

Value Co-Creation Process in Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: The Case of Hakka Heritage Tourism in Taiwan

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Abstract –The purpose of this study is to explore how multi-stakeholder co-create collective value in a local context. Moreover, we aim to examine what barriers between the participators and what mechanisms could reduce these barriers, and then induce the local value. This paper presents a collaborative project that the university implemented in Jia-dong, a township of Pingtung county in Taiwan. Jia-dong is a traditional Hakka cluster with rich and historical elements. The purpose of collaborative project is to integrate Jia-dong's developmental factors and help to create local value. This case study demonstrates that different stakeholder motivations and their ability to provide resources, differences are observed in the value creation activities and mechanisms at three stages: mobilization, expansion, and stabilization. This paper contributes in two aspects: first, it highlights the evolution of collaborative relationships among stakeholders during the process of value co-creation, and second, it provides a deep understanding of the role of value co-creation mechanisms is deeply understood while collaborative barriers derive from developing the local tourism.

Keywords –Value Co-Creation, Multi-Stakeholder, Mechanisms, Taiwan, Tourism

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Sustainable local development is a process for continued creation of local values. This not only entails the preservation of the original cultural landscape but also the injection and activation of new elements to promote additional values for the location (Ryan, 2002). Since the development of a local community is an interaction between the economic and social facets, a multi-stakeholder partnership is an important method for the sustainable development of local values. In the collaboration process, the initial stage requires active participation of key stakeholders to establish and maintain cooperative relationships. At the later stages, additional stakeholders should be involved to promote and sustain long-term partnerships (Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011; Waligo et al., 2013).

However, due to the presence of a multitude of factors, the multi-stakeholder partnership approach could encounter several obstacles and conflicts in the process of collaboration. In order to reduce or avoid cooperation issues, proper management of multi-stakeholder cooperation becomes crucial. In the past, many studies have explored multi-stakeholder partnerships from various perspectives, such as networking, psychological, and political. Until now, these perspectives have rarely been applied to studies on multi-stakeholder value co-creation partnership in the context of local development. This limitation is because most of the value co-creation studies still explore the cooperative relationships in business contexts, and emphasize the interactions between focal organizations and stakeholders. These examinations often ignore the interactions between the various stakeholders and their impact on the creation of collective values (Reypens et al., 2016). From the local development context, this collective value is the value created through the preservation and development of local culture, which requires the active participation and efforts of multiple stakeholders collaborating under a unified goal. Thus, a multi-stakeholder partnership is required to promote local value activation, effectively combine the scattered local cultural elements and resources, and recreate and reinvent the existing cultural phenomenon by integrating external resources.

1.2 Aim, research questions and structure of the paper

The purpose of this study is to focus on the activities of multiple stakeholders who participated in value co-creation for local development. The value co-creation process includes the following research questions:

- (1) What motivates the stakeholders to participate in local developmental activities?
- (2) In a multi-stakeholder context, how to motivate all the parties and overcome obstacles encountered in the collaboration process?
- (3) How can the multiple stakeholders actively participate in co-creating local values?

As cooperation is a complex and dynamic process, this study applied a case study approach to carry out the research. This particular case study was a multi-stakeholder analysis based on a local program with the university (focal organization), which involved, at the very least the local government and organizations (stakeholders). The case aimed to extend the study value co-creation perspectives to the field of local development.

The study is structured as follows. The first section is a review of the literature on value co-creation and stakeholders. The second section presents the methodology to explain the case study. In the third section, the authors present and discuss the results, focusing on the various mechanisms during the value co-creation process. Finally, an inclusive evaluation to the results, limitations, and suggestions for future research is presented.

The contribution of this case study lies in the process of value creation, with a focus not just on the relationship between the focal organization and stakeholders. In the value creation process, the interactions among different stakeholders would drive or gradually form an embedded network of relationships that would mobilize individuals or organizations to participate in the expansion of local values. In addition, when dealing with obstacles in the value co-creation process, this case study can be used to explore the mechanisms for mitigating negative influences and increasing positive benefits.

2 Theoretical background

This study is based on the literature of stakeholder involvements, value creation, and co-creations. It examines the value co-creation from the perspective of stakeholders in the context of local development.

2.1 Value creation and co-creation

First, in the process of value creation (V-Creation, V-Crea), the focus is on these two aspects: (1) Who is the source of V-Crea and the user of this value? (2) What are the ways or means of generating value (Lepak et al., 2007)? At the organizational level, the organization is the source of V-Crea. The creation process of new values is the organization's ability to apply new management methods, new technologies, or new materials in either production or service activities. Thereby, the organization can reduce costs, and incent the target users (buyers) to increase their purchase intent. Thus, this activity increases the V-Crea (Lepak et al., 2007). In this context, the organization-related theoretical studies, for example, resource-based and knowledge-based studies, use an organization as the source of V-Crea to explore how the organization seeks to create new values from a process based on internal resources or knowledge (Barney, 1991; Kogut & Zander, 1992). This approach heavily emphasized the V-Crea process from the perspective of the source's internal resource. Adner and Zemsky (2006) called it "supply-side" perspectives, which ignore the heterogeneity of consumers (users) to create value for focal organizations (source). Subsequent scholars such as Priem (2007) and Priem, Li, and Carr (2012) carried out studies from the "demand-side" perspective, Value Co-Creation Process in Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: The Case of Hakka Heritage Tourism in Taiwan

wherein consumers can create values for the focal organization. The understanding and insight into consumer preferences and experiences can be used to develop a consumer-oriented strategy that facilitates focal organizations to innovate and create new values. Therefore, contrary to the supply-side perspective, which emphasizes the focal organization's development of a new value from the factor market (resources and knowledge), the demand-side perspective emphasizes that the focal organization generates new values from the product market.

In addition to the supply-side and demand-side studies, the development of a service-dominant logic (SDL) tries to incorporate the position of multiple parties (manufacturers, consumers, governments, and other stakeholders) into the idea of value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Grönroos, 2012). Ranjan and Read (2016) believe that the SDL's V-Crea covers the concept of co-production and value-in-use. The multi-participants have the ability and willingness to share knowledge, and jointly invest resources in a fair and interactive platform, leading to an increase in the value-in-use for consumers via experience and interactions.

In this study, the source of value creation is the multiple stakeholders, that is, the joint participation of focal organization and stakeholders who put in their resources to co-produce concrete or intangible cultural assets. The local residents or visitors (users) can then sense the local cultural value shaped by the value creators (source). In this definition, the method of value creation is the means for the focal organization and stakeholders to co-produce and improve the value-in-use. This is a value co-creation process that emphasizes the mechanism of the participants' interactions in order to motivate their efforts. In this process, capturing of the value should be considered so that resources invested by the co-creators can return concrete or intangible benefits as an outcome of the cooperation. This should result into a long-term drive to create the collective (local culture) value (Reypens et al., 2016).

2.2 Stakeholders' perspective

The concept of a stakeholder has been widely applied to various research scenarios since the Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach was published by Freeman (1984). Freeman (1984) argues that stakeholders are an important factor influencing an organizational environment. Stakeholders can affect organizational growth or survival via a variety of influential efforts. In this study, the term "stakeholder" refers to individuals or group that can influence the local collaboration program. There are many studies that have applied the concept of stakeholders to local development. The stakeholders usually involve local communities, local industries, government units, and educational bodies. These stakeholders, by means of investing various resources (labor, knowledge, material, etc.), gradually form a community with interdependent partnerships and relationships, thereby influencing local developments (Murphy, 1988). Grant (1994) also observed that innovative local developments need the cooperation of stakeholders to promote sustainable development.

The perspective of stakeholders can be summarized in the following characteristics: i) Motivation heterogeneity: These refer to the different motivations Value Co-Creation Process in Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: The Case of Hakka Heritage Tourism in Taiwan

of multiple stakeholders, such as altruism, power, reciprocity, and self-interest. This results in the different interpretations of relationship connotations between the focal organization and other stakeholders. It is also expressed from a behavioral aspect (Bridoux et al, 2011; Bosse & Coughlan, 2016). ii) Dependencies: Stakeholders not only develop relationships with the focal organizations but also interact with other stakeholders to promote the flow of resources among the multiple stakeholders (Rowley, 1997). In addition, from the aspect of stakeholder management, the aim of cooperation is to produce benefits or values that a single stakeholder cannot achieve alone. Thus, there needs to be a joint interest among the stakeholders (Freeman, 2010).

Whilst the collaborative relationships of stakeholders have an impact on local development, the process can be rather complex, uncertain, and conflict-ridden (Cordano, 1996). As mentioned earlier, the heterogeneity in the motivations of multi-stakeholders can lead to different interpretations of the collaboration process (Rowley, 1997; Bridoux & Stoelhorst, 2016). This can result in changes to the process of cooperation, which requires a period of interaction to develop a sustainable relationship to achieve the benefits of collaboration (Woodland & Acott, 2007; Waligo et al., 2013). From the collaboration process, stakeholders can learn the heterogeneity of their motives and capabilities, as well as achieve common goals after a long period of interactions. In this process, the barriers produced by interdependent interactions are dependent on the operation of various mechanisms, which either reduce the negative impacts of adverse cooperation or induce benefits.

In terms of designing the mechanism of stakeholder management, scholars have espoused an approach from economic, social, and psychological perspectives to manage the system formed by the focal organization and stakeholders. The economic perspective is to consider the relationship as a contractual one, which designs a safeguard mechanism to reduce the cooperative risks such as entrapment in investments and moral hazards (Jones, 1995). The social perspective is to perceive the relationship as a network relationship. The focal organization and stakeholders are embedded in this network. Network coordination mechanisms (e.g., normative, cohesive) affect the quality and quantity of information exchange (Rowley, 1997). The psychological perspective centers on the psychological interpretations of the cooperative relationship made by the focal organization and stakeholders.

For example, in the study by Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2016), the various stakeholders have interpreted the relationship as communal, political, reciprocal, or market driven. The interpretation types are different, and so are the expectations of other stakeholders and the adopted conflict resolution approaches. In the partnership process, the use of appropriate mechanisms to maintain mutual beneficial interests of interdependent stakeholders can facilitate the effective co-creation of collective values. Therefore, in consideration of the different interests, how to promote multi-stakeholders to work effectively in the co-creation of collective values becomes an important topic (Bridoux et al, 2011; Bridoux & Stoelhorst, 2014, 2016; Reypens et al, 2016; Tantalo & Priem, 2016). Here, the condition of value co-creation is that, given a specific

relationship context, resources can be combined without diminishing the existing interest of each stakeholder. In addition, the resources are used in this context to co-produce value (Tantalo & Priem, 2016).

2.3 Development of sustainable local cultural heritage tourism

Local development is a sustainable process, especially in terms of sustainable tourism. It is a continuous process of value creation (Ryan, 2002). During this development, the stakeholders play indispensable roles (Aas et al., 2005; Byrd, 2007; Waligo et al., 2013). Prior to the discussion on how stakeholders can participate in the local sustainable tourism development, it is important to understand how local contextual factors affect the interactive process of these stakeholders.

In case of cultural heritage tourism, in a limited geographical location and based on a historical context, tangible or intangible cultural products are produced to attract the attention of local residents and visitors. Hence, the cultural product has a local embeddedness, which is based on years of development of the local people and events in a given temporal-spatial backdrop. As changes occur in the partnership of the focal organization and the stakeholders (value co-creation process), the development of local values is affected.

Research related to embeddedness has been widely applied to various topics, such as innovative activities between the business units of an organization, various inter-organizational collaborations, and overseas operations of global companies (Uzzi, 1996; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; McEvily & Zaheer, 1999; Yli-Renko, Autio, & Tontti, 2002). These studies have their own research contexts. The emphasis is that the various social factors (e.g., trust, reciprocity, long-term orientation) would help achieve closer interactive connections between stakeholders. Thus, information flows will become more informative and effective, enhancing the relationship between participants, thereby gradually accumulating social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Studies on local embeddedness are focused on a research scenario that is based on local temporal-spatial conditions, which enable individuals or organizations with set goals to form an embedded relationship (Hess, 2004). Specifically, local embeddedness refers to the degree of social interactive closeness that a group of people develop, given the local temporal-spatial factors.

Value co-creation requires participation of multiple stakeholders to promote value formation in the investment location through resource combination. The interactions between multiple stakeholders will affect the opportunities and connotations of the resource combination. The interactions formed by local embeddedness helps improve information flow and transparency, which increases the chance of resource integration. In addition, various embedded social factors (e.g., cultural, norms) affect the motivations of each stakeholder in this multi-stakeholder partnership of the value co-creation process. Thus, local embeddedness is a catalyst for value creation, which guides the participants in their interactions to combine resources and align motives. Thereby, value co-creation activities can be carried out.

3 Methodology

3.1 Empirical setting

The case study is a research strategy that focusses on an in-depth examination of a study, in which researchers seek to explore dynamic situation within specific context (Yin, 2009). We conducted a longitudinal case study on the local development program undertaken by the university. To date, studies have tended to include business organizations operating according to value co-creation except organizations that develop outside the traditional boundaries with a strong historical legacy, such as the Hakka village. Our aim is to fill the gap that the lack of *in situ* and long-term field studies on value co-creation in local context. The location of this case study is the Jia-dong Hakka village in Pingtung, Taiwan. The village's local history and cultural elements are very rich with buildings maintaining traditional Hakka characteristics. However, these cultural elements and features appear scattered in the village without any apparent connections.

The purpose of the university is to re-create the community and promote the activation of new elements to generate value. The Jia-dong village is the representative case study wherein the university is the focal organization, and other parties who participated in this program are the stakeholders, which include the county government, history and cultural society, and collaborative businesses.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

Data collection included (1) participant observation, (2) interviews, and (3) documentary material. We have triangulated all of these data and sought to remain as close as possible to the experience of the actors involved. We also make efforts to align the multiple data align closely with our research topic.

Participant observations

Our first author is one of the members of the university, providing access to a holistic exploration of value co-creation (VCC) during the cooperation process in this case context. He interacts with local government entities, local organizations, and residents, and is involved in the advance planning, execution and post-event discussions of various collaborative activities. Through his participation, he can closely observe how various stakeholders reconstruct local elements of Hakka culture at different stages of collaboration. He fully immersed himself in the focal phenomena through enactive research, exploring mechanisms of VCC in practice. The second authors remained 'distant', providing collective reflexivity and theoretically generative insights. We focus on unique cultural phenomenon to inform a view of the processes by which VCC unfolds over time.

In-depth interview process

This study used interviews and secondary data collection methods to gain a deeper understanding and analyses of how the relevant stakeholders cooperated to co-create local values. We interviewed a key member representing

the university team responsible for implementing the project. Not only did he conduct on-site inspections at least twice a week during the two-year project period, investigating local Hakka elements, but he also engaged in discussions with relevant stakeholders (including the government and locals) on how to create new Hakka tourism themes. Additionally, he held formal routine meetings with relevant stakeholders at least three times a month. We interviewed him for 5 times, and each interview lasted 1–2 hours. Interview topics included the following: How does the team (“Land Project Team”) that represented the university initiates a partnership with relevant stakeholders? In this collaboration, what are the value creation activities? How are these activities carried out? What are the challenges encountered, and how are they addressed? What are the resources invested by each stakeholder, and what are the benefits? According to the interview content, this study summarized the value co-creation journey of the Land Project Team and the relevant stakeholders. Importantly, no interviews were conducted with stakeholders, as they participated and coordinated within the project. The reason we only conducted with a key member representing the university team (“Land Project Team”) is due to the co-value creation mechanisms being dominated by the university team. Furthermore, as mentioned above, there is close interaction between this key member and diverse stakeholders, with an understanding of each stakeholder's motivations and thoughts. Consequently, he had become the primary interviewee in this study. In terms of data analysis, we also used observations and secondary data to cross-validate the information obtained from the interviews

Secondary data

Wherever possible, we consulted documents pertinent to Jiadong, including historical texts and journalistic accounts, to accumulate insights into the trajectories of Jia-dong's development, both present and prospective, with the aim of identifying any additional elements of significance that might already be in existence. These documents cover topics such as Hakka festival culture, historical architecture, works of poets and painters, etc., which facilitate our comprehension of how stakeholders engender activities of value creation within the distinctive context of Hakka village.

3.3 Data analysis

In our study, we employed a narrative approach to contextualize the case and delineate key landmarks within the project's historical development. Narratives serve as essential tools for dynamically configuring the roles of various actors. The creation of a chronologically-ordered narrative, framed around pivotal events, represents a first order analysis, utilizing the language and frameworks provided by the participants. This empirical examination was subsequently complemented by a secondary-level analysis, which facilitated the incorporation of concepts, themes, and dimensions derived from our literature review.

4 Empirical analysis

In 2015, the Ministry of Science and Technology publicly invited the application for the "Joint Governance Program of Universities and Local Governments." In this program, the university assumes a leading role and collaborates with local governments to select a community with unique features in their county for development. In the subsequent three years, cultural development, community building, and such related development activities are carried out to achieve the policy objectives outlined in the "University planned and local government facilitated local development initiatives." The Ministry of Science and Technology reviews the content of the program and the relevant subsidies. Specific funds are allocated to subsidize the approved implementation of this program. In particular, one of the requirements outlined by the Ministry of Science and Technology is that the university must convince its local governments to put forward 5% (or more) of the planned budget to assist with the implementation, as a demonstration of their commitment.

After receiving the news, seven interested lecturers from six different universities (hereinafter referred to as the Land Project Team) jointly applied for the planning and implementation of this program. After the evaluation, the team chose Jia-dong, characterized by its well-maintained historical buildings, as the project site. In addition, the "living museum" concept is used to plan for the development of Jia-dong.

In the context of the partnership between the university and the local government, this study analyzed the interview and second data to identify the three stages of this value co-creation process. The stages are mobilization, expansion, and stabilization, and are discussed below.

4.1 Stage 1: Mobilization

Solicit the involvement of relevant stakeholders

In the mobilization stage, the "Land Project Team" formed by the universities solicited the involvement of key stakeholders. These key stakeholders included the local organizations, Jia-dong's local culture and historical society, and Pingtung county government. After contacting the two stakeholders, the Land Project Team presented the concept of developing Jia-dong into a "living museum," with the view to creating a sightseeing phenomenon from the perspective of universities. In addition, the team enumerated the available resources, including human resources and funding, management knowledge, educational activities, and student participation. The expectations and resources available to the culture and historical society and the Pingtung county government are different from those of the Land Project Team. Consequently, the two stakeholders responded differently to the partnership program proposed by the team. The Culture and Historical Association was eager to see the results of injecting external resources into local developments. However, incentives are needed to secure the actual participation of the residents in the long-term implementation of this program. Therefore, the Land Project Team committed to employ participation of residents using the subsidy funding to

obtain long-term assistance. The Pingtung county government hoped to implement the program in a different location instead of Jia-dong. The two sides spent a long time in discussion. Finally, from the long-term development perspective, the Land Project Team proposed the prioritization of Jia-dong first and then move to a different location, as an incentive for the government to approve the required funding. The team adopted an incentive mechanism to encourage the Culture and Historical Association to become more active in their facilitation of the program, as well as increase the county government's willingness for partnership. Ultimately, the initial understanding and support of these two key stakeholders (culture and historical society, and the county government) was gained.

This process, as described by the key member of the Land Project Team, is outlined below.

The Ministry of Science and Technology expects this is a cross-border research group which is composed of university and local government. The group could connect local communities to implement the project of sustainable development. Therefore, we try to induce different members including country government, local society, and private enterprises to participate in the project.

The Culture and Historical Association dominants Jia-dong historical preservation and promotion. We visit the director-general of culture and historical society. The director-general tells us a lot of stories about how they salvaged cultural assets. The director-general is happy to hear that we would invest in resources in Jia-dong and is willing to give assistance in this project. However, it is difficult to implement in a long time without incentive. The solution is that the Land Project Team provide the expense for two residents to implement the project.

We connect with the Pingtung country government after the director-general approved and residents assisted. The chief of Cultural Affairs Department of Pingtung Country Government listens our idea and appreciated our motivation. He directs subordinates to assist us. Subordinates worry about work loading and displayed unhappy. The Land Project Team convince them that the loading would be no problem. Next, we also need to obtained permission from the head of Pingtung country government. He thinks that Donggang is better than Jia-dong for this project. We tell him that we had connected residents in Jia-dong and commit him that Donggang would be the next project after finishing the Jia-dong project. The outcome of the project become the performance of country government. Finally, the head agrees us and signs the letter of consent.

Summary: Incentive mechanisms trigger mutual cooperation

In the mobilization stage, by adopting an incentive mechanism for the promotion of partnership, the three stakeholders (Land Project Team, Culture and Historical Association, the county government) had a mutual understanding on the perception of value. That is, there was a mutual recognition that all parties will benefit from the partnership, as Table 1 illustrates. However, due to the differences in motivation, the university and local members took on a more active role, while the Cultural Affairs Department became more passive in a facilitation role. In addition, during the mobilization stage, the Land Project Value Co-Creation Process in Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: The Case of Hakka Heritage Tourism in Taiwan

Team and key stakeholders (county government, Culture and Historical Association) established a local network. The team members became embedded in the local context from the initial interactive process. Thus, they became gradually familiar with the location, as the residents also came to know that the team representing the university would be engaging in meaningful cultural value creation activities in the area.

Table 1: Incentive mechanism during the mobilization stage

Focal organization and stakeholders	Interpretation from participants	Incentive mechanisms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focal organization (the Land Team) ● Stakeholders (Culture and Historical Association, county government) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Land Team: The team of universities could develop local culture in cooperating with local stakeholders. ● Culture and Historical Association; Universities' resources are beneficial for preserving local culture. ● Country government; Participating the collaboration is beneficial for performance in local, but it caused administration loading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resource attraction: The Land Team draw resources into local to attract Culture and Historical Association participate the project. ● The attraction of future outcome: The future outcome became local performance for country government.

4.2 Stage 2: Expansion

Explore the local resource

In the expansion stage, the focus is on the resolution of local issues, such as how to explore and promote local characteristics, as well as how to obtain and spread the local knowledge. As a result of the emergence of local issues, a deepening of the local embeddedness introduced more local participants, such as Jia-dong's Farmers Association. The association joined to discuss marketing methods for its local specialty (Java apple). To address this, the Land Project Team expanded the scope of stakeholders by introducing an external enterprise (Jekey Company) to create a representative CI design for Jia-dong as a means to improve its uniqueness. In terms of local cultural knowledge promotion, a team of local people was trained to become tour guides, who showcased the historical cultures of Jia-dong. During this expansion period, the Land Project Team used a rapping mechanism to encourage participants to think over these issues, actively interact and discuss solutions, Value Co-Creation Process in Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: The Case of Hakka Heritage Tourism in Taiwan

and work toward a common resolution. The first CI design stimulated more ideas and issues from relevant stakeholders. For example, to connect the scattered cultural elements, other than designing a series of CI, the stakeholders thought of designing tour maps and developed follow-up plans for tour guides. Therefore, this rapping mechanism was a virtuous circle, which worked through the mutual interaction of participants to discover issues, work on resolutions, drive initiatives, and resolve additional problems.

In the expansion process, the CI designs, tour maps, and guided tours were conducted as described by the key member of the Land Project Team.

(a) CI design

The Land Team invites local communities to discuss how to proceed in the initial project. We think initially to develop cultural products based on Jia-dong culture. Jia-dong's Farmers Association is our first connection and we hope the association provides some special products to let us try to design and package. The Director General of association tells us that the best product is Java apple. Jia-dong's Java apple has won several champions in the competitions of national farm products. However, Java apple is proceed difficultly, it contains too much water to be proceed and equipment is too expensive. We suggests the Director General that we could provide marketing strategy to promote farm products during the interview. We connect Jekey Company to design Jia-dong's corporate identity (CI). After we discussed with Jekey Company and culture and historical society, the first CI is designed as figure 1. The pattern of this CI is Java apple which represents that Jia-dong's people united spirit. A series of CI are designed after the first CI was admired (see figure 2).



Figure 1. Corporate identity



Figure 2. Corporate identity

(b) Tour maps

Several organizations (the Land Team, Culture and Historical Association, and Jekey Company) have be routine to discuss after the CI issue. We find it lacked a complete tour map to link dispersed resources in Jia-dong. Travelers do not know where the scenic spots in Jia-dong without the tour guide. The Land Team visits the local people to integrate information so that we design the initial tour map.

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(c) *Guided tours*

After designing the CI and tours map, the Land Team invites 10 local people who know about Jia-dong history to become the tour guides. They are trained to introduce Jia-dong culture and historical architecture through the courses in 10 weeks. We increase human resource by this training opportunity.

The relevant stakeholders could capture value in this stage. The key member of the Land Project Team described as follows:

The benefits of CI maps and training courses for the Land Team is that we could provide concrete performance when we report to the Ministry of Science and Technology. Designing courses was our professional specialty so that we could contribute our knowledge.

The benefits for Jekey Company was that we provide a little resource to them, but this was not enough. The more benefits are Jekey Company could apply the other project of government which is relevant to Jia-dong. They implicate the other project through Jia-dong people who were familiar when we were collaborated during the designing CI.

The benefits for Culture and Historical Association is that linking dispersed resources in Jia-dong and owning their CI. The tour maps and guides become their assets in the future tourism activities.

Summary: Rapping mechanisms initiate new value-creating activities

Specifically, in the expansion stage, the focal organization (the Land Project Team) and the stakeholders (including the culture and historical society, QR code company) used the rapping mechanism to resolve the issues encountered in each value creation activity (CI, tour maps, and training courses). After the resolution of the issues, another activity was initiated, thereby inducing a series of results. In the resolution of each problem, a continuous communication approach was applied to promote all stakeholders' understanding of how to complete a specific activity. Thereby, each stakeholder gained an enhanced value recognition for the results. In particular, each stakeholder could potentially receive benefits from these results. The specifics are summarized in table 2.

Table 2: The rapping mechanism during the expansion stage

Focal organization and stakeholders	Value activities	Rapping mechanism	Value capture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focal organization (the Land Team) ● Stakeholders (Culture and Historical Association, Jekey Company) 	CI, tour maps, training courses	Participators worked through the mutual interaction of participants to discover issues, work on resolutions, drive initiatives, and resolve additional problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Land Team: Project performance ● Culture and Historical Association: Tour benefits ● Jekey Company: Applying the other project

4.3 Stage 3: Stabilization

Disseminate the local value

The second stage involves the integration and reorganization of local cultural resources, while the third stage can be considered as a showcase of new cultural resources. In the stable stage, the focus was on sustained local development and dissemination of local values. At this stage, the Land Project Team and all stakeholders had formed a solid emotional foundation from the first two stages. Thus, they were willing to continue to invest in local value creation activities, which included the following: (a) Cultural market: Pingtung county's Cultural Affairs Department invited the Jia-dong team to participate in the "66th Pingtung Cultural Creation Event," which further promoted the Jia-dong heritage; (b) Hakka community: The integration of the Jia-dong team with the neighboring Hakka settlements and participation in their activities expanded the influential scope of Jia-dong's culture; and (c) Environmental development: The Pingtung county government actively facilitated and promoted Jia-dong's environmental development initiatives. In this stable period, the Land Project Team adopted the value dissemination mechanism to actively explore opportunities to showcase the Jia-dong culture. They worked with all stakeholders to promote cultural values through various events, thereby enabling sustainable local development in Jia-dong, as well as actively engaging neighboring communities to ensure the longevity of the Jia-dong culture.

The key member of the Land Project Team stated as follows:

- (a) Cultural market: *Pingtung county's Cultural Affairs Department invite the Jia-dong team to participate in the "66th Pingtung Cultural Creation Event" (see figure 3)*

We actively connect various resources after accumulating outcome of activities. One of our connections is Pingtung county's Cultural Affairs Department. The people of department know our efforts and invite us to participate in "66th Pingtung Cultural Creation Event". It was not only free in the exhibition but also let us visit other participators. We learn much knowledge in this activity.

- (b) Hakka community: Department of Hakka Affairs invite the team to participate in the Hakka activities

We participate in "Moon Hua Hua" that is held by the Department of Hakka Affairs. The department wants to integrate Hakka communities. We are happy that Jia-dong is included in this area.

- (c) Environmental development: The Pingtung county government actively facilitates and promotes Jia-dong's environmental development initiatives (see figure 4)

We send letters of invitation to the Pingtung country government when we hold every activity. We also introduce the people of government to Jia-dong's residents. The people of government often visit Jia-dong when we hold activities. They tell us that it is a pity the beautiful places are dispersed in Jia-dong. They suggest us to link these places by the plan of environmental development. After we discussed this idea it is fortunate that several inhabitants are willing to provide their places to support this idea. For instance, representative local buildings will be embellished with signage featuring designed logo patterns and textual descriptions (see figure 4). This will attract tourists to view and spend in the marketplace (see figure 5).



Figure 3. Cultural market



Figure 4. Environmental development



Figure 5. Tourist crowds

Summary: Value dissemination mechanisms promote local culture

In the stable period, to jointly promote the Jia-dong culture, the Land Project Team and relevant stakeholders applied the value dissemination mechanism to use and develop opportunities for various types of value creation activities (See Table 3). The implications of the marketplace activities have facilitated the integration of Jia-dong's culture with the Hakka culture of various regions. This initiative also serves as an opportunity to promote the dissemination of Jiadong culture beyond its traditional boundaries, thereby enabling a wider cultural diffusion. Furthermore, the environmental development has reinforced the local inhabitants of Jia-dong's sense of identification with their indigenous culture.

In particular, the government department became more active in facilitating the program compared with the initial stages. At this stage, the Land Project Team, the Culture and Historical Association, and the Cultural Affairs Department had gained a good understanding of each other's needs. Hence, when promoting value creation activities, there is also a good degree of synchronicity in communication and coordination efforts. The promotions become smoother and more focused on the sustainable development of the Jia-dong culture. Therefore, at this stage, the focal organization collaborates with diverse stakeholders using value dissemination mechanisms to jointly promote Hakka culture and strengthen local Hakka identity, thereby attracting more tourists to visit.

Table 3: The value dissemination mechanism during the stabilization stage

Focal organization and stakeholders	Value dissemination mechanism	Value creation activities	Value creation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focal organization (the Land Project Team) ● Stakeholders (Culture and Historical Association, Pingtung country government, the Department of Hakka Affairs, and inhabitants) 	The Land Project Team and stakeholders developed various activities to promote Jia-dong culture.	Cultural markets, Haka communities, and environmental development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cultural diffusion ● Cultural identification ● Tourist crowds

5 Discussions

This case study showed that the local value co-creation process of a multi-stakeholder partnership is dynamic in nature. Based on different stakeholder motivations and their ability to provide resources, differences are observed in the value creation activities and mechanisms at different stages. This case

demonstrated how the university and multi-stakeholders (including government and local organizations) produced appropriate mechanisms to gradually realize the benefits. The theoretical and practical implications of this study's results are described below.

5.1 Theoretical implications

This study has several theoretical implications. Firstly, for previous studies on value creation, it is emphasized that participants are the co-producers of value, who are willing to invest their own resources (Ranjan & Read, 2016). However, in value co-creation studies, the participants' investment motivations and resource combination measures still lacked a systematic approach (Aarikka-Stenroos & Jaakkola, 2012; Saarijärvi, Kannan & Kuusela, 2013). From this project's initial stage to the stable phase, this study systematically presented how to mobilize each stakeholder and combine resources. In this process, the integration of all stakeholders' resources occurred to resolve issues.

Secondly, this study also showed how to realize the value and benefits of the resources. Second, in addition to the systematic presentation of resources in the value co-creation process, researchers have also emphasized the importance of a co-creation mechanism (Saarijärvi, 2012; Saarijärvi et al., 2013). The co-creation mechanism presented by this study has evolved with the development of the stakeholders' cooperation process. Therefore, in a collaborative relationship, the mechanism is not static. In the emergence of cooperation issues, it will evolve into an appropriate mechanism that contributes to the formation of values.

Thirdly, value co-creation not only emphasizes the creation of value but also contains value capturing (Reypens et al., 2016). In this study's partnership process, the expansion stage is the most significant period of value capturing. The stakeholders can feel the possible benefits, which are advantageous to the promotion of each cooperation activity.

Fourthly, the theoretical implication of this study for the stakeholders is that from the initial collaboration stage to the later stage, the focal organization and the stakeholders gradually develop a solid cooperative relationship with the formation of values. From the psychological perspective, the stakeholders are more positive and motivated toward cooperative tasks. Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2016) believe that the difference in the stakeholders' motivations can affect the interpretation of partnership scenarios. This study presented the dynamic characteristics of stakeholders' interpretations. The case study demonstrated that as value emerges, stakeholders will change their initial interpretations of the cooperation, thereby behaving in ways that are more conducive to the partnership. For instance, the county government is more active and willing to facilitate the Land Project Team in local activities during the stable period than the initial mobilization period.

Finally, the value co-creation process emphasizes that each stakeholder needs to participate and interact (Ranjan & Read, 2016; Storbacka et al,

2016). This study showed that the involved stakeholders formed a closely embedded relationship as time passed. The interactive scope of the stakeholders expanded as well.

5.2 Practical implications

This study offers three insights. Firstly, the phrase “culture creation” is often excessively. Many initiatives merely focus on such projects environmental cleanups, offering little to cultural heritage development. Our case study reveals that cultural values necessitate joint efforts between that the focal organization and multi-stakeholders. The process involves sustained interactions, pooling resource, and employing effective mechanisms for diverse cultural value creation endeavors.

Secondly, our study highlights a major challenge in cultural innovation: the reinterpreting traditional elements with fresh visual interpretations. In this case study, the focus organization, the university team, initiated partnerships with diverse stakeholders for collaborative design of cultural symbols. These symbols represent the Jia-dong’s heritage, as exemplified in the s second-phase corporate identity design, where they were integrated into signage and wall art feature historical architectural sites. This phase was part of the third-phase environmental development, illustrating how re-envisioning traditional culture can enhance its appeal to tourists.

Lastly, this case study encompasses collaborations among educational institutions, government, and local entities, fostering partnerships public-private sector partnerships. The case demonstrates that the motivation for collaboration acts as a driving force for initiating cooperative ventures, maintaining a series of value-adding activities as long as they yield mutual benefits.

6 Conclusion

This research emphasizes the importance of tailored mechanisms at various stages in the value co-creation process within multi-stakeholder partnerships. These mechanisms are crucial for generating opportunities for value creation and realizing benefits. The development of value at different phases enhances the depth of stakeholders' local embeddedness and progressively aligns their motivations and resource capabilities towards value creation initiatives. As value emerges from resource integration in a partnership setting, future research could investigate the nuances of value co-creation in diverse conditions. This would expand the repertoire of case studies on co-creation across different contexts.

7 Authors

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