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Stakeholder Dynamics and Local Wisdom in Sustainable Community-Based Tourism Development: Evidence from Agam Regency, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how tourism stakeholders and local wisdom interact in sustainable Community-based Tourism (CBT) development in Agam Regency, West Sumatra, Indonesia, a destination governed simultaneously by formal district administration and Minangkabau customary (*adat*) institutions. Data were generated through five single-constituency focus group discussions involving 19 informants representing the five Penta-Helix constituencies of government, academia, tourism business, community, and media, and were analysed thematically using NVivo. Stakeholders expressed broad optimism about post-pandemic recovery and CBT's growth potential. However, two persistent frictions emerged: (i) the exclusion of customary leaders (Niniak Mamak) from early-stage planning, generating role uncertainty and resistance over communal land; and (ii) overlapping mandates and contested expertise among Penta-Helix actors that left communities without coherent guidance. Local wisdom was rhetorically endorsed by all stakeholder groups yet structurally marginalised within formal planning instruments. The study contributes to stakeholder theory by showing that stakeholder salience in culturally embedded destinations

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is conferred as much by customary legitimacy as by formal institutional position. It extends the theory by demonstrating that salience is field-specific rather than actor-specific: where statutory and customary authority systems assess power, legitimacy, and urgency independently, an actor may be definitive in one field and latent in the other, and the resulting divergence, rather than any deficit of participation, is the generative source of governance conflict.

Keywords: Community-based tourism, local wisdom, Penta-Helix, tourism stakeholder, sustainable tourism

INTRODUCTION

Community-based tourism (CBT) is a development approach in which local communities hold a central role in the planning, decision-making, management, and benefit-sharing of tourism activities within their locality (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2012; Okazaki, 2008). Unlike conventional, typically externally driven models, CBT is grounded in community ownership, empowerment, and local knowledge and cultural values as guiding principles for development (Dangi & Petrick, 2021). CBT is therefore best understood not as a tourism product but as a community-centred development approach that balances economic returns with socio-cultural integrity and environmental sustainability.

CBT has long been advanced as an instrument for sustainable development in economically disadvantaged regions, with documented contributions across the socio-cultural, environmental, and economic dimensions of community life (Dangi & Petrick, 2021; Murphy, 1985; Okazaki, 2008). Contemporary sustainable tourism discourse reflects a broader shift towards participatory approaches, premised on the recognition that tourism should actively involve and benefit host populations rather than merely draw on their natural and cultural resources. Within this movement, CBT has become a key pathway to align tourism with broader sustainable development objectives, particularly poverty alleviation, environmental conservation, and cultural heritage preservation (Butler, 1999; Lee & Jan, 2019).

Empirical work consistently identifies meaningful community participation as a determinant of CBT success. Tourism outcomes are more effective, equitable, and durable when residents are engaged not only as service providers but as co-planners and decision-makers (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022; Jaafar et al., 2020; Lee & Joo, 2024; Nguyen et al., 2022; Nugroho & Numata, 2022). This participation has been associated with stronger ownership, pride, and responsibility among residents, reinforcing cultural preservation and social cohesion (Lindström, 2020; Nugroho & Numata, 2021; Salleh et al., 2016). Further studies indicate that community engagement supports economic diversification and retention of local benefits (Dodds et al., 2018; Lee & Jan, 2019). Collectively, this literature establishes participation as central to CBT and to sustainable tourism more broadly.

Despite this accumulated evidence, several dimensions remain insufficiently examined. First, existing studies tend to foreground participation outcomes while devoting limited analytical attention to the stakeholder conflicts, power asymmetries, and negotiation processes that arise among communities, government agencies, and tourism intermediaries during implementation (Blackstock, 2005; Dolezal & Novelli, 2022; Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018; Tosun, 2000). Second, researchers have more often acknowledged the role of traditional authorities and customary institutions in shaping tourism decision-making and resource control in passing than treated them as objects of analysis (Nguyen et al., 2022). Third, although local wisdom is routinely invoked as a normative principle of CBT, few studies examine empirically how it is operationalised, contested, or integrated within multi-stakeholder governance arrangements (Priatmoko et al., 2021; Yanes et al., 2019).

Agam Regency, West Sumatra, offers a theoretically productive setting for addressing these gaps. The regency combines rich Minangkabau cultural heritage, strong customary (*adat*) institutions, and diverse natural landscapes of highlands, lakes, and conservation areas (Chaeroni et al., 2023; Nasution et al., 2023), and has been increasingly positioned as a destination for nature-based and community-oriented tourism (Azwar et al., 2025; Haris et al., 2023). Whereas prior Indonesian research has focused on established tourism villages and national park peripheries (Nugroho & Numata, 2022) or on island community readiness (Sayuti, 2023), regencies where entrenched customary institutions coexist with rapidly intensifying tourism pressure have attracted comparatively little attention. In Agam, land is predominantly held communally under clan (*suku*) tenure and mediated by customary leaders, so that tourism development decisions traverse two authority systems simultaneously. This configuration makes stakeholder dynamics, traditional authority, and local wisdom analytically inseparable.

Accordingly, this study pursues three objectives: (i) to examine how key tourism stakeholders perceive CBT development in Agam Regency; (ii) to identify the roles stakeholders perform and the conflicts that arise between them in CBT planning and implementation and; (iii) to analyse the extent to which local community wisdom is integrated into CBT governance, and the mechanisms through which it is either enabled or marginalised. The current study is significant in generating a situated account of how communities can be engaged more effectively in tourism development, and in supplying evidence for policymakers and practitioners designing inclusive, culturally grounded tourism policy. Its originality lies in treating the intersection of local wisdom and stakeholder dynamics as an empirical problem rather than a normative assumption. The study specifies the conditions under which stakeholder salience diverges across coexisting authority systems, identifies legitimacy as the attribute most susceptible to such divergence, and states the scope

conditions under which the argument should hold in other settings of legal and customary pluralism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community-Based Tourism and Sustainable Development

The tourism literature discusses CBT as a development-oriented approach that places local communities at the centre of tourism planning, management, and benefit distribution. Unlike externally driven models, it rests on principles of local participation, empowerment, and sustainability, seeking to balance economic development with socio-cultural preservation and environmental conservation (Dangi & Petrick, 2021; Okazaki, 2008). Within the wider sustainable tourism discourse, CBT is increasingly framed as a mechanism for inclusive growth, poverty alleviation, and long-term destination resilience, particularly in rural and economically marginalised regions (Lee & Jan, 2019; Scheyvens & Momsen, 2008).

Empirical studies indicate that CBT can enhance community well-being where tourism development aligns with local values, capabilities, and aspirations. Sustainability outcomes are more likely where initiatives are embedded within existing community structures and supported by participatory governance arrangements (Moayerian et al., 2022; Zielinski et al., 2021). The literature nonetheless cautions against treating CBT as inherently sustainable. Outcomes depend on governance quality, stakeholder coordination, and the design of benefit-sharing mechanisms, and CBT initiatives often underperform when these conditions are absent (Dodds et al., 2018; Zielinski et al., 2020). Mayaka et al. (2019) further observe that CBT is applied to a wide range of organisational forms with markedly different degrees of community control, such that the label alone reveals little about the distribution of authority in any given case.

Evidence from outside Southeast Asia complicates any general verdict on CBT. It repays direct comparison, since the leading cases diverge not in their conclusions about performance but in their diagnoses of cause. In Kenya, Manyara and Jones (2007) find that community-based enterprises frequently reproduce dependency and elite capture rather than alleviating poverty. In Botswana, Stone and Stone (2011) report participation faltering less from elite capture than from limited community comprehension of the enterprise model itself. In Ecuador, Ruiz-Ballesteros (2011) argues pre-existing collective institutions absorbed tourism successfully, attributing the outcome to institutional endowment rather than to programme design. In Costa Rica, Trejos and Chiang (2009) locate weak local benefit retention in the structure of value-chain linkages rather than in governance arrangements. Salazar (2012) argues that this divergence stems from the label itself, which travels between contexts more readily than the institutional conditions that make community control substantive. This study positions itself within this debate on the side of institutional endowment, while

specifying a condition, the coexistence of customary and statutory authority over land, that the cases cited above do not address directly.

Stakeholder Theory as a Foundation for CBT Analysis

Stakeholder theory provides a productive lens for examining CBT because it conceptualises development as a process shaped by the interactions, interests, and relative power of multiple actors (Freeman, 1984). In tourism, stakeholders typically include residents, traditional authorities, government agencies, private operators, non-governmental organisations, and visitors (Byrd, 2007). From this perspective, sustainability depends not on participation levels alone but on how stakeholders negotiate and manage competing interests throughout the development process (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Rocca & Zielinski, 2022).

Stakeholder theory is not the only available lens, and its selection here is deliberate rather than conventional. Institutional theory would focus on the regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive pillars that sustain customary and statutory orders in parallel (Scott, 2014). Still, it accounts for institutional persistence more effectively than it explains which actor prevails in a specific development decision. Collaborative governance frameworks specify the conditions under which cross-sector deliberation yields agreement, including face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, and shared understanding (Ansell & Gash, 2008); however, these frameworks presuppose that the relevant parties have already been convened, which is precisely the matter at issue in *Agam Regency*.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) has been applied extensively to explain resident support for tourism as a function of perceived costs and benefits (Ap, 1992). Still, it operates at the level of individual attitude formation and offers limited purchase on inter-institutional contests over decision-making authority. Stakeholder theory is preferred because the empirical puzzle concerns recognition rather than attitude, deliberation, or persistence: which actors are constituted as parties to a decision, on what basis, and at which stage. The power-legitimacy-urgency triad directly addresses this question while accommodating a possibility central to this study: legitimacy may be recognised within one authority system but withheld within another.

Early CBT studies tended to treat community participation as a normative ideal, presuming consensus and shared objectives among stakeholders. Critical scholarship has challenged that presumption. Tosun (2000, 2006) shows that structural barriers, including restricted access to decision-making arenas, political hierarchy, and elite capture, routinely constrain participation in developing country contexts. Blackstock (2005) critiques the romanticisation of CBT, noting that communities are internally differentiated and characterised by unequal power relations. Cole (2006) shows that information asymmetries are themselves a mechanism of disempowerment, since

communities excluded from knowledge about tourism development cannot participate meaningfully in decisions about it. Together, these contributions establish the value of stakeholder theory for CBT research, in enabling examination of conflict, negotiation, and asymmetry rather than assuming harmonious collaboration.

Local Wisdom and Community Participation in CBT

Recent CBT scholarship increasingly identifies local wisdom as a critical element mediating stakeholder relationships. Local wisdom encompasses indigenous knowledge, customary institutions, cultural norms, and informal governance practices that guide community behaviour and resource management (Mungmachon, 2012; Priatmoko et al., 2021). In tourism settings, it serves two functions. First, it shapes the distinctiveness and authenticity of the tourism experience; second, it regulates stakeholder behaviour as a governance mechanism.

Integrating local wisdom into tourism planning has been associated with enhanced community legitimacy, greater trust, and a strengthened sense of ownership over tourism initiatives (Nugroho & Numata, 2021; Yanes et al., 2019). By contrast, when externally imposed development agendas displace local knowledge systems, initiatives are more likely to encounter resistance, conflict, and cultural commodification (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2022). Participation should accordingly be understood not merely as involvement in tourism activities but as participation in knowledge production and in decision-making itself.

Conflict, Collaboration, and Power in CBT

A dynamic interplay between collaboration and conflict characterises CBT development. For this study, stakeholder conflict is understood as manifest disagreement between two or more stakeholder groups over the distribution of authority, resources, or benefits in tourism development, expressed through contesting decisions, withholding consent, or non-participation. Collaborative governance arrangements marked by shared decision-making, transparent communication, and equitable benefit distribution are associated with stronger sustainability outcomes and higher community support (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Lee & Joo, 2024; Mtapuri et al., 2022). Yet conflict arises frequently from competing interests, unequal power, and divergent perceptions of tourism's costs and benefits (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018; Rocca & Zielinski, 2022).

Such conflict commonly concerns land use, cultural representation, revenue allocation, or the boundary of authority between formal institutions and traditional leaders. Rather than construing conflict as a failure of CBT, recent work treats it as an intrinsic feature of multi-stakeholder tourism systems, to be managed through inclusive governance mechanisms (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022). Read through stakeholder theory; sustainability emerges where

conflicts are acknowledged and negotiated, not where they are suppressed by top-down planning.

European evidence indicates these tensions are not confined to developing-country settings, which limits the tendency to explain CBT conflict by reference to weak state capacity. Lindström (2020) documents a community-based sharing initiative destabilised by unresolved ambiguity over public-sector responsibility rather than by resource scarcity or administrative weakness. Across otherwise dissimilar contexts, the recurring pattern is the absence of an agreed rule governing who decides. This supports treating the allocation of authority, rather than the intensity of participation, as the analytically prior question, and it is the question this study pursues.

The Penta-Helix Model and Stakeholder Theory in CBT Governance

In Indonesia, the Penta-Helix model frequently guides CBT development, prescribing collaboration among government, industry, academia, communities, and media (Kagungan et al., 2021; Nainggolan et al., 2020; Sudiana et al., 2020). The framework has proven useful for identifying the actors that a tourism development programme must convene and has been widely adopted in Indonesian tourism village policy (Putra, 2019; Sumarto et al., 2020).

Its analytical reach, however, is limited. The model is descriptive and structural: it specifies the presence of stakeholders rather than the quality or asymmetry of their interactions, and it does not account for why some actors exert disproportionate influence over outcomes. Stakeholder theory addresses this by focusing on power relations, interest alignment, legitimacy, and conflict management (Freeman, 1984; Mitchell et al., 1997). Where the Penta-Helix model explains who is involved in CBT development, stakeholder theory explains how and why certain actors prevail. Integrating the two enables a fuller account of CBT governance, particularly in contexts where customary authorities and local wisdom operate alongside formal institutional arrangements.

Customary Institutions and Communal Land in Minangkabau Tourism Governance

Interpreting stakeholder dynamics in *Agam* requires attention to the customary institutional order of Minangkabau society. Village governance in West Sumatra is organised through the *nagari*, the customary-territorial unit that also functions as the lowest tier of formal administration following Indonesia's regional autonomy reforms. Within each *nagari*, authority is distributed among lineage-based clans (*suku*), whose affairs are led by *Niniak Mamak*, a traditional customary leadership institution in the Minangkabau culture composed of senior clan or lineage leaders known as penghulu. Kerapatan Adat Nagari is the village-level customary council of Minangkabau male clan elders (*Penghulu*), governing customary law, local

disputes, and traditional titles. On the other hand, Bundo Kanduang represents senior matriarchs in Minangkabau's matrilineal system, acting as custodians of ancestral property, cultural values, and internal household governance.

Land is central to this arrangement. A substantial proportion of the region's land is held not as individual freehold but as communal clan property, transferred only with the consent of customary leaders acting for the lineage rather than in a personal capacity (Ullah et al., 2017). Consequently, any tourism development requiring land, whether for road access, visitor facilities, or attraction sites, must secure customary consent in addition to statutory permission. Customary leaders thus function as both gatekeepers of a critical development resource and legitimising authorities whose endorsement shapes community willingness to participate. Earlier work on tourism in Minangkabau villages likewise indicates that cultural performance and community mobilisation for tourism operate through, rather than around, these customary structures (Hidayat & Arkhi, 2015). This configuration produces a distinctive stakeholder problem. *Niniak Mamak* possesses high legitimacy and considerable power within the customary system yet may have low salience in statutory planning processes that do not formally recognise them as stakeholders. The literature on CBT governance has not systematically examined this mismatch, and this study addresses the gap.

An Integrative Framework: Local Wisdom, Salience, and Governance Outcomes

Researchers have conventionally treated the three strands above separately, examining local wisdom as a cultural asset, conflict as an implementation problem, and governance as a question of institutional design. This study treats them as elements of a single system. Local wisdom is understood here not only as cultural content but as the medium through which customary legitimacy is constituted, transmitted, and made recognisable; customary legitimacy in turn conditions whether customary actors register as salient stakeholders within a given planning forum; salience conditions the stage at which those actors are engaged; and the stage of engagement determines whether customary authority operates as a planning resource or as a post hoc veto. Conflict, on this account, is not an input to the system but an output under a specifiable condition namely as a mismatch between the distribution of effective authority and the distribution of formal recognition. Sustainability outcomes follow from how that mismatch is managed rather than from whether participation occurs.

METHODS

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design to examine the dynamics of CBT through multi-stakeholder interaction in Agam Regency, West Sumatra, Indonesia. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the aim of understanding how and why

stakeholders engage, negotiate, and contest within CBT governance, and it permits in-depth exploration of meanings, perceptions, and contextual realities not accessible through quantitative measurement (Marshall & Rossman, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015). The design is exploratory and theoretically anchored in stakeholder theory, which directs analytical attention to the roles, interests, legitimacy, and relative power of diverse actors in tourism development.

Sampling Strategy and Informant Selection

Purposive sampling was employed to identify informants with direct experience of, and involvement in, decision-making regarding CBT development in Agam Regency (Patton, 2015). This ensured that participants held relevant knowledge of tourism planning, community engagement, and governance processes. The study selected informants to reflect the five Penta-Helix constituencies: government, academia, tourism business, local community, and media.

Nineteen informants participated. This number was considered appropriate for three reasons. First, the study sought theoretical coverage rather than statistical representation, requiring sufficient depth within each stakeholder group to capture divergent perspectives and interaction dynamics. Second, prior qualitative tourism research indicates that samples in this range are adequate for examining complex stakeholder systems where informants are information-rich and analytically relevant (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015). Because the study sampled by constituency rather than by individual, the researchers evaluated saturation within and across stakeholder groups, and recruitment stopped when they judged that the range of positions within each constituency was adequately represented. Table 1 presents the informants' characteristics.

All sessions were audio-recorded with participants' consent to ensure accurate data capture. Ethical approval was obtained before data collection, and all participants provided informed consent.

Data Collection

Data were generated through five focus group discussions (FGDs). Each session lasted approximately one hour and was convened as a single-constituency group, such that the five sessions corresponded to the five Penta-Helix elements: government (five participants), academia (three), tourism business (three), local community (three), and media (five), as detailed in Table 1. FGDs were selected for their effectiveness in eliciting collective perspectives and in surfacing areas of agreement, contestation, and negotiation within group settings (Barbour, 2013; Vaughn et al., 1996).

The study adopted single-constituency grouping to reduce risk of conflict and allow each constituency to articulate its position without immediate institutional challenge. The design elicits within-group consensus and divergence but does not allow direct observation of cross-stakeholder negotiation,

so the inter-constituency contrasts reported are analytic reconstructions produced by comparing transcripts rather than exchanges observed in situ.

FGDs were conducted in Indonesian language, with participants free to use Minangkabau where preferred. The discussion guide was developed from the study objectives and from the literature on CBT, stakeholder dynamics, and local wisdom, and was organised around four domains: perceptions of tourism development in Agam; stakeholder roles and responsibilities; sources of tension and disagreement between stakeholders; and the place of customary institutions and local wisdom in tourism planning. Two academic experts in tourism governance reviewed the guide, and the team pilot-tested it before the main fieldwork. To protect confidentiality, informants are identified by code, and any details that could identify individuals have been omitted.

Table 1
Informant characteristics

No.	Informant Code	Age	Penta-Helix Element	Gender	Length of Involvement	Occupation
1	SA	40-49	Government	Male	>8 years	Civil servant
2	ES	50-59	Government	Female	>8 years	Civil servant
3	JI	50-59	Government	Male	>8 years	Civil servant
4	SB	40-49	Government	Male	>8 years	Civil servant
5	YE	50-59	Government	Female	>8 years	Civil servant
6	FF	30-39	Academia	Male	7-8 years	Lecturer
7	TR	30-39	Academia	Female	7-8 years	Lecturer
8	YEP	30-39	Academia	Female	5-6 years	Lecturer
9	EN	50-59	Business	Male	>8 years	Tour leader
10	HRJ	30-39	Business	Female	>8 years	Travel business owner
11	MSB	40-49	Business	Male	>8 years	Tour guide
12	HJ	50-59	Community	Male	3-4 years	Entrepreneur
13	AS	40-49	Community	Female	3-4 years	Instructor
14	SU	30-39	Community	Male	3-4 years	Entrepreneur
15	HA	40-49	Media	Male	>8 years	Journalist
16	M	50-59	Media	Male	>8 years	Journalist
17	PS	30-39	Media	Male	5-6 years	Journalist
18	RY	30-39	Media	Male	>8 years	Journalist
19	YU	30-39	Media	Male	>8 years	Journalist

Source: Author's work

Data Analysis

Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim, including relevant pauses and emphases, and verified against the recordings for accuracy. Transcripts were translated into English with systematic cross-checking to preserve meaning, and a second bilingual researcher reviewed all translated excerpts used in this article (Loubere, 2017). Thematic analysis was conducted using NVivo, following established procedures (Bandur, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017), and proceeded through familiarisation, initial coding, theme development, theme refinement, and interpretation.

Coding proceeded in two cycles. In the first cycle, researchers independently coded the same transcript line by line, generating descriptive codes close to participants' own formulations, and then compared code lists to construct a shared codebook recording each code's label, definition, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and an anchor extract. The remaining transcripts were then coded against this codebook, which was revised iteratively as codes were added, merged, or partitioned; all revisions were logged with the date and the rationale for the change. Coding was neither purely inductive nor purely deductive. During coding, a small number of sensitising categories derived from stakeholder theory, namely power, legitimacy, urgency, and stage of engagement, were kept in view, while codes concerning local wisdom, oral transmission, role uncertainty, and training were generated inductively from the data.

In the second cycle, codes were clustered into candidate categories, and categories were then examined for internal homogeneity and external distinctiveness. Candidate themes were tested against the full data set to confirm that each was supported across more than one session and that no substantial disconfirming extract had been set aside; the account of autonomous *Pokdarwis* planning was retained on this basis as a disconfirming case rather than treated as an anomaly. Coders resolved discrepancies through discussion until they reached agreement. Rather than reporting an inter-coder reliability coefficient, which presumes a fixed coding frame, consensus coding was adopted as the more appropriate procedure for an interpretive design (Nowell et al., 2017). The study retained four final themes, as summarised in Table 2.

Trustworthiness

The study adhered to established qualitative criteria of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Smith & Sparkes, 2016). Credibility was strengthened by comparing accounts across the five stakeholder groups and iteratively engaging with the data. Interpretations were clarified with selected participants to confirm accuracy of meaning. The researchers supported dependability by documenting the research process and analytic decisions, and transferability by providing rich contextual descriptions of the setting and participants. Two researchers conducted coding and resolved discrepancies through discussion.

Table 2
Thematic structure and contributing stakeholder groups

	Theme	Sub-Theme	Contributing Constituencies
1.	Stakeholder perceptions of CBT development	Historical and contemporary recognition of Agam tourism	Academia, business
		Post-pandemic revitalisation	Government, business
		Progress alongside persistent obstacles	Business
		Perceived marginalisation of the community	Community
2.	Stakeholder roles in CBT development	Policy, facilities, training, budget	Government
		Capacity building and product identification	Academia
		Facilities and financial support	Business
		Mobilisation and awareness	Community
3.	Governance frictions in CBT development	Contested authority over land and the sequencing of customary consent	Business, media, community
		Fragmented coordination and contested expertise	Government, academia, community
4.	Integration of local community wisdom	Customary norms and oral transmission	Community
		Community-led management through *Pokdarwis*	Government
		Cross-stakeholder collaboration for awareness	Government
		Economic benefit and revenue sharing	Business

Source: Author's synthesis

Collectively, these measures strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings.

Analytic memos were used throughout to record the researchers' own assumptions about the legitimacy of customary and statutory claims, and coding decisions on which the two positions diverged were resolved through discussion rather than by deferring to either. The researchers' academic standing may also have shaped participants' accounts, particularly in the government and academia sessions, where responses sometimes took the form of institutional position statements; the researchers coded such extracts as claims to legitimacy rather than neutral descriptions of practice.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis produced four principal themes, each comprising several sub-themes. Table 2 summarises the thematic structure and indicates which stakeholder constituencies contributed to each.

Stakeholder Perceptions of CBT Development

Informants across all five constituencies characterised Agam as a destination with established standing and renewed momentum, but differed markedly in how equitably they thought that momentum was being managed.

Historical and Contemporary Recognition of Agam Tourism

Academic and business informants located current development within a longer trajectory of national and international recognition, invoking that history as evidence of latent capacity rather than as nostalgia:

> … Agam tourism has been famous since the 80s and 90s. It was indeed a destination almost at par with Bali, in which, besides local, this region is also well recognised by the foreign tourists… We need to continue developing… (TR, Academia informant)

The comparison with Bali functions less as a factual claim than as a rhetorical assertion of entitlement to development attention. Here, historical standing is mobilised as a resource in present-day advocacy, establishing a baseline against which current performance is judged and found wanting.

Post-Pandemic Revitalisation

Government informants framed recovery as evidence of sectoral resilience and of administrative commitment:

> … everybody knew that the economy, tourism, and many other sectors almost collapsed during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, after COVID, Agam and other regencies in Indonesia are showing a bright light, with the tourism sector spurring again. Although most tourists are still local, tourism significantly influences the community's economy. Thus, we as government officers need to work hard to attract more local and international tourists to visit Agam regency … (SB, Government informant)

Notable in this account is the framing of recovery as a governmental achievement and an administrative obligation. The community appears as beneficiary rather than as agent, a positioning that recurs across government accounts and that community informants later contest directly.

Progress Alongside Persistent Obstacles

Business informants likewise reported recovery, citing external recognition as validation:

> … after the health pandemic, I saw that tourism in Agam is back to normal. Various products attracted more tourists to the region. This is not surprising that at the end of 2021, this district won the Anugerah Pesona Indonesia (API) award from the Ministry of Tourism, which is amazing. Tourism in this area will shine in the future … (HRJ, Business informant)

Product diversification is presented as the mechanism of recovery, consistent with the strategic emphasis on variety within Agam's CBT programme. However, this account's credibility sits in tension with the community assessments reported below, and this divergence between externally validated success and internally experienced

exclusion constitutes the study's central empirical finding. The Anugerah Pesona Indonesia is an annual public-voting award programme organised independently, not conferred directly by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. In the 2021 cycle, announced on 30 November 2021, Agam Regency placed second in the "most popular historical site" category for the Buya Hamka Birthplace Museum. The informant's characterisation is reproduced as given.

Perceived Marginalisation of the Community

Community informants accepted the developmental narrative while disputing their own place within it:

> … undoubtedly, Agam Regency's tourism development continuously improves, with domestic tourists steadily flowing. Despite this, the synergy between the Penta-Helix and the community is still lacking. This area's government planning and development did not involve the local community. Are we not important in development planning? … (HJ, Community informant)

The interrogative closing this account is significant. The informant does not dispute that development is occurring, nor that it brings benefit; the objection concerns standing. What is claimed is not a share of outcomes but recognition as a legitimate party to the decision. This distinction, between distributive and procedural inclusion, organises much of what follows.

Stakeholder Roles in CBT Development

Informants described a division of labour that is, in principle, complementary. Each constituency articulated a clear conception of its own contribution.

Government

Government informants defined their role in terms of cultural positioning, infrastructure, and capacity building, alongside planning, supervision, and budget allocation:

> Currently, our primary role is to expand CBT development based on our unique culture. We are also continuously improving tourist facilities and infrastructure to enhance the tourist experience. Optimising tourism training for the community as a main tourism actor in Agam is also our key role. (SA, Government informant)

> In general, our role is planning, managing, and supervising the development of CBT based on the regulations from the central government. We also focus on regional budgeting by optimising it for the tourism sector, which is our focus in Agam. Therefore, we urge all Penta-Helix to take proactive action jointly. (YE, Government informant)

Two features warrant attention. First, the community is positioned as recipient of training rather than as source of knowledge, an orientation directly relevant to the treatment of local wisdom. Second, the exhortation that other actors "take

proactive action" locates responsibility for collaboration outside the government's own mandate, an attribution that academic and community informants contest.

Academia

Academic informants described a capacity-building and product-identification function extending across a wide territory:

> Providing training and mentoring to the local communities on tourism is our effort for CBT development. We know that Agam communities are directly involved in tourism activities. Some are tourist attraction managers, tour guides, providers of accommodation, food, and beverages, and souvenir sellers for tourists. We must ensure the local communities we train can provide good service to the visitors. (YEP, Academia informant)

> Besides monitoring the existing ones, our job is to identify new CBT products that can be developed, whether natural, cultural, or artificial. We support and enhance the local community's knowledge and skills through training and knowledge-transfer mechanisms. We need to cover huge areas or villages in Agam Regency. (FF, Academia informant)

The reference to territorial coverage signals a resource constraint that becomes consequential later: academic capacity is spread thinly across many *Nagari*, limiting sustained engagement with anyone.

Business and Community

Business informants described material and financial support, while community leaders described mobilisation:

> As tourism businesses, we collaborate with local communities, providing support facilities such as homestays, culinary centres, and souvenirs. Any local communities that want to join the CBT … we provide financial assistance for them. (EN, Business informant)

> As a community leader, I undertake the operation of developing CBT in Agam Regency. My responsibility is to share knowledge, raise awareness, and invite local communities to participate in the CBT programme in their area. Through continuous effort, I can see Pokdarwis in Sungai Batang, Puncak Lawang, Simarasok, and other localities start to accelerate a few CBT activities. (SU, Community informant)

Read together, these accounts describe a functioning division of roles. Each constituency performs work the others do not, and each does so intelligibly. What they do not describe is any mechanism by which those roles are coordinated, and it is at precisely this junction that the conflicts reported below arise.

Stakeholder Conflicts in CBT Development

Informants identified conflicts not as discrete disputes but as recurrent expressions of two underlying governance problems. The first

concerns who holds authority over land and at what stage that authority is engaged; the second concerns how mandates and expertise are allocated among actors once development proceeds. The sub-themes are presented under these two headings rather than separately, since the accounts that follow are analytically continuous: each specifies a different point at which the same allocation problem becomes visible.

Contested Authority Over Land and the Sequencing of Customary Consent

Business informants identified customary consent over land as the most frequent site of dispute:

> … I often saw conflicts in Agam over land-use permits or land for tourism development by Niniak Mamak or traditional leaders. Because the suku own most of the land in the regency, Niniak Mamak consent is required before tourism development can proceed. Without their permission, CBT development would be challenging to implement … (MSB, Business informant)

This account establishes customary leaders as holders of an effective veto grounded in communal tenure. In stakeholder terms, Niniak Mamak possess both legitimacy and coercive power (Mitchell et al., 1997), yet the conflict arises not from the existence of that power but from its non-recognition in the sequence of planning.

The timing of engagement, rather than the substance of the claim, is what informants across constituencies identified as decisive. Media informants attributed conflict specifically to the timing of engagement:

> Yes, conflicts in tourism are real in Agam. Based on my observations, conflicts largely stem from traditional leaders. Lack of involvement in the initial planning stages inhibits the development of CBT in the area. Meaning that Niniak Mamak felt uncertain about their role in the implementation … (RY, Media informant)

The diagnosis is procedural rather than substantive. Customary leaders are not described as opposing tourism development in principle; they are described as uncertain of their standing within a process to which they were admitted late. Uncertainty of role, on this account, precedes and produces resistance.

Community informants extended the point to the *nagari* level, linking exclusion to uneven programme uptake:

> … I am optimistic that CBT can continue to develop in Agam. In 2022, the region issued a decree on rural tourism, recognising 21 villages (*Nagari*) as priority areas for rural tourism development. Unfortunately, not all *Nagari* are actively involved because the government did not include the customary authorities in planning the CBT programme. As we

> know, the customary authorities are great influencers on society, including policymaking in Agam … (HJ, Community informant)

Beneath the question of timing lies a further incompatibility concerning what statutory development requires of customary authority. Business informants located the conflict in the transfer of control that statutory development requires:

> … most of the time, conflicts arise due to the government policies regarding the construction of tourism facilities. The local government can construct tourism facilities if the land is granted to it. However, traditional leaders, or Niniak Mamak, disagree with this rule because they do not retain full power after the land is granted. Thus, they consider this policy detrimental … (MSB, Business informant)

This is the clearest articulation of the structural problem. The statutory instrument requires communal land to pass into state control as a precondition for investment; customary authority is constituted precisely by retaining that control on behalf of the lineage. The conflict is therefore not reducible to poor communication. It reflects an incompatibility between two systems of tenure, one of which the planning framework does not formally recognise. Through the stakeholder theory, three accounts in this sub-theme describe a single sequence: an actor holding power and customary legitimacy is assessed as non-salient by the statutory forum, is consequently engaged only at the point of land transfer, and at that point exercises the power that earlier recognition would have converted into a planning resource.

Fragmented Coordination and Contested Expertise

The second governance friction concerns how mandates and recognised expertise are allocated among actors already constituted as stakeholders. Informants located its cause differently, and the pattern of that disagreement is itself analytically informative. Government informants located the impediment in community capability:

> … from my experience, the hindrances generally stem from the human resources aspect. I realised that the communities' understanding and appreciation of tourism are still insufficient. Thus, not everyone prioritises preservation. Those are the fundamental aspects of developing CBT in Agam. As a government representative, I urge Pokdarwis to actively promote the local tourism awareness and value of tourism to the local communities … (JI, Government informant)

The divergence in attribution is itself analytically significant. Where community and media informants locate the problem in the design of the planning process, government informants locate it in a deficit of community understanding. Each diagnosis implies a different remedy, and neither constituency's account acknowledges the others.

Academic informants identified a coordination failure with direct consequences for communities:

> The conflicts in fostering local communities involved in tourism stem from a lack of synergy between Penta-Helix stakeholder. Training typically does not align with its respective functions and roles. As a result, the Penta-Helix's roles in assisting the community overlap. The community becomes confused about what kind of CBT development model needs to follow … (FF, Academia informant)

Confusion here is an outcome of institutional design rather than community capability, and it qualifies the deficit account offered above: communities receiving inconsistent guidance from multiple actors may appear unresponsive without lacking capacity.

The same fragmentation was reported within constituencies and between them, indicating that the problem is one of mandate allocation rather than inter-organisational rivalry.

> … I notice an internal conflict among local government officers over the development of CBT in Agam. Other agencies in this regency wash their hands of the task, leaving the Tourism Office to carry sole responsibility without support. That is the reason why we can't achieve our target … (JI, Government informant)

> … I want my people to be competent and have strong knowledge of CBT, with academics and tourism business experts as training moderators. However, the government often appoints people who are not well versed in tourism to give training to the local communities … (SU, Community informant)

The second account is notable in reversing the deficit framing: the shortfall in competence is attributed not to the community but to those appointed to instruct it. Taken with the academic account above, this suggests that the training pathway, the principal mechanism by which government intends to build community capacity, is itself a site of contestation over expertise and authority. In stakeholder terms, the two frictions are related: where the first concerns whether an actor is recognised as a party to the decision, the second concerns whether an actor recognised as a party is accorded the authority its mandate implies. Both are failures of recognition rather than willingness, which is why exhortations to collaborate, leave the underlying allocation untouched.

Integration of Local Community Wisdom

The final theme concerns how local wisdom enters, or fails to enter, tourism practice.

Customary Norms and Oral Transmission

Community informants described an unwritten normative order governing resource use and cultural transmission:

> In our community life, we always refer to the unwritten rules of the culture and resources. Despite this, we passed all the attributes orally to the next generation, which includes local tourism potential. (AS, Community informant)

Two properties of local wisdom are visible here: it is normative, regulating conduct in relation to resources, and it is orally transmitted, therefore absent from the documentary forms in which planning decisions are recorded. This second property is consequential. Knowledge that exists only in oral transmission is structurally disadvantaged in processes that operate through written instruments, which supplies a mechanism, rather than merely an outcome, for the marginalisation the study identifies.

Community-Led Management Through *Pokdarwis*

Government informants described substantive community initiative through *Pokdarwis* (*Kelompok Sadar Wisata*, tourism awareness groups):

> The local communities' eagerness to manage CBT in Agam has resulted from their participation in the Pokdarwis. They have taken the initiative to acquire plans to develop CBT in their respective villages, including land use, management, and income sharing. (SB, Government informant)

This account is important as a disconfirming case. It describes communities planning autonomously across precisely the domains, land use, management, and revenue distribution, over which conflict was reported elsewhere. Participation in Agam is therefore not uniformly absent; it appears at the village level through *Pokdarwis* but is absent at the regency level in formal planning. The finding is one of scale and forum rather than of participation per se.

Cross-Stakeholder Collaboration for Awareness

Government informants also described deliberate exposure activities:

> To me … the awareness of the communities on CBT in Agam Regency is achieved through collaboration between Penta-Helix and Pokdarwis. This is why we never stop inviting representatives of local communities to the areas where tourism is more advanced so that they can increase their sense of concern for tourism. (SA, Government informant)

The direction of learning here is instructive, where communities are taken to observe more advanced destinations, rather than external actors being brought to learn from local practice. Local wisdom is treated as an asset to preserve and display rather than as a source of planning knowledge.

Economic Benefit and Revenue Sharing

Business informants described operational arrangements distributing revenue to community participants:

> We have collaborated with the local communities to promote the region, culture, cuisine, and various tourist attractions. The local community actively helps us promote the tour packages, and in return, we pay a commission based on the number of guests who book through our channel. Both parties will get the benefits. (MSB, Business informant)

Economic integration is thus functioning at the transactional level. Communities are compensated participants in the tourism value chain. What the data do not show is any corresponding mechanism through which their knowledge enters the decisions that determine what is developed and where.

DISCUSSION

This study examined how tourism stakeholders and local wisdom interact in CBT development in a destination governed simultaneously by statutory administration and Minangkabau customary institutions. Consistent with accounts of post-pandemic recovery in Indonesian destinations, stakeholders expressed optimism about tourism's economic contribution. The findings add that such optimism coexists with, and partly conceals, an unresolved allocation of authority. Perceptions diverged systematically by constituency, where government and business informants emphasised growth, while community informants disputed not the development itself but their standing within it. That divergence is the first observable trace of the mismatch analysed in the following.

Conflict as Institutional Incompatibility

CBT scholarship commonly attributes stakeholder conflict to weak synergy or inadequate consultation (Cole, 2006; Mtapuri et al., 2022). The *Agam* evidence suggests these describe symptoms rather than causes. The statutory pathway for constructing facilities requires communal land to pass into state control, whereas customary authority is constituted by retaining that control on behalf of the lineage (Ullah et al., 2017). Consent is withheld not from opposition to tourism but from the terms on which it is proposed. No improvement in consultation resolves an incompatibility of this kind, since the two positions are coherent expressions of two tenure systems, only one of which the planning framework recognises.

This also explains the mutual non-recognition. Within the statutory field the community appears as a recipient of training, so incapacity is the intelligible diagnosis; within the customary field standing precedes competence, so exclusion is. Neither account is mistaken by the criteria of the system producing it, which is why each constituency's remedy appears unresponsive to the other. What is unevenly distributed is therefore not information about tourism, as Cole (2006) proposes, but recognition of who is entitled to act upon it.

The Documentary Filter and Forum-Specific Participation

The findings confirm the significance of local wisdom (Mungmachon, 2012; Priatmoko et al., 2021) while qualifying

its reported association with community legitimacy (Nugroho & Numata, 2021; Yanes et al., 2019). Local wisdom in *Agam* was rhetorically endorsed yet structurally marginalised, and this study identifies the mechanism: knowledge transmitted orally and encoded in unwritten norms is disadvantaged within planning conducted through documentary instruments. Marginalisation of this kind requires no intent; it follows from procedure operating upon knowledge for which it holds no format of receipt.

The case nonetheless resists a straightforward reading as participation failure. This study documents communities planning autonomously through *Pokdarwis* across land use, management, and revenue distribution, precisely the domains contested at regency level. Participation is thus forum-specific: substantive at the village scale, attenuated in regency planning. This redirects attention to the articulation between scales, an issue addressed less systematically than participation itself (Dodds et al., 2018; Zielinski et al., 2020) and implies that the practical problem is less building community capacity than constructing a channel through which existing capacity registers.

CONCLUSION

This study examined stakeholder and local wisdom dynamics in CBT development in Agam Regency, drawing on five single-constituency focus group discussions with 19 informants. Three findings stand out. Stakeholders converge in optimism about recovery but diverge over how inclusively development is managed. The principal source of conflict is the late engagement of customary leaders, reflecting institutional incompatibility between statutory land-grant requirements and communal tenure rather than communication failure. Local wisdom is widely endorsed yet structurally marginalised, partly because orally transmitted knowledge has no format to enter documentary planning; meanwhile, substantive planning capacity operates at the village level through *Pokdarwis*, indicating a problem of articulation between scales rather than a lack of capability. Theoretically, the study establishes that salience is field-specific under legal and customary pluralism, that legitimacy is the attribute least able to transfer between coexisting authority systems, and that the stage of engagement converts divergent salience into observable conflict. It further distinguishes elite exclusion from elite capture. Practically, it identifies the sequencing of consent, the design of land-transfer instruments, and the documentary translation of local knowledge as the decisive junctures.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Theoretical Implications

Mitchell et al. (1997) treat power, legitimacy, and urgency as attributes assessed within a single field. Under legal and customary pluralism, these attributes are assessed independently within two fields. *Niniak Mamak* are definitive stakeholders within the customary order and latent within the

statutory order, and neither assessment is erroneous by its own criteria. Notably, salience is field-specific rather than actor-specific, making the pairing of actor and forum the appropriate analytical unit. Second, legitimacy is the attribute most liable to diverge, since power is often observable in both fields, as the land veto demonstrates. In contrast, legitimacy is constituted by the rules of a particular order. Third, divergence is self-correcting only at implementation, which is why conflict presents late and appears as obstruction rather than as a predictable consequence of sequence. The greater the divergence in an actor's assessed legitimacy across coexisting authority systems, the later that actor is engaged, and the more likely it is to exercise its retained power as veto rather than endorsement. Figure 1 formalises these relationships.

The case also refines the elite-capture reading dominant in critical CBT scholarship (Manyara & Jones, 2007; Tosun, 2000). In *Agam,* the excluded actor is itself a local elite, and exclusion rather than dominance produces the governance failure. Elite capture and elite exclusion are distinct pathologies requiring opposite remedies, and the distinction collapses wherever "community" is treated as undifferentiated (Blackstock, 2005). Read internationally, the leading cases diverge in diagnosis rather than verdict: elite capture in Kenya (Manyara & Jones, 2007), capability deficit in Botswana (Stone & Stone, 2011), institutional endowment in Ecuador (Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011), value-chain structure in Costa Rica (Trejos & Chiang, 2009), and unresolved public-sector responsibility in Scandinavia (Lindström, 2020). The recurrent element is the absence of an agreed rule specifying who decides, supporting the treatment of authority allocation as analytically prior to participation intensity.

Stakeholder theory was selected advisedly, while institutional theory accounts for the persistence of both orders) but not for which prevails in a given decision; collaborative governance presupposes the convening that is here at issue. The social exchange theory operates below the level of inter-institutional contests over authority. Accordingly, transferability rests on an institutional condition rather than a cultural setting: communal lineage tenure, a customary authority empowered to consent on the lineage's behalf, and a statutory framework that engages that authority at transfer but not at proposal. These co-occur beyond Southeast Asia, including in Andean community landholding and customary tenure across sub-Saharan Africa and the Pacific. The argument should weaken where land is individually titled, where customary authority is ceremonial rather than proprietary, or where planning frameworks already constitute customary bodies as consultative parties, a scope condition falsifiable against such cases.

Practical Implications

First, reposition customary endorsement from an implementation requirement to a planning input through a mandatory consultation protocol in the regency

planning cycle, under which no *nagari* proposal advances to budgeting without a documented record of consultation with the relevant *Kerapatan Adat Nagari*. This converts customary standing from informal courtesy into procedural entitlement. Second, a standing participatory tourism council at the regency level would provide the missing cross-scale channel, convening the Penta-Helix constituencies with *Kerapatan Adat Nagari* and *Pokdarwis* representatives. It should hold a mandate over proposal sequencing and training allocation rather than an advisory role and requires *Pokdarwis* plans to be tabled as formal inputs.

The statutory land-grant requirement warrants review, since predicating investment on transfer structurally excludes those *nagari* whose customary institutions are strongest. Long-term usufruct, revenue-sharing agreements, and community land trusts merit examination, supported by a co-management framework specifying decision rights, benefit shares, dispute resolution, and exit terms before investment. Lastly, planning guidelines should establish mechanisms for translating orally transmitted knowledge into planning instruments. Participatory mapping and community-authored *nagari* tourism plans offer practical routes for customary norms to enter the record.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study has several limitations that qualify its findings. First, the study did not interview customary leaders (*Niniak Mamak*) directly, so the central finding on their exclusion rests on accounts from other constituencies. Second, thirteen of the nineteen informants were male, and the community constituency had only three informants. This constrains analysis of gender and intra-community exclusion in a matrilineal society. Third, single-constituency focus groups reduced deference but precluded direct observation of cross-stakeholder negotiation, so inter-constituency contrasts are analytic reconstructions. Fourth, the analysis relies on translated material from a single regency at one post-pandemic moment, and the findings are offered for transferability rather than statistical generalisation.

Future research should engage *Niniak Mamak, Kerapatan Adat Nagari* and *Bundo Kanduang* as primary informants. It should also use participant observation or mixed-constituency deliberative forums to capture negotiation and conflict mediation as they unfold. Comparative studies across West Sumatran regencies and other settings of legal and customary pluralism, such as Bali's *desa adat*, Pacific customary tenure and *Andean* communal landholding, could test the scope conditions proposed here. Longitudinal and mixed-methods designs are also needed. These could operationalise field-specific salience, legitimacy and stage of engagement across a larger sample of *nagari* and evaluate whether consultation protocols or usufruct-based land arrangements reduce conflict in practice.

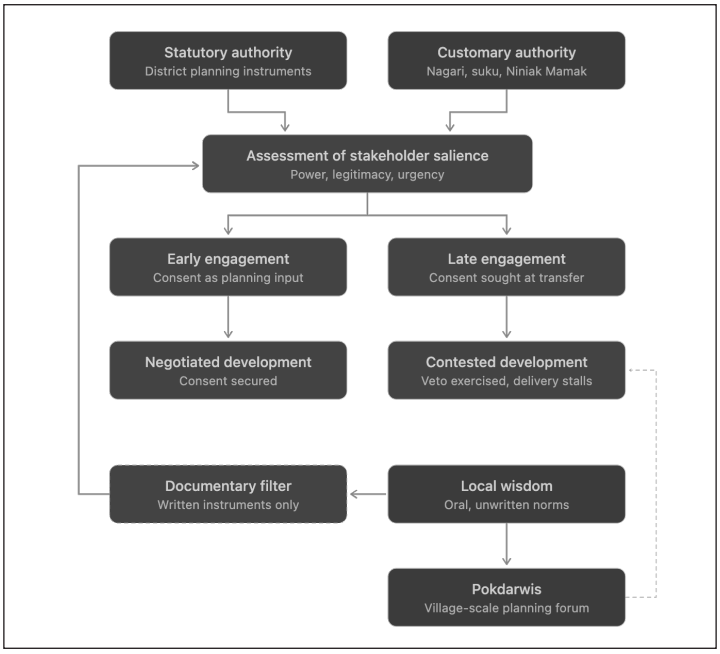


Figure 1. A conceptual model of customary salience in community-based tourism governance
Source: Author's synthesis

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