

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM BASED ON LOCAL CULTURE IN KERINCI REGENCY, JAMBI

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of communication strategies and community participation in the development of tourism based on local culture in Kerinci Regency, Jambi. Employing both quantitative and qualitative research methods, the study aims to understand the awareness and perceptions of residents and tourists, evaluate their satisfaction and engagement, and identify factors influencing community participation in tourism activities. Survey data indicates a moderate level of awareness about Kerinci's cultural assets, with social media emerging as the primary information source. Regression analysis reveals that perceived benefits, social capital, and trust in tourism authorities significantly influence community participation. Thematic analysis of interviews and focus groups highlights the importance of digital communication, challenges in community engagement, and strategies for cultural preservation. The study concludes that effective communication, active community involvement, and authentic cultural integration are crucial for sustainable tourism development in Kerinci. Recommendations include enhancing digital outreach, fostering participatory decision-making, and promoting authentic cultural experiences to benefit both residents and visitors. This comprehensive approach aims to position Kerinci as a vibrant cultural tourism destination while ensuring the well-being of the local community.

Keywords: Communication Strategy; Community Participation; Tourist; Local Culture.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran strategi komunikasi dan partisipasi masyarakat dalam pengembangan pariwisata berbasis budaya lokal di Kabupaten Kerinci, Jambi. Menggunakan metode penelitian kuantitatif dan kualitatif, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami kesadaran dan persepsi penduduk serta wisatawan, mengevaluasi kepuasan dan keterlibatan mereka, dan mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi partisipasi masyarakat dalam kegiatan pariwisata. Data survei menunjukkan tingkat kesadaran yang moderat tentang aset budaya Kerinci, dengan media sosial muncul sebagai sumber informasi utama. Analisis regresi mengungkapkan bahwa manfaat yang dirasakan, modal sosial, dan kepercayaan pada otoritas pariwisata secara signifikan mempengaruhi partisipasi masyarakat. Analisis tematik dari wawancara dan diskusi kelompok terarah menyoroti pentingnya komunikasi digital, tantangan dalam keterlibatan masyarakat, dan strategi pelestarian budaya. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa komunikasi yang efektif, keterlibatan masyarakat yang aktif, dan integrasi budaya yang autentik sangat penting untuk pengembangan pariwisata berkelanjutan di Kerinci. Rekomendasi termasuk meningkatkan jangkauan digital, mendorong pengambilan keputusan partisipatif, dan mempromosikan pengalaman budaya yang autentik untuk menguntungkan penduduk dan pengunjung. Pendekatan komprehensif ini bertujuan untuk memposisikan Kerinci sebagai destinasi pariwisata budaya yang bersemangat sekaligus memastikan kesejahteraan masyarakat lokal.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Komunikasi; Partisipasi Masyarakat; Wisatawan; Budaya Lokal.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has become one of the most significant contributors to economic development in many regions worldwide. In Indonesia, tourism plays a crucial role in promoting cultural heritage, fostering economic growth, and enhancing community livelihoods (Singgalen, Sasongko, & Wiloso (2019); Rahman & Baddam (2021)). Kerinci Regency, located in the province of Jambi, is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, diverse

traditions, and breathtaking natural landscapes, making it a potential hub for cultural tourism.

Despite its potential, the development of tourism in Kerinci Regency faces several challenges. These include limited infrastructure, inadequate marketing strategies, and insufficient community involvement (Wahyuni & Syamsir (2021); Nugroho et al., (2016)). The integration of local culture into tourism development is essential to ensure sustainable tourism that not only attracts visitors but also benefits the local community. A robust communication strategy and active community participation are vital components in achieving this goal.

Bornhorst, Ritchie, & Sheehan (2010) and Okaka (2007) believe that effective communication is fundamental to the success of tourism initiatives. It involves the dissemination of information, promotion of local attractions, and engagement with various stakeholders, including tourists, local residents, government agencies, and tourism operators (Pyke et al, (2021); Dabphet, Scott, & Ruhanen (2012)). In Kerinci, a strategic communication approach can help highlight the region's unique cultural assets, create a compelling narrative for potential visitors, and foster a positive image of the destination.

Killian & McManus (2015), Batra & Keller (2016), and Yamin (2017) suggest that a well-designed communication strategy should encompass multiple channels, including traditional media, digital platforms, and social media, to reach a broader audience. It should also consider the cultural nuances and preferences of both local and international tourists. By leveraging storytelling, visual content, and interactive experiences, Kerinci can effectively showcase its cultural richness and attract a diverse tourist demographic.

Community participation is a cornerstone of sustainable tourism development (Wondirad & Ewnetu (2019); Hall & Richards (2000)). It ensures that the benefits of tourism are equitably distributed and that the local culture and environment are preserved. In Kerinci, engaging the local community in tourism initiatives can lead to a more authentic and meaningful tourist experience. It also empowers residents to take ownership of tourism projects, leading to increased job opportunities, income generation, and enhanced social cohesion.

For successful community participation, Shani & Pizam (2011), Tosun (2000) and Muganda, Sirima, & Ezra (2013) suggest that it is essential to involve local residents in the planning, decision-making, and implementation processes of tourism development. This can be achieved through workshops, focus group discussions, and participatory planning sessions. By incorporating local knowledge and perspectives, tourism strategies can be more effectively tailored to the unique characteristics of Kerinci's cultural and natural landscapes.

Kerinci Regency boasts a wealth of cultural traditions, including traditional dances, music, crafts, and culinary practices. Integrating these cultural elements into tourism offerings not only enhances the visitor experience but also helps preserve and promote local heritage. Cultural festivals, homestays, and guided tours by local residents are some ways to integrate culture into the tourism experience.

By highlighting the cultural uniqueness of Kerinci, the region can differentiate itself from other destinations and attract niche markets interested in cultural and experiential tourism. Furthermore, involving local artisans, performers, and cultural practitioners in tourism activities ensures that tourism development is inclusive and supports the preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach to gain comprehensive insights into

communication strategies and community participation in the development of tourism based on local culture in Kerinci Regency, Jambi. The study combines qualitative and quantitative methods to capture both the subjective experiences of stakeholders and objective data regarding tourism activities and community involvement (Jefferson et al., (2014); Teddlie & Tashakkori (2011); Watkins & Gioia (2015)).

The sampling process involves selecting participants from various stakeholder groups, including local residents, tourism operators, government officials, and visitors. A combination of purposive and random sampling techniques will be utilized to ensure representation across different demographics and perspectives. Sample size will be determined based on the saturation of data and the diversity of participant profiles.

The data collection of this research used qualitative data and quantitative data. For the Qualitative Data, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with key informants, including community leaders, tourism managers, and cultural experts. These qualitative methods allow for the exploration of individual perceptions, attitudes, and experiences related to communication strategies and community participation in tourism development. Thus, for the quantitative data, surveys were administered to a larger sample of residents, tourists, and other stakeholders to gather quantitative data on awareness, satisfaction, and participation levels in tourism activities. The survey questionnaire was designed to capture demographic information, preferences, and perceptions regarding tourism promotion, communication channels, and community involvement.

In analyzing the qualitative analysis, thematic analysis were employed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and narratives in the qualitative data collected from interviews and focus groups. This process involves coding, categorizing, and interpreting qualitative data to uncover insights into communication strategies and community participation dynamics. Therefore, for analyzing the quantitative analysis, statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics and inferential tests, were conducted on the survey data to examine relationships, trends, and differences in perceptions among different demographic groups. Data were analyzed using software such as SPSS 24 to derive meaningful conclusions and identify significant factors influencing tourism development.

To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, triangulation will be employed by comparing and integrating data from multiple sources and methods. Convergence of evidence from qualitative and quantitative approaches will help validate the research findings and provide a comprehensive understanding of communication strategies and community participation in tourism development in Kerinci Regency.

Ethical principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants' autonomy, were be strictly adhered to throughout the research process. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Any personal information collected will be anonymized and securely stored to ensure confidentiality. Moreover, cultural sensitivities and local customs were respected when engaging with the community during data collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Analysis of Quantitative Data

a. Awareness and Perception

To describe the awareness and perception of the respondents of the research on Communication Strategy and Community Participation in the Development of Tourism Based on Local Culture in Kerinci Regency, Jambi, the data can be seen as follows:

Table 1. The Awareness and Perceptions

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Percentage/Score</i>
<i>Respondents identifying key cultural attractions</i>	72%
<i>Significance of local cultural heritage (1-5 scale)</i>	4.2
<i>Distribution of respondents across communication channels:</i>	
- <i>Social media</i>	45%
- <i>Word of mouth</i>	25%
- <i>Official tourism websites</i>	20%
- <i>Television</i>	7%
- <i>Others</i>	3%

Source: Analyzed, 2024

The data above expose some facts described as follow: 1) Respondents identifying key cultural attractions: This indicates the percentage of survey respondents who were able to identify significant cultural attractions in Kerinci Regency, reflecting the level of awareness among both residents and tourists about the cultural heritage of the region; 2) Significance of local cultural heritage: This score, rated on a scale of 1 to 5, represents the perceived importance of Kerinci's cultural heritage in enhancing its attractiveness as a tourist destination. A higher score suggests a stronger recognition of the cultural value of the region; 3) Distribution of respondents across communication channels: This breakdown shows the percentage of respondents who use different communication channels to obtain information about tourism activities and cultural events in Kerinci Regency. It highlights the popularity of various channels, with social media being the most widely used followed by word of mouth and official tourism websites.

b. Satisfaction and Engagement

To describe Satisfaction and Engagement of the respondents of the research on Communication Strategy and Community Participation in the Development of Tourism Based on Local Culture in Kerinci Regency, Jambi, the data can be seen as follows:

Table 2. Satisfaction and Engagement

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Percentage/Score</i>
<i>Overall satisfaction rating with tourism experience (1-10 scale)</i>	8.3
<i>Likelihood of tourists to revisit Kerinci Regency</i>	87%
<i>Frequency of participation in cultural activities:</i>	
- <i>Rarely</i>	20%
- <i>Occasionally</i>	45%
- <i>Frequently</i>	35%
<i>Perception of positive impact of tourism on local community (1-5 scale):</i>	
- <i>Economic benefits</i>	4.5
- <i>Cultural preservation</i>	4.3
- <i>Social cohesion</i>	4.1

Source: Analyzed, 2024

The data above expose some facts described as follow: 1) Overall satisfaction rating with tourism experience: This numerical rating, provided on a scale of 1 to 10, reflects the average satisfaction level of tourists with their overall experience in Kerinci Regency. A higher rating indicates greater satisfaction with the tourism offerings and services in the region; 2) Likelihood of tourists to revisit Kerinci Regency: This percentage represents the proportion of tourists expressing their intention to revisit Kerinci based on their current

experience. A higher percentage suggests a greater likelihood of repeat visitation, indicating positive satisfaction levels among tourists; 3) Frequency of participation in cultural activities: This breakdown shows the distribution of respondents based on the frequency of their participation in cultural activities organized in Kerinci Regency. It provides insights into the level of engagement of tourists with local cultural events and experiences; 4) Perception of positive impact of tourism on the local community: These scores, rated on a scale of 1 to 5, represent the perceived positive impact of tourism on various aspects of the local community, including economic benefits, cultural preservation, and social cohesion. Higher scores indicate a stronger perception of positive contributions by tourism to the community.

Overall, these data points offer valuable insights into the awareness, perception, satisfaction, and engagement levels related to tourism development based on local culture in Kerinci Regency, aiding in the evaluation and analysis of the tourism industry in the region.

c. Factors Influencing Participation

Regression analysis identifies several significant factors influencing community participation in tourism development, including perceived benefits, social capital, and trust in tourism authorities. Residents who perceive tangible benefits from tourism, such as income generation and skill development, are more likely to actively engage in tourism-related initiatives.

Regression Analysis: Factors Influencing Participation

To identify the factors influencing community participation in tourism development in Kerinci Regency, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The dependent variable is the level of community participation, and the independent variables include perceived benefits, social capital, and trust in tourism authorities.

Dependent Variable:

- Community Participation (CP): Measured by the frequency and extent of participation in tourism-related activities (scale from 1 to 10).

Independent Variables:

- Perceived Benefits (PB): The perceived economic, social, and cultural benefits from tourism (scale from 1 to 5).
- Social Capital (SC): The strength of social networks and community cohesion (scale from 1 to 5).
- Trust in Tourism Authorities (TTA): The level of trust in local tourism authorities and their initiatives (scale from 1 to 5).

Regression Model:

$$CP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PB + \beta_2 SC + \beta_3 TTA + \epsilon$$

Where:

- CP = Community Participation
- β_0 = Intercept
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Coefficients for independent variables
- ϵ = Error term

The results can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Regression Result

VARIABLE	COEFFICIENT (B)	STANDARD ERROR	T- STATISTIC	P- VALUE
INTERCEPT	2.10	0.45	4.67	<0.001**
PERCEIVED BENEFITS (PB)	0.85	0.12	7.08	<0.001**
SOCIAL CAPITAL (SC)	0.68	0.15	4.53	<0.001**
TRUST IN TOURISM AUTHORITIES (TTA)	0.73	0.13	5.62	<0.001**

- R-squared: 0.62
- Adjusted R-squared: 0.60
- F-statistic: 35.14
- p-value (F-statistic): <0.001

Interpretation of Results:

- 1) Perceived Benefits (PB): The coefficient for perceived benefits is 0.85, indicating a positive relationship between perceived benefits and community participation. For each unit increase in perceived benefits, the level of community participation increases by 0.85 units, holding other factors constant. This relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).
- 2) Social Capital (SC): The coefficient for social capital is 0.68, suggesting that stronger social networks and community cohesion are associated with higher levels of participation in tourism-related activities. For each unit increase in social capital, community participation increases by 0.68 units. This relationship is also statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).
- 3) Trust in Tourism Authorities (TTA): The coefficient for trust in tourism authorities is 0.73, indicating that higher trust in local tourism authorities correlates with increased community participation. For each unit increase in trust, community participation increases by 0.73 units. This is a significant predictor ($p < 0.001$).

The R-squared value of 0.62 suggests that approximately 62% of the variability in community participation can be explained by the perceived benefits, social capital, and trust in tourism authorities. The F-statistic of 35.14 and its associated p-value of less than 0.001 indicate that the regression model is statistically significant overall.

Therefore, it can be concluded from the regression analysis: perceived benefits, social capital, and trust in tourism authorities significantly influence community participation in tourism development in Kerinci Regency. These findings suggest that enhancing the perceived benefits of tourism, strengthening community networks, and building trust in tourism authorities are crucial for increasing community engagement in tourism activities.

2. Analysis of Qualitative Data

Based on the interviews, the findings can be described as follow: first is the themes and Patterns: Thematic analysis of qualitative data from interviews and focus groups reveals recurring themes related to communication strategies and community participation in tourism development. Key themes include the importance of digital communication channels, challenges in community engagement, and strategies for preserving cultural authenticity. Second is the perceptions and Experiences: Qualitative findings provide rich insights into the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders regarding tourism development in Kerinci Regency. Local residents express a sense of pride in their cultural heritage but also voice concerns about over commercialization and cultural commodification. Tourists, on the other hand, value authentic cultural experiences and

seek opportunities for meaningful engagement with local communities. The third is the recommendations and solutions: Stakeholder input and perspectives contribute to the formulation of recommendations and solutions for enhancing communication strategies and community participation in tourism development. Suggestions include the implementation of targeted marketing campaigns, capacity-building programs for community members, and the establishment of participatory decision-making processes to address concerns about cultural preservation and authenticity.

3. Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings allows for a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics shaping tourism development in Kerinci Regency. While quantitative data provide insights into overarching trends and patterns, qualitative data offer depth and context by capturing the nuanced perspectives and experiences of stakeholders. By triangulating both types of data, this research offers valuable insights and actionable recommendations for promoting sustainable tourism based on local culture in Kerinci Regency, Jambi.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data provides valuable insights into the dynamics of tourism development based on local culture in Kerinci Regency. The findings reveal a moderate level of awareness among both residents and tourists regarding the cultural assets and tourism activities available in Kerinci Regency. While a majority of respondents recognize the cultural significance of the region, there is a clear need for improved promotion and communication strategies to enhance awareness levels further. The preference for digital communication channels, such as social media and websites, underscores the importance of leveraging online platforms to disseminate information about cultural attractions and events. Additionally, efforts should be made to ensure that communication materials effectively convey the unique experiences available in Kerinci, thereby fostering positive perceptions among potential visitors.

Moreover, satisfaction with the tourism experience in Kerinci Regency is positively correlated with community engagement and meaningful cultural interactions. The findings suggest that tourists who actively participate in cultural activities and engage with local residents express higher levels of satisfaction with their overall experience. In line with the research conducted by Gannon, Taheri, & Croall (2022) and Boulhila et al., (2022). This also highlights the significance of fostering opportunities for tourists to interact with the local community, whether through cultural festivals, homestay programs, or guided tours led by community members. Moreover, the perceived impact of tourism on the local community, including economic benefits and cultural preservation, influences tourists' satisfaction levels and their likelihood to revisit Kerinci Regency in the future. This also found in research conducted by Nguyen Viet, Dang, & Nguyen (2020) and Tian et al., (2020). Therefore, efforts to enhance community engagement and promote authentic cultural experiences are essential for maximizing tourist satisfaction and fostering sustainable tourism development in the region.

By integrating quantitative data on awareness, perception, satisfaction, and engagement with qualitative insights into stakeholders' experiences and perceptions, this research offers a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics shaping tourism development in Kerinci Regency. The triangulation of both types of data allows for a nuanced analysis of the factors influencing tourists' perceptions, behaviors, and satisfaction levels. Moreover, it facilitates the identification of actionable recommendations for enhancing communication strategies, community participation, and the integration of local

culture into tourism activities. Ultimately, the findings contribute to the formulation of evidence-based strategies aimed at promoting sustainable tourism development that preserves and promotes Kerinci's rich cultural heritage while benefiting the local community and enhancing the visitor experience.

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