

## Public Sector Organizational Capability in Developing Religious Tourism Villages in North Sulawesi

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### ABSTRAK

*Pengembangan pariwisata religi berpotensi mendorong pertumbuhan ekonomi daerah sekaligus memperkuat identitas budaya. Kabupaten Minahasa, Sulawesi Utara, memiliki sejumlah destinasi religi bernilai sejarah dan spiritual, namun pengembangannya masih terkendala keterbatasan kapabilitas sektor publik. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis kapabilitas organisasi sektor publik dalam mengembangkan kampung wisata religi, serta mengidentifikasi peluang dan tantangan yang menyertainya. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam dengan pejabat pemerintah, masyarakat lokal, pengelola wisata religi, dan pelaku usaha pariwisata, dilengkapi observasi lapangan dan telaah dokumen sekunder. Analisis data dilakukan dengan teknik analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan kapabilitas sektor publik masih berkembang. Aspek perencanaan sudah diarahkan pada integrasi wisata religi dalam program pembangunan daerah, namun terbatas pada jangka pendek. Kendala utama mencakup keterbatasan sumber daya, infrastruktur, koordinasi, serta promosi digital. Di sisi lain, terdapat peluang dari meningkatnya minat wisatawan spiritual, dukungan kebijakan berkelanjutan, dan potensi desa dengan situs religi bersejarah. Temuan ini memperkaya literatur tata kelola pariwisata berbasis kearifan lokal, serta merekomendasikan penguatan kapasitas perencanaan, digitalisasi promosi, dan kolaborasi multipihak sebagai strategi keberlanjutan.*

### ABSTRACT

Religious tourism has the potential to drive regional economic growth while strengthening cultural identity. Minahasa (regency), North Sulawesi, acquires several religious destinations of historical and spiritual value; however, their development remains constrained by the limited capability of the public sector. This study aims to analyze the organizational capability of the public sector in developing religious tourism villages, as well as to identify the opportunities and challenges involved. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with government officials, local communities, religious tourism managers, and tourism business actors, complemented by field observations and secondary document analysis. Thematic analysis was applied to interpret the data. The findings reveal that public sector capability is still at a developing stage. Planning has been directed toward integrating religious tourism into regional development programs, yet it remains short-term oriented. Key obstacles include limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, weak inter-agency coordination, and insufficient digital promotion. On the contrary, opportunities arise from the growing interest in spiritual tourism, supportive sustainable tourism policies, and the presence of villages with historical religious sites. This study contributes to the literature on local wisdom-based tourism governance and recommends strengthening planning capacity, promoting digitalization, and fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration as strategies for sustainable development.

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## INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is one of the driving forces of regional economic development that is able to have a multiplier effect, both in increasing local original income (PAD), job creation, and empowering local communities. In the context of tourism development, one segment that continues to grow is religious tourism. Religious tourism not only offers entertainment value, but also spiritual, cultural, and historical dimensions that can attract domestic and foreign tourists. This is in line with global trends that show increasing interest in *spiritual tourism* and *cultural heritage tourism* (Collins-Kreiner, 2016).

The development of tourism potential in Indonesia has a very important role in various aspects of people's lives and national development (Nuradhawati & Kristian (2022)). Tourism contributes significantly to the economy by creating jobs and sources of income for the local community (Sukmana, 2018). Sectors such as hospitality, restaurants, transportation, and the handicraft industry benefit directly from tourist activities (Hidayat, 2024). By optimally utilizing the potential of tourism, Indonesia can accelerate economic growth and improve the welfare of the community (<https://pemerintahan.uma.ac.id/>). Tourism development has also been proven to encourage the maintenance and preservation of local culture and heritage (Nursanty et al., 2023). When tourist destinations highlight their cultural richness, it not only attracts tourists but also motivates local communities to preserve and care for their traditions and historic sites (Siregar, et al. 2025).

The development of tourism can empower local communities by creating business and employment opportunities, especially in remote or underdeveloped areas. It helps in improving the quality of life and reducing economic disparities between regions (Wahidah, et al. 2022). In many ways, it is understood that awareness of the importance of a clean and sustainable environment increases along with the development of tourism (Atmaja, 2016). Destinations that focus on sustainable tourism will encourage environmentally friendly practices, such as good waste management, natural resource conservation, and the use of renewable energy (Susanti, et al. 2023).

By developing quality tourist destinations, Indonesia can strengthen its image in the eyes of the world as an attractive tourist destination (Simanjuntak, 2019). This will increase the competitiveness of Indonesian tourism at the global level and attract more foreign tourists (<https://www.kemendparekraf.go.id>). Overall, the development of tourism potential in Indonesia not only provides economic benefits, but also social, cultural, and environmental benefits. Therefore, it is important for all parties, including the government, the community, and industry players, to work together to optimize this potential for the sake of joint progress (Vani et al. 2020).

The importance of tourism development today lies in the religious aspect. Religious tourism is one of the categories of tourism that aims to meet the spiritual needs of people by visiting locations that are considered to have religious value (Anwar & Hamid, 2017). Indonesia has a lot of potential related to religion (Plangiten et al. 2024), which can be found in Bali and Java. In Indonesia, religious tourism has emerged thanks to several areas that have potential from a religious point of view, such as areas inhabited by religious people with strong beliefs, so that religious themes can be a certain focus as halal tourism destinations (Djafar, 2017). Some of the regions that have successfully managed and developed religious tourism in Indonesia include West Sumatra, Riau, Lampung, Banten, Jakarta, West Java, East Java, Makassar, and Lombok (Angelia and Santoso, 2019). Through this concept of religious tourism management, these areas have experienced rapid development in the tourism sector.

The development of tourism based on religion is one of the opportunities to be optimized in the implementation of tourism programs (Plangiten et al. 2024). North Sulawesi Province has many possibilities for religion-based tourism. Moreover, with the recognition of North Sulawesi as a region that values interreligious tolerance, this further opens up opportunities to develop religious tourism. In North Sulawesi, many tourist attractions have religious aspects but have not been managed properly. To ensure that these tourist attractions are managed properly and support regional tourism programs, there needs to be planning that can attract the attention of visitors (Ruru et al., 2022).

Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, is one of the areas that has great potential in the development of religious tourism. This area holds various historical sites, old churches, and traditional places of worship that are an important part of the identity and local wisdom of the Minahasa communities. This potential, if managed properly, can make Minahasa a leading religious tourism destination that supports the diversification of North Sulawesi tourism, which is better known as marine tourism. Kampung Jawa Tondano, located in North Tondano District, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, has great potential as a religious tourism destination. Also known as Jatón, this village has a long history that began in 1828 when Kiai Modjo, a spiritual advisor and warlord of Pangeran Diponegoro, along with his followers, were exiled to this region by the Dutch colonial government. Since then, the Tondano Javanese community has developed and maintained distinctive religious traditions and values (Putri & Pratama, 2024). The acculturation of Javanese and Minahasa cultures in Kampung Jawa Tondano creates a unique cultural richness. Religious traditions, such as the commemoration of Islamic holidays and pilgrimage rituals, are still solemnly carried out by the local community. The architecture of houses and houses of worship in this village reflects the fusion of Javanese and Minahasa aesthetics, adding to the appeal for tourists interested in history and culture (Ruru et al., 2022). The potential of religious tourism in Kampung Jawa Tondano lies not only in the spiritual aspect but also in the educational and historical value it offers. Tourists can learn about the history of Kiai Modjo's struggle, the process of cultural acculturation, and the life of the Muslim community in the midst of the Christian majority in Minahasa.

The teachings of Islam and Javanese traditions are important guides taught by Kiai Modjo. Every year, the community celebrates the "Meludan Jatón" festival as a form of respect. Social interaction among the community takes place in a very friendly manner, highlighting the value of tolerance and mutual help (Plangiten et al. 2024). It is hoped that the development of this village as a religious tourism destination that upholds local wisdom can help improve the economy of the local community and preserve the existing culture (Plangiten et al. 2024).

Research conducted in 2023 revealed that the Tondano Javanese ethnic community (Jatón) in Minahasa Regency continues to uphold the teachings and struggles of Kiai Mojo. Additionally, there are natural potentials, cultural values, and religious aspects that make the area suitable for becoming a tourist village (Ruru et al. 2024). Meanwhile, findings from a 2024 study identified physical resources like land, water, climate, geographical environment, livestock, and human resources. Non-physical potentials were also noted, highlighting community interaction and characteristics, social institutions, educational bodies, and social organizations, along with governmental staff, all supporting Jatón's development as a religious tourism destination (Plangiten et al. 2024).

However, the existence of the Tondano Javanese village has not been supported by public facilities that can be developed as religious tourism destinations (Plangiten et al. 2024). And it also urgently needs the support of social institutions, customary institutions, and village religious institutions as pioneers in the development of the village's potential (Plangiten, et al. 2024). In

order to be able to develop tourist attractions, it is necessary to improve management resources as well as cultural support and community participation (Ruru et al. 2024). The ability of the manager, the social environment, and the organizational culture in the management of tourist attractions are very important.

However, the development of religious tourism villages in Minahasa is inseparable from various problems. First, the planning aspect of tourism development is still partial and short-term, so it has not been integrated into the framework of sustainable tourism development. Second, limited human resources, budgets, and supporting infrastructure are still the main obstacles in the management of religious tourism destinations. Third, collaboration between local governments, communities, and the private sector is still not optimal, because it is more often sporadic and has not yet formed sustainable governance. Fourth, the promotion of religious tourism is still carried out traditionally, with minimal use of digital technology to expand market access and build destination *branding*.

In addition, the participation of local communities, especially the younger generation, is still limited to ceremonial activities and has not been actively involved in tourism management and promotion. This condition prevents the great potential of religious tourism in Minahasa from making a maximum contribution to regional development. In fact, if managed through collaborative and community-based tourism governance, religious tourism villages can become one of the pillars of inclusive and sustainable regional economic development (Goodwin, 2009; Dredge & Jamal, 2015).

Departing from these problems, it is important to explore and analyze the capabilities of public sector organizations in the development of religious tourism villages in Minahasa Regency. This analysis aims not only to identify the extent of local governments' readiness to plan, manage, and implement religious tourism programs, but also to find opportunities and challenges that can be the basis for strategic policy formulation. Thus, this research is expected to contribute both academically in enriching the study of tourism governance based on local wisdom and practically in providing recommendations for strengthening the capabilities of public sector organizations to support the development of religious tourism villages in Minahasa Regency.

Paying attention to the research findings in 2023 and 2024, it is considered important for the support and ability of social institutions, customary institutions, and village religious institutions. The social and cultural environment of local community organizations as pioneers in the development of the potential of *Kampung Jawa* village to become a religious tourism village in Minahasa Regency. Therefore, this research was carried out as a continuation of the findings of previous research. So it is considered important to be studied in Unsrat's flagship basic research in 2025. Social institutions, customary institutions, and village religious institutions, as public sector organizations in the village, must have the capacity or ability to support government programs. In the search for publications related to the capacity or ability of public sector organizations (social institutions, customary institutions, and village religious institutions) in the development of religious tourism potential, there have not been many other researchers who have conducted research and carried out studies. This emptiness is the advantage of this research.

The limitation of mapping this potential is the capacity or ability of public sector organizations (social institutions, customary institutions, and village religious institutions) in the development of religious tourism potential, which will later be explored from existing data through scientific studies. From the results of this research, it is hoped that it can be a foothold for the Minahasa Regency government in accelerating regional development through the tourism sector based on local wisdom through religious tourism design.

This research was conducted with the aim of exploring and analyzing the capabilities of public sector organizations in the development of the potential of religious tourism villages in Minahasa Regency, as well as identifying the challenges and opportunities faced in the development process. From this study, it is hoped that the main themes related to the capabilities of the public sector in the development of religious tourism villages, factors related to the research object, and the challenges faced will be identified. So that the capabilities of public sector organizations in the development of religious tourism villages in Minahasa Regency are clearly and scientifically described. The results of this research will be a reference for local governments in designing more effective policies and supporting the development of religious tourism as an economic potential that can benefit local communities.

The findings of this study are an effort to develop the science of public administration and government, especially on the idea of village development and Empowerment of Village/Urban Village/Urban Communities. This research in the field of social sciences and humanities contributes to the development of concepts and models of public administration science, which focuses on strengthening the economy and human resources, as well as the development and strengthening of socio-cultural aspects based on local wisdom. In addition, it is also related to sustainable tourism. In addition, other objectives and benefits expected from this research are as a means of learning and application in courses on qualitative research methods, regional development, and empowerment of village/sub-district communities in the context of public administration and government science.

### **Literature Review**

Activities in the tourism sector are related to the process of traveling, both individually and in groups, to enjoy beauty, fill vacation time, and meet other requirements (Plangiten et al., 2024). This activity also has important cultural, social, and religious values (Siti, 2016) and provides a sense of satisfaction (Plangiten et al., 2024). The government authorizes the regions to develop tourism potential and maintain national assets that are attractive (Siti, 2016). One of these potentials, which is also a national asset, is related to religious aspects. Religion-based tourism is currently growing and is becoming one of the popular choices for tourists (Muharromah & Anwar, 2020). This is due to the relationship between religious aspects in tourism activities (Narulita et al., 2017) with religious practices/ritual, religious beliefs/ideological, religious knowledge/intellectual, religious feelings/experiential, and religious impact/consequential.

*Kampung Jawa* Tondano Village in Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, has the potential for religious tourism to be developed. Many religious activities have been carried out in tourism festival activities. The existence of the Javanese Tondano village has not been supported by public facilities as a religious tourism destination area (Plangiten et al. 2024) and requires the support of social institutions, customary institutions, and village religious institutions as pioneers in the development of the village's potential. In order to be able to carry out the development of tourist attractions, it is necessary to improve management resources as well as cultural support and community participation (Ruru et al. 2022).

Potential is a power, strength, or ability that has the possibility of being developed (Plangiten et al., 2024). Non-physical potentials related to the existence of the community are related to its patterns and interactions, social institutions, educational institutions, and social organizations, as well as local government apparatus and officials (Abdurokhman, 2014). The ability of managers, the social environment, and

organizational culture in the management of tourist attractions is very important (Ruru et al. 2022). Social institutions, customary institutions, and village religious institutions, as public sector organizations in the village, must have the capacity or ability to support government programs. Public institutions in this village are expected to be media that can support the development of the religious tourism potential.

Public sector organizations are organizations that are oriented towards the public interest. Because of their orientation towards the public interest, these organizations are usually not profit-oriented as the ultimate goal. However, as an organization, the management process continues to run in public sector organizations. Public sector organizations have no purpose for financial gain, ownership is collective by the community, and cannot be traded. Therefore, public organizations function to provide services needed by the community in general (Nordiawan et al. 2012).

In order to carry out its functions properly and in accordance with the goals of the organization, adequate capabilities are needed from every public organization. Public organizations in the village are formed from the community and carry out organizational activities for the benefit of the community, such as social institutions, customary institutions, and religious institutions.

The capabilities of social institutions, customary institutions, and religious institutions in supporting government programs are important in realizing government through a real role. Organizational capability is the ability possessed by an organization to carry out its goals and functions to achieve specific goals that have been set beforehand. The deepest element of organizational capability is the resource capacity and leadership capacity possessed. Organizational capabilities can be measured based on leadership capabilities, strategic human resource capabilities, facilities and infrastructure capabilities, infrastructure, funds, organizational structure/system capabilities, and the environment (Mahyuddin, 2008).

In other references, it is also stated that leadership, human resources, organizational structure, facilities and infrastructure, finances, and location are important elements of the capabilities of public organizations (Lustiadi, 2018). In the development of knowledge that occurs today, public organizations are faced with challenges in developing capabilities. Digital transformation, changes in organizational culture, and changes in community behavior cannot be avoided by public organizations. Therefore, public organizations must adopt adaptive and innovative strategies to remain relevant and successful in the midst of various changes that occur (Lustiadi, Y. 2018). However, it does not leave the aspect of local wisdom and religious values that are owned in the scope of society as a wealth that has high value in the spirit of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*.

Zakiah (2018) highlights the importance of organizational structure, inter-agency coordination, and policy support in the success of public services, while Sadvaraz and Zulkarnain (2021) emphasize organizational capabilities in strategic planning, resource management, and stakeholder engagement. These findings are relevant for the context of religious tourism in Minahasa, as successful destination development does not only depend on strategic planning, but also requires a clear organizational structure, cross-sector coordination, and strengthening of the capacity of public organizations, including in local community empowerment and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Recent research on rural tourism development and multi-stakeholder collaboration provides an additional framework for the management of religious tourism in Minahasa.

Wahid, Rusliadi, and Syamsul Bahri (2025) indicated the role of local institutions in empowering communities to manage community-based tourist destinations. Alfiandri and Iriawan (2023) emphasized collaborative governance, while Wahidah (2022) highlighted the effectiveness of penta helix collaboration in increasing destination competitiveness. Jane and Pawitan (2025) added that local empowerment strategies through BUMDes can strengthen the capacity of planning, managing, and promoting digital destinations. Overall, these findings confirm that the development of religious tourism in Minahasa Regency requires strong public sector organizational capabilities, sustainable multi-stakeholder collaboration, and empowerment of local communities so that destinations can be managed effectively, sustainably, and competitively.

Various previous studies have emphasized that tourism is not only related to recreational activities, but also concerns cultural, social, and religious values that can strengthen people's identities (Siti, 2016; Plangiten et al., 2024). Religious tourism is even growing rapidly as a spirituality-based tourism option that involves ritual, ideological, intellectual, emotional, and consequential dimensions (Narulita et al., 2017; Muharromah & Anwar, 2020). In the context of North Sulawesi, especially Kampung Jawa Tondano, the potential for religious tourism has been identified, but it is still constrained by the lack of public facilities, institutional coordination, and support for human resources and infrastructure (Plangiten et al., 2024; Ruru et al., 2022). Previous studies have highlighted the potential of religious tourism from cultural and social aspects, while studies on the capabilities of public sector organizations in managing and developing religious tourism villages are still limited.

Therefore, this research presents a novelty by examining the role and capabilities of public sector organizations—including social, customary, and religious institutions—in supporting the development of religious tourism based on local wisdom in North Sulawesi, while responding to contemporary challenges such as digital transformation, resource limitations, and the demands of multi-stakeholder collaboration.

**Table 1.**  
**Literature Review Summary**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>Author &amp; Year</b>	<b>Focus of Study/Concept</b>	<b>Findings / Digest</b>	<b>Relevance to Research</b>
1	Plangiten, et al. (2024)	Tourism activities	Tourism is concerned with individual/group travel, tourism satisfaction, and religious tourism potential	Becoming the basis for understanding religious tourism in Kampung Jawa Tondano
2	Siti (2016)	Cultural, social, and religious values in tourism	Tourism has cultural, social, and religious interests; Regional Authority in Tourism Development	Explain the non-economic dimension of tourism and regional regulations
3	Muharromah & Anwar (2020)	Religious tourism	Religious tourism is growing as a spiritually based tourism option	Strengthening the urgency of religious tourism development in North Sulawesi
4	Narulita, et al. (2017)	Religious dimension in tourism	Religious dimensions: ritualistic, ideological,	Provides an analytical framework for the

Yes	Author & Year	Focus of Study/Concept	Findings / Digest	Relevance to Research
5	Ruru, et al. (2022)	Tourism management & community participation	intellectual, emotional, consequential The development of tourist attractions requires improving human resources, cultural support, and community participation	development of religious tourism Providing guidance on community-based religious tourism management strategies
6	Abdurokhman (2014)	Non-physical potential	Community potential related to interaction patterns, social institutions, education, and village apparatus	Emphasizing the role of communities and local institutions in tourism development
7	Nordiawan, et al. (2012)	Public sector organizations	Public organizations are oriented to the public interest, not for-profit, and run public services	Strengthening the theoretical basis of village public organizations that are relevant to social, customary, and religious institutions
8	Mahyuddin (2008)	Organizational capabilities	Capability elements: resource capacity, leadership, facilities, organizational structure, funds, environment	Used to assess the ability of public institutions to support tourism development
9	Lustiadi (2018)	Public organization capabilities	Important elements: leadership, human resources, organizational structure, facilities, finances, location; Adaptation to digital transformation and social change	Provide a perspective on the contemporary challenges of public organizations in managing religious tourism
10	Synthesis of various studies	Tourism & socio-religious dimension	Tourism is not only recreational but also cultural, social, and religious value; Religious tourism involves many dimensions.	Showing a research gap: the capabilities of public organizations in the development of religious tourism in villages are still limited

Source: Literature Summary, 2025.

To enrich the research perspective, it is also important to refer to international studies that highlight the capabilities of organizations in tourism governance. Saarinen and Hall (2025) in *the Handbook on Tourism Governance* emphasize that the capabilities of public organizations, including aspects of policy coordination, resource capacity, and the ability to build networks between stakeholders, are key factors in the success of tourism destination management. In line with that, Bramwell and Lane (2011) emphasized that sustainable tourism governance requires organizational capacity that is able to integrate economic, social, and environmental interests in a balanced manner. Hall (2011) also highlights that policy failures in tourism are often caused by

weak organizational learning and limited institutional adaptation to change, thus reinforcing the urgency of developing adaptive public organizational capabilities.

Furthermore, Beritelli, Bieger, and Laesser (2007) show that organizational capabilities in building collaboration between destination actors are an important prerequisite for the effectiveness of tourism governance, especially in the context of complex destinations and involving many stakeholders. Dredge and Whitford (2013) added that inclusive tourism governance requires the capacity of public organizations to actively involve local communities in the planning and decision-making process, so that policy legitimacy can be maintained. Thus, the findings of this study can be aligned with the international literature that emphasizes the importance of the capabilities of public organizations in supporting the sustainability of tourist destination development.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research was carried out in Kampung Jawa, North Tondano District, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, which was chosen because it has the potential for religious tourism villages with significant historical and spiritual value. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design (Sugiono, 2020) to analyze the capabilities of public sector organizations in the development of religious tourism villages, as well as identify the opportunities and challenges that accompany them.

The case study approach allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the factors that affect public sector capabilities, including aspects of planning, resources, coordination, and digital promotion. This research aims to produce a scientific description of the capabilities of public sector organizations, the challenges faced, and the opportunities that can be utilized, so that the findings can be a reference for local governments in designing more effective policies to support the development of religious tourism as an economic potential while strengthening local cultural identity.

The research informants were selected purposively, namely those who are considered to have relevant knowledge, experience, and information related to the capabilities of public sector organizations in the development of religious tourism villages in Kampung Jawa, North Tondano District, Minahasa Regency. The selection of informants is carried out to ensure that the data obtained reflects the perspectives of various parties involved in the management and development of religious tourism. The elements of informants include:

1. Elements of the Minahasa Regency Tourism and Culture Office, which has a role in planning, coordination, and policies for the development of religious tourism at the regional level.
2. Elements of the Javanese Village Government Leadership play a role in the implementation of religious tourism development programs and activities at the local level and interact directly with the community.
3. Elements of Leadership of Social Organizations, Customary Organizations, and Religious Organizations in Java Village, who are involved in the management of religious tourism potential, the preservation of cultural values, and the empowerment of local communities.

The approach of interviewing informants from these three elements allows the research to obtain comprehensive data on the capabilities of the public sector, the challenges faced, and opportunities for the development of religious tourism villages, thus supporting the validity and depth of the analysis. In this study, the data collection technique was carried out with a qualitative approach to obtain in-depth information related to the capabilities of public sector

organizations in the development of religious tourism potential in Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province. The data collection techniques used include:

### **1. In-Depth Interviews**

Interviews were conducted face-to-face with informants who had knowledge and roles related to the object of research. These interviews are guided by pre-compiled interview guidelines, so that each question is relevant to the research objectives. This technique aims to explore the views, experiences, and perceptions of informants regarding the capabilities of public organizations in the management of religious tourism.

### **2. Observation**

Observations were made through direct observation in the field of public organizations involved, including social organizations, customary organizations, and religious organizations. The focus of observation includes aspects of leadership, human resources, organizational structure, facilities and infrastructure, and financial management. This technique allows researchers to obtain contextual data and supports the validity of information obtained from interviews.

### **3. Literature Studies (Secondary Data Documentation)**

Literature studies are carried out by collecting documents and secondary data relevant to the research object, such as village profiles, organizational reports, and scientific publications available through electronic sources, including Google Scholar. This technique is used to complement the primary data, provide additional perspective, and strengthen the research analysis.

With the combination of these three data collection techniques, this study can produce comprehensive and valid information about the capabilities of public sector organizations in supporting the development of religious tourism potential in Minahasa Regency.

The data analysis technique in this study refers to the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (Sugiyono, 2020). The analysis process is carried out through three main stages, namely: (1) data reduction, namely the selection process, concentration, simplification, and organization of raw data obtained from the field; (2) data display, which is compiling information that has been reduced in the form of narratives, matrices, tables, or charts so as to facilitate the extraction of meaning; and (3) conclusion drawing and verification, which is the process of finding patterns, relationships, and meanings of the analyzed data, then being verified repeatedly to maintain the consistency and validity of research findings.

To increase the validity of the findings, this study applied source triangulation as a data verification strategy. Triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained through in-depth interviews, field observations, and literature studies, so that each data collected can be tested for consistency from various perspectives. This process allows researchers to identify the suitability and differences of views between informants, while strengthening the objectivity of the analysis. Thus, the application of source triangulation not only ensures the reliability of the data, but also enriches the depth of interpretation of the capabilities of public sector organizations in the development of religious tourism village in Kampung Jawa, North Tondano District, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province.

Regarding the research method used, it is stated that the novelty of this research is in the application of qualitative methods of case studies in the context of the development of religious tourism villages in Minahasa Regency, which is still rarely researched. This research integrates multi-stakeholder perspectives, including tourism offices, village governments, and social,

customary, and religious organizations, thus providing a comprehensive understanding of the capabilities of public sector organizations. In addition, the focus of the analysis is not only on existing conditions, but also on identifying opportunities, challenges, and strategies for strengthening organizational capacity in utilizing economic potential and local cultural identity. Thus, although the research method is conventional, the novelty of this research emerges from a specific context, a multi-stakeholder approach, and a thematic focus that emphasizes tourism governance based on local wisdom, which contributes to the literature and practice of religious tourism development in the region.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The capabilities of public sector organizations are an important concept in understanding the ability of government institutions to plan, manage, and implement development policies, including in the tourism sector. This capability is not only related to the availability of human resources and budget, but also to the capacity to formulate strategic visions, develop long-term plans, and ensure the sustainability of development programs. Bryson (2018) emphasizes that strategic planning in the public sector must be able to integrate short-term and long-term goals, as well as involve stakeholders in a participatory manner so that development programs are more effective. In the context of tourism, this means that local governments are required not only to create a momentary project-based tourism program, but also to develop *a sustainable and adaptive tourism* master plan.

In addition, the development of religious-based tourist destinations cannot be separated from the collaborative *governance model*. Ansell and Gash (2007) explain that collaborative governance is built through shared forums, intensive communication, and trusting relationships among the actors involved, including governments, the private sector, and communities. The success of collaborative governance is greatly influenced by the institutional capacity and consistency of commitment of all parties involved (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). In the development of religious tourism, collaborative mechanisms allow for synergy between economic interests, cultural preservation, and the fulfillment of the spiritual needs of tourists.

Religious tourism itself has become one of the growing global trends. Collins-Kreiner (2016) said that religious tourism is a unique form of *heritage tourism* because it combines spiritual, cultural, and historical dimensions. Recent studies emphasize that the success of religious tourism management is highly determined by *service quality* and the ability of destinations to provide a holistic interpretation of inherent religious and cultural values (Rinschede, 2020). This means that religious tourism is not only seen as a recreational activity, but also as a spiritual experience and deeper cultural learning.

In the context of community-based development, the concept of *community-based tourism* (CBT) is one of the widely used approaches. Goodwin and Santilli (2009) explained that CBT aims to empower local communities as the main actors in destination management, so that economic and social benefits can be distributed equitably. However, the success of CBT is not automatic, as it is often constrained by limited community capacity, access to markets, and government policy support. Therefore, the role of the public sector is very important as a facilitator, regulator, and guarantor of public access to resources and technical support (Manyara & Jones, 2007).

In line with these developments, tourism trends in Indonesia are also moving towards the development of tourist villages and community-based destinations. *The tourism village program* launched by the government is an opportunity for regions that have the potential for cultural and religious tourism to develop locally-based tourism attractions. The UNDP report (2021)

emphasizes that strengthening infrastructure, increasing human resource capacity, and digitizing promotions are key factors in strengthening regional tourism competitiveness. This is particularly relevant for the Minahasa Regency, which has the potential for religious tourism villages but still faces limitations in basic infrastructure and promotion.

In addition, the development of digital technology is also a strategic factor in the development of tourist destinations. Buhalis and Sinarta (2019) emphasized that digital marketing allows tourist destinations to build an image (*branding*), reach tourists globally, and manage the visitor experience more effectively. In the post-pandemic era, tourism digitalization has even become an important instrument for the recovery of the tourism sector (Sigala, 2020). Therefore, local governments need to develop organizational capabilities in the field of digital marketing, ranging from content curation, social media management, to the use of tourist data to support evidence-based planning. The development of religious tourism villages in Minahasa Regency requires strengthening the capabilities of public sector organizations in various aspects: strategic planning, collaborative governance, community empowerment, infrastructure development, and digitalization of promotions. From the data collection, information was obtained that:

### **1. Leadership Elements of the Minahasa Regency Tourism and Culture Office**

An informant from the Minahasa Regency Tourism and Culture Office explained that the development of religious tourism has become one of the agendas in regional development planning, although it is still short-term and has not been fully integrated into the sustainable tourism *master plan*. The agency acknowledges that there are limitations in human resources and budget capacity, so that the management of religious tourism is still predominantly project-based. However, there is a commitment from local governments to improve governance in the future by encouraging multi-stakeholder collaboration. According to the informant, one of the main challenges is the lack of supporting infrastructure, such as road access, public facilities, and tourist information centers. On the promotion side, they assessed that digitalization is still weak, so that the branding of religious tourism destinations in Minahasa is less competitive with other regions. However, they see great opportunities with the increasing trend of spirituality-based tourism and the support of central government policies.

### **2. Elements of the Government Leadership of Kampung Jawa, North Tondano District.**

Informants from the Kampung Jawa government said that the local community has played a role in maintaining the preservation of religious sites in their area, but involvement in tourism management aspects is still limited. The village government considers that collaboration between local governments, communities, and the private sector has not been consistent, because so far, cooperation has been more dominant when holding religious or cultural events. They highlighted the limitations of infrastructure, such as road access and basic tourism facilities (toilets, accommodation, information centers), which have an impact on the comfort of tourists. The informant also revealed that the younger generation has not been active in the promotion or innovation of religious tourism, even though their role is very important in the use of digital media. In their view, the empowerment of local communities and the increase of tourism awareness are key factors in the development of religious tourism in North Tondano.

### **3. Elements of Social, Customary, and Religious Organization Leaders in Kampung Jawa, North Tondano District**

Informants from social, customary, and religious organizations emphasized that the spiritual and cultural values inherent in religious sites in Minahasa have great potential to attract tourists. They stated that the community is used to maintaining and preserving these sites, but

participation in tourism management, including the development of tour packages or digital promotions, is still limited. They highlight the importance of parallel multi-stakeholder collaboration, where communities play a complementary role, but also as a key actor in governance. The informant emphasized that religious tourism must be developed without eliminating the inherent sacred value, so that the community-based tourism approach becomes very relevant. According to them, one of the biggest obstacles is the low awareness of tourism in maintaining cleanliness and friendliness to visitors. Even so, they see a great opportunity with the increasing interest of tourists in spiritual and culture-based tourism, so a more directed strategy is needed in digitizing promotions and empowering the younger generation as innovation agents.

### **1. Planning Capabilities**

The results of the study show that the planning for the development of religious tourism in Minahasa Regency has begun to be considered and included in the regional development agenda. Several religious tourism programs and activities have been scheduled in the local government's work plan, indicating institutional awareness to harness cultural and religious potential as a source of local economic growth (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Putri & Pratama, 2024).

However, the findings also indicate that planning is still short-term and has not been fully integrated into the sustainable tourism masterplan. The limited long-term planning can be seen from the lack of synchronization between related agencies, the lack of digital promotion strategies, and the lack of focus on preserving cultural values and empowering local communities (Ruru, Lengkong, & Goni, 2024; Bryson, 2018). This condition indicates that although the public sector is starting to pay attention to the development of religious tourism, strategic planning capabilities still need to be improved.

From a public management perspective, this is in line with *strategic planning* theory, which emphasizes the importance of the public sector's ability to formulate coordinated, comprehensive, and sustainable goals, strategies, and action plans (Bryson, 2018; Ansell & Gash, 2007). Effective planning includes not only short-term program planning, but also *cross-sectoral coordination*, resource needs analysis, and socio-economic impact evaluation (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015).

In addition, the tourism literature confirms that the sustainable development of religious destinations requires adaptive and responsive planning to tourist dynamics, including spiritual tourism trends, pandemics, and socio-cultural changes (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Sigala, 2020). Thus, strengthening planning capabilities is an important step so that the development of religious tourism in Minahasa can provide optimal benefits for local communities, support economic growth, and preserve local cultural identity (Collins-Kreiner, 2016; Plangiten, Ruru, & Pangemanan, 2024).

### **2. Management Capabilities**

This study found that the local government of Minahasa Regency shows a high commitment to the development of religious tourism. This can be seen from the support of policies, programs, and activities that are focused on utilizing the potential of the village and increasing tourist visits (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Ruru, Londa, Palar, & Rompas, 2022). However, these commitments are still limited in terms of human resource capacity and budget allocation, so that the management of religious tourism often runs on separate projects and is not based on a sustainable management system (Vani, Priscilia, & Adiinto, 2020; Bryson, 2018).

The results of the observation also show that the current management is more ad hoc, for example, focusing on certain tourism events or activities, without any long-term monitoring, evaluation, or integration mechanism. As a result, the development of religious tourism has not been able to guarantee economic sustainability and the preservation of local cultural values (Plangiten, Ruru, & Pangemanan, 2024; Putri & Pratama, 2024).

In the context of collaborative governance theory, effective management capabilities require the involvement of multi-stakeholders, including both governments, local communities, social/customary/religious organizations, and the private sector, to design, implement, and evaluate programs in a participatory manner (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). This model emphasizes coordination between actors, a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities, and a continuous consultation mechanism to achieve common goals.

In addition, the tourism literature shows that community-based destination management can improve economic and social sustainability if it is equipped with support for human resource capacity, infrastructure, and an integrated management system (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Manyara & Jones, 2007; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). Therefore, strengthening management capabilities in Minahasa must include increasing human resource capacity, adequate budget allocation, and adopting collaborative mechanisms that make the development of religious tourism more systematic and sustainable.

### **3. Infrastructure Availability**

The results of the study show that accessibility to religious tourism locations in Minahasa Regency is still limited, both in terms of road conditions, public transportation, and supporting facilities for tourist trips (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Ruru, Londa, Palar, & Rompas, 2022). Some tourist villages have strategic locations, but inadequate physical infrastructure conditions limit the mobility of tourists, especially for domestic and international tourists who need comfort and safety during the trip.

In addition, tourism supporting facilities such as public toilets, information centers, accommodation, and recreational facilities are still minimal. The limitations of these facilities not only reduce the comfort of tourists but also affect the perception of the professionalism and quality of tourist destinations (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). Lack of adequate facilities can negatively impact tourist satisfaction, which in turn affects the image and reputation of Minahasa religious tourism in the eyes of visitors (Sigala, 2020; Collins-Kreiner, 2016).

The tourism literature emphasizes that the development of infrastructure that is integrated with destination promotion and management strategies is an important factor to improve the tourist experience, maintain repeat visits, and support the sustainability of the local economy (Manyara & Jones, 2007; Rinschede, 2020). Therefore, strengthening the capabilities of the public sector in providing adequate infrastructure needs to be carried out systematically, starting from planning road construction and transportation, providing public facilities, and integrating with information services and digitizing destination promotion.

### **4. Multi-stakeholder collaboration**

This study found that collaboration between the government, the community, and the private sector in the development of religious tourism in Minahasa Regency has begun to form, but it is still sporadic and inconsistent. This multi-stakeholder cooperation generally appears at a specific level of activity or event, such as religious festivals, tour guide training, or limited promotional

programs, so that it is not yet part of a long-term governance system (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Ruru, Londa, Palar, & Rompas, 2022).

In the context of public governance, these findings are in line with *the collaborative governance model* put forward by Ansell & Gash (2007), which emphasizes the importance of the involvement of all parties—government, society, and the private sector—in the participatory process of planning, implementation, and evaluation of policies. Effective collaboration not only increases management capacity but also strengthens social legitimacy, innovation in tourism product development, and destination sustainability (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015; Bryson, 2018).

The tourism literature also emphasizes that public-private–community partnerships (PPCP) are key strategies in increasing the competitiveness of destinations and empowering local communities (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Manyara & Jones, 2007; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). With a structured PPCP, the development of religious tourism can include aspects of strategic planning, human resource management, provision of facilities, and integrated promotion and marketing. It is important that the development of religious tourism in Minahasa is not only a momentary project, but also a sustainable governance system that provides economic, social, and cultural benefits to the local community (Collins-Kreiner, 2016; Plangiten, Ruru, & Pangemanan, 2024).

### **5. Local Community Participation**

The results of the study show that local communities in Minahasa Regency play an active role in maintaining and caring for religious sites, such as churches, ancestral tombs, and pilgrimage sites, so that the preservation of cultural and spiritual values is maintained (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Ruru, Londa, Palar, & Rompas, 2022). However, community participation in the overall management of religious tourism is still limited, especially in terms of planning, operational management, and destination promotion.

In addition, the younger generation has not been actively involved in digital promotion activities, tourism product innovations, or the development of creative programs to attract tourists, so the potential of local human resources has not been optimally utilized (Vani, Priscilia, & Adianto, 2020; Putri & Pratama, 2024).

This phenomenon is relevant to the concept of community-based tourism (CBT), which emphasizes community empowerment as the main actor in the management of tourist destinations. According to Goodwin & Santilli (2009) and Manyara & Jones (2007), the success of CBT is not only measured by the increase in tourist visits, but also by the increase in local capacity, the economic well-being of the community, and the preservation of local culture. Thus, strengthening community participation, especially through the involvement of the younger generation, tourism education, and destination management training, is an important strategy so that the development of religious tourism in Minahasa is more sustainable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of local communities (Collins-Kreiner, 2016; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019).

### **6. Promotion and Digitalization**

The results of the study show that the promotion of religious tourism in Minahasa Regency is still carried out traditionally, such as through banners, brochures, and local print media. The use of digital media, social media, or online platforms for destination marketing is still limited, so the potential to reach a wider audience, both national and international, is not optimal (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Ruru, Londa, Palar, & Rompas, 2022).

In addition, the lack of destination branding has caused religious tourism in Minahasa to be less known compared to other areas in North Sulawesi, such as Likupang or Tomohon, which have utilized digital promotion and nation branding strategies more effectively (Simanjuntak, 2019; Sigala, 2020). The lack of a clear identity and integrated communication strategy has implications for the low competitiveness of destinations and difficulties in attracting tourists from a wider segment.

Modern tourism literature emphasizes that the digitization of destination promotion and branding is a key strategy to increase visibility, attract tourists, and strengthen the image of the destination (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Rinschede, 2020; Manyara & Jones, 2007). The use of social media, official websites, tour guide applications, and multimedia-based content can help reach young and international tourist segments while increasing local community participation in promotion through creative content (Vani, Priscilia, & Adianto, 2020). Thus, strengthening digital promotion strategies is an important step so that the development of religious tourism in Minahasa is more competitive, sustainable, and able to attract tourist visits consistently.

## 7. Development Challenges

This study found that the development of religious tourism in Minahasa Regency still faces a number of structural and operational challenges. First, there is weak coordination between government agencies, both at the district and sub-district levels, so that tourism development programs often run partially and have not been integrated. This condition causes duplication of activities, lack of planning synchronization, and delays in program implementation that should increase the attractiveness of destinations (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Bryson, 2018; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015).

Second, the limitation of the tourism budget at the regional level is the main obstacle to infrastructure development, human resource training, and destination promotion. Limited budget allocations often cause tourism development activities to be short-term and unsustainable projects, resulting in less than optimal economic and social impacts on local communities (Vani, Priscilia, & Adianto, 2020; Plangiten, Ruru, & Pangemanan, 2024).

Third, the low awareness of the public in maintaining the cleanliness of the environment, facilities, and the quality of tourism services is an additional challenge. Limited community participation in operational aspects and destination promotion can affect the tourist experience, reduce satisfaction levels, and reduce the image of Minahasa religious tourism compared to other destinations in North Sulawesi (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Manyara & Jones, 2007; Collins-Kreiner, 2016).

Based on the literature, effective management of religious tourism requires cross-sectoral collaboration, resource capacity building, and community education to create a clean environment and quality services. This is in line with *the community-based tourism and collaborative governance approach* that emphasizes active community participation and coordination between stakeholders as a destination sustainability strategy (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019).

## 8. Development Opportunities

The results of the study show that the development of religious tourism in Minahasa Regency has considerable potential, especially supported by the increasing interest of tourists in spiritual and culture-based destinations. The current trend of spiritual tourism is not only in demand by domestic tourists, but also by international tourists looking for authentic religious and cultural experiences (Collins-Kreiner, 2016; Rinschede, 2020).

In addition, the central government's policy support related to sustainable tourism and the development of tourist villages provides opportunities for local governments to utilize local resources more systematically. This policy includes human resource training programs, providing incentives for destination managers, and funding for tourism supporting infrastructure (UNDP, 2021; Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024). This support for government regulations and programs can strengthen the capacity of the public sector and facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration, including community, private, and local organizations, in developing sustainable religious destinations.

In addition, many villages in Minahasa have historical religious sites, such as old churches, ancestral tombs, and pilgrimage sites, which can be used as excellent destinations. This potential allows the development of religious tourism packages that are integrated with cultural promotion, ecotourism, and educational experiences, thereby increasing tourism attraction and local economic contribution (Plangiten, Ruru, & Pangemanan, 2024; Putri & Pratama, 2024).

By taking advantage of this opportunity, the development of religious tourism can be a source of sustainable economic growth, while strengthening local cultural identity and involving communities as key actors in destination governance (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). The right strategy includes increasing human resource capacity, strengthening digital branding, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and participatory and sustainable management of local resources.

This research provides an academic contribution by enriching the literature on the capabilities of the public sector in tourism governance based on local wisdom. The findings of the study show the dimensions of public organization capabilities, such as strategic planning, management, infrastructure, multi-stakeholder collaboration, community participation, and digitalization of promotions, which play an important role in the development of religious tourism at the regional level (Plangiten, Tulusan, & Lengkong, 2024; Bryson, 2018; Ansell & Gash, 2007).

In addition, this study produced a model of analysis of the capabilities of public organizations in the regional tourism sector, which can be used as a reference for future research related to *community-based tourism governance* and strengthening public sector capacity in the context of local development (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Collins-Kreiner, 2016; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). This model helps to understand the linkages between public organization capabilities, multi-stakeholder collaboration, community participation, and the sustainability of tourism destinations.

Based on the findings of the study, the development of religious tourism in Minahasa Regency requires a number of practical steps to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of destinations. First, it is necessary to strengthen the capacity of long-term strategic planning, including the integration of religious tourism into the sustainable tourism master plan with cross-sector coordination and periodic monitoring (Bryson, 2018; Plangiten, Ruru, & Pangemanan, 2024). Second, improving infrastructure and accessibility is a priority, including improving roads, transportation, supporting facilities, and adequate public facilities to improve tourist comfort and destination competitiveness (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Rinschede, 2020).

Furthermore, the digitization of promotions through the use of social media, official websites, and online tourism platforms needs to be improved so that destination branding becomes more effective and able to reach national and international tourists (Sigala, 2020; Vani, Priscilia, & Adiarto, 2020). In addition, the empowerment of local communities and the involvement of the younger generation are very important, for example, through training, tourism education, and

participation in the promotion and development of tourism innovations, so that destinations are managed in a participatory and sustainable manner (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Manyara & Jones, 2007).

Similarly, strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration between the government, the private sector, and local communities, according to *the collaborative governance framework*, is a key strategy to create synergies between actors, clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure the sustainability of the development of religious tourism destinations (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). The implementation of this recommendation is expected to make religious tourism in Minahasa more competitive, sustainable, and provide economic, social, and cultural benefits for the local community.

**Table 2.**  
**Analysis Summary**

Aspects	Findings in the Field	Relevant Analysis/Theory	Practical Recommendations
<b>Planning Capabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Religious tourism planning has been included in the regional development agenda.</li> <li>- It is still short-term, not yet integrated into the sustainable master plan.</li> </ul>	<p>The importance of <i>public sector strategic planning</i> (Bryson, 2018).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a <i>long-term religious tourism master plan</i>.</li> <li>- Integration into the <i>RPJMD and sustainable tourism policies</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Management Capabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The government is highly committed, but limited in human resources and budget.</li> <li>- Management is still project-based, not yet a sustainable system.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Collaborative governance model</i> (Ansell &amp; Gash, 2007).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing human resource capacity through training.</li> <li>- Strengthening performance-based governance mechanisms.</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure Availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited access (roads, transportation, supporting facilities).</li> <li>- Tourist facilities (toilets, information centers, accommodation) are still minimal.</li> <li>- Reducing <i>tourist satisfaction</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Infrastructure is the key to the quality of tourism destinations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basic infrastructure investment.</li> <li>- Improvement of public facilities to support tourism.</li> </ul>
<b>Multi-stakeholder collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are government, community, and private partnerships, but they are not consistent.</li> <li>- Collaboration is more dominant at the event level.</li> </ul>	<p>The Concept of <i>Public-Private-Community Partnership (PPCP)</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a multi-stakeholder partnership forum.</li> <li>- Establish a clear role of each actor in tourism governance.</li> </ul>
<b>Local Community Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The community maintains religious sites, but is limited in management.</li> <li>- The younger generation is less involved in promotion/innovation.</li> </ul>	<p>The concept of <i>community-based tourism</i> (Goodwin, 2009).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community empowerment through <i>Pokdarwis</i>.</li> <li>- Involving the younger generation in digital promotion.</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion and Digitalization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion is still traditional (banners, brochures).</li> <li>- Lack of <i>destination branding</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Digitalization of promotion expands the tourism market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of official tourism digital platforms.</li> <li>- Optimization of social media and <i>destination branding</i>.</li> </ul>

Aspects	Findings in the Field	Relevant Analysis/Theory	Practical Recommendations
<b>Development Challenges</b>	- Weak inter-agency coordination. - Limited budget. - Low public awareness related to services.	The classic challenge of tourism governance.	- Forming a cross-agency coordination unit. - Optimizing the tourism budget. - Tourism awareness education for the community.
<b>Development Opportunities</b>	- Interest of spiritual & cultural tourists increases. - Central policy support. - Many villages with historical religious sites.	<i>Cultural &amp; Spiritual Tourism Development.</i>	- Developing superior religious tourism villages. - Synergy with national tourism programs.
<b>Academic Implications</b>	- Enriching the literature on public sector capabilities. - A model of analysis of the capabilities of regional tourism organizations.	Contribution to the theory of <i>public management &amp; tourism governance.</i>	- Developing cross-regional research for comparison. - Integration of results into tourism theory based on local wisdom.
<b>Practical Implications / Recommendations</b>	- Need to strengthen strategic planning. - Improve infrastructure. - Digitalization of promotion. - Community empowerment. - Strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration.	Collaborative governance as an implementation framework.	- Recommendations to government, community, the private sector: increasing capacity, infrastructure, collaboration, and digitalization for sustainability.

Source: Analysis Summary, 2025

This study found that the planning capabilities of religious tourism development in Minahasa Regency have begun to be included in the regional development agenda. However, based on interviews with elements of the leadership of the Tourism and Culture Office, the planning is still short-term and has not been fully integrated into the *sustainable tourism master plan*. This condition shows that there is a gap between strategic needs and actual policy implementation. This finding was in line with the view of Bryson (2018) that emphasized strategic planning in the public sector, which must be long-term, integrated, and involve various stakeholders in order to be able to provide a sustainable development direction.

In terms of management capabilities, informants from the Tourism Office emphasized the commitment of the local government to supporting religious tourism. However, limited human resources and budgets make management more predominantly project-based than sustainable management systems. This indicates the need for more collaborative governance, as explained by Ansell and Gash (2007) in the concept of *collaborative governance*, where the success of public sector management is largely determined by the extent to which government, community, and private sector actors are able to build sustainable partnerships.

Meanwhile, interviews with elements of the Jawa Village government revealed that the infrastructure supporting religious tourism is still limited, both in terms of road access and basic facilities such as toilets, information centers, and accommodation. This condition has an impact on low *tourist satisfaction* and the image of religious tourist destinations in Minahasa. In addition, the participation of the younger generation in tourism development is still minimal, especially in terms of digital promotion. In fact, according to Goodwin (2009), the development of *community-based tourism* requires the active involvement of local communities, especially

the younger generation, so that tourism management not only preserves cultural values but also creates innovations that are relevant to the needs of the modern tourism market.

Informants from elements of social, customary, and religious organizations emphasized that local communities have a strong tradition of maintaining religious sites, but their involvement in the tourism management system is still limited. They emphasized the importance of parallel multi-stakeholder collaboration, so that the community is not only positioned as a complement, but also as key agents in governance. This reaffirms the importance of *collaborative governance frameworks* (Ansell & Gash, 2007) that enable the creation of participatory and inclusive governance.

From the perspective of promotion and digitalization, the results of the interviews show that the promotion of religious tourism in Minahasa is still carried out traditionally (banners, brochures), so that its competitiveness is inferior to that of other destinations in North Sulawesi. The lack of destination branding weakens Minahasa's position in the tourism market. The informant assessed that the use of digital media can be an important strategy to reach national and international tourists. This is in line with the global trend of tourism that emphasizes the integration of digitalization as a marketing strategy and the improvement of the tourist experience.

From these findings, it can be seen that the main challenges in the development of religious tourism in Minahasa are weak inter-agency coordination, budget limitations, low infrastructure, and a lack of active participation of the community and the younger generation. However, on the other hand, there are significant opportunities, such as increasing tourist interest in spiritual and culture-based tourism, as well as central government policy support through sustainable tourism programs and tourism villages.

Thus, the results of this study enrich the literature on the capabilities of the public sector in tourism governance based on local wisdom. Academically, this research supports the Bryson (2018) framework on the importance of *strategic planning, the collaborative governance* theory of Ansell and Gash (2007), and *the community-based tourism* model (Goodwin, 2009). Practically, this study emphasizes the urgency of strengthening the capacity of long-term planning, infrastructure development, digitalization of promotions, empowerment of local communities, and strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration as the foundation of religious tourism governance in Minahasa.

## CONCLUSIONS

This research shows that the capabilities of public sector organizations in the development of religious tourism villages in Minahasa Regency are still in the developing stage. Planning for the development of religious tourism has begun to be integrated into the regional development agenda, but it is not yet fully long-term-oriented. The management aspect is characterized by the commitment of the local government, but the limitation of human resources and budget is still the main challenge. The supporting infrastructure for religious tourism destinations is also not fully adequate, thus reducing the attraction and comfort of tourists. In terms of collaboration, there are cooperation initiatives between the government, the community, and the private sector, although they have not been established consistently. The main obstacles include weak inter-agency coordination, a lack of digital-based promotion, and low involvement of the younger generation. However, development opportunities remain open through increasing tourist interest in religious tourism, support for sustainable tourism policies, and the potential of villages with historical religious sites.

These findings have important implications for policymakers at the regional and national levels. First, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of strategic planning in the public sector so that the development of religious tourism has a more sustainable direction. Second, investment in basic infrastructure, such as road access, public facilities, and means of transportation, is essential to improve the quality of destinations. Third, the use of digital technology in the promotion of religious tourism needs to be strengthened in order to expand market reach and attract the interest of younger generations of tourists. Fourth, a more structured multi-stakeholder collaboration mechanism is needed between the government, the community, the private sector, and religious institutions to ensure the sustainability of development programs.

This research opens up space for further research with several directions of development. First, comparative studies can be carried out with other regions that have succeeded in developing religious tourism, to obtain best practices that can be adapted in the Minahasa Regency. Second, quantitative research with a survey approach can complement qualitative findings by providing a statistical overview of the perceptions of tourists, the community, and stakeholders. Third, focusing on the role of the young generation and local communities in supporting digital-based religious tourism can be an important study to strengthen community participation. Thus, further research is expected to enrich academic understanding and provide more applicable policy recommendations.

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