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The Dynamics of Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration: Challenges in Integrating the Pentahelix Model in Bojonegoro Geopark

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Abstract. This study examines multi-stakeholder collaboration in the management of the Bojonegoro Geopark using the Pentahelix approach. A qualitative descriptive method was employed to explore stakeholder roles and collaboration patterns. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. Informants were selected purposively to represent government, academia, business actors, community groups, and media. Data were analyzed using interactive qualitative techniques, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that although all five helixes are involved, their roles are not yet integrated into a systematic collaborative framework. The government provides infrastructure and regulatory support but lacks a dedicated coordinating body. Academic contributions have not fully supported geosite interpretation, while business actors remain concentrated in recreational areas. Community groups play operational roles with uneven capacity, and media promotion has not built a consistent geopark identity. Strengthening coordination, community capacity, and integrated communication is essential for sustainable geopark governance.

Keywords: Collaboration, Geopark, Multi-Stakeholder, Pentahelix

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, geoparks have emerged as instruments for integrating geological conservation, environmental education, and sustainable regional development. Since the establishment of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Programme in 2014, geoparks have represented collaborative governance linking scientific knowledge, public policy, and

community participation. Despite this ideal framework, implementation at the regional level often encounters challenges due to weak coordination among stakeholders and fragmented institutional roles.

Indonesia actively participates in the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, reflecting national commitment to conserving geological heritage while

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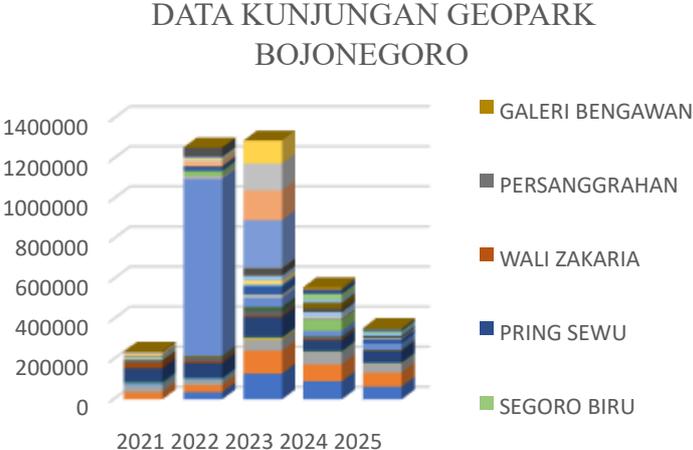
promoting community welfare through sustainable tourism and environmental education. However, studies emphasize that successful geopark governance depends on cross-actor collaboration integrating scientific inventory, community participation, and local economic development (Henriques & Brilha, 2017). In practice, coordination gaps among government institutions, local communities, and supporting stakeholders remain a persistent challenge.

These challenges are evident in the management of the Bojonegoro Geopark. Empirical findings indicate that coordination among key actors government, academia, business actors, communities, and media remains fragmented and insufficiently integrated (Budiono et al., 2024). This fragmentation constrains collaborative planning, limits community capacity development, and reduces the effectiveness of geopark promotion and conservation initiatives. Consequently, the absence of an integrated coordination mechanism has become a central governance issue requiring systematic collaboration.

The Pentahelix approach provides a relevant framework for addressing coordination challenges by integrating the roles of government, academia, business, community, and media. In the context of geopark tourism, collaborative synergy among these actors is essential to ensure consistent destination management, promotion, and visitor experience. Fluctuating tourist visits in the Bojonegoro Geosite area indicate that tourism development

has not yet been supported by integrated governance and coordinated promotion strategies. Strengthening collaboration can improve destination branding, enhance service quality, and create sustainable tourism experiences. Trust, shared commitment, and participatory mechanisms therefore become critical foundations for sustaining adaptive and inclusive geopark governance.

To further understand the effectiveness of geopark tourism management, visitor trends can serve as an important indicator of governance performance and promotional consistency. Stable growth in tourist arrivals typically reflects coordinated destination management and strong stakeholder collaboration, whereas fluctuating visitation patterns may indicate weaknesses in institutional coordination and branding strategies. Therefore, examining visitor data provides empirical insight into the sustainability and management effectiveness of the Bojonegoro Geotourism destinations.



Source: Bojonegoro Culture and Tourism Office 2021-2025

Graph 1. Tourist Data for Bojonegoro Geopark Tourist Destination 2021-2025

Based on Graph 1, visitor trends to Bojonegoro Geopark destinations from 2021 to 2025 show significant fluctuations. In 2021, visitor numbers remained low due to mobility restrictions and the lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A sharp increase occurred in 2022, with total visits surpassing one million tourists, indicating a strong rebound in domestic tourism. However, this growth was not sustained; from 2023 to 2025, visitor numbers declined to nearly half of the previous peak. This fluctuation suggests instability in destination management and indicates that tourism growth has not yet been supported by consistent promotion, integrated planning, and coordinated stakeholder engagement. Major destinations such as Pring Sewu and Babo remain primary contributors to annual visits, while sites including Segoro Biru, Wali Zakaria, and Galeri Bengawan provide smaller yet stable contributions. This pattern shows that nature-based and educational tourism remains attractive to domestic visitors, but supporting destinations require stronger innovation, packaging, and management. From a governance perspective, inconsistent visitation trends reflect the absence of integrated destination branding and collaborative tourism management. Strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration through the Pentahelix approach is therefore essential to ensure coordinated promotion, improved visitor services, and sustainable tourism development.

In this study to answer the research question of how multi-stakeholder collaboration in geopark management can become a leading destination, particularly based on the pentahelix approach concept. The researcher conducted an analysis to find new research using Vos Viewer software.

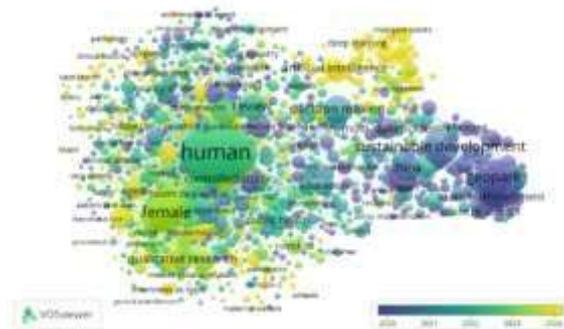


Figure 1. Overlay Visualisation Network by Vos Viewer, 2024

Based on Figure 1, this study demonstrates novelty through the integration of a multistakeholder collaboration model based on the pentahelix approach in geopark governance, an area that has rarely been explored systematically in international literature. Bibliometric analysis using VOS viewer with the keywords collaboration, geopark, and multi-stakeholder shows that global research remains concentrated on sustainable development, tourism planning, and community participation, while the pentahelix framework has not yet emerged as a dominant analytical perspective.

This gap indicates limited scholarly attention to how cross-actor collaboration involving government, academia, business actors, communities, and media can be operationalized in geopark governance (Henriques & Brilha, 2017). As geoparks increasingly function as instruments of sustainable development, effective management requires synergy of knowledge, resources, and innovation among stakeholders. The persistence of coordination fragmentation in the management of Bojonegoro Geopark further highlights the practical relevance of this gap. Therefore, this study contributes by developing a Pentahelixbased collaborative

governance model that strengthens participatory, adaptive, and sustainable geopark management while supporting local economic resilience and community empowerment.

THEORETICAL STUDY

The Pentahelix Approach as an Analytical Tool

The Pentahelix approach represents an evolution of the Triple Helix framework proposed by (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000), which emphasised interaction among government, academia, and business. It later expanded this model by incorporating community and media, forming a multi-layered collaborative system aimed at fostering innovation and sustainable development. Within the geopark context, each helix contributes a distinct and irreplaceable function. Government provides regulatory frameworks, spatial planning, and long-term conservation policy. Academia contributes scientific research, geodiversity documentation, and educational programs that transform geological heritage into learning resources. Businesses support tourism services, creative economy initiatives, and destination competitiveness. Local communities act as custodians of geoheritage and cultural knowledge while ensuring social participation and sustainability. Media functions as a literacy bridge and promotional platform, amplifying public awareness and strengthening digital outreach. The absence of any one actor weakens the governance ecosystem and risks fragmenting geopark management.

Previous studies emphasise the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in geopark governance. For example, (Budiono et al., 2024) highlight coordination fragmentation among actors, while (Budiastra et al., 2022) underline the necessity of collaborative governance for sustainable tourism development. However, a critical gap remains regarding how media engagement is technically integrated into geological education, digital promotion, and

community-based interpretation. This gap suggests that collaboration is not merely institutional but also communicative and knowledge-driven.

The relevance of the Pentahelix model is further reinforced by contemporary sustainable development frameworks and UNESCO Global Geoparks guidelines, which emphasise community participation, education, and integrated governance. These principles align with Indonesia's commitment to sustainable regional development and geodiversity conservation. In the case of Bojonegoro, geopark management still faces challenges such as fragmented coordination, limited cross-sector synergy, and insufficient public promotion and geoscience literacy. Therefore, the Pentahelix approach provides a comprehensive analytical lens to examine multi-actor dynamics and identify collaborative gaps. By applying this framework, the study aims to reveal how integrated stakeholder engagement can strengthen governance, enhance community participation, and improve sustainable geopark management.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study strategy to gain an indepth understanding of multi-stakeholder collaboration in the management of Bojonegoro Geopark. The study focuses on the operational collaboration dynamics at Geosite Teksas Wonocolo, which represents the integration of geotourism, community participation, and heritage conservation. Field research was conducted from October to November 2025. Data were obtained through in-depth semi-structured interviews, field observations, and documentation, complemented by secondary data from government reports, scientific publications, and tourism statistics.

Five key informants were selected purposively to represent each element of the Pentahelix: a tourism office official, an academic expert, a local business operator, a earth garden exploration

leader, and a local media practitioner. Informants were chosen based on their direct involvement in geopark management and decision-making processes. Data were analysed using the interactive model of (Umum & Graha, 2024), including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and technique triangulation by comparing interview findings with field observations and documentation. The Pentahelix approach was applied as the analytical framework to assess actor roles, contributions, and inter-sectoral synergy in geopark governance.

Table 1. Research Informant Profiles

No	Helix Element	Position & Role of Informants	Reasons for Selection
1.	Government	Officials/Technical Staff of the Bojonegoro Regency Culture and Tourism Office	Has direct authority over destination development, geopark programme formulation, and tourism policy management.
2.	Academic	Lecturers/researchers involved in geological research, geotourism, geopark studies	Possess scientific competence and research experience related to geoparks and be able to provide an academic perspective
3.	Business Operator	Management of MSMEs/Tourism Businesses in the Bojonegoro Geopark	Understanding local economic dynamics and business sector involvement in supporting geopark tourism
4.	Community	Members/Drivers of Local Communities in geosite destinations (Pringsewu, Babo, Wonocolo, etc.)	Directly involved in destination management, tourism services, and community empowerment

5.	Media	Local media reporters/editors who actively cover geopark activities	Playing a role in publications, public education, and shaping the image of Bojonegoro Geopark
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Source: Empirical data processed by researchers, 2025.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Empirical phenomena related to the management and development of Bojonegoro Geopark were obtained from in-depth interviews, document analysis, and field observations, which were then processed through an analysis to identify thematic patterns.



Figure 1. Word Cloud on Indicators per Helix

The dynamics of stakeholder roles, interaction patterns, and collaboration mechanisms in geopark management are analysed using the Pentahelix approach, which includes the government, academia, business actors, communities, and the media. This approach emphasises that the effectiveness of geopark governance is not only determined by the involvement of these five actors, but also by the quality of coordination, information exchange, and cross-sector synergy.

Government

The government acts as a regulator and facilitator by providing regulations, basic infrastructure, and establishing a Geopark Management Agency. This is in line with the informants' statements explaining that geopark policies are based on the region's need to create leading attractions:

“Bojonegoro is not a tourist destination like Yogyakarta or Malang. So when we want to develop Bojonegoro, one way is through tourism. The geopark could become one of its icons." Essentially, this is an effort to develop the potential that exists in Bojonegoro, whether it be tourism, culture or education." (Ms Andri, person in charge of the Bojonegoro geopark)

The government also emphasised that geoparks have been prioritised in the RPJMD. This is evident in the commitment to provide infrastructure by cross-sectoral regional government agencies such as PUPR, the Environment Agency, and SDA:

“There are many things we need to complete for UNESCO. One of them is infrastructure. Each regional government agency has its own part to play. For example, we are responsible for tourism, PUPR is responsible for roads and signs, and others are responsible for their respective tasks. The development of infrastructure has been directed and pursued to support the Geopark itself. The geopark has a Geopark Management Agency. It consists of representatives from the government, universities and the media. Everyone has their own role to play. We are still in the process of fulfilling UNESCO's requirements, and have not yet reached the evaluation stage. The evaluation will likely take place at the end of the year. (Ms Andri, person in charge of the Bojonegoro geopark)

Figure 1. Geotour For Foreign Guests



Source: Instagram jelajah_taman_bumi

Internal obstacles mainly lie in the lack of uniformity of focus across OPDs.:

“Because perhaps not all of them focus on the Geopark. There are regional government agencies involved, but their main focus is not the Geopark. That is an obstacle. Raising awareness about Geoparks is not easy. If we say, “We want to join UNESCO”, they will definitely ask, “Why UNESCO? What do we get out of it? Conservation efforts cannot be carried out by us alone in the tourism sector. We must work together with the Environment Agency, Water Resources Agency, and other agencies that have the necessary expertise. (Ms Andri, person in charge of the Bojonegoro geopark)

Academic

Academics play a role as suppliers of scientific data and validation through geological research, geotourism, and socio-economic studies. This academic contribution is in line with the views of Henriques & Brilha (2017), who state that scientific legitimacy is an important foundation in the development of UNESCO Global Geoparks. Furthermore, student involvement through thematic community service programmes is also in line with the academic participation model outlined by Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff (2000). This is reinforced by the statement from the source that LPPM actively initiates various leading research projects that are directly oriented towards the needs of the geopark. As stated by the source:

“So far, one of the things that LPPM Unigoro has done to support Bojonegoro Geopark is to conduct flagship research ranging from the remediation of contaminated soil in traditional oil well areas, socio-economic research on the community, to environmental quality assessments.”

(Ms Laily, Chair of LPPM UNIGORO)

The role of academics has grown stronger through the Thematic Community Service Programme (KKN Tematik) in collaboration with BRIN and PSG. Reports on these activities show that academic contributions are not only theoretical, but are also manifested in tangible products such as promotional videos, field research, and public education. These findings are in line with the statements made by the sources. Furthermore, collaboration between students and national research institutions and local governments has resulted in hundreds of scientific and creative products. As explained in the interview:

“We sent 800 students to 26 geopark sites. The students developed programmes for geopark development, and one of the mandatory outputs was to create promotional videos and sustainability plans. In total, there are 567 works, 28 promotional videos, 29 books, 55 scientific articles, 353 media publications, and 34 intellectual properties. We have submitted all of these to the Geopark Management Agency. I am involved as an expert in the field of biodiversity my job is to conduct studies and search for species that can support the value of Geoparks in the eyes of the international community. I discovered *Dendrobium capra* as a rare species that is now only found in the teak forests of Bojonegoro. (Ms Laily, Head of

LPPM UNIGORO)

The Challenge of Collaboration the interview results also revealed obstacles in multistakeholder collaboration. One of these was communication barriers caused by internal bureaucracy. The interviewees emphasised:

“There is a bottleneck. Information that should have been conveyed to the leadership was not conveyed so the technical team was confused about our position. Sometimes I have to go

through formal channels and send reports directly to my superiors to keep the process moving forward. As an academic, everything I say must be based on data, not on likes or dislikes. (Ms Laily, Head of LPPM UNIGORO)

Figure 2. Group 6 of the 2025 Unigoro Community Service Programme highlights the potential of Jari Village, Gondang Subdistrict, through a creative video.



Source: radarbojonegoro.jawapos.com

Within the management structure of Bojonegoro Geopark, academics contribute not only through research and community service programmes, but also through direct participation in the Geopark Management Agency. This contribution is carried out in two ways.:

“We have two roles as part of the Geopark Management Agency and as a campus institution. My efforts are to submit all outputs to the Geopark so that they can be used in UNESCO Global Geopark documents. My dream is for all Geopark databases to be stored at UNIGORO a kind of Geopark corner that stores all research results and community service activities. (Ms Laily, Head of LPPM UNIGORO)

Business Operator

In the pentahelix model, academics act as providers of knowledge, research, and community capacity building through scientific approaches (Carayannis & Campbell, 2010). This role is important because geopark development requires a strong scientific basis, particularly in relation to identifying geological potential, development planning, and formulating sustainable

policy recommendations (UNESCO, 2024). In the interviews, informants emphasised that academics have been heavily involved in providing technical understanding and science-based assistance. One informant said:

“ Friends from the university usually help provide scientific perspectives, including identifying geological potential and how to package it into educational material for the community. We often collaborate with lecturers or students to study tourism potential and train tour guides, so they not only conduct research but also teach the community. (Mr Harjo, Business Owner near the Geopark)

The quote emphasises that academics' contributions are not limited to research, but also include community service that has a direct impact on improving the capacity of local actors. The role of academics in formulating policy recommendations was also appreciated by informants. One source added:

Usually, when there is a major programme, the university helps provide input or recommendation papers so that its development is not haphazard and remains in line with scientific principles. The role of academics in the development of Bojonegoro Geopark can be seen through their contributions in providing research, scientific assistance, and education to the community and stakeholders. Academics serve as a bridge between scientific concepts in geology and tourism and practical needs in the field. This is in line with the pentahelix concept, which positions academics as strategic actors in driving innovation and strengthening community capacity. (Mr Harjo, Business Operator in the Geopark Area) Dalam wawancara, informan menegaskan bahwa akademisi selama ini banyak terlibat dalam memberi pemahaman teknis dan pendampingan berbasis keilmuan. Salah satu informan mengatakan:

“ Friends from the university usually help provide scientific perspectives, including identifying geological potential and how to package it into educational material for the community. We often collaborate with lecturers or students to study tourism potential and

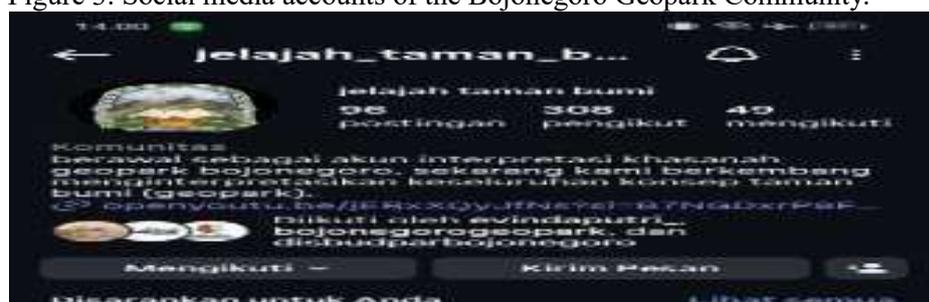
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Community

The community is the most active actor at the operational level in the development of Bojonegoro Geopark, particularly through geotourism guiding, conservation, education, and ecotourism network expansion activities. This pattern is in line with the concept of community-driven collaboration in the Quintuple Helix (Carayannis & Campbell, 2010). In an interview, the Community Chair emphasised that the success of the geopark is highly dependent on the closeness and consistency between actors and the community, as he stated.:

“All parties must consistently approach the community by sitting on an equal footing. I am from the East Java Ecotourism Forum. We do a lot of work in villages that have received ADWI awards. We have collaborated with Unigoro, UB, and UPN Veteran. Our relationship is very positive. This community was originally formed by the Department of Culture and Tourism. “We regularly conduct research, train geotourism guides, develop geotrails, sign MOUs with Italy, produce documentaries, publish guidebooks, and provide assistance to villages.” (Mr Agni, Chair of the Jelajahatanbumi Community)

Figure 3. Social media accounts of the Bojonegoro Geopark Community.



Source: Instagram [jelajah_taman_bumi](#)

All of these activities are publicised and reinforced through the use of community social media on Instagram @jelajahtamanbumi, which serves as a space for documentation, public education, and a channel for promoting geotourism. This social media platform plays a significant role in expanding the reach of information to the public, showcasing community activities transparently, and building a positive image of the geopark at the local and regional levels. Consistent publication through Jelajah Taman Bumi also strengthens public trust, as stated by the source that

“The public response has been very positive. It began in June last year with tourism agency training, and developed into a community focused on tourism villages, conservation and research. (Mr Agni, Chair of the Jelajahtamanbumi Community)

With an increasingly structured role and supported by social media as a public communication tool, the community functions as a strategic hub that maintains connectivity between pentahelix actors and ensures the sustainability of conservation, education, and community empowerment values in the development of Bojonegoro Geopark.

Media

The media plays a strategic role in strengthening public literacy, promoting destinations, and facilitating dialogue between actors. This was emphasised by Radar Bojonegoro, which stated that,

“Every report on a geosite not only displays photos and locations, but also explains its geological value so that the public understands the importance of preserving the area. (Mr Cho Radar Bojonegoro)

The role of the media in the ‘safe disaster tourism’ campaign is also in line with the findings (Santos X., 2025) regarding the importance of risk communication at geopark destinations in the post-pandemic era. The source added that,

“Since the pandemic, we have included information on risks and mitigation measures in activities such as KKN-TK, we not only cover the event, but also bridge communication between the university, volunteers, and the village. In the early stages, we helped to standardise information between parties so that the programme would be more coordinated,” said the source. Because there are geosites that are prone to landslides or located in hilly areas, we have created special coverage and pocket books for students,” explained the source. (Mr Cho Radar Bojonegoro)

Figure 4. Regent Wahono and KKNTK-21 Unigoro students planting trees together in Klino Village



Source: radarbojonegoro.jawapos.com

This effort supports the development of sustainable tourism that prioritises safety. In addition to formal reporting, the use of social media also strengthens the reach of education. Through the ‘Jelajah Taman Bumi’ account, Radar Bojonegoro utilises digital platforms to attract a younger audience. Social media integration has made the dissemination of geopark information more dynamic and responsive, especially with regard to updates on field conditions and collaborative agendas. Despite its significant role, the interviews revealed a number of obstacles that affect the effectiveness of the media. Geopark promotion is not yet evenly distributed, visual data and information infrastructure are still limited, and public literacy is still developing

“We use Jelajah Taman Bumi for quick content such as reels, safety tips, and geosite routes. Many young people actually learn about geoparks from this content.” Sometimes we encounter

difficulties because the official documentation is incomplete, while not all geosites have adequate promotional materials," said the source. (Mr Cho Radar Bojonegoro)

The Pentahelix Collaboration Structure as a Geopark Management Framework

The Pentahelix approach to Geopark management shows that each element of government, academia, business, community, and media has a complementary role in supporting the sustainable development of geoparks. The government acts as a regulatory and policy guide, while academia provides a scientific basis through geological research, education, and development recommendations. Businesses then utilise this knowledge base to strengthen tourism product innovation and local economic activities. The community is a key actor at the field level, implementing geotourism practices, conservation, and cultural storytelling. The media serves to strengthen the entire process through the dissemination of information, educational campaigns, and the formation of public opinion regarding the geopark programme. The interconnectedness between these actors forms a collaborative mechanism that is not hierarchical, but rather interactive and mutually reinforcing, with the Geopark as the centre of orientation for all activities. To provide a clearer picture of the relationship between these actors, the Pentahelix collaboration model can be visualised as shown in the following figure:



Figure 1. The Pentahelix Collaboration Process as a Geopark Management Framework

Sustainable geopark management requires the integration of conservation, education, and tourism development through structured and collaborative governance. The concept of geoconservation emphasizes the protection of geological heritage as a fundamental component of sustainable development (Brilha, 2018). Furthermore, sustainable geotourism requires a balance between environmental preservation and local community welfare (Dowling & Newsome, 2017). Multi-actor collaboration frameworks derived from the Triple Helix model provide an important foundation for strengthening cross-sector partnerships in regional development (Ranga & Etzkowitz, 2013). Global geopark management standards also emphasize the integration of conservation, education, and sustainable development as core principles (Unesco, 2020). In the context of community-based tourism development,

stakeholder collaboration plays a crucial role in achieving sustainable governance (Nurdiansyah, 2023).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study reveals that the management of Bojonegoro Geopark has involved all Pentahelix actors government, academia, business, community, and media yet collaboration remains partial and fragmented, reflecting a silo mentality without a formal coordination mechanism to unify shared goals. While each actor contributes through infrastructure support, research, tourism services, community participation, and promotion, development is still predominantly tourism-oriented, risking the marginalisation of geological conservation and public education as core principles of the UNESCO Global Geoparks framework. Therefore, strengthening institutional coordination through a dedicated geopark management body, enhancing community capacity, integrating research into policy and interpretation, and promoting consistent educational branding are essential to transform Bojonegoro Geopark into not only a leading tourist destination but also a sustainable centre for conservation, education, and community empowerment. and provides a governance model for strengthening integrated Pentahelix collaboration in emerging geoparks.

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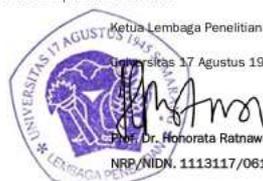
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JUDUL PENELITIAN : The Dynamics of Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:
Challenges in Integrating the Pentahelix Model in
Bojonegoro Geopark

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