

## PRESERVING AND MANAGING CHINESE SETTLEMENT HERITAGE TOURISM IN LASEM, INDONESIA

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**Abstract:** This research examines Chinese settlements' preservation and management strategies as heritage tourism in Lasem, Rembang, Indonesia. Ancient houses in Chinatown settlements are vulnerable and require a social resilience strategy as a solution. This study used a qualitative approach and data collection techniques through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and focus group discussion (FGD). The informants were owners of ancient houses utilizing their buildings as heritage tourism destinations. The results of this study show that the community or owner in managing settlements or Chinese houses as tourist destinations should have three capacities in the social resilience perspective, namely 1) coping capacity, which includes resources, knowledge, skills, and learning; community as the main actor, community awareness, and social kinship system; 2) adaptive capacity which includes: community networks, human and environmental relations, and community participation; and 3) transformative capacity which includes community infrastructure, multi-stakeholder partnerships, technological innovation, diversity and economic innovation. This study concludes that the owners of ancient houses in Chinatown settlements who utilize their buildings as tourism destinations are quite resilient.

**Keywords:** Chinese Settlement; Heritage Tourism; preserving; managing; social resilience

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### INTRODUCTION

The Chinese Settlement in Lasem, Rembang Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia, is a rich and unique cultural heritage tourism with a long history involving cultural influences. There are several reasons for the preservation and management of settlements with history. For example, Chinese settlements are a collection of buildings and a symbol representing the Chinese community's identity and cultural wealth (Hu et al., 2021). By maintaining and caring for these settlements, we can preserve the cultural roots that have grown and developed over the years (Ye, 2018). As a tourist destination, the Chinese Settlement in Lasem has great potential to boost the local economy through income from tourism and businesses run by the community. By promoting cultural diversity and tolerance, these settlements become places where different groups of people can interact harmoniously (Jailani et al., 2023). This strengthens the community's social bonds and creates an inclusive and harmonious environment in Lasem. Chinatown in Lasem is unique from other Chinatowns in Indonesia. The ancient Chinese houses in Lasem have a large gate and a large area of land around the house bordered by a fort. Today, this type of architecture is rarely found in Central Java Province. Most Chinatown settlements in Indonesia are houses and shops located close to each other, such as those in Jakarta, Semarang, Malang, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya (Wulanningrum, 2017). Unfortunately, the owners of these ancient houses and the local community do not pay much attention to them. Therefore, the Lasem Chinese settlement heritage area is threatened with extinction (Kuasa and Wuryanto, 2017). In this study, the Lasem Chinatown area was chosen as the locus of the study because of its architectural uniqueness. In addition, the vulnerability of the physical condition of the buildings needs to be studied further and preserved.

Cultural heritage around the world is currently facing severe threats. Data from UNESCO shows that around 5000 cultural heritage sites worldwide are at risk of being lost or damaged yearly. This number is of great concern and shows the magnitude of the challenges faced in preserving the world's cultural heritage. Based on field surveys, many old house owners leave Lasem and migrate to the city, leaving their houses empty and without maintenance, thus accelerating the deterioration of old buildings. According to data from the Central Java Tourism Office in 2021, as many as 67 out of 120 traditional Chinese houses in Lasem Chinatown were severely damaged. If this physical damage is unchecked, Chinese settlements' historical integrity and heritage value as heritage tourism in Lasem may decline. This thread not only disrupts the architectural beauty and historical authenticity of the city but also threatens the cultural value and tourism potential of

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Lasem (Syafrini et al., 2022). Historic buildings will experience gradual deterioration threatening valuable cultural and historical heritage, if it is untreated well. The rich cultural identity, particularly associated with Chinese settlement, will be lost if the old houses that represent this identity are neglected or demolished. The vast tourism potential of the historic old houses will be wasted, reducing Lasem's appeal as a cultural tourism destination (Kakakhel et al., 2019; Vinet and Zhedanov, 2011). These problems include the vulnerabilities encountered by heritage tourism destinations, especially the ancient houses of Lasem. Social resilience can be used to cope with vulnerability in heritage tourism.

Social resilience is the ability of a social group or community to respond to crisis situations in the political, social, economic, and environmental fields and adapt and transform to these conditions to conquer uncertainty (Adger, 2000; Agatha et al., 2020; Keck and Sakdapolrak, 2013; Maclean et al., 2014; Maguire and Hagan, 2007). Meanwhile, resilience is the ability at the personal or community level to adapt to adversity, trauma, tragedy, challenges, or significant sources of stress (Cahill et al., 2022). There is a difference between the concepts of resilience and social resilience. If social resilience emphasizes the collective ability of social systems to adapt to challenges, then resilience only focuses on the response of individuals or communities in the face of challenges (Larimian et al., 2020). Social resilience is more appropriate as a perspective for overcoming complex challenges in heritage tourism. Preservation and management will be successful if homeowners play an active role and network with various stakeholders. Social resilience, which includes economic development, social capital, information and communication, and community competence, supports overcoming the crisis conditions of heritage tourism preservation and management (Muangasame and Tan, 2023; Norris et al., 2008). This is in line with Adams (2010) and Keck and Sakdapolrak (2013) that tourism management in Haines, which experiences vulnerability to environmental damage due to the large number of tourist visits, must build social resilience as a solution. Heritage preservation plays an important role in enhancing social resilience. For example, the involvement of the Gullah Geechee community in heritage preservation practices and policies fosters the community's social resilience (Ghahramani et al., 2020). Therefore, in the context of Lasem, ancient building owners are encouraged to use social resilience strategies to preserve and manage their ancient houses from the vulnerability of physical damage due to building age and social change.

Social resilience has three dimensions: coping, adaptive, and transformative capacity (Keck and Sakdapolrak, 2013). Compared to previous researchers focusing on natural disasters (Adger, 2000; Maclean et al., 2014; Maguire and Hagan, 2007; Sweya et al., 2021), Keck and Sakdapolrak suggest that social resilience should examine social change and development issues. Tourism is one of the suggested areas. Some previous studies have examined tourism from a social resilience perspective. Gabriel-Campos et al., (2021) have studied the resilience and adaptive capacity of ecotourism communities in Peruvian villages in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. The ecotourism community has prepared to adapt. Yang et al., (2021) conclude that tourism is important in measuring social resilience. In particular, sports entertainment and spectators are positively related to social stability. This study contradicts the researcher's proposal that tourism management requires social resilience. Wulandari et al. (2020) explain that the younger generation of Lasem Heritage Foundation (LHF) members participated in managing heritage tourism in Lasem. Youth participation received support from various stakeholders, especially academics, private institutions, and the local community in Lasem.

Empirically, Gabriel-Campos et al. (2021) focus on resilience and adaptive capacity. Additionally, Wulandari et al. (2020) use the role of the younger generation in heritage tourism management. Methodologically, Yang et al. (2021) use quantitative methods, while this study use a qualitative approach with in-depth interview methods. In the context of using informants from 12 villages in Peru (Gabriel-Campos et al., 2021), while Wulandari et al. (2020) involve the youth in the Lasem Heritage Foundation with 15 informants. Meanwhile, this study use 30 people from 5 villages in the Lasem Heritage Area.

The preservation of Chinatown heritage tourist destinations has also been widely studied. Kurniati et al. (2020) focus on the preservation of Semarang Chinatown. Various events are organized to preserve the area, provide additional income, and involve the community in its development and implementation. There are various strategies for preserving the cultural heritage of Chinatowns in various places. Most governments and local communities take a commercialization strategy to preserve Chinatown as a heritage tourism destination. For example, Foo and Krishnapillai (2019) observe that the designation of George Town World Heritage Site (GTWHS) by UNESCO aims to protect intangible cultural heritage. However, what was expected was different from the reality faced. The local government took advantage of GTWHS' status as a heritage tourism industry by marginalizing the local community. Relatively expensive rents replace locals with new residents, which has implications for gentrification in the GTWHS. This damages the intangible living heritage that should be preserved for the knowledge of future generations. Meanwhile, Phua and Shircliff (2020) reveal that commercializing the Chinatown heritage area resulted in cultural uniformity in Singapore. The tourists could not find the uniqueness of Chinatown in Singapore and other areas. In contrast, in Manado's Chinatown area, Manado people are interested in developing Chinese cultural rituals as tourist attractions. The culture of the Chinese community in Manado is very unique and different. It is considered an interesting thing for Manado people in general. In addition, the local government is also trying to make the Chinatown area a cultural heritage area (Towoliu et al., 2020). ASEAN countries seek to preserve and manage Chinatown as a heritage tourism attraction. The strategy of preserving and managing the Chinatown area as a tourist destination tends to ignore its cultural heritage values. In this context, social resilience can be used to revitalize the Chinatown heritage area. Therefore, this study analyzes homeowners' coping, adaptive, and transformative capacities to preserve and manage the Chinese settlements as heritage tourism.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study research design. This study was located in Lasem District,

Rembang Regency, Central Java Province. Lasem is a heritage town comprising six villages: Karangturi, Babagan, Soditan, Gedongmulyo, and Dorokandang. The object of this study is ancient houses with Chinese architecture serving as tourism destinations in Karangturi, Babagan, Soditan, Gedongmulyo, and Sumbergirang Villages as shown in the map in Figure 1. However, this study does not include Dorokandang village because no ancient houses are heritage tourism objects. The research location is depicted in the map below:

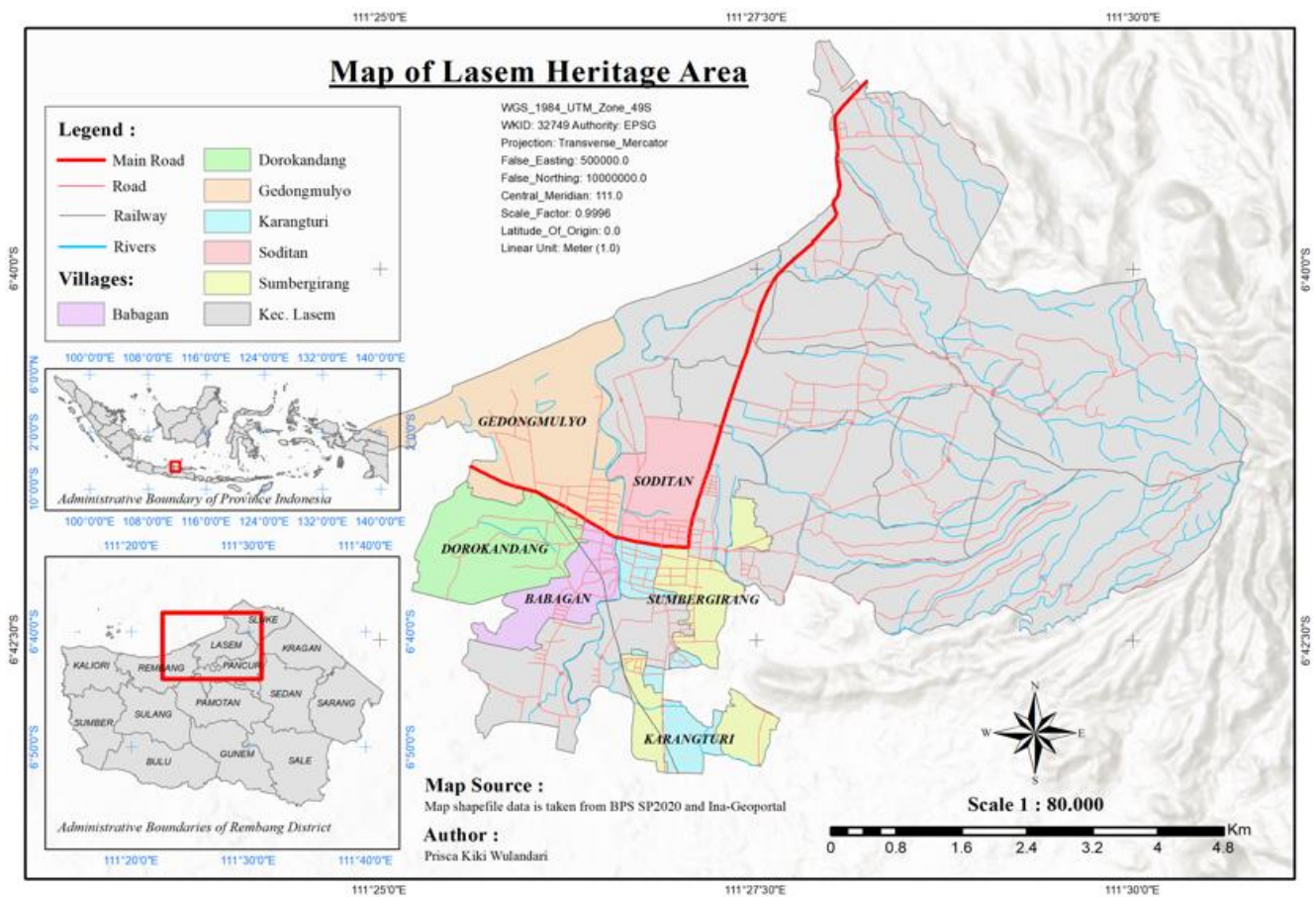


Figure 1. Research Location Map (Source: Authors, 2024)

The advantage of this qualitative approach lies in its ability to provide an in-depth understanding of the context and nuances of the Chinese settlement environment. In-depth interviews allow researchers to gain insights from the community, while neighborhood observation and document analysis complement those perspectives with concrete data. Figure 2 below explains the step in this study:

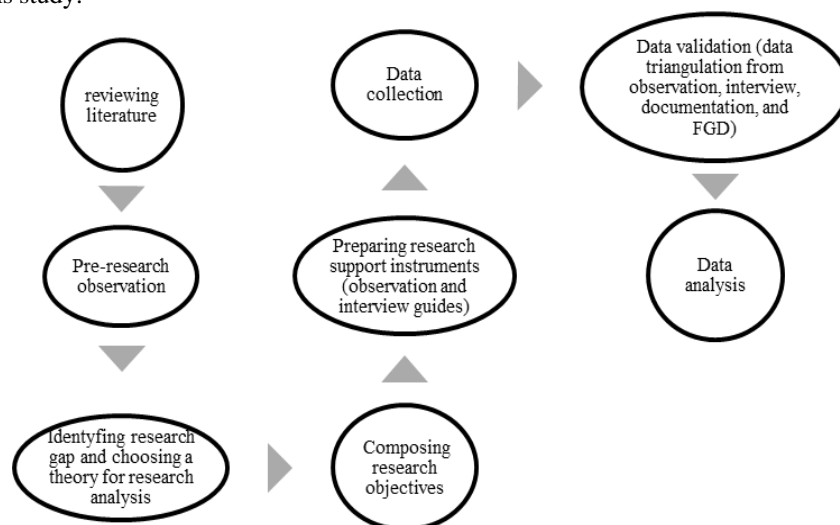


Figure 2. Flowchart of Research Method

#### Data Collection

This study collected data through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and focus group discussion (FGD). Informants were selected using purposive sampling. The criteria were the owners and managers of ancient

houses utilizing their houses as tourism destinations. There were 30 informants because 30 of 120 houses were merely used as destinations in the heritage city. FGD was conducted by inviting 30 ancient house owners. However, only 15 FGD participants came. Observation and documentation were conducted by observing tourism activities in 30 Lasem’s ancient houses. Table 1 explains the informant profiles:

Table 1. Informants (Source: Authors, 2022)

Number	Village	Name	Gender	Occupation	
1	Soditan	P1	Male	Businessman	
2		P2	Male	Housekeeper	
3	Sumbergirang	P3	Female	Batik entrepreneur	
4		P4	Male	Businessman	
5		P5	Male	Businessman	
6		P6	Male	Businessman	
7		P7	Male	Lodging manager	
8		P8	Male	Lodging manager	
9		P9	Male	Businessman	
10		P10	Female	Batik maker	
11	Karangturi	P11	Male	House owner	
12		P12	Male	Businessman	
13		P13	Male	Housekeeper	
14		P14	Male	Religious leader	
15		P15	Male	House owner	
16		P16	Male	Lodging staff	
17		P17	Female	business woman	
18		P18	Male	Businessman	
19		P19	Male	Batik entrepreneur	
20		P20	Male	Batik entrepreneur	
21		P21	Female	Batik entrepreneur	
22		P22	Female	Housekeeper	
23		P23	Male	Businessman	
24		P24	Male	Housekeeper	
25		Babagan	P25	Male	Businessman
26			P26	Male	Batik entrepreneur
27			P27	Male	Batik entrepreneur
28			P28	Female	Batik entrepreneur
29			P29	Male	Housekeeper
30	Gedongmulyo	P30	Male	Businessman	

Coding of Informants:

P1- P30: Informant Names

Figure 3 below explains the distribution of ancient houses as tourism destinations in Lasem is explained in the map below:

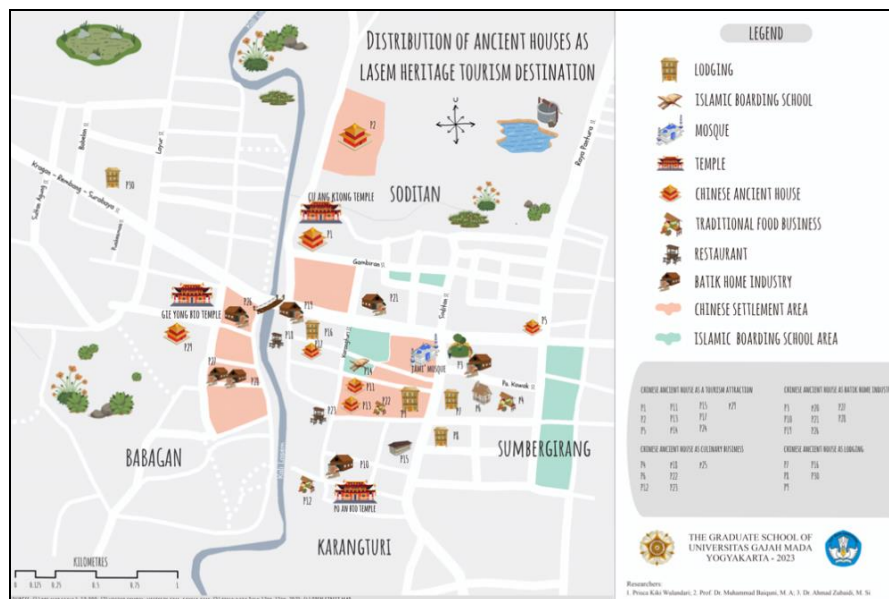


Figure 3. Map of the distribution of ancient houses as tourist destinations (Source: Authors, 2023)

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis in this study used the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The first stage, data reduction, requires

researchers to group and summarize findings from interviews, observations, and documents into relevant categories or themes. This process helps to simplify the information for further processing. Researchers used social resilience theory, introduced by Keck and Sakdapolrak (2013), in which three capacities exist: coping, adaptive, and transformative to overcome vulnerability. The second stage, data display, involves visually presenting findings through tables (Tables 2, 3, 4), graphs, or diagrams. This display provides a clearer picture of social resilience in tourism management. Finally, in the third stage, researchers conclude and verify the analysis results.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Key findings emerged from the participants' narratives and experiences during data analysis. These findings were then organized into categories and given as key points. Figure 4 describes the findings, including a social resilience perspective that uses 3 key concepts, namely Coping Capacity, Adaptive Capacity, and Transformative Capacity, adapted from Keck and Sakdapolrak (2013).

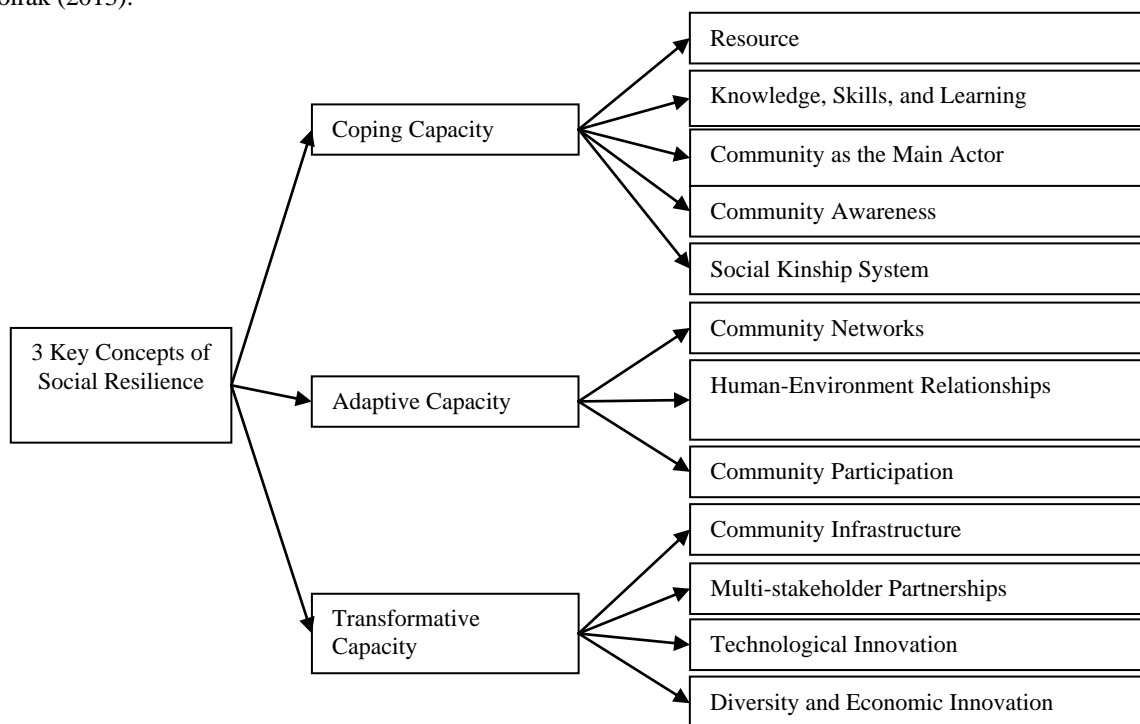


Figure 4. 3 Key Concepts of Social Resilience (Source: Keck and Sakdapolrak, 2013)

The results of the research findings are as follows:

a. Coping Capacity

Table 2. Findings on Coping Capacity (Source: Author, 2023)

Theme	Sub-theme	Informant
Resource	The origin of ancient buildings ownership	SBG-P7, SBG-P8, BG-P25, SBG-P5, SBG-P6
	Ownership status of ancient buildings	All of Informants
Knowledge, Skills, and Learning	Ancient buildings are preserved for their authenticity (becoming cultural heritage sites)	SDT-P1, SDT- P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19, KT-P20, BG-P27, BG-P28, BG-P29, GM-P30
	Renovating (minor changes) to fix damaged parts of the house	SDT- P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4, KT-P24, BG-P25
	Repurposing houses into something valuable for tourism	SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P12, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15, BG-P29, GM-P30
	Running existing businesses	BG-P29, GM-P30, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P9
	Establishing businesses in response to tourist visits	SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P9, KT-10, KT-13, KT-P14, KT-P15, BG-P25, BG-P26, BG-P27, BG-P28, BG-P29, GM-P30
	Utilizing ancient buildings as residences	SBG-P3, SBG-P4, SBG- P5, KT-P11, KT-P12, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P2, KT-P16, KT-P17
	Preserving the authenticity of ancient buildings for accommodation for tourists	SBG-P5, SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19
	Batik production sites as attractions for tourists	KT-P19, KT-P20
	Homeowners utilizing buildings as culinary businesses	SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P9, KT-P10, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15, BG-P25, BG-P26, BG-P27, BG-P28, BG-P29, GM-P30
	Organizing activities to showcase Lasem's original culture	KT-P15, BG-P25, BG-P26, BG-P27, BG-P28, BG-P29, GM-P30
Utilizing heritage houses as residences, heritage sites, and businesses	BG-P29, GM-30, SBG-P7	
Community as the Main	Involving the local community	SBG-P5, SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19

Theme	Sub-theme	Informant
Actor	Culinary businesses provide opportunities for local residents to start businesses on provided land	SBG-P3, SBG-P4, KT-P24, BG-P25
Community Awareness	Awareness of environmental geographical constraints damaging the walls of ancient houses	SBG-P24, SBG-P5, SBG-P6, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15, KT-P16
	Awareness of social factors in maintaining cultural heritage assets	SDT-P1, KT-P18, KT-P19, KT-P20, KT-P21, KT-P22, KT-P23, BG-P27, BG-P28
	Difficulty in finding suitable raw materials for building repairs	SDT-P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4, SBG-P5
	Difficulty in obtaining legitimate ownership during maintenance	KT-P12, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15, KT-P16, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P9
	Aging buildings	SDT-P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4
	Difficulty in regenerating the profession of batik makers	SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P9, KT-P10, KT-P15, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18
Social Kinship System	Lack of government support	KT-P23, KT-P24, BG-P25, BG-P26
	Later descendants were willing to return to Lasem to care for their parents, their ancient house, and continue the family business.	BG-P25, BG-P26, SDT-P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4

Explanation: SBG, BG, KT, GM, SDT: abbreviation of village at research location (same with table 3and4)

The findings of social resilience on Coping Capacity that are most commonly found from the results of interviews which is shown in Table 2 are 1) resources, 2) knowledge, skills, and learning, 3) community as the main actor, 4) community awareness, and 5) social kinship system. Coping Capacity in the resource, the owners of ancient buildings know their houses' origins and ownership status. The origins are due to two things, namely, purchase and inheritance. Some owners of ancient buildings who acquired ownership due to inheritance have difficulty obtaining freehold titles. Therefore, they choose to sell their property. When the owner sells his house, he will sell the timber first, then sell the land. As a result, the number of ancient houses in Lasem decreased as it is seen today. Security of tenure factors have implications for sustainable development (Gillespie, 2009). If owners of ancient buildings get protection from the local government in obtaining freehold title, they will be more severe in maintaining their resources as heritage tourism destinations. For instance, the owner of Lawang Ombo Heritage developed his property as a tourist destination for colonial opium houses.



Figure 5. Tourist visits to opium house (Source: Authors, 2023)

The opium house, as depicted in Figure 5, was once used for opium trading in the 19th century. The owner of the building manages the opium house as a historical education museum. The museum witnessed the distribution of opium through the Lasem River and the smuggling of opium to traders through the hole, as depicted in Figure 5. The owner of the building tend to brand his ancient house as a tourist destination for tourists who want to know about the opium trade in Lasem.

Then, regarding knowledge, skills, and learning, the owners of ancient buildings have several strategies to preserve their buildings. The maintenance of ancient buildings as cultural heritage shows expertise in caring for historical heritage, with minor renovations to repair damaged parts while maintaining authenticity (Ribera et al., 2020). The house owner maintains the authenticity and history of Chinese architecture in the Lasem area. Renovations are also carried out to repair damaged parts without reducing the authenticity of the building. The utilization of ancient buildings converted into tourism venues, such as inns, not only helps preserving the heritage but also creating a new source of income. Homeowners are also involved in developing existing businesses or setting up new ones according to the needs and interests of tourists, thus boosting the local economy. Flexibility in using ancient buildings as residences, heritage, and businesses provides a range of alternatives for owners to utilize according to local needs and potential. According to Jiang et al. (2019), existing communities learn from market needs and tourism trends by converting houses into tourist attractions and running businesses responsive to tourist visits.

In the aspect of community as the main actor, the local community is involved in decision-making and program implementation. The culinary business can be an effective means to improve the local economy. By providing opportunities for residents to open businesses on the land provided, they can be directly involved in managing and promoting the culinary heritage. By involving the community directly, the community can nurture a sense of belonging and shared responsibility for a heritage, increasing the community's social resilience in the face of future changes and challenges (Tan et al., 2018). Furthermore, community awareness of coping capacity is the ability of social entities to see the risks that will be encounter in the face of vulnerability (Sweya et al., 2021). In preserving ancient houses, the owners are aware of the constraints. For example, Lasem's geographical location, which is directly adjacent to the North Coast of Java, affects the condition of the surrounding buildings. The salty coastal air damages the walls of ancient houses quickly. However, homeowners do not have a solution to this problem yet. Lubis et al. (2020) point out that ancient buildings near the coast are vulnerable to damage because of geomorphological changes and sediment movement.

The final indicator of coping capacity is the social kinship system. This refers to the network of relationships based on kinship, marriage, and social ties in the community. The social kinship system includes biological and fictive relationships, where fictive kinship extends the network beyond biological relatives and includes individuals who provide social and economic support, especially for immigrants integrating into a new society (Ebaugh and Curry, 2000). The ancient buildings in Lasem's Chinese settlements that serve as tourism destinations are those whose heirs are willing to return to Lasem to care for their parents. Currently, the owners of ancient houses are elderly people who are at the non-productive age level of 65 years and above. They need care from their offspring, while most children have migrated and work in big cities. Some parents persuaded their children to return to Lasem to care for themselves and their houses and continue the family business. The Chinese descendants who returned to Lasem were at a productive age. In addition to continuing their family businesses, they commodify their ancient homes and businesses as heritage tourism destinations. This preservation effort is supported by the preservation community in Lasem. Shafiq et al. (2017) and White and Jorion (1996) explain that kinship plays an important role in maintaining social order and solidarity and regulating various aspects of life, such as economic institutions, inheritance, and social rights.

In the effort to preserve and manage Chinese buildings as heritage tourism destinations, Coping Capacity plays an important role. This is reflected in the maintenance of ancient buildings as heritage tourism, the participation of local people in culinary endeavors, and the community's awareness of the challenges and social factors that affect the preservation of heritage tourism. A sustainable kinship system affects the existence of these ancient houses. In addition, cooperation between the preservation community and the heirs of ancient houses also supports the sustainability of Chinese settlements.

b. Adaptive Capacity

The findings from the social resilience on Adaptive Capacity from the interviews are as follows in Table 3:

- 1) community networks, 2) human-environment relationships, and 3) community participation.

Table 3. Findings on Adaptive Capacity

Theme	Sub-theme	Informant
Community Networks	Collaborating with tour guides from the Lasem Heritage Foundation	KT-P12, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P20, KT-P21, KT-P22, KT-P23, SDT-P1
	Collaborating with the Lasem Heritage Foundation in organizing virtual <i>Batik Tiga Negeri</i>	BG-P26, BG-P27, BG-P28, SBG-P4, SBG-P5, SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8
	Informal collaboration between mass media and tour guides	SDT- P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19, BG-P26, BG-P27, BG-P28
	Gallery and Museum <i>Nyah Lasem</i> collaborating with the Lasem Heritage Foundation in exhibition and management	SBG-P5, SBG-P6, SBG-P7, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15, KT-P16, KT-P17, BG-P27, BG-P28, BG-P29, GM-P30
	Owners of Heritage Red House collaborating with tour guides	SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P12, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15
Human-Environment Relationships	House buildings adjusted to environmental conditions	SBG-P5, SBG-P6, BG-P27, BG-P28
Community Participation	Entrusting business products to businesses with larger showrooms	SBG-P5, SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19
	Collaborating with other businesses	SDT-P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19

The Adaptive Capacity regarding community networks plays a crucial role in enhancing the society's adaptation ability to environmental, social, and economic changes. The preservation community (Lasem Heritage Foundation: LHF) networks with owners of ancient houses. The majority of LHF members are tour guides. Thus, they invite tourists to visit Lasem's ancient houses. It creates opportunities for economic development and establishes strong social networks. LHF invited several Batik entrepreneurs in ancient houses to organize the *Batik Tiga Negeri* virtual tour. This tour explores adaptation to technology to sustain tourism activities, providing opportunities to stay connected with tourists and promoting Lasem's cultural heritage. Informal collaboration between mass media and tour guides creates space for local narratives and authentic stories, increasing Lasem's visibility as a tourist destination. Furthermore, collaboration among Gallery and Museum *Nyah Lasem* and LHF in managing exhibitions and cultural art activities strengthens efforts in preserving and promoting Lasem's heritage tourism. Meanwhile, the collaboration between the

owners of the Heritage Red House and tour guides creates a deep and authentic tourist experience for visitors while providing economic support to both of them. Building owners can share knowledge, experiences, and resources through strong community networks to strengthen preservation efforts (Armitage et al., 2020). Through this collaboration, the challenges can be easily identified. In addition, through community networks, Chinese building owners can establish relationships with relevant parties, such as local governments, cultural institutions, and tourism actors, to strengthen support and raise awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage.

Human-environment relationships are crucial in adapting traditional buildings to their surrounding environment, reflecting local wisdom in utilizing natural resources sustainably. Maclean et al. (2014) state that local communities will survive sustainably if they can maintain their environment. In developing tourism destinations, local communities, especially the owners and managers of ancient houses, have the right to develop the surroundings based on their potential. For example, Rumah Oei was renovated into an inn designed with a fusion concept between Chinese and Javanese culture. The fusion reflects the strengthening of shared culture as well as local identity. This will be felt by tourists when visiting there.



Figure 6. Oei House as a mirror of Chinese and Javanese cultural acculturation (Source: Authors, 2023)

The Chinese architectural design in the main room of Oei House, as depicted in Figure 6 (left), has been retained by the building owner. The main room has become a family museum that can be visited by tourists. In Figure 6 (right), the lodging rooms in Rumah Oei are named after Javanese puppets. This shows that the owner's life is influenced by his social environment. By deeply understanding historical and cultural values, building owners can develop a harmonious relationship with the surrounding environment (Foster, 2020). In sustainable tourism, tourist destination managers need to pay attention to their sustainable social environment (Rachmadiarazaq et al., 2023).

Regarding community participation, strategies involve entrusting products to businesses with larger showrooms. This action allows the community to expand the marketing reach of their products but also encourages collaboration with external stakeholders. Through this cooperation, the community strengthens its position in the broader economic ecosystem while expanding its networks. It also allows community members to learn from the experiences and networks of larger businesses. In addition, working with other businesses enables the exchange of resources, ideas, and support between community members and local businesses, creating strong synergies, increasing the community's economic competitiveness, and strengthening relationships between community members and stakeholders (Giglietto et al., 2022).

c. Transformative Capacity

Table 4. Findings on Transformative Capacity

Theme	Sub-theme	Informant
Community infrastructure	Infrastructure can be utilized to conduct business in each household	SBG-P4, SBG-P5, KT-P15, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18
Multi-stakeholder partnerships	Collaborating with educational institutions	SBG-P4, SBG-P5, KT-P15, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18
Technological innovation	Utilizing digital technology for batik product marketing (social media)	KT-P12, KT-P13, KT-P14, BG-P27, BG-P28, SDT-P1
	Utilizing marketplace as a selling platform for batik	SDT-P2, SBG-P3, SBG-P4, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19, BG-P26, BG-P27, BG-P28
	Promotion via WhatsApp for batik houses	SBG-P5, SBG-P6, BG-P27, BG-P28
	Utilizing Instagram for accommodation and culinary businesses	SBG-P4, KT-P16, KT-P17, KT-P18, KT-P19
	Promoting the red house using live Instagram	SBG-P5, SBG-P6, SBG-P7, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15, KT-P16, KT-P17, BG-P27, BG-P28, BG-P29, GM-P30
Diversity and economic innovation	Implementing innovations in derivative batik products favored by young people and affordable in price	SBG-P6, SBG-P7, SBG-P8, KT-P12, KT-P13, KT-P14, KT-P15



The findings from the social resilience on Transformative Capacity from the interviews are as follows in Table 4: 1) community infrastructure, 2) multi-stakeholder partnerships, 3) technological innovation, and 4) diversity and economic innovation. Transformative capacity in community infrastructure encompasses various resources available to support owners and managers of ancient houses as heritage tourism destinations. Utilizing infrastructure to conduct business within their own homes has a positive impact. This enhances the flexibility and economic self-reliance of community members and can optimize the time and resources they possess. Infrastructure, such as good accessibility and adequate transportation networks, ensures that tourists can easily visit the location (Tomej and Liburd, 2020). Quality public services also help maintaining visitor's comfort and safety (Bater et al., 2024). The house owner hopes that there will be more and easier access to Lasem. Easy access will increase the number of tourist visits. However, the ease of access to Lasem heritage tourism destinations does not concern all stakeholders. Tourism destination managers are also unable to provide it, as seen in:

"...when asked what obstacles are faced in managing the Rumah Merah Heritage tourism destination? I always ask how tourists from Jakarta can easily come to Lasem. I prioritize Jakarta tourists because they are willing to spend more on tourism needs than other regions. This problem needs support from the government, namely infrastructure and promotion..." (Interview with P9, October 2022)

In terms of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, the strategy involves collaboration with educational institutions. Lasem batik, made in the ancient houses of Chinatown, has become a heritage tourism attraction, as batik entrepreneurs maintain distinctive motifs that are hundreds of years old. Currently, batik entrepreneurs face difficulties in regenerating Lasem batik makers. The youth choose to work in other more profitable sectors, namely factories. To solve this problem, it is necessary to establish partnerships with educational institutions, especially elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. This aims to introduce and encourage the younger generation to be interested in the batik-making process. They will preserve Lasem batik when they become batik makers. Radosavljević and Čulafić (2019) and Liu et al., (2022) argue that communities, through partnerships with local educational institutions, can access intellectual resources, research, and development to support efforts in preserving and managing Chinese heritage tourism.

Regarding technological innovation, this approach utilizes digital technology to strengthen social resilience. Using social media such as Instagram for batik product marketing, using marketplaces as sales platforms, promoting batik houses via WhatsApp, and leveraging Instagram for accommodation and culinary business promotion. These steps not only increase the visibility and accessibility of local products and tourist destinations but also strengthen cultural identity and promote sustainable local economic development. By integrating technology in marketing and promotion strategies, communities increase the visibility of their products and tourist destinations and strengthen the appeal and appreciation of Chinese cultural heritage tourism in Lasem (Bruno et al., 2018).

Furthermore, diversity and economic innovation relate to their strategy of creating derivative batik products favored by young people at affordable prices. This step reflects the community's ability to adapt to changing times and market needs and expand its economic scope through product diversity and relevant marketing approaches. This strengthens the community's economic resilience and contributes to preserving Chinese heritage tourism in Lasem by ensuring that traditional values and practices remain relevant. As for diversity and technological innovation, by introducing batik-derived products that appeal to the younger generation and are financially affordable, communities expand the market share for their batik products and ensure the sustainability of the local economy as well. This innovation allows the Chinese cultural heritage tourism in Lasem to remain relevant and attractive to the younger generation while creating new local economic development opportunities (Dorcic et al., 2019).

## CONCLUSION

The owners of ancient houses have considerable social resilience in preserving and managing Chinatown settlements as heritage tourism destinations. They have coping capacities, including the ability to manage resources, have knowledge, skills, and learning, involve the community as the main actors, have community awareness, and have a social kinship system. In adaptive capacity, they have the ability to build community networks, pay attention to human and environmental relations, and engage in community participation. In a transformative capacity, they have the ability to provide community infrastructure, build multi-stakeholder partnerships, utilize technological innovation, and create economic diversity and innovation. However, building owners do not have the ability to provide public infrastructure. In that context, the government should play a greater role. This study offers a social resilience strategy in preserving and managing heritage tourism destinations for all local stakeholders, not only the owners of ancient houses.

This study recommends that other stakeholders, especially the government, play an active role in making policies on preserving and managing ancient buildings in Lasem. Future research could examine preserving and managing other heritage tourism destinations in Lasem. Many potential cultural heritages, such as ancient tombs and places of worship, have not been properly managed and are therefore vulnerable to damage.

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