

Sustainable Tourism Management at Prambanan Temple: Analysis of Utilization, Cultural Preservation, and Local Community Welfare

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the implementation of sustainable tourism management at Prambanan Temple, focusing on the coordination challenges between PT Taman Wisata Candi (TWC) and the Cultural Heritage Preservation Center and Museum (BPK MCB), as well as the implications for economic equity, cultural preservation, and local community welfare. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with pentahelix stakeholders (academics, industry players, communities, government, and media), direct observations, and documentation analysis. The findings reveal that although PT TWC has actively organized various cultural events and empowered local communities through MSME involvement and labor absorption, the economic benefits have not been evenly distributed, and community participation remains limited, particularly in the planning and evaluation stages. Coordination between PT TWC, which is oriented toward tourism utilization, and BPK MCB, which focuses on conservation, faces challenges due to differences in priorities, lack of structured formal meetings, and overlapping regulations at various administrative levels. Cultural preservation efforts are also at risk of over-commercialization, which can erode authenticity and cultural values. This study concludes that effective sustainable tourism management requires regulatory synchronization, strengthening local community participation through a community-based tourism approach, fair distribution of economic benefits, and holistic collaboration among all stakeholders to balance tourism utilization, cultural heritage preservation, and local community welfare.

Keywords: *sustainable tourism, cultural heritage management, community participation, institutional coordination, Prambanan Temple*

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with an infinite wealth of historical value, and each era leaves a legacy both in the form of intangible values and physical forms that can be utilized by future generations. During the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom period, estimated to have begun in the 5th century AD and ended in the 15th century, many heritages were produced in the form of temples and inscriptions spread across various regions such as Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Kalimantan, with the highest concentration in Central Java Province, DI Yogyakarta, and East Java (Intania, 2023).

The picture above is a map of the distribution of temples in Indonesia, which provides a broader view of the large number of historical tourism destinations in Indonesia, especially temple buildings (Gunkarta, 2012). Kingdoms that once existed in Indonesian territory left deep imprints in the form of temples spread across various regions of the archipelago (Chowdhury & Ahmed, 2015). The existence of temples as historical relics is a significant trace of past civilizations. Temples not only functioned as places of worship but also as cultural centers and symbols of power and political legitimacy of the kingdoms that built them. For example, Prambanan Temple, built by the Syailendra Dynasty and the Ancient Mataram Kingdom and dedicated to the Hindu Trimurti, shows the strong Hindu influence in Central Java in the 9th century and reflects the glory and progress of civilization at that time. Today, these temples are an important part of Indonesia's cultural heritage and contribute to national

identity. The temple not only attracts tourists from all over the world but also serves as a symbol of pride for the Indonesian people. Efforts to preserve and research these temples continue to maintain and deepen understanding of the nation's history and culture. Historical tourism encompasses various factors containing values of uniqueness, feeling, atmosphere, discovery, and authenticity. Understanding these values is vital for explaining the historical tourism experience itself (Handika, 2020; Harimurti & Sunarjo, 2024; Hoefler, 2022).

This understanding aligns with the recognition that historical relics, such as temples, contribute to local economic development through tourism (Nguyen et al., 2025; Ningsih & Wijaya, 2023). Temples, as cultural and historical heritage, act as tourist attractions that draw visitors interested in past civilizations (Morrisan, 2017). Tourist visits to cultural heritage sites encourage the preservation of historical and cultural landmarks and stimulate economic development for local communities (Intamano & Visuthismajarn, 2019).

The communities around the temples derive economic benefits from tourist visits through souvenir sales, tour guide services, and accommodation. Additionally, the government and temple site managers often organize cultural festivals and art performances near the temples, further enhancing tourist attraction and enriching visitor experiences (Panjinegara, 2023; Pujaastawa, 2023). Thus, temples in Indonesia serve not only as historical evidence but also as centers of dynamic cultural and economic activities that attract global attention (Kang et al., 2014; Kriyantono, 2022).

Research by Tucunan and Perkasa (2021) on Prambanan Temple, Borobudur Temple, and the Singasari Site revealed that heritage sites no longer represent the identity of local communities. This is due to a value discontinuity, where the historical, aesthetic, social, and scientific values of these sites are diminishing (Tucunan & Perkasa, 2021). These sites no longer serve as strong cultural representations for the community, and their management often follows a top-down planning procedure without involving local community participation. Consequently, the sites do not yield expected positive effects on their surrounding environment, posing a major challenge in managing cultural heritage in Indonesia.

Therefore, the management of historical tourism in Indonesia remains ineffective, as some sites have yet to positively impact their local environments. For example, the Mount Padang Site in Cianjur, West Java, and the Liyangan Site in Temanggung, Central Java, have not significantly influenced the communities in their respective regencies. These destinations have yet to become recognized trademarks for tourism in their areas, illustrating that management of historical destinations in Indonesia lacks structured organization. Tourist destination management applies principles in tourism governance. This process involves a series of organized activities carried out by groups aiming to coordinate steps to achieve desired outcomes (Rozi & Lemy, 2023).

Thus, the tourism sector in Indonesia benefits from physical heritage more than 1,000 years old, including buildings, inscriptions, and more, which serve as historical tourism attractions. Historical tourism in Indonesia is managed by the government through synergy among several ministries (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Ministry of Education and Culture) and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). One SOE managing historical sites is PT Taman Wisata Candi (PT TWC).

According to its official website, PT TWC was established on July 15, 1980, with the primary goal of managing the environment of Borobudur Temple, Prambanan Temple, Ratu

Boko Palace, Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, and various other cultural heritage sites. The company focuses on developing these destinations as tourist areas and tourism businesses. PT TWC also aims to optimize the use of its resources to produce high-quality products or services with strong competitiveness. Effective management seeks to ensure long-term sustainability and benefits for local residents.

According to the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 1992, the management of Borobudur and Prambanan Temple Tourism Parks, including environmental control, is regulated through three zones. Zone 1, per Article 4 paragraph (1), is the core area of the temple protected to maintain the authenticity and physical preservation of the site. Zone 2, based on Article 5 paragraphs (1) and (2), includes a buffer area around Zone 1, used for developing tourist parks, tourism activities, preservation, and research, covering about 37.2 hectares around Prambanan Temple.

Zone 3, as stated in Article 6, includes areas outside Zone 2, functioning to support regional harmony. This zone accommodates limited settlements, green corridors, agricultural land, and other facilities that help preserve the environment and support tourist parks. Although spatial arrangement and development are the responsibility of local government, Presidential Decree No. 1 of 1992 mandates PT TWC to collaborate with regional governments in resource exploration and revenue sharing to support tourist park functions in Zone 3. At Prambanan Temple, Zone 3 covers approximately 663 hectares.

PT TWC's authority and responsibilities are regulated in Chapter III, Article 8 paragraph 1, which states PT TWC has authority over Zone 2. Article 9 letter d explicitly notes that all entrance fee revenues for tourist parks, including temples, are PT TWC's income. Thus, this decree does not regulate direct distribution of ticket revenue to local communities or conservation bodies such as BPCB from PT TWC's revenues. PT TWC's involvement in Zone 1 preservation relates to use, order, and cleanliness based on technical instructions from the Directorate General of Culture, rather than a financial profit-sharing scheme from ticket sales to BPCB. This highlights the need for a more holistic socio-economic sustainability model. PT TWC's responsibilities, according to the Minimum Service Standards Attachment to the Decree of the Board of Directors of PT TWC (Persero) Number: 19/DIREKSI/2018, dated October 31, 2018, include in Zone 1 the implementation of a buffer for temple monuments and participation in temple preservation. Meanwhile, Zone 1 at Prambanan Temple is managed by BPCB DIY & Central Java (TWC, 2018).

PT TWC's 2023 annual report shows that Heritage Park service users at Prambanan Temple reached 2,447,882 in the 2023 financial year, accounting for 60% of total service users and surpassing Borobudur Temple's revenue and 117% of the target (PT. TWC, 2023).

A significant obstacle to optimization is PT TWC's centralized management, which risks becoming monopolistic. BPCB does not receive direct income from PT TWC but obtains management funds indirectly through the Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museum Preservation, receiving 500 million rupiah per year for protection and preservation; however, since 2015/2016, the preservation budget has been halted. Concerning cultural preservation, unsustainable tourism management can negatively affect local community culture.

Supporting this, a study by Alamineh et al. (2023) revealed several negative impacts on local culture and behavior, including: tourists previously receiving awards without expectation of reciprocation, but with industry growth, interactions have shifted toward transactional

relationships; additionally, two concerns emerge. First, degradation of local appreciation for traditional values, exemplified by religious artifacts becoming commercialized and losing their sacredness (Alamineh et al., 2023). Second, high demand for cultural products has led to mass production of low-quality goods that do not reflect original culture. This is a critical issue for cultural preservation because MSMEs selling souvenirs at Prambanan Temple often offer items unrelated to the temple or Yogyakarta's identity, such as market-available daster garments or dream catcher-themed hangers.

Regarding novelty, this study aims to holistically analyze the impact of Prambanan Temple's development on sustainability. The approach offers a comprehensive perspective on tourism utilization, cultural preservation, and local community welfare simultaneously. It will further highlight the coordination model between managing legal entities: PT Taman Wisata Candi (TWC) and the Cultural Preservation Center, each having different roles and priorities but both significantly influencing sustainable management. Up-to-date field data from direct interviews and stakeholder observations ensure the study results are representative of real conditions.

Sustainable tourism management at Prambanan and Ratu Boko Temples faces coordination challenges between PT Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur, Prambanan & Ratu Boko (TWC), which prioritizes tourism utilization, and the Cultural Heritage Preservation Center and Museum (BPK/MCB), which focuses on conservation. This situation results in potential vision conflicts, ineffective communication, and overlapping regulations. Moreover, local community involvement in management remains limited, especially in economic benefit access and participation in planning and evaluation stages, which may cause social jealousy. Cultural preservation efforts also risk over-commercialization, threatening cultural authenticity and value. Therefore, this study aims to assess the fairness and inclusivity of community economic benefits, examine cultural preservation efforts amid commercial pressures, and identify institutional coordination challenges in achieving effective, sustainable tourism management. The research will provide practical recommendations for stakeholders, particularly PT TWC and BPK MCB, to improve institutional coordination, increase community participation, and ensure a fairer distribution of economic benefits. Theoretically, it is expected to enrich sustainable tourism governance literature at cultural heritage sites by offering an analytical framework integrating utilization, preservation, and community welfare holistically.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative method with a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the application of Sustainable Tourism principles at Prambanan Temple, managed by PT Taman Wisata Candi (TWC). This method was chosen to allow researchers to explore the meanings, experiences, and interactions among stakeholders related to economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects in managing historical tourist destinations.

The research subjects consisted of three main groups: (1) the primary managers of PT Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur, Prambanan, and Ratu Boko (PT TWC); (2) local communities around the Prambanan Temple area; and (3) academics with expertise in sustainable tourism. Sample selection was carried out using purposive sampling, based on direct involvement and relevance to the research theme.

Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with resource persons from the pentahelix elements (academics, industry players, communities, government, and media), as well as direct observations of community activities, local culture, and environmental conditions around the temple. Secondary data were collected from scientific literature, research reports, and official PT TWC documents. All data were supported by photo and video documentation to strengthen the validity of the research findings.

Data analysis was conducted interactively, referring to the Miles and Huberman model, which includes four stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. Interview data were transcribed and analyzed using NVivo 15 software for coding, theme grouping, and data visualization. This approach helped researchers identify patterns, relationships, and meanings relevant to the application of sustainable tourism principles at Prambanan Temple.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In-Depth Interview Results

1. With Academic Resource Persons

Table 1. Interview with Academic Resource Persons

Problem Formulation	Question	Answer
Problem Summary 3 regarding management challenges related to regulations.	Are the current regulations felt to be sufficient to regulate stakeholder involvement? Request provide academic recommendations aimed at increasing the synergy and effectiveness of coordination between PT TWC and BPCB DIY in sustainable management.	2018 to 2020 was the preparation of the Integrated Tourism Master Plan for Borobudur, Prambanan, Yogyakarta. So there I used to enter the institution of the UGM Center for Tourism Studies, and found that there was overlapping regulations. There are many regulations. At the national level, at the provincial level, at the district level. Each of them has a task. But its duties overlap with the duties in other regulations that assign other institutions. So the one who sells tickets is TWC. So, let's get to the basics, let's get to the basics. But the Ministry of Education, don't worry, later the temple will be damaged. However, by regulation, PT TWC is indeed regulated, which is to bring in profits. But the regulation is the Borobudur Conservation Center or the one in Zone 1 to protect the temple. The question is how synchronization of them. Their synergy In the field, the implementation in the field, yes, is still not well established. Well, according to Mr. Mei, how can it be better, for example, in management, in respecting local wisdom, yes, synchronization between these regulations. Synchronous first, the regulations will follow. So that people don't walk alone. Visitor management is not restricting visitors, but managing visitors. On the one

Problem Formulation	Question	Answer
		<p>hand, to protect the temple, but also to enliven the surroundings as well.</p> <p>Providing benefits to the surrounding community.</p> <p>Indeed, if we go to a tourist destination, we just do it carelessly, it's not allowed. It means that we must be responsible. Well, this actually contains education or awareness to everyone. That's why the theory of responsible tourism emerged.</p>
<p>Problem formulation 1 Regarding the economic benefits for the community around the temple.</p>	<p>Is in your judgment, the community locals have the opportunity to get opportunities Economy of Cultural Heritage Tourism Development?</p>	<p>So the question is, who are the economic benefits for now? Well</p> <p>So if we enter, let's pay for the ticket, this is put into PT Taman Wisata. The community can feel it. By law they don't get any benefits.</p> <p>The training has been widely accepted by the community through POKDARWIS. Tourism Awareness Group. Those who have been trained so far are two people, brought training, three people, two trainings. It should be the task of this group after receiving the training to teach the community, but does that happen? Not necessarily. But for us, wow, the society is not organized. Yes, it is. Because he has never received training.</p>
<p>Problem formulation 1 regarding the economic benefits for the community around the temple.</p>	<p>Whether You have Suggestions on the mechanism Good Applied to ensure that the local community benefits Economically?</p>	<p>From the tourism awareness group, we should lower the level to MASDARWIS. Tourism Aware Society. If all people are aware of tourism, it is safe.</p> <p>The involvement of the community, the portion of which is important. So the community must be actively involved. He doesn't know if he needs it yet, so he has to be made aware if he needs it. Maybe because he has not been involved so far, so he doesn't feel useful.</p> <p>The portion of community involvement must be instilled. They must be subjects so that the benefits they get are optimal if we want to continue.</p>
<p>Problem formulation 2 About cultural preservation and local identity.</p>	<p>What is tourism management in Prambanan Temple and Queen Boko maintains the authenticity of traditions, practices culture and the cultural identity of the local community? Please</p>	<p>Presidential Decree Number 1 of 1992 is indeed regulated by PT TWC regulations that bring profits. But the regulation of the Conservation Center in zone 1 is to protect the temple. But the problem is that the temples that exist now Borobudur Temple, Prambanan Temple according to good conservation research there is a decline.</p> <p>Every visitor is obliged to respect the local wisdom of the destination visited. It is not just because he has paid, then he feels like</p>

Problem Formulation	Question	Answer
	provide suggestion to address the potential risks of cultural commercialization that can erode cultural sustainability.	doing something. Local wisdom needs to be upheld. Because all the power in the destination belongs to the community. Have you heard of the tourist village of Gunung Kidul? They develop from the community and are supported by the government. So that the people involved now benefit from the presence of tourism. Try to see that there are in big cities that are running well like in Jakarta and its surroundings. We will see how much sustainability there is. Visitor management is not restricting visitors, but managing visitors. But the packaging must be good.
Problem Summary 3 regarding management challenges related to regulations.	Please give advice on implementing a sustainable tourism model that can maintain the resilience and viability of the destination – not just from the physicist aspect and ecological, but also in terms of historical value, meaning culture and its relevance in the midst of the changing dynamics of the times, market pressures, and the potential degradation of the meaning of the site itself?	Our tourism activities need to be reorganized. So that everyone is happy. If he (the local community) can't benefit, why do he support it? Later someone else will get it. That's why community-based tourism emerged. So far, society has been used as an object, society should be a subject. Synchronization between regulations to be better in management and in respecting local wisdom. Synchronous first, the regulations will follow. So that people don't walk alone.

Source: Interview results with academic resource persons, 2024

2. With local resource persons

Table 2. Interviews with local resource persons

Problem Formulation	Question	Answer
a. Problem formulation 1 Regarding the economic benefits for the community around the temple.	a. Does the development of tourism in this area provide economic benefits for local residents?	a. Yes, of course, it's just that it may not be so evenly distributed, but it is very useful for local residents so they can absorb local workers.
b. Problem formulation 2 about the preservation of local culture and identity.	b. Is there an impact on the environment and cultural preservation?	b. Tourism can strengthen local culture if managed wisely, for example, many tourists who come are interested in art performances, traditional events or local artists who may provide economic value and pride to the community to preserve traditions, but on the other hand, culture can be shifted because it undergoes
c. Problem formulation 3	c. Are there things that need to be improved so that tourism in this	

formulation 3 regarding management challenges related to regulations.	region continues to benefit all people and future generations?	commercialization when traditions are only displayed for entertainment without original meaning. c. For economic equity, the local quota should be at least 70% of the workforce must come from local residents. Then maybe a tourism cooperative can be created so that there can be a share of ticket revenue for development funds villages and also MSME training
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Problem Formulation	Question	Answer
a. Formula problem 3 regarding management challenges related to regulations. b. Formula problem 2 About Cultural Preservation and local identity. c. Formula problem 3 regarding management challenges related to regulations.	a. Have you ever experienced an incident that resulted from the existence of area management More than one temple? b. Is the current manager involved the community in preserving the environment, culture, and the lives of local residents? c. If not, which aspect do you think is least in line with the needs of local residents?	a. PT TWC allowed the installation of decorations for the festival, but BPCB prohibited it because of the risk of damaging the temple. So sometimes confused about which area zones are regulated by PT TWC, which should be regulated by BPCB, making the impact of the bureaucratic process slow. b. Oh yes, of course, but limited, because there are no certain rights in society, then local MSMEs also often lose competition with foreign entrepreneurs who can access more easily from PT TWC. Because the outside entrepreneur may have more capital, so he can like to manage the problems related to this tourism business. The most crucial problem is the lack of distribution of economic benefits, people feel that the income from temple tickets is only very small or they feel like they can't get that share. So then there is a bit of social jealousy.

Problem Formulation	Question	Answer
a. Formula problem 2 About Cultural Preservation and local identity. b. Formula problem 1 Regarding the economic benefits for the community around the temple. c. Formula problem 2 About cultural preservation and local identity.	a. What is the popularity of tourism in area It reinforces the culture local tradition or vice versa? b. Whether Have there been any changes from the previous way of life in line with the development of tourism in this region? c. What steps that you think should be taken to keep local culture alive co-existing. Rise in popularity Destinations?	a. The negative impact is that tourists or tourists are often, especially local ones, who like to throw their garbage carelessly. So plastic waste is sometimes not put in the garbage can, then if it is for a positive impact the funds from tourism, it can be used to support the restoration of temples or for the revitalization of traditional arts. b. There are farm workers, who are lazy to do what they are farm workers there who are only given very little wages. It is better for him to guide tourists, his work is simple, and he immediately gets money at that time, it is also like the consumptive life also increases following the pattern of tourists. The education sector and also to always involve the younger generation so schools and local communities must teach history,

language and traditions to children so that they can proud and want to preserve it. We continue to want community-based tourism, so involve local communities as well as actors main in the management of tourist destinations, not only as an object. So, because if for example the community implements it, we must both take care of the tourism so that it is good.

Source: Results of interviews with local community resource persons, 2024

3. With the Managing Resource Person

Questions 1,4,5 were responded to by Renayu Molya, customer experience staff of Prambanan Temple, questions 2 -3 were answered by Nia Widyastuti as staff of Prambanan and Ratu Bobo Commercial and Partnership.

Table 3. Interviews with Managing Resource Persons

Problem Formulation	Question	Answer
Problem formulation 3 regarding management challenges related to regulation	How do PT TWC and BPCB DIY coordinate in the management of Prambanan Temple and Ratu Boko Palace? Are there any challenges in unifying the vision and challenges in communication?	Our communication style is indeed not for regular meetings. Because we are in one complex, one office area, so it is delicious indeed. Then what are the challenges? The challenge is that we have a difference in priorities because we as SOEs emphasize its function as the use of tourism, while PBK emphasizes more on its conservation function, its preservation function. Well, sometimes it is not in good line.
Formulation of problem 2 regarding the preservation of local culture and identity	What has PT TWC done as a manager to maintain cultural sustainability in these 2 temples?	In the management of this temple, there is one more institution under the Ministry of Culture, there is the Cultural Preservation Center Region 10 and also the Cultural Heritage Museum. Those whose job are to ensure that the temple building is safe, its preservation is also maintained. Everything that uses the temple area must be communicated with that party. Everything that is held in our place must indeed meet cultural elements. For example, we can still put ornaments or elements that are still related to culture. So there we also invite the local community. Community programs, CSR also run to the residents for cultural development, there is the development of creativity products and so on.
Problem formulation 3 regarding management challenges related to regulation	Is there a revenue distribution mechanism obtained from the management of Prambanan and Ratu Boko Temples between	Dividends from this company are entering the state into the state budget, non-tax revenues, and entering state revenues. Then there are indeed some that are allocated as preservation funds to the BPK MCB, it does exist and it is indeed routine every year.

		PT TWC, BPCB DIY, and the surrounding community?	
Problem formulation regarding management challenges related to regulation	3	What has PT TWC done to implement sustainable tourism in the temple area?	The first thing we have done is independent waste management . Actually, it's been a long time, but we're more active. So organic waste, which is the majority of waste, yes almost 80% of us are in the form of leaves or twigs from the park area and the rest is domestic waste from tourists. For the 80%, we are already independent, we have processed it ourselves. There are many resources ranging from tools and manpower that will later produce organic fertilizer that we have tested lab certification and we will use it again for fertilization purposes in the garden, so from the garden back to the garden. Then we manage domestic waste from visitors and stalls in collaboration with the local village 3R TPS. In addition, we have also started to use such non-carbon emission technology . In the Prambanan area, no vehicles are allowed to enter the visitor lane except in our vehicles. And our vehicles are all electric-based. We also hold cultural events in collaboration with local villages. Because in the past, for Prambanan Temple, the garden was to free up land, yes, Mbak from the community was then moved to the village east of Prambanan, which is now called Tlogo village, Mbak. Well, so we always want to facilitate cultural events with the Tlogo community.
Problem formulation regarding management challenges related to regulation	3	Continuing the previous question, how does PT TWC measure the success of the implementation of Sustainable tourism in Candi?	We also have 3 measuring tools here. 2 two measuring tools are to measure the satisfaction rating of visitors who visit. So we measure it, the first is through a CSI survey, namely the Customer Satisfaction Index . We usually do that twice a year or at least once a year. Well, and also we have a survey so that in real time we know what kind of visitor satisfaction that day is. Now for the other one we also have a survey on our performance satisfaction level . Later the survey will be our partners. Including there are from the surrounding community.

Source: Interview results with PT TWC management resource persons, 2024

Discussion

Sourced from the insights obtained from the informants' answers, this research can answer 3 problem formulations:

1. To what extent have the equitable and inclusive economic benefits been felt by the local communities around Prambanan Temple that have come from sustainable tourism management and what steps can be taken so that the community can be optimally involved to achieve better socio-economic sustainability?

The development of tourism in Prambanan Temple has provided economic benefits for the local residents, especially through the absorption of local labor and the empowerment of MSME actors and artists who not only come from around the temple, but also from the Yogyakarta area. PT TWC as the manager has involved the community around the temple, local MSMEs, and empowered artists in various cultural activities. Examples are the implementation of the Medang Market, routine dance performances, CSR programs, management of MSME kiosks, and residents around the temple who act as traveling photographers, tour guides, face painting artists, and caricatures.

However, the economic benefits have not been felt evenly. The local community stated that local MSMEs often lose competition with entrepreneurs who have larger capital or easier access to trade and do business. In addition, there is a shift in work patterns in the community where some leave traditional jobs such as farm laborers to switch to the tourism sector which sometimes increases the consumptive lifestyle of local people due to the increase in income and is influenced by tourists who come not only from Indonesia, but from all over the world. For example, the uneven distribution of income is what happens in Borobudur District. The sub-district is still below the poverty line even though Borobudur Temple which is in the Borobudur District area absorbs many visitors. Academic speakers also questioned whether the community has prospered from tourism? Highlighting that the chain of tourism activities has not been rearranged so that the community can benefit. People do not feel that they have benefits so they do not feel the need to support or protect the destination.

The above discussion is related to the theory of Socio-Economic Sustainability because this theory has an emphasis on understanding that sustainable tourism destinations do not only focus on the income of the manager, but also the fair distribution of income to the local community. This can be done by empowering local communities through involvement in operational activities such as becoming a local tour guide or lodging manager, so that income from tourism can improve the quality of life of the local community without damaging social and cultural values. The conditions in Prambanan show that this aspect of distribution has been carried out, but what is lacking is at the top-down level of participation (Amara, 2024).

Currently, community participation is still partial in the planning and evaluation stages, which has an impact on reducing the optimization of local socio-economic sustainability. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the participation of local communities in the industry and encourage cooperation between stakeholders. The source said that strengthening social capital can overcome stagnation in destination development and increase community participation and the quality of human resources (Ura, 2021).

This Economic Sustainability Governance model has been successfully implemented in several countries, including Indonesia. This model emphasizes the involvement of local communities in tourism management to create jobs and raise awareness of environmental conservation. For example, in Komodo and Bromo Tengger Semeru National Parks, revenue from entrance tickets is used to support conservation and infrastructure projects so that the community can feel direct benefits (Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025). In Prambanan, despite empowerment efforts, the direct benefits of admission have not been felt equally by the local community.

2. How are tourism management efforts at Prambanan Temple in maintaining the preservation of culture and local identity while recognizing and overcoming the potential risk of fading the authenticity of tradition and cultural meaning?

PT TWC has been active in organizing various cultural-themed events on a regular basis, such as Ramayana Ballet Prambanan, Pasar Medang, and Sleman Temple Run where in each of its implementations, PT TWC strives to include cultural elements and involve the local community, as well as empowering local artists and MSMEs. For example, Pasar Medang sells merchandise made by local MSMEs and Pasar Medang also displays dances by residents around the temple and artists around Yogyakarta. This shows PT TWC's efforts to empower local communities through involvement in operational activities and cultural activities, which are in line with the concept of socio-economic sustainability and strengthening social capital. The organization of cultural events such as the Tlogo Cultural Festival is also PT TWC's commitment to maintain cultural sustainability and good relations with the local community.

In Culture Defense Theory, culture functions as a defender in defending the group's identity against external pressures or social changes. The development of tourism does provide economic benefits, but it can be an external pressure that threatens cultural authenticity if not managed wisely. Therefore, sustainable tourism management that makes local culture the main attraction has created a mutually beneficial relationship between tourism and culture, so that culture can sustain itself through responsible utilization. Through the speaker, PT TWC also said that the goal is not to be exploitative, but to channel the heritage of our ancestors and the values contained in the temple relief to everyone, so that the temple is not only a monument to the dead, but also a source of learning for the next generation.

There is still a risk that traditions are only displayed for entertainment without heeding the original meaning or meaning. Of course, this can erode the values and authenticity of existing traditions. The mass production of low-quality goods that do not reflect the original culture is also a concern. Cultural heritage sites sometimes no longer represent the identity of the local community because the historical, aesthetic, social, and scientific values of the cultural heritage sites themselves have declined. Top-down management with minimal participation from local communities can exacerbate this condition (Siahaan & Ng, 2024; Suri & Sidik, 2021; Sururi, 2019).

3. How does the coordination between the legal entities that manage Prambanan Temple coordinate in creating effective sustainable management?

The management of Prambanan Temple involves two legal entities with different priorities, namely PT Taman Wisata Candi (TWC), a state-owned enterprise oriented to the use of tourism, and the Cultural Heritage Preservation Center and Museum (BPK MCB) Region 10 which focuses on the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage. Although both institutions have offices in the same complex to facilitate direct coordination and communication, structured formal coordination is still lacking, often more informal and ad hoc. PT TWC's responsibilities in Zone 1 include the implementation of the buffer of the existence of temple monuments and participating in the preservation of temples, but the control, management, and main responsibility for the temple (Zone 1) lies with the agency under the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is currently represented by the Cultural Preservation Center and Cultural Heritage Museum (BPK MCB) Region 10, which provides technical instructions for PT TWC.

This condition is explained by Institutional Theory. As an organization that behaves influenced by the norms, rules, and social pressures around it. In this case, PT TWC is under pressure to bring profits and optimize the use of resources, in accordance with its function as a company. Meanwhile, BPKMCB emphasizes the function of conservation and preservation, in line with the task of maintaining cultural heritage (Windiani et al., 2022).

The main challenge arises from this difference in priorities where PT TWC tries to bring in as many visitors as possible, but on the other hand BPK MCB focuses on the carrying capacity and preservation of the temple. This shows that there are different institutional pressures such as coercive pressure from regulations that require TWC to bring in profits and BPK MCB to maintain temples that have not been properly synchronized in the field. The lack of structured formal meetings and more informal coordination suggests that institutional mechanisms for unifying visions and addressing differences in priorities have not been fully effective.

Then, the overlap of regulations at various administrative levels (national/provincial/district) also slows down the decision-making process and causes conflicts of interest. Dr. Meitolo Hulu, an academic who was a resource person for this study, emphasized that regulatory synchronization is very crucial so that no party "runs alone" and produces negative impacts on the community and the cultural heritage itself. This is in accordance with Institutional Theory which highlights the importance of how formal and informal norms, values, and rules have an influence on the policy making process and managers' actions.

CONCLUSION

Sustainable tourism management at Prambanan Temple operates within a dual institutional framework, with PT Taman Wisata Candi (TWC) focusing on tourism utilization and the Cultural Heritage Preservation Center and Museum (BPK MCB) Region 10 responsible for conservation. Despite sharing an office complex, coordination remains informal and sporadic, complicated by differing priorities—visitor growth for TWC versus heritage preservation for BPK MCB—and overlapping regulations that create conflicts. Economically, tourism has generated local employment and empowered MSMEs, yet benefits are unevenly distributed, with limited direct revenue reaching local communities who also face competition from larger external businesses. Culturally, PT TWC supports local artists through events like the Ramayana Ballet and Pasar Medang while collaborating with BPK MCB to protect heritage values. Environmentally, efforts include organic waste management and electric vehicle use to reduce emissions. To enhance sustainable tourism, future research should explore mechanisms for formal institutional collaboration, regulatory harmonization, and models for fair economic benefit-sharing that balance tourism growth with cultural and environmental preservation.

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