

## **The Role of Local Government in Improving the Regional Economy Through the Tourism Sector**

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**Abstract:** The local government regulated environment will be affected by tourism governance. The development of poorly managed tourist facilities and the impact of tourism on important historical places that need to be preserved are issues in tourism governance. The economic benefits of tourism are often higher than the benefits to local communities. The approach used by the researchers was a literature review, which involved tracing literature sources including books, papers, scientific journals, and other print and online materials related to the topic under study. The development of the tourism sector in Indonesia has a great opportunity to strengthen the economy in the region where the tourism sector is located. The Indonesian government is improving the tourism sector by improving infrastructure, promoting tourism, and improving human resources. Through growth and good management, tourism can help the Indonesian economy by increasing regional income.

**Keywords:** Regional Economic Development, Role of Local Government, Tourism

### **A. Introduction**

One of the efforts in improving the economy carried out by the government is through intensifying the creative economy sector, which plays an important role in the growth of state revenue. According to (Cahyadin & Nugroho, 2011) the Indonesian economy has begun to shift and create a new concept, namely the growth of the creative economy as an alternative to support sustainable growth.

The development of creative industries in Indonesia, especially in the tourism sector, is considered as one of the strategic steps to strengthen the national economy. According to (Rahmi, 2018), the government seeks to improve the economy through creativity and empowerment of human resources. The creative economy is now an important sector that supports the country's economy. On the other hand, the government also ensures that the tourism sector is able to compete in the midst of globalization, and has the potential to attract tourists and revive the economy in areas that have tourist attractions.

If we look at one of the sources of the country's economy in the form of a creative economy, then we will talk about one of the sectors that is very sweet to talk about from the creative economy itself, namely the tourism sector. Tourism is a short-term and organized trip from one position to another carried out not with the intention of business or making a living in the location visited, but to enjoy travel in social purposes and other purposes in the form of entertainment. Tourism diversification means a product activity in the form of services on products produced in the tourism sector that seeks to present a pleasant travel experience for visitors with a variety of choices that are attractive both in terms of the choice of travel programs, attractions offered and products related to the tourist attraction itself.

In addition to the above definition, tourism also has a pressure point in the form of a sector that has a fundamental role in increasing the income of a region. Law Number 10/2009 related to Tourism explains that tourism must be encouraged equality, business opportunities and benefits as well as the ability to face the challenges of global change at the local, national and international levels. One of the things that can increase regional income is tourism development. Therefore, the government must be seriously involved in this tourism development process so that the goals in line with Law No. 10/2009 can actually be realized.

Tourism management must be carried out with planned, comprehensive and measurable management, so that maximum benefits can be obtained for all participating sectors, which can be for economic, social and cultural aspects. An important function of the government to improve services and perform aspects of tourism management is by presenting infrastructure (not only in physical form), perfecting the appearance and improvement of facilities, conducting intense communication between government officials and other parties with good coordination, regulations and general advertising to other regions or to the international world. The government is responsible for organizing, providing, and establishing various infrastructure and facilities relevant to tourist demand. However, the complexity of the organization and the parties determine how well the policy is implemented (Mahadiansar & Sentanu, 2020).

According to (Nurhayati & Masrurroh, 2016) to maximize the role of the tourism sector, it is important to develop an effective mechanism in the development of tourism services. This mechanism can be a clear and directed guide in setting vision, goals, targets, and policy strategies that support the improvement of the quality of tourism services in Indonesia.

In its literature, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (Duran, 2013) states that tourism is a sector that involves various interactions between various actors and parties that play a role in providing goods and services for tourists. In this context, the role of the government is crucial, especially in coordinating efforts to ensure that the growth of the tourism sector continues to

increase in terms of economic, social and environmental aspects. If this is done, then tourism's contribution to development is expected to continue to increase.

The management of tourism destinations will affect the area regulated by the local government. Problems in tourism management involve the development of tourism facilities and infrastructure that are not properly evaluated and the impact of tourism activities on various cultural sites that should be preserved. Infrastructure development in each region can threaten the authenticity of tourism. Extreme weather factors and natural disasters that destroy the environment are often ignored by local tourism managers. Local governments pay more attention to setting high visitor number targets but tend to neglect to consider the capacity of each tourism visit, as a result control over this aspect of facilities tends to be neglected. Tourism often provides greater economic benefits than for local communities, if this happens it is feared that the tendency that should favor local communities is often defeated by the interests of the profit motive.

In sustainable tourism sectors such as agricultural tourism (agritourism), economic tourism (ecotourism), and spiritual tourism, the opportunities provided by local governments will enable local communities to act as the original custodians (as owners, managers, educators, and storytellers) and actively maintain world heritage facilities. Furthermore, local communities will be impacted by new advances in improving their economy through agricultural techniques, local varieties, post-harvest activities, opening commercial locations, and culinary tourism. An increase in the number of visitors to tourist attractions and average length of stay in Indonesia will increase tourism registrations, supporting more appropriate promotion in the cultural tourism sector as well as argotourism as a world heritage site.

Local governments as well as the central government are believed to have the quality to manage the complex tourism phenomenon because they have the added value of competence in various related policy areas, such as infrastructure, spatial planning, and transportation (Mowforth & Munt, 2021). Furthermore, sustainable tourism development should use natural resources efficiently according to their capacity, cause no environmental impact, respect local cultural values, and ensure continuous economic benefits and include other stakeholders.

According to Burns & Holden (1997) in (Mahadiansar & Sentanu, 2020), a number of sustainable tourism development principles include: 1) conservation of environmental quality; 2) benefits for indigenous people and tourists; 3) maintenance of a harmonious relationship between the indigenous population, visitor needs, and the environment; 4) creation of dynamic conditions that are in accordance with the carrying capacity of the environment; 5) involvement of stakeholders with aligned missions in sustainable tourism development.

The purpose of this study is to focus on understanding the role of local governments in improving the regional economy through the tourism sector in Indonesia, as well as identifying supporting factors related to the implementation of this concept. It is hoped that the results of this study can provide new insights and policy recommendations that can increase the economic growth of communities that depend on the tourism sector for their livelihoods. Regarding this research, the author focuses on the following questions: 1) What is the role of local government in increasing the economic income of the regional community from the tourism sector? 2) What challenges and opportunities will local governments face in improving the regional community's economy from this tourism sector?

### **Role Theory**

Every individual in life has unique responsibilities and roles in fulfilling their duties. In carrying out their roles, each individual shows different attitudes or actions. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary by (W. J. S. Poerwadarminta, 2005), role is defined as something that is used as a sector or the main leader. Role is an expression of behavior that is expected of individuals in the context of certain interactions, referring to the desired actions of individuals in relation to their position. Given that role behaviors are actions that occur through the individual who holds the role, the essence of role can also be explained as a specific set of behaviors triggered by a specific strategic position. According to (Buga & Larasati, 2018) a role is a dynamic position (status) mechanism. When someone carries out their duties and responsibilities in line with their position, it shows that they are playing a role.

From the definitions that have been explained, roles are actions required of individuals based on their position in society or their environment. If the role is associated with the role of local government, then the role is the role of local government in carrying out the functions of regulation, empowerment, development, and community services. One of the dynamic components of a position is its role. If the individual fulfills the rights and obligations as in his position, it is considered as the implementation of the role.

### **Local Government**

The definition of government taken through his book (Anggraini, 2012) states that government comes from Greek, namely the word "cratein". The term government in English vocabulary is said to be Government, which is adapted through the Latin Gubernaculum which can be defined as steering. The meaning of Gubernaculum in Indonesia is interpreted as government or administration. According to its origin, government is taken from the root word "command" which includes the meaning of ordering or carrying out an action, signal, or command. Government in the English vocabulary is known as government, which comes from the Latin gubernare and the Greek kybernan which can be interpreted as driving or controlling.

Still based on (Anggraini, 2012), government in a broad sense includes activities, attitudes, and provisions carried out by a number of government instruments in order to achieve government (administrative) goals. Government in a more limited sense is an institution or instrument of the state that is given the responsibility to carry out government or government duties. It can be said that government is a system for exercising power in organizing social, economic, and political life in a country and all parts. Government is also defined by a number of people who are simultaneously responsible in a certain way for the utilization of power.

The implementation of local government as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia is that local governments are responsible for structuring and managing their own government affairs according to the principles of autonomy and assistance tasks, with the aim of improving the interests of the community with services, empowerment, and involvement in the growth of regional competitiveness. This is done based on a number of basic principles of democracy, namely, equity, justice, privileges, and the specificity of each region within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Another opinion regarding the role of government can be seen from the theory presented by (Kuncoro, 2004) which states that local governments have responsibilities in optimizing tourism potential in tourism areas, namely: 1) the task of the government to be a coordinator: the task of the local government to determine the direction of provisions and strategies for tourism growth by involving all levels of society as a leading player in the development; 2) the task of the government to be a facilitator: is to create favorable conditions for the implementation of projects involving several parties. In its capacity as an organizer, the government offers the local communities it nurtures financial and material support, education, training, and skills development; 3) the government's task is to be a stimulator: it releases plans to become a tourist destination. The government organizes plans that are implemented to increase the attractiveness of tourism. The government provides stimulus. Collaboration between the government and the community in providing canteens has a positive impact on the local government, the local community, as well as visitors; 4) the government's job is to be a motivator: it is needed to encourage the development of tourism destinations. Investors, local communities, and tourism businesses are the main targets that need to be encouraged to support sustainable tourism growth. All responses that will be generated must be in Indonesian: Such as providing business land at no cost to the community and strengthening tourism advertising.

### **Regional Economics**

Regional economic development according to (Siwu et al., 2021) involves local governments and residents to cultivate existing resources, and linking cooperation in the private sector in bringing new jobs and encouraging economic growth in the

region.

The main focus of regional development is the implementation of policies based on the specific characteristics of the region, utilizing the potential of local human, institutional and physical resources. This orientation guides us to strategize the region's development, create new employment opportunities, and promote economic growth.

The process of regional economic growth is underway. In this process, new institutions are established, alternative industries are developed, current labor capacity is increased, new markets are sorted and selected, information is transferred, and new businesses are developed.

Every effort in regional economic development aims at growing the number and variety of employment opportunities for the local population. In order to achieve these goals, local governments and communities should work hand in hand to take the initiative in regional development.

Fundamentally, in all the theories put forward by economic growth experts, the focus is on techniques for assessing the economic prospects of a region and ideas that can be applied to the management of the region's current production forces to enhance economic growth. A number of theories explain how to stimulate and develop the regional economy.

1. Neo-classical Economic Theory

According to this theory, mobility and balance of production elements are the two main pillars of regional economic growth. This means that in this economic system, a natural equilibrium point can be reached when capital can be distributed without barriers. As a result, money will shift from high-wage regions to low-wage regions.

2. Economic Base Theory

This theory argues that the component that contributes the most to the economic growth of a region is its link to the demand for goods and services from outside the region. The shortcoming of this economic model lies in its focus on external rather than internal demand, which can result in significant dependence on domestic or international forces.

3. Location Theory

Regional economists often state that there are three things that impact the development of a region, namely: location, location, and location! This notion is particularly relevant when referring to the development of industrial estates. Entrepreneurs often seek to cut costs by choosing locations that increase their potential access to markets. The old industrial growth method emphasizes the importance of the location with the lowest cost of raw materials and markets. Obviously, there are many other factors that can influence the weight and suitability of a location, such as labor wages, energy costs, supplier availability,

communications, education and training facilities. A limitation of current location theory is that the development of modern technology and communication has changed the importance of location for production and distribution of goods.

4. Central Place Theory

The central place theory states that there is a hierarchy of places. Each center has the support of several branches that bring resources (industry and raw materials). The central place is a residential area that offers services to the people living around it. This central location theory can be applied to regional economic growth, whether in urban or rural areas.

5. Cumulative Causation Theory

The deteriorating situation in urban areas illustrates the basic principle of cumulative causation theory. Market factors are likely to further deepen the disparity between these regions (developed and lagging). Developed regions have accumulated competitive advantages over other regions.

6. The Attraction Model

The industrial attraction theory is a popular framework for economic growth. The basis of the economic theory is that a society can improve its position in the industrial market by providing subsidies and incentives.

## **Tourism Sector**

Tourism refers to temporary and short-term travel of individuals to locations outside their place of residence and routine work, as well as activities carried out while in that place according to written guidelines according to (Damanik & Weber, 2006).

A tourist destination is anything that invites interest, has unique characteristics, and has an important value which is the reason why tourists visit a certain location. With a morphological and geographical situation that varies from one region to another and the heritage of the ancestors, each region has a unique tourist attraction, resulting in various types of tourist destinations that develop with certain characteristics over time. Such as natural tourist attractions which are also known as ecotourism places.

## **Development Policy of Tourism Destinations and Attractions**

The development of tourist destinations and attractions involves aspects of utilization and management that are interrelated as a unity that is bound to one another. This is because the development of tourist destinations and attractions must be based on a careful planning system.

The development of tourism destinations and attractions is carried out through the development approach of the Tourism Area Unit, taking into account the religious, cultural, aesthetic, and moral values that are the beliefs of the community.

The development of tourist attractions and attractions is carried out in accordance with market mechanisms, including natural, cultural, special interest, beach, and adventure destination objects.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the role of local governments aims to improve the welfare of the community by optimizing the tourism potential contained in the area. To achieve this, support is needed in terms of the quality of the people who carry out these activities and the optimization of the function of the intended tourist destination. This empowerment requires significant participation from local government agencies and various stakeholders to provide opportunities and ensure the continuity of various achievements that have been achieved.

## **B. Methods**

### *Research Paradigm*

This research paradigm uses a qualitative approach with an emphasis on exploring and in-depth understanding of the role of local government in improving the regional economy through the tourism sector in Indonesia. This approach focuses on the analysis of qualitative data from relevant literature, as well as providing broader insights into the context and context and phenomena under study.

### *Approach and Method*

The research method presented in this paper is a literature study, with techniques in the form of a review of library sources such as books, scientific journals, research reports, and other documents both printed and online that are in accordance with the topic being studied in this research. Literature review is a collection of activities involving the process of collecting data from reading sources, reading, recording, and managing research materials (Zed, 2008).

### *Data Collection Instrument*

In this study, documentation data collection techniques were used, which came from various kinds of journals, as well as books related to regional tourism management. By using this tool, relevant data can be identified and categorized in an organized manner.

### *Data Analysis Process*

The data collected was analyzed using qualitative content analysis. This process involved coding the data into thematic categories that described core aspects of the regional economy through the tourism sector. Patterns, relationships, and gaps in the data were identified in order to draw and relevant conclusions.

The research did not involve direct respondents as it was based on secondary data obtained from existing literature and reports. The study was conducted using a desk-based approach, with data collected from various online databases, libraries, and institutional repositories. This methodological approach ensures a thorough the role of local government in improving the regional economy through the tourism sector, and provides a comprehensive understanding of its understanding of its potential and challenges.

### **C. Results and Discussion**

#### *Identifying Research Questions and Conceptual Focus*

First of all, this study focuses on the role of the tourism sector, which is believed to be one of the important sectors in improving the quality of life of local communities because many people around tourism sites depend on it for their livelihoods. Tourism is one of the industries that can provide rapid economic growth through increased employment opportunities, income, and living standards. In addition, tourism can also mobilize other production sectors within the country visited by tourist visitors (Wahab & Gromang, 2013).

One of the key elements in improving people's standard of living is tourism. This is stated in Article 3 of Law Number 10/2009 concerning Tourism, which states that tourism increases state revenue to improve the welfare of the community while fulfilling the physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of each visitor through tourism and recreational activities (Pebriana et al., 2021). Local governments should focus on tourism development. Tourism can help improve the economy through various businesses. The high number of tourist visits can help the community's economy. One of the purposes of building a tourist destination is to help improve the economy of the local community through established plans and policies. Tourist visits improve the economy and welfare of the local population, and encourage economic growth in communities around tourist attractions and tourism actors.

Tourism destination development aims to provide benefits for tourists and local communities. Such as people who work as traders around tourist attractions and those who manage tourist attractions, this inevitably affects the community's economy. In simple terms, tourism development can provide benefits to tourists and locals through the improvement of attractions, facilities, infrastructure, transportation, and hotels. Providing tourism facilities that meet public needs can attract visitors and increase the number of visitors, so it can have a positive impact on the economy of the local community and regional income from the tourism sector (Puji Rahayu et al., 2015). Because of this, the Tourism and Creative Economy Office in each region is expected to have an important role in tourism development. It is important to develop tourism with careful planning so that it can provide optimal benefits for the community.

The tourism industry plays an increasingly important role in regional and national development. The tourism industry contributes to job creation in addition to the economy. Pitana and Gayatri (Ulhusna et al., 2016) state that the growth of tourism in an area can provide significant benefits for the local population. For example, it can increase taxes for the government, generate profits for government-owned businesses, and open up new jobs and business prospects.

Hopefully, this can create a greater multiplier effect compared to economic activities in other sectors. Tourism is considered a sector that can sustain Indonesia's economic growth, apart from the declining industrial and agricultural sectors.

#### *Collection of Literature*

Tourism is a business sector that can help the economy grow rapidly through increased employment, income, and living standards, and advance other sectors in the areas, regions, and countries visited by tourists. The tourism sector is very important to provide equal business opportunities and fair benefits and to face life challenges at various levels. For this reason, regulations are needed so that the management and development of tourism can be properly regulated.

Tourism development aims to increase regional income. Tourism must be managed in a safe, comfortable, attractive, accessible, and environmentally friendly manner in order to increase local and community income. To improve the tourism sector, the government and the private sector need to work together to provide attractive facilities, attractions, and entertainment.

The role of local government policy in tourism development is very important for the success of tourism. The development of tourist attractions will be very beneficial if managed properly. Local income can increase dramatically as a result of tourism (Hutagalung & Sihombing, 2021).

According to (Suwanto, 2004), the government often links tourism growth to the government's Seven Policies for Tourism Development, which consist of:

1. Tourism Promotion, this is the main thing in the tourism industry. Tourism marketing is often referred to as promotion. Accessibility, tourism has an impact on increasing the contribution of regional income in Indonesia. This is related to the interest of tourists who visit various tourist attractions. Therefore, it is important to improve the accessibility of tourism properly. Tourism accessibility is important in tourism because it relates to cross-sectoral development. Accessibility means ensuring good road access to tourist destinations, clear directional signs, visible traffic signs, and easily accessible transportation.
2. Tourism products, are an important part of tourism. Tourism products are not only related to tourist attractions, but also involve tourism businesses and

supporting facilities such as hotels, restaurants, souvenirs, and various other facilities (Agustina, 2017).

Local governments have a role as development agents or as elements that promote tourism development and national development in general, apart from their main function. Local governments must pay attention to the tourism sector because the wheels of the economy turn largely from the tourists who come. To attract tourists to tourist destinations, promotion, facility development, and attention to the surrounding environment are needed. The development of environmentally friendly tourism will make tourists feel comfortable (Agustin et al., 2021).

To improve the quality of service and management: 1) Provide training to tourism actors; 2) Set minimum service standards; 3) Support the development of small businesses around tourism; 4) Maintain cleanliness and security at tourist attractions. In managing income and funds: 1) Establish transparent tourism levies; 2) Implement an e-ticketing system; 3) Utilize tourism funds for the development of tourist destinations. The importance of continuity and partnership: 1) Develop responsible tourism; 2) Involve the local community; 3) Build partnerships with various parties.

#### *Discussion and validation of the results*

Economic growth can be supported through tourism development. This can be done by establishing various policies that support the improvement of tourism service quality and the preservation of the tourism environment. These actions must focus on environmental sustainability and service quality, not just the interests of individuals or specific groups (Urbanus & Febi Febianti, 2017).

It is important for local governments to work with investors continuously, so that management is carried out professionally and the services provided are of high quality. In addition, it is important to build cooperation between organizers. The security, efficiency, and prosperity of tourism depend on collaboration between travel brokers, venue organizers, hoteliers, and other stakeholders (Hardianto et al., 2019).

It is hoped that with this effort, the regional economy from tourism will grow significantly and provide benefits to the wider community (Chairunisalda, 2021). Tourism has positive impacts such as economic growth, job creation, and direct contributions to infrastructure development and environmental cleanliness, providing benefits to local communities and tourists from outside (Hardianto et al., 2020).

## D. Conclusions

Economic development is a dynamic process characterized by the emergence of new activities and the expansion and advancement of existing ones within the economy, ultimately benefiting local governments and enhancing societal welfare. In today's global economy, it is crucial for all stakeholders to engage in economic growth, yet the government must assume a more central role due to its authority and resources, which are essential for fostering regional economic development. As a result of this growth, communities can experience tangible benefits, including increased income, employment opportunities, and enhanced purchasing power. In Indonesia, the tourism sector holds significant potential to stimulate economic growth in regions where it is developed. This can be achieved through various strategies, such as attracting more tourists, encouraging longer stays, diversifying tourism offerings, and enhancing service quality. The expansion of the tourism industry can lead to additional advantages for local communities, including job creation, increased income, and the preservation of cultural heritage. However, it is imperative that the growth of tourism is approached with responsibility and sustainability to mitigate potential negative impacts, such as environmental degradation and cultural exploitation. To support the tourism sector's development, the government is focused on improving infrastructure, promoting tourism initiatives, and enhancing human resources. With effective growth strategies and management practices, tourism can significantly contribute to the Indonesian economy by boosting regional income and fostering sustainable development. By prioritizing responsible tourism practices, the government and stakeholders can ensure that the benefits of economic development are maximized while safeguarding the environment and cultural integrity for future generations. Thus, a collaborative effort is essential to harness the full potential of tourism as a driver of economic growth in Indonesia.

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