a collection of traits owned by an individual. Identity is one-self as if understood reflectively by a person in their biographical context (Stald, 2008).

According to Barker (2004), identity is social and cultural because: (1) The belief on how to be a person is a cultural question. Individualism, for instance, is the characteristic of the modern community. (2) Resources that shape materials for identity projects which are language, cultural products, and social character. Further, Kusumaningrum & Dharta (2023), indicate that the identity of a tourist area is a very important factor in tourism. It encompasses a set of defining characteristics that distinguish various geographical areas. These distinctive features influence tourists' decisions when selecting destinations for their trips and visits.

Identity is not limited to self-description, but it is also about the social label. As quoted from Giddens (in Barker, 2004): The analogies of social identity are normative rights, obligations, penalty on certain collectivity, and creating the role of standardised signs, especially the signs related to bodily attributes, age, and gender, which are fundamental in every community although the cross-cultural variations are also made and can be recorded (Piecowyte, 2000); (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

According to Operario & Fiske (in Padilla & Perez, 2003), social identity is perceived through three aspects: (1) *People are motivated to maintain a positive self-concept*, (2) *the self-concept derives largely from group identification*, and, (3) *people establish positive social identities by favourably comparing their in-group against an out-group* (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

The three aspects above implied that first, people are motivated to maintain a positive self-concept. Second, self-concept gained most of the group identification. Third, people set a positive social identity properly by comparing their in-group and out-group. The aspects showed that social identity is directed to the social conflict comparison process within in-group and competition between groups. Variables such as power, hierarchy, and resources increase the competition where the in-group believes that they are better than the out-group. In conclusion, social identity is built from similarity and difference in several social and personal aspects. Social identity emphasises the idea that identity is produced continuously and flexibly to improve the social identity itself. Tradition is commonly understood as a culture. Tradition is perceived as a custom, that every rule and custom related to cultural values that are inherited and practiced collectively by a community such as *sadranan*, *suranan*, *sekaten*, and *ruwatan*.

According to Herusatoto (2000), "Tradition, in general, is meant to refer to a certain value, norm, and custom that has been developing continuously and accepted, followed, and even conserved by the society for a long term". Tradition is defined as custom practiced from generation to generation in a certain community or tribe.

Tradition is a whole material and idea from the past but it does still exist until today as a whole. According to Shils (in Sztompka (2004) "Tradition means everything passed or inherited from the past to present time". Tradition is an inherited custom from one generation to the next generation. Inherited custom includes cultural values such as culture and belief.

Commonly, a certain tradition is used as the symbol of life culture of a community which is in line with the norms and culture that they believe. According to Suyono & Siregar (1985) "Tradition is a series of mature regulations that includes all conceptions of the cultural system of a certain culture to regulate action and behaviour in the community" (Suryono & Siregar, 1985). C. A. van Peursen (1976) also urged that, "Tradition is the inheritance of norms, customs, rules, and assets" (C. van Peursen & Hartoko, 2000).

Rural communities generally tend to relate with various traditions that should be conserved. If the rural communities could be identified as an agrarian society, then they tend to avoid speculating new alternatives. Preserving culture is a crucial aspect of indigenous peoples' lives, as they are identified with a lifestyle still guided by local customs. The process of cultural preservation in indigenous communities is inseparable from the crucial role of traditional institutions. These institutions have the potential to determine whether indigenous peoples will practice their traditions (Sonia & Sarwoprasodjo, 2020).

Tradition in society has several functions. Shils as cited in Sztompka (2004), "Humans could not survive without tradition although they are dissatisfied with their tradition". Sztompka (2004) also explained several functions of tradition: (1) In cliché, it is stated that tradition is a hereditary policy. Its place is in our present consciousness, belief, norms, values, and objects created in the past. Tradition also provides fragments of historical heritage that are found useful. Tradition is a pile of ideas and materials that people can utilise to build the future based on the

experiences in the past. (2) Provides legitimacy for existing views of life, beliefs, institutions, and regulations which require justification to bind its members. One of the legitimation sources is tradition. (3) Providing convincing and collective identity strengthens primordial loyalty to the nation. (4) Helps to provide the escape of dissatisfaction for life. Tradition implies a content past which provides the source of pride when the society was in crisis (Sztompka, 2004).

Ruwatan is one of the traditions of the Javanese community. According to Kamajaya (1992) "The term *ruwatan* is originally from the word *ruwat* which means free. The word *mangruwat* or *ngruwat* means "to free, to release" (Kamajaya, 1992). In the ancient tradition, the ones who experienced *ruwat* are creatures who live a noble life but then turn into despicable and miserable. Thus, those who live a miserable or despicable life must be treated, which means to be released from a miserable life. WJS Poerwadarminta," Explained in Baoesastra Djawa, *ruwat* means *luwar saka ing panenung, pangesot, wewujudan sing salah kedaden, luwar saka ing bebadan paukuman ing dewa*" (Kamajaya, 1992). In Bahasa, *ruwat* means (1) Recovery to the initial condition. (2) Free from the despicable fate.

The *Ruwatan* Ceremony has been developing through centuries and experiencing changes until today. Its existence shows that cultural legacy possesses an essential function to the society which supports it. *Ruwatan* is supported by a traditional puppet show (*wayang*) that delivers a message about moral value through the characters. The functions of *ruwatan* according to Kamajaya (1992) is: "*Ruwatan* Ceremony... contains messages about moral value delivered symbolically and metaphorically in the form of aesthetic presentation".

The dreadlocks *ruwatan* tradition is religious and magical for the people of Java. *Ruwatan* is also aimed to avoid unwanted fate. According to Mulder (1985): Sometimes conditions and events can be identified as dangerous and potentially disruptive, and in this case, they must be prevented by ceremonies and rituals. In essence, such deterrence (*ngruwat*) is an attempt to change unfavourable coordinates, to remove the evil influence which hovers over those who suffer from force adversity. (Mulder, 1985).

*Ruwatan* usually is the prevention of unfavourable things so that they do not happen to people who are considered as *Sukerta*. *Ruwatan* is held for the safety and well-being of the people of the society who are sincere. Besides, the purpose of *ruwatan* is to create awareness so that people can understand its meaning. *Ruwatan* is understood not only from what is perceived but also the symbolic meaning of the process during *Ruwatan*. The symbolic meaning helps people who experience *ruwatan* to strengthen their self-confidence and positive attitude.

Before getting to understand city branding, a knowledge of 'brand' in the context of marketing communication should be gained first. According to Gardner and Levy (1955) in 'A Conceptual View of Branding for Service', a brand is complex and it represents ideas and attributes and can explain to customers many things related to the product (Davis, 2007). A brand does not have a certain form, but it is also not fictitious. It only exists in the mind of the customers.

Nainggolan & Darmastuti (2022) from their writing branding strategy of Wonogiri, Kapuhan, Sawangan villages as tourist villages 'Religious Villages'. He explained several programs that can be carried out to implement the Religious Village branding strategy including promotion, live in, cultural discussions and support from the government. Intercultural communication can be carried out when the community conducts cultural studies or tourists communicate with the residents of Wonogiri Hamlet, especially with residents who adhere to the belief in one almighty God. However, this program can run smoothly if the government also supports and is involved in the operation of the religious village.

Indrawan et al. (2022), there is not much difference from the research conducted by the destination branding strategy of the Rekso Wilis Park tourist village in Sareng Village, Geger District, Madiun Regency, which was carried out by the Sareng Village government, Sareng Village is one of the tourist destinations, especially in parks that are widely visited by the wider community, but on the other hand there are several sectors that still have shortcomings where the use of media is not yet too extensive.

Several studies have shown that the government's role in developing city branding is crucial. Cultural events like the Dieng Culture Festival (DFC) and collaborative efforts between the government and local residents contribute to the strength of the culture itself. This means that the traditional ritual of cutting dreadlocks (*ruwatan*) is not only seen as a cultural practice but can also be an effective branding tool for Wonosobo, a city with a unique cultural heritage.

The term above then brings to understand city branding which is the impact of brand development. City branding is a concept that takes place as if it 'speaks' to the public (Yananda & Salamah, 2014). In the city branding strategy, a city seems to communicate the public about itself, in this case, Dieng Plateau city branding which communicates through the *ruwatan* tradition of dreadlocks as their cultural identity suggests an image in the public. This image will build the public's perception of Dieng.

In the beginning, the practice of city branding was utilised for economic purposes but today it becomes a concern as globalisation in the economy has created cities or regions as strategic capital. City branding can be said as a strategy for a city to create positioning in the minds of the target audience. More precisely, it is called the image of a city (Widodo, 2014); (Kavaratzis, 2004); (Riza et al., 2012); (Braun et al., 2013).

City branding is not limited to creating a slogan or logo but also the idea that the identity and what is displayed or presented should come originally from the soul of the city. As same as products, labelling in a city should represent all the personalities of the city that the brand is attached to (Jansson & Power, 2010); (Castillo-Villar, 2016); (Anttiroiko, 2014).

The novelty of the research titled 'Traditional Ruwatan Rambut Gimbal in Branding Dieng as a Cultural Tourism Destination' lies in its approach that explores the integration of sacred rituals as the core of the destination branding strategy, not merely as an additional attraction. Unlike previous studies that may only view it as a tourism object or cultural preservation effort, this research specifically analyses how the symbolic values, magical narratives, and authentic processions of Ruwatan Rambut Gimbal actively shape the unique, differentiated, and sustainable brand identity of Dieng—where the ritual functions as the 'soul' that animates the entire destination marketing narrative, creates an economic ecosystem that involves the local community, and produces an authentic image that avoids being reduced to mere tourism commodities.

This research is interesting and needs to be done because the Ruwatan Rambut Gimbal tradition functions as a very strong pillar of identity differentiation (unique selling proposition) for the Dieng brand image, where the authentic and spiritually meaningful cultural ritual is not only a tourist attraction, but becomes the soul and main narrative that forms the image of Dieng as a genuine and characteristic cultural tourism destination, so that it is able to differentiate it from other destinations, create an economic ecosystem for the community, and ultimately strengthen the sustainability of the tradition itself through the economic value generated from the branding.

The explanation above shows that dreadlocks have a certain social identity. How is it their social identity? How does the dreadlocks transformation through the ritual contribute to the brand activation of Dieng as a tourism destination? Thus, this study formulated the main issue: how does the cultural identity of dreadlocks *ruwatan* tradition exist in branding Dieng as the cultural tourism destination?

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed the constructivism paradigm and analysed systematically meaningful acts socially, especially on the dreadlocks in Dieng, Wonosobo, Central Java. The methodological approach is qualitative. The study used social identity theory and emphasised empathy and dialectic interaction between the researcher and subjects to reconstruct the reality studied, through case study strategy, an investigation with natural background on indications within the context of real-life/actual indications/currently happening with unclear boundaries between indications (Yin, 2014). The subject of this study is the dreadlocked children in Dieng. The informants are six; those are parents, public figures, and officials (Table 1).

The research stages began with a literature study to understand the problem map and supporting theories, followed by participatory observation of ritual processions and destination branding activities to capture the context visually and empirically, as well as in-depth interviews with key informants such as caretakers, parents of dreadlocked children, representatives of the Tourism Office, business actors, and tourists to gain comprehensive narrative insights. The collected data were then analysed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification, which was chosen because it can simplify complex qualitative data into structured themes without losing its contextual essence, thus ensuring the depth and validity of the research findings.

**Table 1.** Data of informants

Name	Location	Profession	Date
Informant 1	Telaga Warna, Dieng	Farmer, Elder Dieng	7 April 2017
Informant 2	Desa Bakal, Dieng	Parents, Farmers and Merchant	7 April 2017
Informant 3	Kauman Selatan, Wonosobo	Freelance Journalist, Tourist	6, 7, 8 April 2017
Informant 4	Mendolo, Wonosobo	Head of Wonosobo Regency Library	6 and 8 April 2017
Informant 5	Mendolo, Wonosobo	Teacher of SMPN 1 Wonosobo	6 and 8 April 2017
Informant 6	Merchant in the Crater Sikidang-Dieng	Parents, Merchant	7 April 2017

Source: Data by Author (2025)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The origin of the dreadlock

The literature on dreadlocks in Dieng is now accessible on the internet. Before the internet era, knowledge and understanding of dreadlocks were gained through stories (with the nuance of legend). The legend of the dreadlocks in Sikidang Crater, Dieng, Central Java is told in the stories below:

#### *The legend of Pangeran Kidang Garungan (Prince Kidang Garungan)*

The dreadlocks in the Dieng Plateau are associated with this legend. Once upon a time, a beautiful princess named Dewi Sinta charmed Prince Kidang Garungan. Then, the prince intended to marry her. Fortunately, Dewi Sinta accepted him to be her husband. However, Dewi Sinta had never met the prince. When the prince and his people arrived at Dewi Sinta's palace, the princess was surprised. Prince Kidang Garungan was not a brave and handsome prince, but a man with the head of a deer. Dewi Sinta, who had already accepted the proposal, was disappointed. She asked Prince Kidang to create a well. The reason for the request was that the people in the kingdom had difficulty in accessing water resources. The well should be finished in one night only. Prince Kidang agreed to the request, and he started to dig a well. Then, when he was digging, Dewi Sinta's guards and maids buried him. He was furious and disappointed. Before he died, he swore an oath that Dewi Sinta's descendants would have dreadlocks. Until today, there are still children with dreadlocks in the Dieng Plateau area.

#### *The legend of Ni Roro Ronce*

600 years ago when Dieng was still inhabited by Hindu Gods and Goddesses, a messenger from the Ancient Mataram Kingdom was ordered to open the Dieng area and expand the territory of the kingdom. Together with his wife, Ni Roro Ronce, the couple was ordered to look after the welfare of the people who inhabit this area. After receiving revelations from Nyi Roro Kidul, the ruler of the South Java Sea, they were aware of the coming of the dreadlock. Since then, the dreadlocks phenomenon has been noted in the Dieng Plateau. The belief stated that the more people with dreadlocks the more quality of the welfare in Dieng.

#### *The legend of Kyai Kolo Dete*

According to the locals, children with dreadlocks in the past were entrusted by Kyai Kolo Dete. He was a retainer during the Islam Mataram Era (14<sup>th</sup> Century). Together with Kyai Walid and Kyai Karim, Kyai Kolo Dete was assigned by the Mataram Kingdom to prepare for the government in Wonosobo. Kyai Walid and Kyai Karim served in Wonosobo while Kyai Kolo Dete Served in the Dieng Plateau. When he arrived at the Dieng Plateau, Kyai Kolo Dete and his wife (Ni Roro Ronce) received revelation from the Queen of the South Sea. The couple was assigned to bring prosperity to Dieng. The benchmark for prosperity was marked by the presence of the dreadlocked children. Since then, children with dreadlocks are everywhere in Dieng. Informant 2 (7 April 2017) emphasised, "Based on the legend, there is *Mbah Kaladete* who had dreadlocked hair like the reggae".

### *The sulphur in Dieng*

Children in Dieng are born to mothers who live close to the sulphur gas. The sulphur then affects the genes and the dreadlock. Based on the legends above, it can be concluded that there were several versions of the origin of dreadlocks in Indonesia, especially in the Dieng Plateau area. First, the dreadlocks are the result of the curse of Prince Kidang Garungan for Dewi Sinta's descendants. Second, the children with dreadlocks were entrusted by Kyai Kolo Dete and his wife. The third reason is a purely biological phenomenon which is the sulphur effect. The appearance of dreadlocks is believed to be a sign of the increasing welfare of the Dieng population, "the more the number of children with dreadlocks, the people of Dieng believe that their welfare will be improving".

After learning the stories, the researcher decided to trace how a child could have dreadlocked hair. Several sources explained the process of the dreadlocks' appearance. The symptom will be started by the high temperature of the child's body for several days.

"The appearance of the dreadlocks in a child will be signalled by the high body temperature for several days. The temperature will be back to normal in the morning along with the appearance of dreadlocks. When the child is 2 years old and gets the fever, it is a sign that the child is special" (Informant 2, 7 April 2017).

"However, some of them have dreadlocked hair because they are sick. We have interviewed two families, and they explained a similar process." The informant also added that the higher the body temperature, the thicker the dreadlocks. The temperature of the child will be back to normal along with the appearance of the dreadlock. "The dreadlocked hair usually starts to grow before a child turns three years old".

Informant 2 (7 April 2017) told a story of a four-year old child whose mother was also sick. When he was three years old, he got a fever twice. During the pregnancy, the mother did not show any symptoms that she will have a dreadlocked child. Informant 3 (6<sup>th</sup> April 2017) also stated similar information, "There is no such sign during pregnancy that a mother will have a dreadlocked child or not".

It can be concluded that the dreadlocks do not appear since the beginning of the children's life; however, it appears when the children reach three years old. Nor does this happen to all children; but the locals believe that the dreadlocked children are entrusted by Kyai Kolo Dete.

One of the elders in Dieng, Informant 1 (7 April 2017) also said that the dreadlocks will grow thicker over time. According to him, the phenomenon of the dreadlocks is increasingly being recognised as a combination of genetic and metaphysical. Regardless of the lineage, dreadlocks still appear on people who had bloodlines from Dieng.

The phenomenon is not limited to the dreadlocks in Dieng. "Dreadlocks are mostly in Dieng, Siterus Village. There are twenty dreadlocks in the village." There is also a dreadlock in Siwatu. The number of dreadlocks in Dieng is fair between boys and girls. The appearance of a dreadlock in a family is unpredictable because many family members have dreadlocks. "It is the descendant of a child from the past with dreadlocks."

Informant 1 (7 April 2017) has a slightly different view. Regardless of lineage, dreadlocks still appeared on the people who had bloodlines from Dieng. "Several cases were also found in the people who had direct descendants from the people of Dieng although they lived outside Dieng." In regard to the statement, Informant 2 (7 April 2017) agreed, "There is a dreadlock who happened to be not a native Dieng, but his parents are from Dieng. He has dreadlocked hair although he was not born in Dieng."

### **Self-identity**

Informant 2 (7 April 2017) stated that dreadlocks are varying. However, there is a similarity, "the hairlines are stuck to each other." They wash their hair every day. The informant's grandchild after a shower, "the hair was combed to get rid of the dreadlock but after that, the hair became dreadlocked again. When we comb the hair and the dreadlocked hair falls, the hair should be kept as it would be thrown away during the ceremony", he said. He also added, "there is a child who has pretty dreadlocked hair, her name is Bintang, the daughter of Harol. She is still in kindergarten".

"The hair seems to be a sign of the mood." At certain times, the emotion of the dreadlocks becomes unbearable with no apparent reasons. "When they are angry, the dreadlocks will stand upright as if in a threatening mood. However, a child with dreadlocked hair "is not spoiled and rarely cries." (Informant 2, 7 April 2017).

On the other hand, it is believed that dreadlocks are braver than others. Sometimes even the dreadlocks like to talk to themselves. They also sleep at 11, midnight, or even 3 in the morning. The habits will stop when the dreadlocks are cut.

In daily life, the dreadlocks are no different from normal children. "They will be back from school at half past 10 in the morning." Informant 2 (7 April 2017) added that in Siterus there are dreadlocks who do not go to school.

The dreadlocks are playing together with other normal children. They interact with the children as usual, however, "usually children with dreadlocks are more active socially. Children with dreadlocks tend to be more active than the others. Even when it is time to study, they will play around."

### **Initial process: asking for hair cutting and the requirements**

Among their friends who have normal hair, the dreadlocks do not find any difficulty in communication. "However, the dreadlocks sometimes are ashamed because they are different or even some of their friends mock them by calling "eh anak gimbal, anak gimbal (Hey dreadlock! Dreadlock!)". Regardless of being mocked by their friends, "basically the dreadlocks are fine to be called so (*gimbal* or dreadlock)."

The request to cut the dreadlocked hair is unpredictable. The reason why the dreadlocks want to cut their hair is mostly that they are embarrassed. They want to cut the dreadlocks because "Sometimes they feel embarrassed, they are teased by their friends when they enter elementary school. Some also feel embarrassed because their friends are calling them *rambut gembel* or dreadlocks." Informant 2 (7 April 2017) added, "Dreadlocks want to cut their hair because they were ashamed as their friends would see their hair."

According to informant 2 (7 April 2017), the term *gembel* is commonly used by Javanese, while *gimbal* or dreadlocks are used by the people in the city. The word '*gembel*' for the people in the city is a homeless child. Meanwhile, the Javanese called the hair as *gembel* only to make it simple. "The term is the same as *wedus gembel* of Mount Merapi." The community believes that the dreadlocks are special. Furthermore, informant 4 (8 April 2017) explained that *gembel* means someone who is not able to hold a ceremony as it requires large funds and invites many neighbours.

There were homeless or beggars in Dieng. "They are homeless and beggars due to the economic situation. During the 90s era, the term *gembel* was not used." Since the era of 80s, there have been several visits from universities and people outside Dieng who were willing to help increase the economic status of the people in Dieng and decrease the number of homeless or beggars.

Two factors motivate the dreadlocked children to cut their hair: first, they are uncomfortable with the hair as it is heavy, and second is the external factors, including the television. "It can be from their motivation, as the hair is heavy and uncomfortable or the external factors such as peers or television that could motivate them to change their appearance." Education also influences their decision and motivation.

Another perspective also stated, "There is also supernatural code from the creatures who are living in their hair." Informant 2 (7 April 2017) explained: "Yes, I heard that creatures are living in the hair. Children with dreadlocked hair are special, that is why there are unseen creatures in their hair, and it is not only one", according to the shaman. There is fear if a child is born dreadlocked because will be unseen creatures living in the hair. There are three dreadlocks here whose hair is inhabited by 35 unseen creatures, and they were even interviewed by Mr. Tukul. Three dreadlocks are guarded by 35 supernatural beings. Most of the dreadlocks can see the unseen (supernatural beings).

Informant 3 (8 April 2017) argued that the mystification built is that the dreadlocks are special, smart, hyperactive since they are guarded by supernatural beings. "Many people in Indonesia still believe in mystical things, even modern people, but that is an interesting part."

According to Informant 5 (8<sup>th</sup> April 2017) who does not believe in mystification, dreadlocks can be removed by cutting the hair. Thus, a dreadlock wants the hair to be cut, it is purely due to the modernisation factor. In the past, 15 years old dreadlocks did not have any motivation to cut the hair, but nowadays children with dreadlocked hair who are younger than 15 years old want to cut their hair because of the influence of the media or other people. Dreadlocks and people with tattoos were perceived negatively. "However, nowadays it is considered a style. Thus, modernisation influences the motivation to cut the dreadlocks as now dreadlocked children want to cut their hair at a younger age."

Apart from the mystification factor, "The oldest dreadlocked who wants to cut his hair is a secondary school student." Most of the dreadlocks aged 7 years old have asked to be cut, the oldest is 15 years old and the youngest is 3 years old. In Karangsari, someone had their hair cut when they entered junior high school. "It is rare for the dreadlocks to keep their hair until they are adults." Informant 4 (8<sup>th</sup> April 2017) added, "Actually dreadlocked hair should be maintained as it is a prominent identity."

The hair should not be cut until the child expresses the desire to get a haircut. Thus, they must ask to cut their hair. Parents could not force the children to cut their dreadlocked hair. "At school, nobody wants to cut the dreadlocked students' as the principal understands that the dreadlocks are special."

When a dreadlock wants to cut the hair, the parents should fulfil the request. "Every wish or request should be fulfilled. Parents should fulfil the children's request." Thus, parents will find out what the requests from their children are as they have to fulfil them. Parents also cannot predict the requests and if the parents are not able to fulfil them, there will be an argument between parents and children. The requests could be asked when the dreadlocked hair is about to be cut, not when the requests are said. "After the requests are granted, the children will use the goods that they have asked for."

### **Second process: wish granting**

Informant 1 (7 April 2017) explained, "The dreadlocks will only be cut in a special ritual or *ruwatan*". *Ruwatan* should follow certain rules and be based on the willingness of the dreadlocked children. Before the cutting ritual or *ruwatan* is carried out, the child usually will ask for several requests. "If they have asked for several requests, they should be granted."

Along with the desire to cut the hair, there is a unique request from the child, for instance, asking for a ceremony where the parents should distribute 2000 oranges, or asking for the rice left from certain fields. "The dreadlocks have various requests, the biggest one is a bicycle, the smallest is a rubber band," There was also a dreadlock who requested a cow without even knowing what a cow looks like."

### *Ceremony*

Informant 1 (7 April 2017) explained that every August or the month of Sura in the Javanese calendar, a mass cutting ceremony of dreadlocks is carried out in the courtyard of Arjuna Temple. "It is known that it is not cheap to hold a haircut ceremony, thus, the cost will be lessened by mass cutting at once." However, some are not ready for the expensive cost of up to 20 million because they must invite all the neighbours.

Informant 2 (7 April 2017) stated that if the ceremony is carried out privately, the reception could be held at home by inviting at least 20 people. The reception at home usually serves various traditional dishes such as *cucur* and red and white porridge that should be served in the ritual"

However, although there was only one dreadlocked child who cut the hair, "they still want to hold a big ceremony." Thus, "There was no minimum requirement of the dreadlocks if we want to hold a big ceremony."

There was a case when parents of the dreadlocks did not perform *ruwatan* ceremonies due to the economic condition or belief. According to informant 3 (8<sup>th</sup> April 2017), "They usually will cut the hair during *aqiqah* (according to Islam belief), however, it is still rare there and just started in recent days. Until today, the *cukur kuncung* tradition does still even exists".

Thus, "Just let the hair grow until 15 years old. The hair will get normal. "But as far as I know, Pak Holil only has one." Informant 2 (7 April 2017) added, "When a boy is circumcised, the ceremony is different from haircutting." We agreed that we do not hold a big ceremony for circumcision.

Informant 3 (8<sup>m</sup> April 2017) said that the biggest dreadlock cutting ceremony was in Dieng. The government annually participates in the event. The biggest *ruwatan* ceremony was attended by the Regent. "In Dieng, they usually will look for the dreadlocks who are ready to cut the hair and then hold the ceremony."

However, according to informant 2 (7 April 2017), the large-scale ceremony held in the Dieng Plateau is rare. "It depends on how many dreadlocked children want to cut their hair." After the haircut, there will be a reception. It is believed that "after the children request to cut the hair, the dreadlock will not grow anymore. " If parents carelessly cut the dreadlocks without any ceremony, the child will be sick. After the ceremony, the hair will grow like other normal hair."

#### *Sanction*

The locals believe that if the cutting is done without any ceremony or willingness from the dreadlocked children, or if the requests are not granted, the dreadlock hair will grow back. Some had not been cut until they were old and then the family was forced to cut their hair. However, the hair grew back, and the dreadlock became ill.

#### *Tourism destination*

Informant 3 (7 April 2017) stated that *Ruwatan* or the Dieng Cultural Festival was not originally initiated by the government. That implies that the government only promotes the event. However, the government's involvement in the event is significant.

Informant 3 (8 April 2017) heard that *ruwatan* is related to 1 Sura (Javanese Old Calendar), but the government requests the event to be held on every 1 August. 1 Sura is not always on 1 August. Uniquely, the community agreed on this request. An event like Balong will be held every August. The government will hold the event for tourism promotion. Thus, there will be an annual agenda that ultimately unites several events. The events are economically beneficial and efficient for the government to organise.

"I perceive the event is related to mystification, economy, and politics," informant 3 (8 April 2017) urged. Thus, the government utilises the event for economic purposes. Meanwhile, the local community still believes in mystification as a part of our culture that is believed until today. Informant 4 (8 April 2017) also stated that to help the people of Dieng, it is proposed to incorporate economisation and mystification. The mayor held Dieng Culture Festival that will be exposed by the media. The exposure will trigger the tourists to visit Dieng. "The problem is how to create a mystifying image with the economy. Probably the scholars from the university will be able to conduct research regarding the issue. Scholars who visit Dieng usually have to bring solutive ideas."

Informant 4 (8 April 2017) added that people will always create change to improve themselves. Without help from the scholars or cosmopolites, the change will be difficult to make. "I want people outside Wonosobo to be brought to the office and library and watch the movie (about Wonosobo)".

In order to prepare for the cultural festival, the bus terminal at Telaga Warna was built and improved. "Now the terminal looks amazing. In Dieng, there are many tourist attractions and could be visited in one package."

"Yesterday, the village head earned one million per month from the parking retribution. It was good news, the tourists usually want something different, especially those from Jakarta. (The revenue) in Dieng increased to 40%." (Informant 4, 8 April 2017)

"Well, probably the road is fun for touring, the route from Pekalongan will be expanded. There is another route that connects Jakarta-Semarang between the route and there is a direct road to Dieng which passes the forest that could be cut. The choice can be via the north or south. The access to Dieng could direct, no need to turn to Semarang. Thus, after Pekalongan, the tourists can directly go to Dieng.

Informant 2 (7<sup>th</sup> April 2017) concluded that for the people of Dieng, the number of dreadlocks is correlated with the welfare of the community. "The more dreadlocks in the community, the people of Dieng believe that their welfare will be better." If dreadlocks were only a natural phenomenon, there would be no series of cultural events. A series of actions are repeated every year. This marks the motivation to maintain a conception: dreadlocks as self-identity or cultural identity.

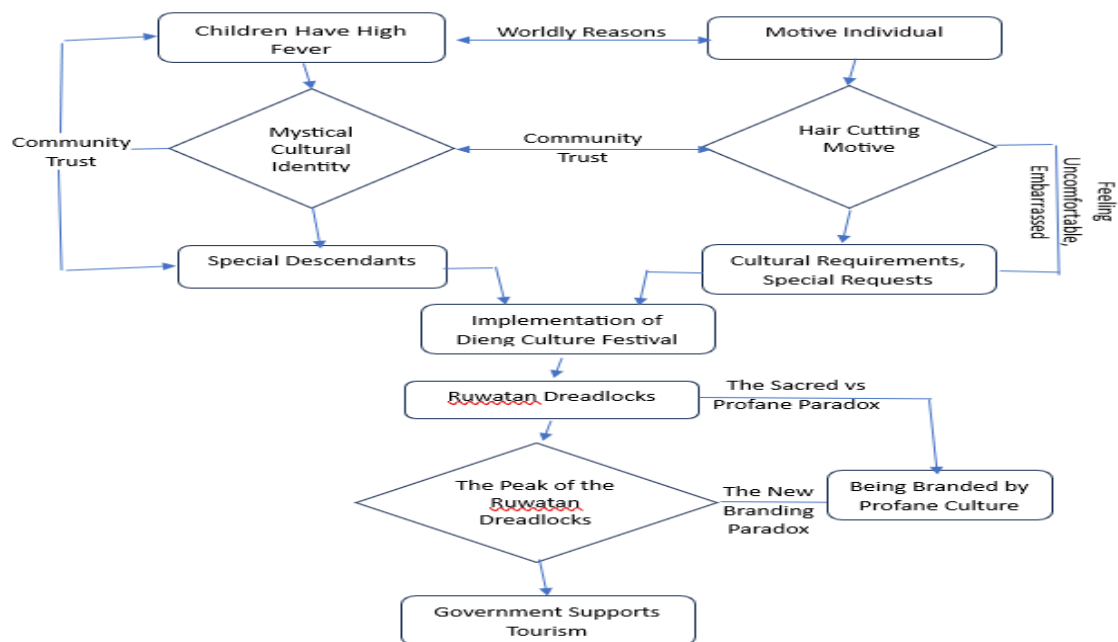
### Discussion and Theoretical Implications

The results showed that dreadlock is a physical characteristic of certain children that is not gained from birth but after experiencing high fever. Genetically, the characteristics of the dreadlocks are believed by the Dieng community as a direct descendant of the Dieng people and were entrusted by Kyai Kolo Dete, as revealed by (Febriyanto et al., 2018).

The physical characteristics possessed (the youngest is 3 years old-the oldest is 15 years old) finally want to cut their dreadlocked hair. The fact is different from the Rastafarian or Balinese dreadlocks who preserve their dreadlocked hair which has profane and religious meanings. The motives of the dreadlocks to cut their hair are uncomfortable feeling (hot and heavy), embarrassment being teased by their peers, influence from television, and education. The findings are in line with the results of a study conducted by Damayanti (Damayanti, 2011).

Although the dreadlocks are special, smart, hyperactive because they are guarded by supernatural creatures, the dreadlocks' identity is not maintained by the dreadlocks themselves and their family. In other words, the identity of dreadlocks is not one's identity. Dreadlocks are more of an institutional-cultural identity for 'dreadlocks' not for individuals who have dreadlocked hair.

As a cultural identity, dreadlocks are described as: (1) Showing certain emotions at certain moments, they are out of controls; the dreadlocked hair will upright when the child was angry; (2) Providing privileges, in a mystical sense (guarded by supernatural creatures and able to talk to them; (3) Creating hyperactive and bold characteristics; (4) Possess special privileges, in the sense that their requests should be fulfilled, especially when the dreadlocked hair is going to be cut; the requests should be fulfilled by the parents. Based on the description of the research findings above, the researcher presents the following flowchart as appear on Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Research Findings  
 Source: Author (2025)

The cultural identity seems to be the unique culture of the people in Dieng. The uniqueness is commodified into an annual cultural performance called Dieng Cultural Festival. The commodification and mystification appear to be in line with the informant's belief that "the more children with dreadlocked hair, the Dieng community is confident that their welfare will be better."

This cultural identity seems to be the unique culture of the people of the Dieng Plateau. This cultural uniqueness is commodified into an annual cultural performance called the Dieng Cultural Festival. The commodification of cultural identity and its mystification appears to be in

line with the informant's belief that "the more children with dreadlocks hair, the Dieng community is confident that their welfare will be better." As Sukarno & Mutiarin (2023) say that for addition to its economic impact, tourism development has also generated significant employment opportunities within the tourism sector.

The results of the study on cultural identity are in line with previous studies (*Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State*, 2003); (Febriyanto et al., 2018); (Wagner et al., 2012); (Meliono, 2011); (Lie, 2017). The phenomenon of the dreadlocks is the commodification of cultural identity and its mystification (Cole, 2007); (Banindro, 2007); (Irianto et al., 2018); (Sumartono, 2016); (Malik, 2018); (Febriana et al., 2019).

During the festival, the *ruwatan* becomes the highlight which means *ruwatan* is one of the peak traditions in Javanese belief. Carrying out *ruwatan* means recovering back to the original state as a being who lives a noble life; regardless of the bad luck that will befall (Kamajaya, 1992). The meaning seems contradictory to the cultural identity of the dreadlocks (special, divine incarnation). However, by examining Setiawan's research (2012), *ruwatan* contains profane meaning that human beings are not free from mistakes and sins.

The reproduction of profane meaning through cultural performance has a significant and unique place or attention. The uniqueness shows the soul of the Dieng community as the people who believe in themselves as the profane beings represented by dreadlocks. According to (Yanti et al., 2023) that Cultural Heritage as Key Promotion of Village Brand. Thus, Dieng is branded by dreadlocks *ruwatan*.

Based on the results of this discussion, the theoretical implication for city branding studies is that cultural identity need not always be interpreted as a symbol of pride or nobility to be preserved but can instead be effectively constructed from narratives of vulnerability, profaneness, and the need for purification. The finding that dreadlocks are cut for reasons of worldly discomfort (physical and social) and then treated with ritual rituals to ward off bad luck offers a new perspective on city branding: that a destination's appeal can arise from the paradox between the sacred and the profane, between the special and that which needs to be 'fixed'. This enriches city branding theory, which has tended to focus on building an image based on excellence and grandeur, by demonstrating that honestly acknowledged cultural humility, complexity, and even 'shame' can shape a city's brand identity that is more authentic, relatable, and sustainable.

Furthermore, this research strengthens cultural branding theory by demonstrating that the process of commodification does not necessarily destroy cultural values but can instead be a mechanism for the reproduction and reactualisation of those cultural values in a modern context. Dieng's successful branding through the Ruwatan Rambut Gimbak ritual demonstrates that a destination brand can be built not by creating new, artificial narratives, but by highlighting and curating existing cultural complexities—even paradoxical ones—and turning them into compelling narratives. The theoretical implication is a more organic, bottom-up approach to branding, where the strength of a city's brand stems from its ability to embrace the complexity of its cultural identity, rather than simplifying it for market consumption. Thus, this study provides a new conceptual framework for how city branding can function as a dialogic interface between tradition and modernity, rather than simply a one-way marketing strategy.

The Dieng government supports tourism by organizing flagship cultural events such as the Dieng Cultural Festival (DIE), improving infrastructure by repairing roads and public facilities, and promoting new tourist attractions outside the festival, such as reservoirs and alternative spots for enjoying the sunrise. This support involves local governments, such as the Banjarnegara and Wonosobo district governments, as well as village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) and youth communities. For example, efforts to restore Arjuna Temple and improve parking area management demonstrate a clear commitment to improving the tourist experience. (RadarGarut, 2025).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, the Dieng Cultural Festival serves as an effective city branding strategy by utilising the Ruwatan Rambut Gimbak tradition as the core narrative of cultural identity. The festival's uniqueness lies not in the commodification of culture, but rather in its ability to transform complex traditional values—spanning both sacred and profane dimensions—into symbolic capital that shapes the destination's image. Through the festival, Dieng has

successfully built an authentic and differentiated brand identity that showcases the full face of Javanese culture, while strengthening its position as a premium cultural tourism destination in Indonesia.

Further research is needed to determine the effectiveness of festival marketing communication strategies in building perception and brand awareness among domestic and international tourists. Furthermore, future research is needed to develop a model for measuring the festival's impact on the local creative economy ecosystem and the sustainability of the destination's brand equity, while maintaining the integrity of cultural values without commodifying them.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like especially to thank all informants from Sikidang Crater, Dieng, Central Java (parents, public figures and officials).

## REFERENCES

- Adjie, B. A., & Anggina, W. F. (2020). Efektivitas city branding "solo, the spirit of java" terhadap implementasi program perencanaan kepariwisataan. *Cakra Wisata*, 24(1), 10-21.
- Aji, D. A., & Juwita, R. (2023). Brand activation sebagai bentuk strategi komunikasi pemasaran terpadu (studi kasus: headstock coffee di balikpapan). *Jurnal Indonesia: Manajemen Informatika Dan Komunikasi*, 4(3), 1446-1462.
- Alfadhil, D. M., Anugrah, A., & Hasbar, M. H. A. (2021). Budaya Westernisasi Terhadap Masyarakat. *Jurnal Sosial-Politika*, 2(2), 99-108.
- Anttiroiko, A. V. (2014). The political economy of city branding. In *The Political Economy of City Branding*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203782187>
- Banindro, B. S. (2007). Gaya Psychedelia Counter Culture Amerika Komodifikasi Indonesia Kini. *Jurnal Desain Komunikasi Visual Nirmana*, 9(2), 69-76.
- Barker, C. (2004). *Cultural studies: Teori & praktik*. Kreasi Wacana.
- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (2016). The social construction of reality. In *Social theory re-wired* (pp. 110-122). Routledge.
- Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city-my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1), 18-28.
- Castillo-Villar, F. R. (2016). Urban icons and city branding development. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 9(3), 255-268.
- Cole, S. (2007). Beyond authenticity and commodification. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(4), 943-960.
- Damayanti, P. A. (2011). Dinamika perilaku "naka" anak berambut gimbal di dataran tinggi dieng. *Psikolamika: Jurnal Psikologi Dan Psikologi Islam*, 8(2).
- Davis, J. C. (2007). A conceptual view of branding for services. *Innovative Marketing*, 3(1).
- Eviyanti. (2016). *Dieng Culture Festival, Ritual Potong Rambut Gimbal*. [www.Pikiran-Rakyat.Com](http://www.Pikiran-Rakyat.Com).
- Febriana, K. A., Setiawan, Y. B., & Ersyad, F. A. (2019). Warak Ngendhog Commodification as a Kind of Creative Industry in Semarang City. *Jurnal The Messenger*, 11(1), 27-37.
- Febriyanto, A., Riawanti, S., & Gunawan, B. (2018). Mitos rambut gimbal: Identitas budaya dan komodifikasi di dataran tinggi Dieng. *Umbara*, 2(1).
- Herusatoto, B. (2000). *Simbolisme dalam budaya Jawa*. Hanindita.
- Indrawan, L., Ombeng, C., Purwati, E., & Anggoro, A. D. (2022). *Strategi Destination Branding Desa Wisata Taman Sekar Wilis Desa Sareng Kecamatan Geger Kabupaten Madiun*.
- Irianto, A. M., Laksono, A., & Hermintoyo, H. (2018). Traditional Art Strategy in Responding Capitalization: Case Study of Kubrosiswo Cultural Art Commodification. *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*, 18(1), 1-12.
- Jansson, J., & Power, D. (2010). Fashioning a global city: Global city brand channels in the fashion and design industries. *Regional Studies*, 44(7), 889-904.
- Kamajaya. (1992). *Ruwatan Murwakala: suatu pedoman*. Duta Wacana University Press.
- Kavaratzis, M. (2004). From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Branding*. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.pb.5990005>
- Kusumaningrum, R., & Dharta, F. Y. (2023). Analysing the potential of industrial tourism for Karawang and the socio-economic impact. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 7(3), 944-961.
- Lie, A. (2017). English and identity in multicultural contexts: Issues, challenges, and opportunities. *Teflin Journal*, 28(1), 71.
- Littlejohn, S., Foss, K., & Leeds-Hurwitz, W. (2012). Social Construction of Reality. In *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412959384.n344>
- Malik, A. (2018). Cultural Identity and Social Interaction of Indigenous Peoples in the Middle of Modernization (Case Study of Indigenous Peoples of Kasepuhan Banten Kidul). *Jurnal The Messenger*, 10(1), 34-43.
- Meliono, I. (2011). Understanding the Nusantara thought and local wisdom as an aspect of the Indonesian education. *Tawarikh*, 2(2).
- Mulder, N. (1985). *Pribadi dan masyarakat di Jawa: penjelajahan mengenai hubungannya*. Penerbit Sinar Harapan.
- Nainggolan, S. Y., & Darmastuti, R. (2022). Strategi Branding Desa Wonogiri, Kapuhan, Sawangan sebagai Desa Wisata "Kampung Religi" berbasis Komunikasi Antar Budaya. *PROPAGANDA*, 2(2), 175-184. <https://doi.org/10.37010/prop.v2i2.773>

- Namtham, W., & Gogoi Konwar, J. (2021). Poi Sanglong/Poi Khamsang : The Study of Rite of Passage in Tai man's life in Tai Yai Community of Ban Pangmoo Village, Maehongson, Thailand and Tai Aiton Community of Banlung Mantai , Karbi Anglong District, Assam, India. In *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education* (Vol. 12, Issue 8).
- Padilla, A. M., & Perez, W. (2003). Acculturation, Social Identity, and Social Cognition: A New Perspective. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 25(1), 35-55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739986303251694>
- Peursen, C. A. van. (1976). *Strategi Kebudayaan*. Kanisius.
- Peursen, C. van, & Hartoko, D. (2000). *Strategi Kebudayaan* (Edisi Baru). Kanisius.
- Piecowye, J. (2000). Social Identity: International Perspectives. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 25.
- Putra, R., & Hidayat, S. (2016). Tingkat Kemandirian Keuangan Daerah dan Hubungannya dengan Pertumbuhan Ekonomi Provinsi Jambi. *Jurnal Perspektif Pembiayaan Dan Pembangunan Daerah*, 3(4), 243-256.
- RadarGarut. (2025). *Dukung Pengembangan Wisata Dieng, Pemprov Jateng Siapkan Infrastruktur dan Destinasi Penunjang*. <https://radargarut.id/2025/08/25/dukung-pengembangan-wisata-dieng-pemprov-jateng-siapkan-infrastruktur-dan-destinasi-penunjang/2/>
- Riza, M., Doratli, N., & Fasli, M. (2012). City branding and identity. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 35, 293-300.
- Sakroni, S., Subardhini, M., & Riyadi, S. (2024). Pelaku Bullying Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Teori Identitas Sosial Sebuah Systematic Review Literature. *Santhet (Jurnal Sejarah Pendidikan Dan Humaniora)*, 8(1), 1042-1051. <https://doi.org/10.36526/santhet.v8i1.3926>
- Satria, E. (2017). Tradisi ruwatan anak gimbang di dieng. *Jurnal Warna*, 1(1), 155-171.
- Social movements: identity, culture, and the state*. (2003). Choice Reviews Online. <http://choicereviews.org/>
- Sonia, T., & Sarwoprasodjo, S. (2020). Peran Lembaga Adat dalam Pelestarian Budaya Masyarakat Adat Kampung Naga, Desa Neglasari, Kecamatan Salawu, Tasikmalaya. *Jurnal Sains Komunikasi Dan Pengembangan Masyarakat [JSKPM]*, 4(1), 113-124. <https://doi.org/10.29244/jskpm.4.1.113-124>
- Stald, G. (2008). Youth, Identity, and Digital Media. In *Digital Media*. <https://doi.org/10.1162/dmal.9780262524834.vii>
- Sukarno, M., & Mutiarin, D. (2023). Branding tourism and collaborative governance: A case study from Nglanggeran village. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 7(3), 797-812.
- Sumartono, S. (2016). Komodifikasi media dan budaya Kohe. *Jurnal The Messenger*, 8(2), 43-51.
- Suryono, A., & Siregar, A. (1985). *Kamus Antropologi*. Akademi Pressindo.
- Suyono, A., & Siregar, A. (1985). *Kamus Antropologi*.
- Sztompka, P. (2004). *Sosiologi perubahan sosial*. Prenada Media.
- Taylor, S. E., Peplau, L. A., & Sears, D. O. (1997). *Social psychology* (9th ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Wagner, W., Sen, R., Permanadeli, R., & Howarth, C. S. (2012). The veil and Muslim women's identity: Cultural pressures and resistance to stereotyping. *Culture and Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067X12456713>
- Wibisono, M. D., & Sasia, M. (2020). Pengembangan skala identitas sosial : validitas, dan analisis faktor eksploratori. *Proyeksi*, 15(1), 58. <https://doi.org/10.30659/jp.15.1.58-67>
- Widodo, B. (2014). Strategi Pencitraan Kota (City Branding) Berbasis Kearifan Lokal (Studi Kasus di Kota Solo, Jawa Tengah dan Kabupaten Badung, Bali). *Profetik: Jurnal Komunikasi*, 7(2).
- Yananda, M. R., & Salamah, U. (2014). *Branding tempat: membangun kota, kabupaten, dan provinsi berbasis identitas*. Makna Informasi.
- Yanti, D., Heryadi, D. Y., Cakranegara, P. A., & Kadyrov, M. (2023). Developing rural communication through digital innovation for village tourism. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 7(3), 696-712.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). Case study research: Design and methods (5th ed.). In *Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications*.