



DIJDBM:
**Dinasti International Journal of Digital
Business Management**

E-ISSN: 2715-4203
P-ISSN: 2715-419X

<https://dinastipub.org/DIJDBM> ✉ dinasti.info@gmail.com ☎ +62 811 7404 455

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/dijdbm.v7i3>
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The Role of RIPPDA in Sustainable Tourism Destination Management in West Sumatra: A Case Study of Tourism Policy

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Abstract: Tourism is one of the strategic economic sectors in West Sumatra Province, yet its development continues to face challenges in sustainable destination management. This study aims to analyze the role of the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan of West Sumatra Province in managing tourism policies. The research object is tourism policy management in West Sumatra Province. This study employed a qualitative approach through document analysis and interviews, with the researcher acting as the main instrument. The findings indicate that the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan has formulated policies focused on environmentally friendly infrastructure development, culture-based tourism, and community empowerment. However, policy implementation still encounters obstacles, including weak coordination among government institutions, limited budget allocation, and low community participation. Despite these challenges, the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan has substantial potential to support sustainable tourism management if implemented effectively. Therefore, strong synergy among government stakeholders and a high level of commitment are essential to optimize tourism policy management and ensure sustainable tourism development in West Sumatra Province.

Keyword: Tourism Policy, Regional Tourism Development Master Plan, Sustainable Tourism, Stakeholder Synergy, West Sumatra Province.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the strategic public sectors that significantly contributes to regional economic development in West Sumatra Province. However, tourism management is no longer solely the responsibility of government institutions, but rather involves multiple interconnected stakeholders, including local governments, communities, and the private sector. According to Governance Theory, public sector management requires collaborative networks among various actors to achieve effective policy outcomes (Rhodes, 1997). This governance approach is highly relevant to tourism management in West Sumatra because sustainable tourism development requires coordinated efforts among all stakeholders involved in destination planning,

implementation, and preservation. Therefore, the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan serves as a comprehensive strategic instrument expected to align provincial tourism policies and ensure sustainable tourism governance.

As a strategic planning document, the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan does not solely prioritize economic growth but also incorporates environmental conservation and social sustainability. This aligns with Sustainable Development Theory, which defines sustainable development as meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987). In this context, the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan aims to balance economic growth, environmental protection, and social welfare, which are the essential pillars of sustainable tourism development.

Furthermore, Public Policy Theory emphasizes the importance of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation in ensuring policy effectiveness (Dunn, 2018). This theory is relevant in examining how the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan functions as a tourism policy framework that integrates economic, social, and environmental dimensions into destination management. Effective tourism planning through public policy is crucial to creating sustainable tourism destinations that are not solely commercially driven but are also environmentally responsible and socially beneficial.

In addition, destination management is defined as a holistic and integrated approach to managing tourism destinations by combining social, economic, and environmental aspects (Balakrishnan & Thomas, 2020). Within this framework, the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan acts as a guiding instrument for destination management, ensuring that tourism development in West Sumatra is oriented toward preserving local culture, protecting the environment, and enhancing community welfare.

This study aims to explore the role of the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan in sustainable tourism destination management in West Sumatra Province, analyze the tourism policies contained within the plan, and assess how these policies contribute to environmentally friendly, culturally based, and socioeconomically beneficial tourism development. By applying relevant governance, sustainable development, public policy, and destination management theories, this study seeks to enhance understanding of how the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan can function as an effective tool for sustainable tourism governance.

Despite the increasing discussion on sustainable tourism policies, there remains a significant research gap regarding the specific role of the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan in managing sustainable tourism destinations in Indonesia, particularly at the provincial level. Previous studies have largely focused on broader sustainable tourism concepts without directly examining long-term regional tourism planning frameworks. Moreover, limited research has evaluated the implementation and effectiveness of the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan in West Sumatra Province, particularly concerning large-scale destination management complexities.

This research seeks to address these gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis of the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan as a strategic policy instrument for sustainable tourism management in West Sumatra Province. The study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically by expanding sustainable tourism policy knowledge while offering strategic insights for local governments, tourism destination managers, and communities in optimizing tourism governance for future sustainability.

The problem formulation of this study is: How does the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan function as a strategic policy instrument in managing sustainable tourism destinations in West Sumatra Province, and what challenges affect its implementation?.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical study design. A qualitative approach was selected because the research aimed to explore in depth the role of

the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan in sustainable tourism destination management while also examining the broader context of tourism policy dynamics in West Sumatra Province. The descriptive-analytical design was intended to identify the policy framework within the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan and analyze its implications for sustainable tourism destination management.

The research population consisted of policymakers involved in the planning and implementation of the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan in West Sumatra Province, as well as key tourism destination managers within the province. A total of 15 respondents participated in this study, including 5 policymakers from the West Sumatra Provincial Tourism Office, 5 tourism destination managers, and 5 local community members directly involved in tourism management in their respective areas.

The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling. This method was chosen because the selected respondents were considered to possess sufficient knowledge and practical experience regarding the implementation of the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan and sustainable tourism destination management in West Sumatra Province.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with respondents to examine the implementation of Regional Tourism Development Master Plan policies, challenges in sustainable tourism destination management, and the policy's influence on economic development, environmental sustainability, and community welfare. In addition to primary interview data, secondary data were obtained from official Regional Tourism Development Master Plan documents of West Sumatra Province to analyze policy structures, strategic programs, and tourism development initiatives.

The variables analyzed in this study included: (1) independent variables, namely policies within the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan concerning environmentally friendly infrastructure development, local community empowerment, and culture-based tourism; (2) dependent variables, namely sustainable tourism destination management outcomes in West Sumatra Province, including destination governance effectiveness, community welfare improvement, and tourism attractiveness; and (3) intervening variables, namely inter-agency coordination and community participation, which influence the effective implementation of tourism policies.

The data analysis technique applied in this study was thematic analysis for qualitative data. Interview transcripts and policy documents were systematically analyzed by identifying major themes related to Regional Tourism Development Master Plan policies and their impact on sustainable tourism development. This thematic approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of policy effectiveness, implementation barriers, and sustainable tourism outcomes. In addition, descriptive analysis was used to present findings from interviews and document analysis in a structured manner, allowing for an in-depth assessment of tourism policy functions in West Sumatra Province.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the policies contained within the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan of West Sumatra Province have a significant direct impact on sustainable tourism destination management. The implementation of environmentally friendly infrastructure development, culture-based tourism, and local community empowerment positively contributes to improving destination sustainability. These findings are consistent with Sustainable Development Theory, which emphasizes the balance between economic growth, environmental preservation, and social sustainability in development policies (WCED, 1987). The Regional Tourism Development Master Plan reflects this principle by integrating sustainable infrastructure and cultural preservation into tourism planning, thereby supporting long-term destination sustainability.

Furthermore, the development of culture-based tourism aligns with Tourism Marketing Theory, which highlights the importance of destination identity and uniqueness in enhancing tourism competitiveness (Kotler, 2009). In the case of West Sumatra, tourism development rooted in Minangkabau cultural heritage strengthens destination attractiveness while simultaneously preserving local traditions and cultural assets. In addition, Community Empowerment Theory explains that involving local communities in tourism management is essential for ensuring sustainable destination governance (Schirmer, 2011). The findings demonstrate that community empowerment initiatives under the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan encourage local communities to actively participate in preserving environmental and cultural resources, thus enhancing social and economic sustainability.

This study also reveals that the effectiveness of Regional Tourism Development Master Plan policies is indirectly influenced by intervening variables, particularly inter-agency coordination and community participation. Governance Theory emphasizes that effective public policy implementation requires collaboration among multiple institutions and stakeholders (Rhodes, 1997). In this context, coordination among provincial governments, local governments, tourism agencies, and private sectors is crucial for ensuring policy consistency and successful implementation. Weak institutional synergy was identified as one of the primary challenges in achieving effective sustainable tourism management in West Sumatra Province.

Similarly, Community Participation Theory explains that sustainable tourism management requires active involvement from local communities in decision-making processes (Arnstein, 1969). The study found that stronger community participation significantly enhances tourism sustainability by increasing local ownership, cultural preservation, and economic benefits for residents. Social Capital Theory further supports these findings by emphasizing that trust, networks, and social norms within communities play a critical role in policy success (Putnam, 2000). Communities with stronger social capital are more likely to actively contribute to tourism sustainability initiatives.

Another important finding is that adequate funding significantly influences the success of Regional Tourism Development Master Plan policy implementation. Sufficient financial resources are necessary for supporting sustainable tourism infrastructure, destination maintenance, community training, and promotional activities. This finding aligns with Resource Management Theory, which emphasizes the importance of proper resource allocation in managing shared resources effectively (Ostrom, 1990). Without adequate funding, even well-designed tourism policies may fail to achieve their intended outcomes.

The interpretation of these findings confirms that the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan functions as an effective strategic instrument for sustainable tourism destination management when supported by strong governance, active community participation, and sufficient funding. These findings reinforce Sustainable Development Theory by demonstrating that successful tourism policies must integrate environmental, social, and economic dimensions in a balanced manner.

Compared with previous studies, these findings are consistent with research highlighting the importance of governance collaboration and community involvement in sustainable tourism success (Hassan et al., 2015). However, this study also identifies a critical research gap regarding the specific implementation challenges of long-term regional tourism planning frameworks such as the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan, particularly in the context of provincial-scale tourism governance.

The theoretical implication of this study is the development of an integrated sustainable tourism management model that combines governance, sustainable development, public policy, and destination management theories. Practically, this study emphasizes that regional governments should prioritize stronger institutional coordination, active community engagement, and sufficient funding allocation to optimize sustainable tourism policy implementation. These findings can serve as strategic guidance for tourism policymakers in

West Sumatra Province and other regions seeking to improve sustainable tourism governance through comprehensive long-term planning frameworks.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan policies in West Sumatra Province have a significant positive influence on sustainable tourism destination management through environmentally friendly infrastructure development, culture-based tourism, and local community empowerment. These findings contribute theoretically by developing a sustainable tourism destination management model that integrates Governance Theory and Sustainable Development Theory with long-term tourism planning policies such as the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan. Practically, this study provides important insights for regional governments in improving inter-agency coordination, strengthening community participation, and ensuring adequate funding for effective policy implementation. Furthermore, this research opens opportunities for future studies by expanding the analysis to other provinces in Indonesia or by applying mixed-method approaches to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of sustainable tourism policy effectiveness.

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