

Alignment of Rural Tourism Development in the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) (for Tourism with the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) Concept in Jatigede, Sumedang)

Ahmad Rimba Dirgantara¹ & Delfta Tunjung Baswarani²

¹ Universitas Persatuan Islam, Bandung, Indonesia

² Universitas Aisyayah Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This research article examines the alignment of rural tourism development in the Jatigede Tourism Special Economic Zone (SEZ) with the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) indicators. The primary focus of the study is to evaluate the extent to which the SEZ development plan in this region accommodates principles of inclusive, sustainable, and competitive tourism, particularly in the context of villages affected by the construction of the Jatigede reservoir. Using a descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory approach, this study applies the TTDI framework to assess infrastructure, environmental sustainability, human resource capacity, socio-cultural dynamics, and local policy readiness. The findings indicate that the development planning of the Jatigede Tourism SEZ has strong potential to enhance rural tourism; however, further alignment with TTDI standards particularly regarding environmental considerations and local community participation is necessary. The study recommends a collaborative development model involving local governments, village communities, and investors to establish an SEZ that fosters local economic growth while preserving socio-cultural heritage. These recommendations are intended to serve as a strategic reference for policymakers to ensure that implementing the Jatigede Tourism SEZ aligns with TTDI principles and sustainable development goals.

Keywords: Rural Tourism; Special Economic Zone (SEZ); Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI); Jatigede; Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION

Jatigede District, as a buffer zone for the Jatigede Reservoir in Sumedang, holds significant potential for development as a rural tourism destination. Natural resources such as the reservoir, organic farming, and biodiversity, along with the rich cultural heritage of the Sundanese people, create opportunities for surrounding villages to offer authentic community-based tourism experiences (Saepudin et al., 2019). The Sumedang Regency Government is planning to establish a special economic zone (SEZ) for Tourism in the Jatigede Reservoir Area. This initiative is based on previous studies regarding the development of tourism SEZs, including Tanjung Lesung in Banten, Mandalika in West Nusa Tenggara, and Tanjung Kelayang in Bangka Belitung (Aggarwal, 2022; Estriani, 2019; Prabawani et al., 2022).

The Indonesian government actively promotes the establishment of Tourism SEZs through Government Regulation No. 40 of 2021, which provides fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to attract investment and accelerate the development of national tourism infrastructure. The discourse on SEZ development began during the administration of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and gained serious momentum during President Joko Widodo's tenure (Darmastuti, S., 2018).

Although the concept of Tourism Special Economic Zones (SEZs) provides a strong regulatory framework and attractive incentives (Winanto & Ramdhani, 2024), their implementation in rural areas often falls short of aligning with sustainability principles and the parameters outlined in the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI). Several studies have identified gaps in digital infrastructure, environmental management, and community participation, which are essential to the TTDI framework (Salam, 2024; Gürsakal & Arli, 2023).

Previous research has noted that one of the key factors hindering the optimal economic impact of Tourism SEZs is the low level of community engagement and participation in tourism development within these areas (Darmastuti, 2018). This underscores the importance of developing SEZs that prioritize economic growth and incorporate social and environmental considerations to achieve long-term sustainability. Another study by Firdaus et al. (2021) highlights that active participation of local communities in rural tourism development enhances program success and ensures equitable economic benefits.

Framework of Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI)

The Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) is a framework developed by the World Economic Forum to assess the factors and policies that enable the sustainable growth and resilience of the travel and tourism sector (World Economic Forum, 2022). TTDI is composed of several key pillars, including: (1) enabling environment which covers policies, regulations, and business conditions that support the tourism industry; (2) travel and tourism policy and enabling conditions which evaluates the effectiveness of tourism policies and the factors that facilitate sector growth; (3) infrastructure which examines the quality of transportation systems, accommodation, and other facilities essential to tourism; (4) natural and cultural resource which assesses the richness of natural and cultural assets that serve as tourism attractions; and (5) sustainability which measures environmental conservation efforts and social sustainability in tourism development. The TTDI is an evaluation tool that gauges a destination's preparedness and competitiveness within the global tourism landscape. Integrating TTDI principles into planning tourism special economic zones (SEZs) is expected to ensure that sector growth remains inclusive and sustainable (Salam, 2024).

Concept of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is a form of tourism that emphasizes authentic experiences in rural areas, involving direct interaction with local culture, agricultural activities, and natural surroundings. Tourism villages are developed and opened to boost community and regional government revenue and provide a refreshing experience for both domestic and international visitors (Khoir & Dirgantara, 2020). The key characteristics of rural tourism include: (1) authenticity of local culture and traditions where visitors can immerse themselves in the daily life of village communities, including local customs, handicrafts, and traditional cuisine; (2) active community participation where residents are central to providing tourism services, such as homestays, tour guides, and artisanal product creation; and (3) environmental

sustainability where natural resource management is carried out responsibly to preserve the environment and support sustainable agricultural practices (Ojha, 2020).

Concept of Special Economic Zone (SEZ)

A Special Economic Zone (SEZ) is a designated area with defined boundaries established to facilitate economic activities and provide specific incentives to enhance competitiveness and attract investment (Aggarwal, 2022). The primary objectives of SEZ development include: (1) accelerating regional economic growth in which SEZs are expected to become new economic growth hubs through infrastructure development and incentives; (2) enhancing investment and exports where SEZs offer fiscal and non-fiscal benefits to attract domestic and foreign investors; (3) job creation in which SEZ development generates employment opportunities for local communities. Tourism SEZs are designed to develop premier destinations with adequate infrastructure and high-quality services in the tourism sector. Implementing SEZs in tourism, such as in Mandalika and Likupang, has demonstrated that these developments can increase tourist arrivals and drive local economic growth (Estriani, 2019; Firmansyah, 2021). However, challenges such as limited infrastructure, interagency coordination, and community participation must still be addressed to achieve long-term sustainable success.

Figure 1. West Java Special Economic Zone (SEZ)



Source: Dinas Penanaman Modal dan Pelayanan Terpadu Satu Pintu (DPMPTSP)
 Kabupaten Sumedang (2021, p. 66)

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method. Primary data, collected through focus group discussions (FGDs) and field surveys, is analyzed using the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) approach, encompassing various key components. Data collection follows the TTDI framework, covering the Enabling Environment, Tourism Policy and Enabling Conditions, Infrastructure, Tourism Demand Drivers, and Tourism Sustainability. The data was gathered over three months, from June to October 2022, through the analysis of supporting documents from both offline and online sources as part of the secondary data regarding the Jatigede Reservoir area. Once the data was compiled, each indicator was assigned a weighted score based on discussions with relevant stakeholders and field studies. Below is the list of government informants who provided data and information for this research.

Table 1. TTDI Indicator Weighting

No.	Weighting (%)	Description
1	0-10	Low
2	10-50	Good
3	50-100	Excellent

Source: Research Analysis (2022)

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) conducted in this study explores questions representing tourism potential for visitors, institutional aspects, and policy considerations. An observation guideline table was also used to identify key tourism attractions, facilities, infrastructure, and accessibility in Jatigede. Following the data and information collection, the analysis phase used the components outlined in the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) framework.

Table 2. Data and Information Sources

No.	Government Institution	Data and Information
1	Department of Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sports	- Distribution of tourism attractions in Jatigede area and Calendar of Event
2	Department of Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises, Trade, and Industry	- Number of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Jatigede
3	Department of Community Empowerment and Village Development	- Village-specific products with market value
4	Department of Communication, Informatics, Codes, and Statistics	- Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) on the geographical and demographic characteristics of villages in Jatigede
5	Department of Public Works and Spatial Planning	- Regional maps and institutional jurisdictions in Jatigede
6	Department of Transportation	- Transportation system to and from Jatigede
7	Jatigede District Government	- Official district decisions regarding village boundaries designated for the Special Economic Zone (SEZ)
8	Department of Investment and Integrated Services	- Investment inflows into Sumedang Regency in general
9	Regional Disaster Management Agency	- General investment information in Sumedang Regency and potential disasters in Jatigede

Source: Field Observation (2022)

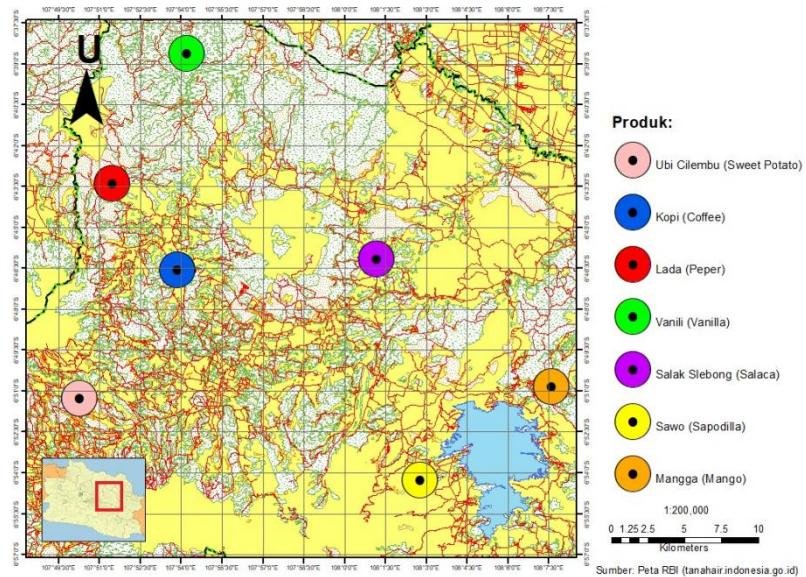
RESULT

Tourism Potential of the Jatigede Area, Sumedang

The Jatigede region in Sumedang Regency holds significant potential for developing rural tourism based on local resources. As one of the area's primary attractions, Jatigede Reservoir offers diverse tourism experiences, including water-based tourism, nature tourism, cultural

tourism, agro-tourism, sports tourism, camping grounds, and pilgrimage tourism. The abundance of natural resources and the rich Sundanese cultural heritage serve as key assets in developing eco-tourism in the region. Several local commodities from Sumedang Regency, particularly within Jatigede, include rice crops, mangoes, coffee, Celembu sweet potatoes, pepper, vanilla, salak fruit, and sapodilla. (Pardian et al., 2024)

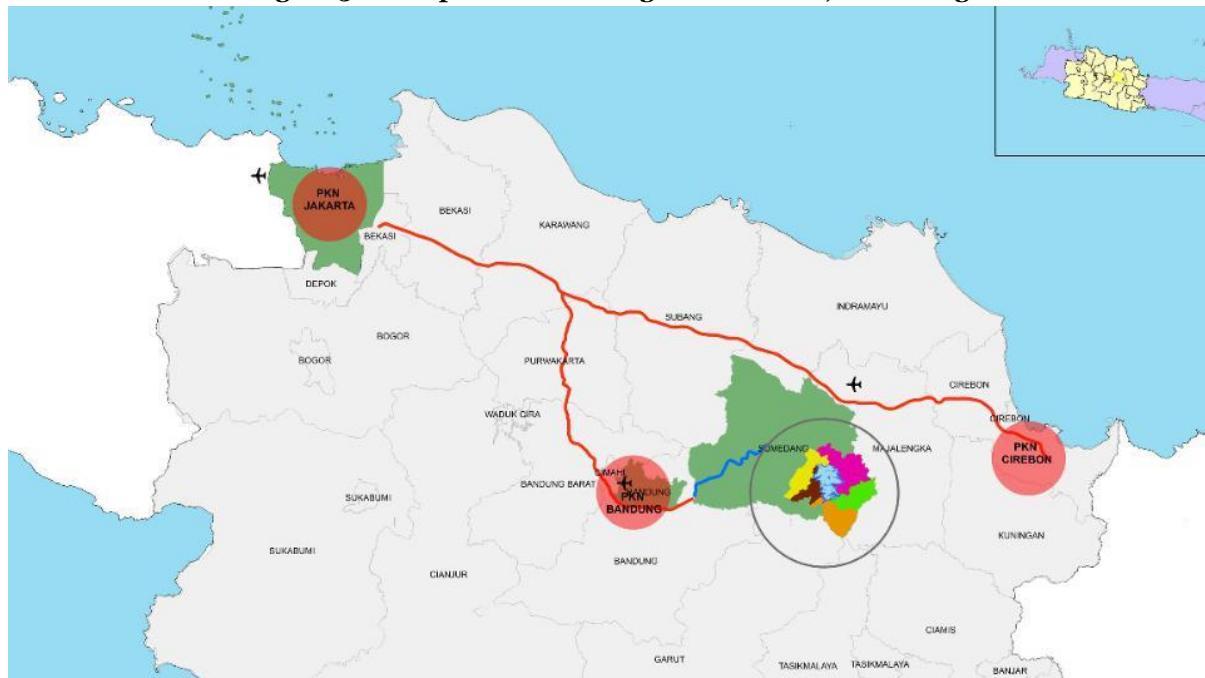
Figure 2. Local Commodities from Sumedang Regency



Source: Field Study and Official Sources from Relevant Government Agencies (2022)

Beyond its agricultural commodities, the Jatigede Reservoir area features several tourist attractions easily accessible from the main road. According to field observations, the travel time to each attraction is approximately 10–15 minutes, provided that traffic conditions remain light, particularly during extended holiday periods (Djuwendah et al., 2019).

Figure 3. Transportation to Jatigede Reservoir, Sumedang



Source: Field Study and Official Sources from Relevant Government Agencies (2022)

Access to Jatigede, Sumedang, is supported by both air and land transportation networks. In terms of air travel, two primary options are available: Kertajati Airport in Majalengka, which is approximately 35.1 kilometers from Jatigede with an estimated travel time of 1 hour and 15 minutes, and Husein Sastranegara Airport in Bandung, located 90.1 kilometers away with a travel duration of around 2 hours and 5 minutes. Regarding land transportation, Jatigede can be reached via train or bus; however, there is currently no direct rail service to Sumedang, necessitating transit through Cirebon or Bandung. Furthermore, the planned development of the Bandung–Cirebon railway line, which will pass through Sumedang, is expected to enhance regional accessibility and connectivity substantially in the future.

Tourism Service Infrastructure

Sumedang features 27 accommodation providers, including six-star-rated hotels and 21 non-star hotels. The area also offers a range of dining establishments, with 121 food and beverage businesses operating as of 2021.

International Market Accessibility

The Sumedang Tourism Development Master Plan provides a detailed overview of the Jatigede Tourism Industrial Zone, highlighting its potential as a significant market for both domestic and international tourism. However, foreign tourists have yet to visit the area in significant numbers, with domestic visitors dominating SEZ tourism in Jatigede. Government policies, such as Circular Letter No. IMI-0700.GR.01.01 of 2022, which facilitates immigration services to support sustainable tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic, remains in effect to enhance international accessibility.

ICT Readiness in Tourism Development

Telecommunication networks serve as a key indicator in developing the tourism sector. According to the Travel & Tourism Development Index 2021: Rebuilding for a Sustainable and Resilient Future by the World Economic Forum, the sustainability of digital services depends on the availability of adequate telecommunication networks (Soshkin & Calderwood, 2022). Based on open-source data from the Sumedang Regency, the following table provides information on service providers and Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) covering the Jatigede region:

Table 3. Service Providers and Base Transceiver Stations Covering Jatigede

Provider	Location	Category	Quantity
Telkom	Kadu Village	Ministry of Communication Service Assistance	1
Telkom	Cisampih Village	Ministry of Communication Service Assistance	1
Telkom	Lebaksiuh Village	Ministry of Communication Service Assistance	1
Telkom	Jatigede City Square	Public Wi-Fi Contract I	1
Telkom	Bina Harapan	Public Wi-Fi Contract III	1
Telkom	Alfamart Jatigede (mini market)	Public Wi-Fi Contract I	1

Source: Sumedang Satu Data (2022)

Health and Hygiene

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, new indicators have been introduced to align with the tourism industry's evolving conditions, including the availability of healthcare infrastructure to mitigate pandemic-related impacts. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy developed the CHSE program (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability) as a certification system to evaluate businesses in the tourism sector based on their adherence to CHSE principles. The Jatigede region has post-pandemic support infrastructure, such as handwashing stations and visitor temperature screening tools. However, the region still lacks official CHSE certification, which is crucial for ensuring compliance with national tourism standards.

Safety and Security

Security is a fundamental aspect influencing the long-term sustainability of travel and tourism (Kövári & Zimányi, as cited in Khalik, 2014). Ensuring comfort and safety is a top priority for tourists when selecting destinations, directly affecting their overall experience (Dirgantara et al., 2023). Additionally, security is critical in maintaining industry viability and shaping complex interactions with the local socio-economic environment (Tarlo, 2014, as cited in Mataković, 2023). In the Jatigede region of Sumedang, security infrastructure has been established to support tourism development, enhance visitor confidence, and facilitate sustainable growth. Statistical data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) provides insights into crime rates per district, reflecting the current security conditions in the area.

Table 4. Crime Rates per District in 2019

District	Crime Cases per Year
Darmaraja	12
Wado	3
Jatigede	4

Source: Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumedang (2020)

Based on the data above, Jatigede District has a relatively lower crime rate than the two other districts when measured on an annual basis. However, in 2019, the crime rate in Jatigede was higher than in Wado District, highlighting the need for enhanced security strategies.

Human Resources and Labor Market

Human capital is a key component in improving communities' competitiveness in the tourism industry. This indicator assesses educational facilities and general educational attainment levels across Sumedang Regency as part of the Jatigede community development. Strengthening education and vocational training is essential for equipping the workforce with the skills needed for sustainable tourism growth (Budiarti et al, 2021).

DISCUSSION

Integrating Potential with TTDI Framework

Integrating this potential within the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) framework can enhance the destination's competitiveness. TTDI emphasizes sustainability,

infrastructure quality, and community participation in tourism development. Effective and sustainable management will allow Jatigede to leverage its unique assets for long-term growth.

Table 5. Selected Key Tourist Attractions Around Jatigede Reservoir, Sumedang

No.	Image	Name and Description	Name
1.		A central viewpoint offering a panoramic view of Jatigede Reservoir, which, when water levels are at normal capacity, resembles the "Raja Ampat of West Java."	Puncak Permata
2.		An iconic landmark within the Jatigede Reservoir area, known for its architectural significance and cultural value.	Al Kamil Mosque
3.		A semi-modern tourist attraction featuring several Instagrammable spots and boat rental services for exploring the islands within the Jatigede Reservoir.	Tanjung Duriat
4.		A rock formation site located near the main road leading to the entrance gate of the Jatigede tourism area	Ciagung Stone Park

Source: Pictures taken personally (2022)

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Infrastructure and Policy Overview

The need for infrastructure improvements is closely linked to the policy initiatives the Sumedang Regency Government introduced to support the development of the Jatigede Tourism SEZ. While regulatory efforts, such as Regulation No. 110 of 2020, aim to create a favorable investment climate, the effectiveness of these policies depends on adequate infrastructure and active community participation (Djuwendah et al., 2019). However, low public engagement in the planning phase suggests that further measures are necessary to strengthen governance frameworks that encourage local involvement in decision-making processes. This concern aligns with the broader spatial planning strategy, as outlined in Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2018, which underscores the importance of integrating tourism within the region's agribusiness and industrial development goals.

Additionally, the focus on eco-tourism expansion and the establishment of the Jatigede Tourism SEZ reinforces the regional government's commitment to sustainable tourism, demonstrating the intersection between policy direction, infrastructure readiness, and economic aspirations. Furthermore, tourism policies and investment openness contribute positively to the Tourism Policy and Enabling Conditions subindex, reinforcing Sumedang's viability for developing a Tourism Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Affordable pricing further strengthens this competitive positioning, enhancing its ability to compete with other regions. In the initial phase, the primary target market is domestic tourists.

International Market Accessibility and Competitive Pricing

Indonesia's lower exchange rate compared to the U.S. dollar provides a competitive advantage for foreign tourists, making it an economically attractive destination especially for the future development of the Jatigede SEZ. Economic studies, such as Wicaksono's (2022) research, indicate that exchange rates significantly influence foreign tourist arrivals. Initially, Jatigede's target market will focus on domestic tourists, but once the SEZ is fully established, foreign visitors will gradually become a primary market segment.

ICT Readiness and Environmental Sustainability

Telecommunication networks serve as a key indicator in developing the tourism sector. According to the Travel & Tourism Development Index 2021: Rebuilding for a Sustainable and Resilient Future by the World Economic Forum, the sustainability of digital services depends on the availability of adequate telecommunication networks (Soshkin & Calderwood, 2022). An assessment of environmental sustainability reveals gaps in waste management and habitat conservation within the Jatigede region. Villages surrounding the reservoir lack an integrated environmental monitoring system, with an average readiness score of 10%. This highlights the urgent need for a sustainable waste management system to ensure long-term environment.

Socio-Cultural Aspects and Safety

From a socio-cultural perspective, community participation in rural tourism planning has shown promising results, achieving a score of 35% (Parlinah et al., 2018). This indicates strong potential for collaboration among government agencies, local communities, and other stakeholders to advance sustainable tourism development (Suwartapradja et al., 2024). However, additional empowerment programs are required to enhance local capacity to manage and expand the region's tourism potential. Security is a fundamental aspect

influencing the long-term sustainability of travel and tourism (Kövári & Zimányi, as cited in Khalik, 2014). Ensuring comfort and safety is a top priority for tourists when selecting destinations, directly affecting their overall experience (Dirgantara et al., 2023). Additionally, security is critical in maintaining industry viability and shaping complex interactions with the local socio-economic environment (Tarlow, 2014, as cited in Mataković, 2023).

Health, Hygiene, and Human Resources

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Strategic Alignment and Monitoring

Based on the study's findings, several priority strategies are recommended to align the Jatigede Tourism Special Economic Zone (SEZ) development with the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) framework. These strategies, which include Village Digitalization and ICT Transformation, a Collaborative Governance Approach for SEZ Management, Strengthening Participatory Regulations, and Integrated Conservation and Waste Management Programs, are designed to enhance Jatigede's competitiveness and sustainability as a leading rural tourism destination. Implementing this framework is expected to foster economic growth and environmental conservation while leveraging Indonesia's competitive exchange rate, making the country an attractive destination for foreign tourists (Wicaksono, 2022). While initial market focus will be domestic tourists, the SEZ's long-term strategy is gradually expanding its primary market to include foreign visitors, contributing to local economic growth and solidifying Jatigede's position as a sustainable and competitive tourism hub.

Environmental and Social Sustainability Aspects

An assessment of environmental sustainability reveals gaps in waste management and habitat conservation within the Jatigede region. Villages surrounding the reservoir lack an integrated environmental monitoring system, with an average readiness score of 10%. This highlights the urgent need for a sustainable waste management system to ensure long-term environmental preservation (Fadli et al., 2019). From a socio-cultural perspective, community participation in rural tourism planning has shown promising results, achieving a score of 35% (Parlinah et al., 2018). This indicates strong potential for collaboration among government agencies, local communities, and other stakeholders to advance sustainable tourism development (Suwartapradja et al., 2024). However, additional empowerment programs are required to enhance local capacity to manage and expand the region's tourism potential.

TTDI-Based Monitoring and Evaluation

Development of TTDI-Based Monitoring Instruments Design performance evaluation tools based on TTDI indicators to periodically assess SEZ development progress. Collaboration with Research Institutions and Universities – Conduct regular audits focusing on social, economic, and ecological sustainability in partnership with academic institutions and research organizations. This framework aims to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of Jatigede as a leading rural tourism destination while fostering economic growth and environmental conservation. Implementing these strategies is expected to enhance Jatigede's competitiveness as a sustainable rural tourism destination and contribute to local economic growth.

Table 6. TTDI Indicator Weighting

Indicator	Weighting		
	Low	Good	Excellent
Enabling Environment	Human Resources and Labour Market, ICT Readiness	Business Environment, Safety and Security, Health and Hygiene	
Travel and Tourism Policy and Enabling Conditions		Prioritization of Travel and Tourism, International Openness, Price Competitiveness	
Infrastructure	Tourist Service Infrastructure	Air Transport Infrastructure, Ground and Port Infrastructure	
Travel and Tourism Demand Drivers		Non-Leisure Resources	Natural Resources, Cultural Resources,
Travel and Tourism Sustainability	Environmental Sustainability, Socioeconomic Resilience and Conditions	Travel and Tourism Demand Pressure and Impact	

Source: Analysis Result (2020)

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This study highlights the significant potential of developing the Jatigede Tourism Special Economic Zone (SEZ) to strengthen the rural tourism sector, particularly through a sustainability-driven and competitive approach. Based on an analysis of the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) dimensions, Jatigede has recorded high percentages in basic infrastructure and fiscal policy, indicating strong initial readiness for SEZ development.

However, several critical TTDI dimensions, such as ICT readiness, environmental sustainability, and community engagement, still show considerable gaps. The average scores for digital infrastructure and waste management systems remain below TTDI thresholds, signaling the need for policy interventions and capacity-building efforts at the local level. As a destination with diverse tourism potential from eco-tourism and agro-tourism to cultural tourism Jatigede holds a strategic position for development as an inclusive and sustainable Tourism SEZ. Its long-term success, however, depends on implementing an adaptive and collaborative governance framework.

Recommendation Strategic Alignment of the Jatigede Tourism SEZ with TTDI Standards

Based on the findings of this study, several priority strategies are recommended to enhance the alignment of the Jatigede Tourism Special Economic Zone (SEZ) development with the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) framework: (1) village digitalization and ICT transformation by establishing high-speed internet access through public-private partnerships (PPP) in rural areas, and conducting e-commerce training and digital technology utilization programs for local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in the hospitality and creative economy sectors; (2) collaborative governance approach for SEZ Management by forming an inclusive SEZ management body comprising representatives from village governments, local entrepreneurs, community leaders, and academics to ensure equitable decision-making processes; (3) strengthening participatory regulation by enhancing community involvement in tourism development by implementing village consultative forums for destination planning; (4) integrated conservation and waste management programs by establishing sustainable waste management systems in tourism villages, incorporating the reduce-reuse-recycle (3R) approach and environmentally friendly technologies; rehabilitating forest areas and the Jatigede Reservoir ecosystem by involving local tourism awareness groups (called Pokdarwis) and community organizations.

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