

THE ROLE OF THE VILLAGE-OWNED ENTERPRISE (BUMDES) IN MANAGING THE RECO KEMBAR BATHING TOURISM DESTINATION IN COWEK VILLAGE, PURWODADI DISTRICT, PASURUAN REGENCY

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Abstract

Village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) are expected to manage local economic potential while generating benefits for village communities. This study examines the role of BUMDes in managing the Reco Kembar Bathing Tourism Destination in Cowek Village, Purwodadi District, Pasuruan Regency, and identifies the constraints faced in its implementation. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach. Primary data were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews with the village head, BUMDes director, tourism manager, visitor, and local community representative, while secondary data were collected from institutional documents, visitor records, regulations, and relevant literature. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification using Biddle and Thomas's role theory indicators: expectation, norm, performance, evaluation, and sanction. The findings show that the role of BUMDes has been formally and structurally implemented, but has not been substantively optimal. Stakeholder expectations and role norms are relatively clear; however, performance remains concentrated on basic operations, maintenance, and visitor services. Evaluation is conducted routinely, while sanctions are predominantly implemented through guidance rather than formal consequences. Major constraints include declining visitor numbers, limited human-resource capacity, suboptimal digital promotion, inadequate supporting facilities, and weak formal pressure for measurable improvement. The study recommends strengthening tourism-unit capacity, scheduled digital promotion, gradual facility improvement, and clearer performance accountability.

Keywords: BUMDes, Role Theory, Village Tourism, Tourism Management, Reco Kembar

A. INTRODUCTION

Village development positions the village government not merely as an administrator of government affairs, but also as an actor managing local potential to enhance community welfare. Within the framework of public administration, managing village potential requires an institutional framework capable of connecting service functions, resource management, and the creation of economic benefits for residents. Village-Owned Enterprises (*Badan Usaha Milik Desa* / BUMDes) serve as one such institutional instrument. Formally, Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2021 emphasizes the status of BUM Desa as a legal entity established by the village to manage businesses, utilize assets, develop investment and productivity, provide services, and carry out economic activities for the maximum welfare of the village community.

This view aligns with Revida et al. (2021), who position public administration as an instrument to realize public programs and goals.

One of the economic potentials of Cowek Village, Purwodadi District, Pasuruan Regency, is the Reco Kembar Baths Tourism (*Wisata Pemandian Reco Kembar*), managed through BUMDes. This destination features natural bathing pools and a preserved rural environment as its main attractions. However, data from the tourism management indicates a declining trend in visitor numbers. During the 2018–2019 period, 1,632 visitors were recorded, dropping to 845 visitors in 2020–2021, and further declining to 730 visitors in 2022–2025. This decrease has been accompanied by modest supporting facilities, sub-optimal promotion, and limited managerial capacity. This condition represents a critical issue, as declining visits directly affect BUMDes revenue and the economic benefits received by the community. The trend in visitor numbers is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Trend in the Number of Visitors to Reco Kembar Tourism

Period/Year	Number of Visitors	Condition	Information
2018–2019	1.632 people	Crowded	Initial period after inauguration
2020–2021	845 people	Decreasing	Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic
2022–2025	730 people	Tending to be quiet	Significant decline

Source: Reco Kembar Tourism Management Data (2025), processed by the researcher.

Research on BUMDes and village tourism indicates that village institutions can play a crucial role in facility management, promotion, community empowerment, and local economic strengthening. Siswanda and Meirinawati (2021) demonstrate the role of BUMDes in developing *Embung* tourism through organizational goals, structure, financing, and accountability. Ababil and Yulistiyono (2022) found that BUMDes plays a role in program planning, infrastructure management, social media promotion, and community training. Mahmudah et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of development strategies, enhancing tourism appeal, and creative promotion. More recent studies also reveal that institutional coordination, product innovation, human resource capacity, and digital marketing remain challenges for BUMDes in developing tourism destinations (Christy & Hardjati, 2025; Putra & Nuryana, 2025).

Nevertheless, most previous studies have predominantly examined developing destinations or focused on economic impacts and development strategies. Studies positioning a destination experiencing a downward trend in visitor numbers as the primary case, analyzed through the five indicators of Biddle and Thomas' Role Theory, remain limited. The novelty of this study lies in analyzing the alignment among expectations, norms, actual performance, evaluation, and sanctions regarding the role of BUMDes in managing Reco Kembar Baths Tourism. This study is essential not only to identify what BUMDes has accomplished, but also to uncover the gap between ideal and actual roles that affect the sustainability of destination management.

Based on this context, this study aims to analyze the role of BUMDes in managing the Reco Kembar Baths Tourism Destination in Cowek Village, Purwodadi District, Pasuruan Regency, and to identify the constraints faced in executing that role. Theoretically, the research is expected to enrich public administration literature regarding the role of village institutions. Practically, the

findings are intended to serve as evaluation material for BUMDes and the Cowek Village Government in improving tourism management.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Biddle and Thomas' Role Theory serves as the primary analytical framework in this study. Biddle and Thomas (1966) define a role as a set of behaviors expected of an individual or group occupying a specific position within a social system. Role analysis does not stop at actual actions, but encompasses expectation, norm, performance, evaluation, and sanction. Expectation reflects the demands placed on an actor by other parties; norm serves as formal and informal guidelines; performance describes actual actions; evaluation represents assessments of role execution; while sanction illustrates the responses or consequences arising from conformity or non-conformity in role execution.

In the context of this study, BUMDes occupies the position of an organizational manager for village tourism potential. Expectations toward BUMDes stem from the Village Government, BUMDes management, field managers, visitors, and the local community. Role norms derive from Village Government policies, internal operational guidelines, and evolving practices within the tourism area. Performance is observed through operational coordination, facility maintenance, customer service, promotion, and destination development. Evaluation is observed through assessment mechanisms and coordination meetings, while sanction is viewed through the forms of response from the Village Government regarding BUMDes's performance achievements.

The position of BUMDes in village development is also closely linked to public organization management principles. Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2021 regulates the structure of BUM Desa, which consists of the Village Assembly (*Musyawarah Desa*), advisors, operational management, and supervisors. This structure provides a formal foundation for assigning responsibility and operational accountability within business units. In practice, the existence of a formal structure does not automatically guarantee optimal performance. Barung et al. (2025) demonstrate that transparency and accountability influence BUMDes performance, whereas Tegila et al. (2026) emphasize the critical role of the Village Government in planning, guiding, and supervising BUMDes.

Studies on BUMDes-based tourism reveal a relatively consistent pattern: village institutions can deliver economic benefits, but outcomes are heavily influenced by organizational capacity and execution quality. Ginting et al. (2021) demonstrate that inter-stakeholder coordination and communication determine role effectiveness in tourism development. Ababil and Yulistiyono (2022), Mahmudah et al. (2023), Christy and Hardjati (2025), alongside Putra and Nuryana (2025) collectively identify the need to strengthen promotion, human resources, institutional capacity, and facility development. On that basis, this study positions Role Theory as a tool to interpret the alignment among formal structures, stakeholder expectations, actual execution, and evaluation mechanisms within a single case study of village tourism destination management.

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the role of BUMDes in managing the Reco Kembar Baths Tourism. The research location is situated in Cowek Village, Purwodadi District, Pasuruan Regency. This location was selected due

to the presence of Reco Kembar as a key village natural tourism asset managed by BUMDes and the observed phenomenon of declining visitor numbers in recent years.

The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through observation and in-depth interviews. The main informants represent five key stakeholder groups directly involved in tourism management, namely the Head of Cowek Village, the Director of BUMDes, the Reco Kembar Baths Tourism management team, visitors, and local residents of Cowek Village. Secondary data was retrieved from BUMDes institutional documents, visitor count records, facility condition documentation, BUMDes-related regulations, as well as literature and previous studies. Data collection techniques encompassed observing facility conditions, management operations, site cleanliness and comfort, alongside promotional efforts; in-depth interviews; and documentation. This approach aligns with qualitative research characteristics that emphasize understanding phenomena through contextual data from diverse sources (Ratnaningtyas et al., 2023).

The analytical focus is structured around the five indicators of Biddle and Thomas' Role Theory: expectation, norm, performance, evaluation, and sanction. Data was analyzed across three stages: data reduction to select information relevant to the research focus; data display in descriptive narratives and tables to make pattern trends easily readable; and drawing conclusions/verification to ensure alignment among empirical findings, the research problem, and study objectives. Analysis was executed by cross-comparing information across various informants alongside field documentation, allowing the gap between the ideal and actual roles of BUMDes to be systematically identified.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Reco Kembar Bathing Attraction is located in Krajan Hamlet, Cowek Village, Purwodadi District, Pasuruan Regency. Institutionally, the Cowek Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) possesses a formal organizational structure comprising an advisory board, a supervisory board, a director, a secretary, a treasurer, and several business units. The Tourism Unit, which directly manages the Reco Kembar attraction, is led by a unit head and supported by two employees. While this structure indicates a clear organizational foundation, the personnel capacity within the tourism unit is relatively limited relative to the requirements for managing and developing the destination.

Field documentation reveals that basic facilities such as the ticket booth, bathing pools, restrooms, seating areas, and trash receptacles are available and functional. The bathing pools, serving as the primary attraction, remain well-maintained, whereas some supporting facilities require upkeep. The restroom facilities are basic and showing signs of deterioration in certain areas, and some seating areas also require maintenance. These physical condition findings align with informant assessments indicating that while basic services are operational, upgrading facilities remains crucial for enhancing visitor comfort. A synthesis of the research findings, based on the five indicators of Biddle and Thomas's Role Theory, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Synthesis of findings based on Biddle and Thomas's Role Theory

Indicator	Key findings	Analytical interpretation
Expectation	Expectations align on professional management, increased visitor numbers, improved facilities, and enhanced economic benefits.	High role clarity, yet extensive demands.

Norm	Village policies, internal work guidelines, and standards for cleanliness and safety are in place.	Guidelines exist, but implementation remains inconsistent.
Performance	Coordination, basic maintenance, cleanliness, and service operations are functioning, though development programs remain limited.	Formal roles are operational, yet substantive achievements are suboptimal.
Evaluation	Routine evaluations address visitor numbers, promotion, facilities, and operational challenges.	Issues have been identified, but follow-up remains inadequate.
Sanction	The primary response involves guidance, direction, and support rather than administrative or financial sanctions.	Corrective accountability is weak.

Source: Interview results and research documentation (2026), processed by the researcher.

Expectation (Role Expectations)

Expectations regarding BUMDes point in a relatively uniform direction. The Village Government expects more professional management so that Reco Kembar Tourism can thrive again, boost village revenue, and open business opportunities for the local community. BUMDes management holds similar expectations, particularly regarding an increase in visitor numbers through improvements in facilities, cleanliness, and social media promotion. Field managers emphasize BUMDes support in promotion and facility development, while visitors expect more comprehensive facilities and maintained cleanliness. The community views increased visitation as a pathway to revitalize local economic benefits.

This shared direction of expectations indicates role clarity, as all elements within the role set understand the general objectives to be achieved. However, the broad scope of demands—ranging from managerial professionalization, maintenance, promotion, and increasing visits to driving economic impact becomes the starting point for a role gap when organizational capacity is not yet commensurate with expectations. This pattern aligns with findings by Ginting et al. (2021), who noted that the effectiveness of tourism stakeholder roles is heavily influenced by inter-party coordination and communication capabilities, rather than objective clarity alone.

Norm (Role Norms)

The management of Reco Kembar Tourism is governed by both formal and informal norms. The Village Government establishes policies that serve as the foundation for task division, responsibilities, and asset management, while BUMDes possesses operational guidelines concerning services, facility maintenance, and tourism operations. At the field level, these norms are translated into practices such as maintaining cleanliness, regulating operational hours, delivering customer service, and safeguarding site security. Visitors also encounter directional signs for cleanliness and safety, while the local community informally assists in preserving the tourism environment.

These findings show that the primary issue is not an absence of rules, but rather the consistency of execution and the capacity to translate rules into tangible outcomes. From a Role Theory perspective, norms provide behavioral standards, but do not automatically guarantee that an organization possesses sufficient resources to meet those standards. This aligns with Barung et al. (2025), who highlight the importance of transparency and accountability in driving BUMDes

performance. Thus, formal norms must be accompanied by accountability mechanisms and resource support to generate actual performance improvements.

Performance (Role Execution/Performance)

BUMDes has executed the baseline functions required of a management body. Ongoing activities include operational coordination, facility oversight, light maintenance, cleanliness monitoring, communication with field staff, and visitor service. Minor repairs are handled directly, while larger repair needs requiring higher expenditure are discussed with the Village Government. The community also participates in mutual assistance (gotong royong) and cleanup drives, although their level of involvement can still be expanded. Regarding service quality, visitors rate the management as fairly friendly, though overall comfort remains constrained by facility quality.

This performance demonstrates that BUMDes is actively fulfilling its role, but its achievements have not yet matched expectations. More strategic development programs, particularly digital promotion and larger-scale facility upgrades, remain largely unrealized. An internal root cause is the capacity constraint of the Tourism Unit, which relies on only two employees. Externally, the declining visitor numbers have reduced activity and revenue, thereby restricting available funding for further development. This condition reinforces the findings of Christy and Hardjati (2025), which identify limited human resource capacity and economic stability as key constraints in village tourism development by BUMDes.

Evaluation (Role Evaluation)

Evaluation of BUMDes performance is conducted through coordination meetings between the Village Government and BUMDes, as well as internal manager meetings. Recurring issues in these evaluations include declining visitor numbers, sub-optimal promotion, and limited facility development. Feedback from visitors and the community follows the same pattern: while management provides baseline benefits and adequate essential services, facilities and promotional efforts must be upgraded to restore tourist traffic and recover economic benefits.

The consistent assessment across multiple parties shows that the gap between expectations and performance is not merely a single actor's perception. The evaluation process effectively serves as a problem identification mechanism, but follow-up actions have not been strong enough to bridge the gap rapidly. This finding aligns with Ababil and Yulistiyono (2022), who demonstrate the importance of evaluating infrastructure management, promotion, and tourism programs as a basis for improvement. Thus, the primary challenge within the evaluation indicator is not the absence of evaluation forums, but the capacity to convert evaluation outcomes into measurable, sustainable action plans.

Sanction (Role Sanctions)

Sanction mechanisms within Reco Kembar Tourism management primarily take the form of guidance, direction, and mentoring. The Village Government prioritizes providing input to BUMDes management to conduct evaluations, draft new strategies, and enhance coordination. Field managers also note that received responses resemble guidance for improving service quality rather than administrative or financial penalties. This pattern reveals that performance gaps are understood primarily as capacity issues to be remediated through guidance.

This supportive approach offers positive value by preserving working relationships and encouraging progress without punitive measures. However, the absence of formal consequences and binding key performance indicators can weaken the pressure to make measurable improvements. Tegila et al. (2026) similarly indicate that the Village Government's role in guiding and supervising BUMDes requires clear structures and responsibilities to deliver consistent

performance. In the case of Reco Kembar, guidance needs to be supplemented with clear targets, deadlines, and monitoring mechanisms.

Management Constraints and Role Synthesis of BUMDes

The research findings identify five primary constraints. First, the year-over-year decline in visitor numbers, which adversely affects tourism activity, BUMDes revenue, and community economic benefits. Second, human resource constraints, as the Tourism Unit operates with only two staff members. Third, underutilized digital promotion, leaving destination information unable to reach a broader audience of potential visitors. Fourth, inadequate maintenance for supporting facilities, such as rest areas and seating. Fifth, an accountability mechanism oriented toward guidance without formal, measurable consequences, which fails to generate sufficient drive for rapid improvement.

All five indicators of Role Theory point to a consistent pattern: BUMDes's role functions structurally and formally, but remains substantively sub-optimal. Expectations and norms are relatively clear, whereas performance remains dominated by baseline operations. Evaluations occur regularly and identify core issues, but soft sanction mechanisms do not sufficiently accelerate necessary follow-up actions. This gap results from a combination of external factors—namely declining visitor traffic—and internal constraints, including limited managerial capacity, weak promotion, deteriorating facilities, and loose accountability mechanisms.

The synthesis of these findings aligns with prior research indicating that BUMDes's formal role in tourism management does not automatically guarantee optimal development outcomes. Siswanda and Meirinawati (2021) emphasize the necessity of organizational structure and accountability; Mahmudah et al. (2023) highlight development strategies and promotion; Putra and Nuryana (2025) demonstrate challenges in institutional coordination, innovation, and digital marketing; while Christy and Hardjati (2025) underscore capacity limits as a major development hurdle. The core novelty of this study lies in analyzing these gaps through the integrated expectation–norm–performance–evaluation–sanction sequence, demonstrating that management problems do not exist in isolation, but are interconnected within an institutional role structure

E. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that BUMDes Cowek has formally and structurally fulfilled its role as the manager of Reco Kembar Baths Tourism, though its substantive execution remains sub-optimal. Regarding the expectation indicator, the village government, BUMDes, field managers, visitors, and the local community share aligned expectations toward professionalizing management, increasing visitor numbers, improving facilities, and strengthening economic benefits. For the norm indicator, formal policies and operational guidelines are available and reinforced by local cleanliness and safety norms. On the performance indicator, BUMDes has carried out operational coordination, basic facility maintenance, and customer service; however, development programs have not matched expectations. Evaluation occurs regularly and consistently identifies the same core issues, while sanction leans predominantly toward guidance rather than formal consequences.

The primary management constraints consist of declining visitor numbers, limited human resource capacity, sub-optimal digital promotion, supporting facilities still requiring maintenance, and weak formal pressure for measurable improvements. Therefore, key areas for improvement include expanding or upgrading the competence of Tourism Unit personnel, establishing scheduled digital promotion, prioritizing facility maintenance and development, and strengthening

performance indicators and accountability mechanisms among the Village Government, BUMDes, field managers, and the local community.

A limitation of this study relates to its single-destination focus and qualitative approach; thus, the findings primarily explain the management context of Reco Kembar Tourism and are not intended for statistical generalization to all BUMDes. Future research could expand the study locations, conduct cross-destination comparisons, or employ quantitative approaches to measure the economic impact of tourism management on community income.

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