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The Potential Of Sport Tourism Touring Jelasak As A Tourist Attraction And Driver Of The Economy Of The Community In Kerinci Regency

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Abstract
Sport tourism is a form of tourism development that integrates sports activities with tourism experiences and has the potential to stimulate the local economy. The Touring Jelasak activity in Kerinci Regency represents a community-based motorcycle tourism initiative that utilizes natural and social potential as a tourist attraction. This study aims to analyze the potential of Touring Jelasak as a sport tourism attraction and its contribution to driving community economic development in Kerinci Regency. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with event organizers, motorcycle community members, local residents, and relevant stakeholders. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that Touring Jelasak has significant potential as a sport tourism product, viewed from aspects of natural beauty, community participation, and economic opportunities created for local communities, such as increased income for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), transportation services, and other supporting tourism sectors. However, the development of Touring Jelasak still requires infrastructure support, sustainable promotion, and collaboration between local government and community groups. Proper and structured management is expected to position Touring Jelasak as a sustainable driver of tourism and community economic development in Kerinci Regency.

Keywords: Sport tourism; Touring Jelasak; tourist attraction; community economy; Kerinci Regency

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INTRODUCTION

Sport tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the modern tourism industry. This concept combines sports activities with tourism experiences, where tourists not only act as spectators but also as active participants in challenging and recreational activities (Purba, 2023). Various regions in Indonesia have begun to utilize sport tourism potential to attract both domestic and international tourists. Through sport tourism, regions not only showcase their natural beauty but also generate significant economic impacts for local communities (Arisman et al., 2024).

Indonesia possesses geographical advantages and natural diversity that strongly support the development of sport tourism. Activities such as trail running, rafting, rock climbing, and motocross have increasingly emerged across many regions (Kristiyanto, 2016).

Local governments and communities are becoming more aware that sport tourism development can serve as an effective strategy to expand tourism destinations and improve community welfare. One region with considerable potential in this field is Kerinci Regency in Jambi Province (Ningsih et al., 2025).

Kerinci Regency is well known for its rich natural tourism assets, including Lake Kerinci, Mount Kerinci, and the Kerinci Seblat National Park. In addition to its natural attractions, the people of Kerinci demonstrate a strong enthusiasm for developing community-based adventure activities (Mardianis & Syartika, 2018). The combination of challenging natural landscapes and a hospitable local culture makes Kerinci a promising area for sport tourism development, particularly touring and motorcycle adventure activities.

One activity currently gaining popularity in Kerinci is Touring Jelasak (Jelajah Sakti Alam Kerinci), a touring event that combines adventure, nature exploration, and automotive sports (Rondonuwu et al., 2023). This activity attracts participants from both within and outside the region to explore Kerinci's challenging and scenic routes. Touring Jelasak not only serves as a channel for motorcycle enthusiasts to pursue their hobbies but also functions as an effective tourism promotion medium to introduce Kerinci's natural and cultural potential to a wider audience. This phenomenon reflects the strong potential of sport tourism to enhance destination appeal while stimulating the local economy (Purwanto et al., 2024).

Beyond its role as a tourist attraction, Touring Jelasak also generates positive economic impacts for surrounding communities. During the event, service sectors such as accommodation, culinary businesses, fuel supply, and MSMEs experience increased demand. Many regions in Indonesia have successfully stimulated local economies and provided tangible benefits to communities through sport tourism events (Lupikawaty & Wilianto, 2013). Local communities gain opportunities to participate as tourism service providers, creating significant economic circulation. This demonstrates that sport tourism can serve as a viable alternative for empowering rural economies (Anam et al., 2025).

However, despite its considerable potential, Touring Jelasak has not yet been optimally managed as part of a regional sport tourism program. Unstructured management, limited promotion, and insufficient infrastructure support remain key challenges (Arisman et al., 2024). Moreover, sport tourism events such as touring warrant further analysis to assess their contribution to tourist interest (Julian & Merutu, 2024). Therefore, an in-depth study is needed to explore how the potential of Touring Jelasak can be developed sustainably to support tourism and community economic development in Kerinci Regency.

This study aims to analyze the potential of Touring Jelasak as a form of sport tourism capable of serving as both a tourist attraction and a driver of community economic development in Kerinci Regency. The findings are expected to provide strategic insights for local governments, tourism stakeholders, and local communities in developing Touring Jelasak in a more professional, sustainable, and competitive manner. Thus, sport tourism can become a key pillar in tourism development and community welfare improvement in Kerinci.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. The qualitative approach was selected to gain an in-depth understanding of the potential of Touring Jelasak sport tourism as a tourist attraction and its role in driving community economic development in Kerinci Regency. According to Sugiyono (2019), qualitative research is used to examine natural conditions, with the researcher acting as the main instrument in data collection. The descriptive design aims to systematically and factually describe phenomena based on field data.

The research was conducted in Koto Periang Village, Kayu Aro District, Kerinci Regency, Jambi Province, with a focus on the locations and routes of the Touring Jelasak activities as well as the surrounding community environment affected by these activities. The research was carried out for approximately one month, from mid-October to mid-November 2025.

Research subjects included individuals and groups directly involved in and affected by Touring Jelasak. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique commonly used in qualitative research to identify individuals with relevant knowledge and experience (Moleong, 2018). Informants included event organizers, motorcycle community members, MSME actors, local residents, and representatives from local government or related agencies.

Data were collected primarily through in-depth, semi-structured interviews to obtain comprehensive information on tourism potential, economic impacts, and development challenges and opportunities. According to Esterberg (as cited in Sugiyono, 2019), interviews are meetings between two people to exchange information and ideas through questions and answers. Data collection was supported by field observations and documentation, including photographs, activity records, and related archives. The primary research instrument was the researcher (human instrument), supported by interview guidelines developed based on research objectives. The guidelines covered aspects of tourist attraction, community involvement, and economic impacts of Touring Jelasak.

Data analysis followed qualitative procedures consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. According to Miles and Huberman (2014), qualitative data analysis is a continuous process involving data reduction, data display, and verification. Interview and observation data were categorized based on research focus and presented in descriptive narratives. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from different informants and data sources. Member checking was also conducted to verify interview results and ensure accuracy (Sugiyono, 2019).

The study adhered to research ethics by obtaining informed consent from informants, maintaining confidentiality, and using research data solely for academic purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings indicate that Touring Jelasak possesses significant potential as a sport tourism activity in Kerinci Regency. This potential is reflected in the scenic natural landscapes encountered along the touring routes, including mountains, plantations, and natural tourist areas, which add value for adventure and sports tourism enthusiasts.

Interviews revealed that Touring Jelasak attracts participants not only from Kerinci Regency but also from other regions. This has led to increased economic activity among local communities, particularly MSMEs, accommodation providers, culinary businesses, and local transportation services. Communities reported increased income during event periods, although the impact remains incidental and not yet sustainable.

Table 1. Touring JELASAK as Sport Tourism in Kerinci Regency

No.	Core Aspect	Key Findings	Stakeholders	References
1	Natural Potential	High potential as nature-based sport tourism supported by scenic and challenging routes.	Participants, Organizers, Government	Papanikos (2015); Higham (2021)
2	Market Reach	Attracts participants from local and external regions, indicating regional tourism appeal.	Participants, Organizers	Higham (2021)
3	Economic Impact	Boosts local economy, especially MSMEs and tourism services, but remains short-term.	MSMEs, Community, Government	Peric (2018); Tomino et al. (2020)
4	Promotion Effect	Enhances destination image through participant-driven social media promotion.	Participants, Government	Tomino et al. (2020)
5	Participant Experience	High satisfaction with nature, route challenges,	Participants	Weed (2008); Higham (2021)

		safety, and community hospitality.		
6	Community Involvement	Community participation exists but is limited mainly to service provision, not planning.	Local Community	Jamaliah & Puujiati (2024); Masadeh et al. (2017)
7	Governance & Management	Government support exists, but weak coordination and lack of structured management hinder sustainability.	Government, Organizers	Tubey (2014); Susanti et al. (2017)
8	Development Constraints	Infrastructure limitations and insufficient MSME facilities restrict long-term development.	Government, MSMEs	Tubey (2014); Darsono & Sudijandoko (2024)

Additionally, Touring Jelasak enhances social interaction and regional promotion. The activity serves as a promotional medium through participant-generated content shared on social media. The natural landscapes traversed during Touring Jelasak function not only as a backdrop for sporting activities but also as memorable tourism experiences, enhancing participant satisfaction. This strengthens Touring Jelasak's potential as a nature-based sport tourism product with unique characteristics.

However, community involvement remains participatory rather than well-organized. Local residents typically engage as service providers during the event, such as food vendors and accommodation providers. A lack of structured management limits equitable and sustainable economic benefits.

Challenges identified include limited supporting infrastructure, insufficient official promotion, and the absence of structured sport tourism management. Weak coordination among organizers, communities, and local government has hindered integration into regional tourism programs. Therefore, strategic management, sustainable promotion, and infrastructure improvement are essential to optimize Touring Jelasak's potential**.**

From the perspective of the local government, Touring JELASAK is viewed as a form of sport-based tourism activity that is highly relevant to the geographical conditions and natural potential of Kerinci Regency. The government considers this activity to be in line with regional tourism development policies that emphasize the diversification of tourism products and the enhancement of destination attractiveness. This finding is consistent with the study by (papanikos, 2015), which states that the development of sport tourism in regions with strong natural characteristics can serve as an effective strategy to enrich tourism destination portfolios. Government support for Touring JELASAK is generally provided in the form of permit

facilitation, cross-sectoral coordination, and promotional support, although the activity has not yet been fully incorporated into the official annual regional tourism agenda. The government also acknowledges the positive economic impact experienced by local communities, particularly MSME actors, as well as the contribution of this activity to strengthening the regional image. This aligns with (Tomino et al.,2020), who emphasize that sport tourism events play a strategic role in increasing destination visibility and generating short-term economic benefits for local communities. Nevertheless, the government continues to face challenges related to budget limitations, infrastructure readiness, and the need to strengthen coordination among all stakeholders.

Local MSME actors reported that the implementation of Touring JELASAK generates a fairly significant economic impact during the event. There is an increase in sales, particularly of food and beverage products, local souvenirs, and supporting services such as parking and accommodation. This finding supports the study by (Peric, 2018), which indicates that sporting events can stimulate economic activity in the informal sector and among MSMEs in surrounding areas. Although the economic impact is generally temporary, the activity opens opportunities for sustainable economic benefits if organized regularly and systematically. This is in line with (Dulgio&Beltramo, 2017), who argue that the sustainability of economic impacts from tourism events depends heavily on the frequency of implementation and long-term planning. MSME actors also stated that they receive some support from event organizers and the government, although it remains limited. Challenges faced include limited vending facilities, suboptimal spatial arrangement of MSME locations, and insufficient promotion of local products to participants, as also identified in the study by (Darsono&Sudijandoko, 2024).

Local communities generally express positive responses toward the implementation of Touring JELASAK. The activity is considered capable of increasing community economic activity, expanding interaction with tourists, and introducing their area to external visitors. Some community members are involved as volunteers, service providers, or event supporters. This finding is consistent with (Jamaliah&Pujiati, 2024), who state that community involvement in sport tourism contributes to enhanced social and economic benefits. However, community participation in the planning stage of the activity remains relatively limited. This condition aligns with (Masadeh et al., 2017), who notes that limited community involvement in the planning phase can reduce the optimization of tourism benefits. The social impacts perceived are generally positive, although there are some complaints related to traffic congestion, noise, and increased activity during the event, which are commonly reported in community-scale tourism events.

Touring participants stated that they learned about Touring JELASAK through social media, motorcycle communities, and information shared by fellow participants. Their primary motivation for joining the event is the desire to gain a challenging touring experience while enjoying the natural beauty and tourism atmosphere of Kerinci Regency. This finding is in line with (Higham, 2021), who explain that the main motivation of sport tourism participants is the combination of physical challenge and nature-based tourism experiences. Participants assessed the routes as sufficiently challenging and offering experiences distinct from touring activities in other regions. Natural scenery, the hospitality of local communities, and opportunities to learn about local culture emerged as the most memorable impressions. This supports Weed's (2008) assertion that authentic experiences and interaction with local communities are key factors in sport tourism participant satisfaction. Overall, participants expressed satisfaction with service quality and safety aspects, although they suggested improvements in supporting facilities and technical event management.

From the organizers' perspective, Touring JELASAK is defined as a community-based sport tourism activity that integrates automotive sports, nature tourism, and local community empowerment. The idea for organizing this activity stems from the perception that Kerinci's natural potential is highly suitable for development as a sport tourism destination. This concept aligns with Weed and Bull (2012), who argue that community-based sport tourism has strong potential to create sustainable tourism experiences. The sport tourism concept is implemented through the selection of routes that offer both a certain level of challenge and scenic value. Planning and implementation are carried out through collaboration with motorcycle communities, local government, MSMEs, and local residents, as recommended by (Susanti et al, 2017) regarding the importance of stakeholder synergy. The main challenges faced by organizers include limited funding, licensing procedures, and the readiness of supporting infrastructure, which are also commonly encountered in the development of regional sport tourism events (Tubey, 2014).

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Touring Jelasak exhibits characteristics consistent with the concept of sport tourism, namely tourism activities that integrate sports participation with recreational experiences and travel. According to Weed and Bull (2012), sport tourism involves the active participation of tourists in sporting activities combined with travel to a specific destination. This concept is reflected in Touring Jelasak, which integrates automotive sports with the exploration of natural and local cultural potential.

From an economic perspective, the increase in local community income during the implementation of Touring Jelasak supports the view of Yoeti (2016), who argues that tourism development can serve as a driver of community economic growth through the creation of business opportunities and employment. Although the economic impacts observed are still temporary in nature, these findings indicate substantial potential if Touring Jelasak is managed in a sustainable and well-planned manner.

These findings are also consistent with previous studies. Research by Hidayat and Nugroho (2020) demonstrates that community-based sport tourism activities are capable of increasing tourist visits as well as the income of MSME actors in tourism destinations. Furthermore, Prasetyo (2019) found that sport tourism events, such as touring and off-road activities, contribute to destination promotion through social media and community networks. Another study by Rahman and Putri (2021) concludes that the involvement of local communities in the management of sport tourism is a crucial factor in achieving economic and social sustainability in tourism areas.

In addition, the involvement of motorcycle communities and local residents in Touring Jelasak reflects the importance of community participation in tourism development. This finding aligns with Suwantoro (2017), who emphasizes that the success of regional tourism development is largely determined by synergy among communities, interest groups, and government institutions. The constraints identified in this study highlight the need for policy support, adequate infrastructure, and integrated promotion strategies. With structured management, Touring Jelasak has the potential to develop into a leading sport tourism product that can enhance destination attractiveness while sustainably improving the community economy of Kerinci Regency.

The results of this study also reinforce previous research emphasizing the strategic role of sport tourism events in the development of special-interest tourism destinations. Weed (2008) states that sport tourism has the capacity to extend tourists' length of stay and increase tourist expenditure at destinations, particularly when sporting activities are combined with natural and cultural attractions. This condition is relevant to the implementation of Touring Jelasak, which not only focuses on touring activities but also encourages participants to enjoy natural tourism destinations and local products in Kerinci Regency.

Furthermore, Getz and Page (2016) assert that community-scale sport tourism events make a significant contribution to local economic development, particularly through increased MSME activity and the creation of temporary employment opportunities. This assertion is consistent with the findings of this study, which show increased community economic activity

during the implementation of Touring Jelasak, although the impacts remain short-term. This indicates that event frequency and sustainable planning are key factors in strengthening the resulting economic benefits.

Previous studies have also highlighted the role of digital promotion in sport tourism development. Higham and Hinch (2018) argue that visual documentation and experiential narratives shared through social media can effectively shape destination images and increase the interest of potential tourists. This finding strengthens the results of the Touring Jelasak study, which demonstrate that promotion through participant and motorcycle community social media posts contributes to expanding the tourism exposure of Kerinci Regency, although it has not yet been optimally supported by official government promotion.

Earlier research by Dwyer et al. (2015) emphasizes that the sustainability of sport tourism is largely determined by the quality of governance, infrastructure support, and collaboration among stakeholders. The infrastructure limitations and lack of integrated management of Touring Jelasak identified in this study reflect challenges similar to those found in previous studies across various regions. Therefore, strategic planning involving local government, motorcycle communities, and local residents is required to ensure the sustainable development of Touring Jelasak.

In conclusion, Touring Jelasak has significant potential as a community-based sport tourism event capable of enhancing destination attractiveness, strengthening tourism promotion, and driving local economic development. However, to fully realize this potential, structured management, strong policy support, and cross-sectoral synergy are essential to ensure sustainable benefits for Kerinci Regency.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and the discussion presented, it can be concluded that Touring Jelasak has considerable potential as a form of sport tourism in Kerinci Regency. This potential is reflected in the integration of automotive sports activities with the utilization of natural beauty, as well as the active involvement of motorcycle communities and local residents as key tourist attractions.

Touring Jelasak has been proven to have a positive impact on the local economy, particularly through increased income for MSME actors, the culinary sector, accommodation providers, and local transportation services during the implementation of the activity. In addition to its economic impact, this activity also contributes to the promotion of Kerinci Regency as a tourism destination through community networks and social media. However, the impacts generated remain temporary and have not yet been managed optimally.

Therefore, the development of Touring Jelasak as a sport tourism product requires adequate infrastructure support, sustainable promotional strategies, and strong synergy among communities, local residents, and the local government. With well-directed and sustainable management, Touring Jelasak has the potential to become a leading tourist attraction as well as a driver of community economic development in Kerinci Regency.

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