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Sustainable Development of Inclusive and Disability-Friendly Tourism in the Pasir Padi Beach Area, Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

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Abstract

Inclusive tourism emphasizes the principle of equal access to tourism facilities and infrastructure, ensuring that tourism benefits are accessible to all individuals, including persons with disabilities and marginalized communities, while simultaneously supporting environmental conservation and long-term sustainability. This study aims to explore the readiness of Pasir Padi Beach in implementing inclusive tourism by examining physical accessibility, such as adequate infrastructure, wheelchair-friendly pathways, and accessible transportation, as well as inclusive services, information availability, and social acceptance in developing a disability-friendly and sustainable tourism destination. This study adopts a qualitative research approach using a descriptive and exploratory design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including local government officials, destination managers, tourism service providers, and community representatives. These data were complemented by direct field observations and document analysis related to tourism planning and accessibility policies. Qualitative data analysis was conducted using NVivo software to identify dominant themes, stakeholder perspectives, and institutional readiness related to inclusive tourism development. The findings indicate that Pasir Padi Beach has demonstrated initial commitment toward inclusive tourism; however, several gaps remain, particularly in standardized accessibility infrastructure, integrated planning, and public awareness regarding disability inclusion. The study further reveals that multi-stakeholder collaboration among government agencies, destination managers, local communities, and the private sector plays a decisive role in establishing an adaptive, inclusive, and equitable tourism system. Inclusive tourism development is found to contribute not only to social justice and equal participation but also to market diversification, destination competitiveness, and long-term sustainability. In conclusion, the development of inclusive tourism at Pasir Padi Beach requires a comprehensive, participatory, and sustainability-oriented approach. This study contributes to the growing body of inclusive tourism literature and supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to equality, reduced inequalities, and sustainable cities and communities.

Keywords: Inclusive tourism; Accessibility; Disability-Friendly Tourism; Sustainable Tourism; Pasir Padi Beach

A. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the strategic sectors that plays an important role in driving economic growth, creating employment opportunities, and strengthening cultural identity. However, the utilization of the tourism sector has not yet been fully accessible and enjoyed by all segments of society, particularly persons with disabilities. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), more than 15% of the world's population consists of persons with disabilities, and this number continues to rise along with population growth and aging. In Indonesia, the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2023) records millions of individuals with various types of disabilities who have equal rights to participate in tourism activities. Unfortunately, most tourist destinations in Indonesia are still not fully accessible for this group—whether in terms of infrastructure, information access, or supporting services. Tourism activities encompass a multidimensional and multidisciplinary series of interactions that arise from the needs of individuals and states, as well as interactions between tourists and local communities, fellow tourists, the government, local governments, and entrepreneurs, including for persons with disabilities (1). Persons with disabilities

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often face limited access not only to healthcare, education, and decent employment, but also to tourism (2). The development of inclusive tourism can foster fairness and equality by ensuring that all groups—including minorities, vulnerable populations, persons with disabilities, and indigenous communities—have opportunities to participate in and benefit from the tourism industry.

Developing inclusive tourism has become an urgent need to realize the principles of equality and social justice. Inclusive tourism emphasizes the provision of equal access for all individuals, including persons with disabilities, older adults, and other vulnerable groups. Implementing this concept requires not only the availability of physical facilities—such as ramps, accessible toilets, clear signage, and disability-friendly transportation—but also enhanced human resource capacity to provide services that are sensitive to the needs of tourists with disabilities (Buhalis & Darcy, 2011). Major challenges include limited budgets, the lack of technical regulations, low awareness among tourism business actors, and insufficient cross-sectoral collaboration between government, the private sector, and communities. Moreover, the principles of sustainable development are inseparable from this discourse. Tourism development that focuses solely on physical infrastructure without considering social, economic, and environmental dimensions may lead to negative impacts. Therefore, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—particularly Goal 10 (reducing inequality) and Goal 11 (sustainable, safe, inclusive, and resilient cities and communities)—are essential to ensure that inclusive tourism development provides not only short-term benefits but also preserves natural resources, empowers local communities, and improves the well-being of future generations (UNWTO, 2022).

In terms of tourism policy , although Law No. 8/2016 explicitly includes cultural and tourism rights for persons with disabilities (for example, in Article 16), found that policy commitments have not been fully translated into concrete actions (Pravita et al., 2023). They highlight the need for accessible infrastructure (physical access), transportation, and information that is easy to access and communicate, in accordance with the principles of the CRPD. This situation does not only present ethical concerns but also creates strategic opportunities. By developing a comprehensive inclusive tourism model—one that involves national and local governments, tourism businesses, disability organizations, and the wider community—Indonesia can harness the significant potential of tourists with disabilities. Economically, travelers with disabilities represent a relatively underserved market segment, even though their demand has the potential to drive improvements in tourism quality. Socially, this is an opportunity to strengthen human rights and social justice; from a sustainability perspective, inclusive tourism helps achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to reducing inequality and promoting social inclusion.

Investing in inclusive tourism—such as by building disability-friendly facilities, training tourism sector personnel to be sensitive to disability needs, and developing CRPD-based accessibility guidelines—is not merely a regulatory obligation but a strategic socio-economic investment with long-term benefits. Recent research reinforces this notion: in a 2025 study, Reindrawati et al. examined the hospitality sector in Indonesia and found that major accessibility challenges persist in the areas of infrastructure, service quality, and industry commitment (Reindrawati et al., 2022). By improving these aspects, tourism destinations in Indonesia will become more competitive among both domestic and international tourists with disabilities—while also realizing the principle of tourism as a universal right. Thus, the development of inclusive and disability-friendly tourism in Indonesia is not merely a moral obligation but an integral part of a broader strategic development agenda. It has the potential to strengthen Indonesia's position within the global tourism landscape, enhance destination branding as disability-friendly, and simultaneously promote greater social welfare. To be effective, these efforts must be carried out collaboratively and sustainably: engaging the government, the private sector, disability communities, and other relevant stakeholders; translating regulations into infrastructure design, operational policies, and service culture; and periodically evaluating progress and challenges. With such an approach, inclusive

tourism will become more than just rhetoric—it will evolve into a tangible reality that guarantees every individual, without exception, the right to travel and participate fully in social life.

Indonesian tourist destinations at the global level while ensuring tourism as a right for every individual without exception. Inclusive tourism development is not only about providing accessibility, facilities, and infrastructure for vulnerable and minority groups but also about creating conditions that allow local stakeholders to meaningfully participate in the tourism industry (3). As of 2020, the number of persons with disabilities in Indonesia reached 22.5 million people or 5% of the total population. In the Bangka Belitung Province, Kompas (2023) reported 7,746 persons with disabilities out of a total population of 1,537,627. Meanwhile, in South Sumatra Province, according to the South Sumatra Provincial Social Office (2023), there are 30,157 persons with disabilities. These data show that the number of persons with disabilities is relatively high. Thus, special efforts and attention are needed to ensure fairness for all groups—particularly minorities and persons with disabilities—in alignment with national development priority number 4, which focuses on improving human resources through enhanced education, healthcare, and access to technology. The government must also promote gender equality by increasing the roles of women, youth, and persons with disabilities across various development sectors. Therefore, developing inclusive tourism is essential to achieving a tourism model that is disability-friendly and sustainable. This research aims to develop an inclusive, disability-friendly, and sustainable tourism model in the Southern Sumatra region (Palembang City and Pangkal Pinang).

This study employs a qualitative research approach, which aims to understand the phenomenon of developing disability-friendly inclusive tourism through an in-depth exploration of perspectives, experiences, and real conditions observed in the field. The qualitative method is chosen because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the social dynamics, policies, and physical conditions that shape the level of accessibility in the Pasir Padi Beach tourism area. Rather than focusing on numerical measurements, this approach emphasizes meaning, processes, and contextual interpretations underlying the phenomenon being studied. Data collection was carried out through several techniques, beginning with interviews and the formation of discussion forums or focus group discussions (FGDs). This was followed by direct observation at the research sites to verify the validity of the information obtained through interviews and FGDs. Subsequently, questionnaires were distributed to persons with disabilities to understand their responses regarding the availability of facilities and infrastructure—whether they are adequately provided or not.

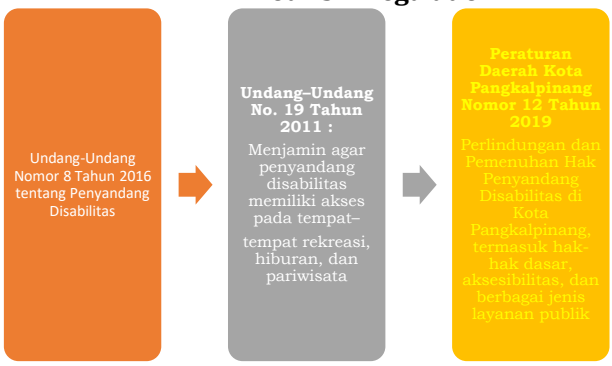
B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach, which aims to understand the phenomenon of developing disability-friendly inclusive tourism through an in-depth exploration of perspectives, experiences, and real conditions observed in the field. The qualitative method is chosen because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the social dynamics, policies, and physical conditions that shape the level of accessibility in the Pasir Padi Beach tourism area. Rather than focusing on numerical measurements, this approach emphasizes meaning, processes, and contextual interpretations underlying the phenomenon being studied. Data collection was carried out through several techniques, beginning with interviews and the formation of discussion forums or focus group discussions (FGDs). This was followed by direct observation at the research sites to verify the validity of the information obtained through interviews and FGDs. Subsequently, questionnaires were distributed to persons with disabilities to understand their responses regarding the availability of facilities and infrastructure—whether they are adequately provided or not.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Inclusive tourism is defined as tourism activities that are accessible to everyone regardless of physical, sensory, intellectual, or socio-economic conditions. For persons with disabilities, limited accessibility often becomes a major obstacle to enjoying tourism services. Meanwhile, the concept of sustainability requires that tourism not only generates economic benefits but also protects the environment and improves the quality of life of local communities. Based on the findings of the study, the development of an inclusive tourism model in the Pasir Padi Beach area can be viewed through several indicators as follows. Regulations serve to establish a framework that ensures equal access in the tourism sector. Through laws, government regulations, and derivative policies, the state can: 1). Establish accessibility standards for tourism facilities and infrastructure, such as wheelchair paths, Braille information boards, and audio guides; 2). Encourage tourism industry actors to provide disability-friendly services by offering incentives such as tax reductions or simplified licensing processes; 3). Provide legal protection for tourists with disabilities to ensure they are free from discrimination.

Figure 1.
Tourism Regulation



The regulation of figure 1 above for developing the Pasir Padi Beach area to be disability-friendly begins with the highest legal framework—Law No. 8 of 2016—followed by the issuance of Regional Regulation (Perda) No. 12 of 2019 by the Pangkal Pinang City Government concerning the protection and rights of persons with disabilities in Pangkal Pinang City, including basic accessibility rights and various types of service provisions. The Pasir Padi Beach Tourist Attraction Area is part of the City Tourism Strategic Area (KSPK) of Pasir Padi Beach Edu-Recreation and its Surroundings. The development target of this area is to establish an environmentally conscious coastal edu-recreation zone that can stimulate the growth of other tourism areas, supported by the development theme of coastal edu-recreation products. The main tourism attraction is beach recreation, while the supporting attractions include ecotourism, cultural tourism events, religious edu-recreation, and seafood culinary tourism.

Tabel. 1
Focus of Tourism Attraction Development in the Pasir Padi Beach Area

Tourism Attraction Development	Indicator
Developing planning and regulator	Developing planning and regulatory frameworks for the Pasir Padi Beach Tourism Attraction Area as a superior tourism destination and a tourism growth center, including a master plan for tourism attraction development, detailed engineering design (DED), and feasibility studies
Fasility and Accesibility	Monitoring coastal abrasion, waste disposal, environmental degradation, and related issues; Establishment of a rapid-response unit for handling tourism-related accidents; Improving accessibility to tourist attractions and equipping them with road facilities such as signage and directional markers, as well as providing safe, comfortable, and reliable intermodal transportation. services; Development of supporting tourism facilities according to standards; Enhancement of basic tourism infrastructure and amenities; Increasing community involvement as tourism actors.
Information and education	Developing a secondary tourism service center in the Pasir Padi Beach area and providing a tourist information center, particularly for the Pasir Padi Tourism Area and its surroundings
Development Area	Arrangement and development of the Tanjung Bunga Beach religious edu-recreation area; Arrangement of the Pasir Padi Beach edu-recreation area, integrated with the development of the Tanjung Bunga Beach edu-recreation area and seafood culinary tourism Development of the BBG (Bangka Botanical Garden) area for edu-recreation activities, equipped with various collections of rare plants, a biodiversity library, a herbarium, a camping ground, and sports tourism activities such as jogging tracks or bicycle tracks;
Construction	Construction of a breakwater at Pasir Padi Beach that also functions as a jogging track or bicycle track for beachside cycling activities; Construction of a clean and hygienic seafood culinary center in the TPI and Fish Port areas;

Based on Table 1 above regarding the Focus of Tourism Attraction Development in the Pasir Padi Beach Area, it can be concluded that the development of the Pasir Padi Beach tourism attraction is designed in an integrated, sustainable, and quality-oriented manner. The development focus is not limited to physical infrastructure, but also emphasizes governance, service quality, and community involvement. Overall, the development direction includes comprehensive planning and regulatory frameworks, such as the preparation of a tourism master plan, detailed engineering design (DED), and feasibility studies, aimed at positioning Pasir Padi Beach as a leading tourism destination and a tourism growth center. In terms of facilities and accessibility, priority is given to improving basic infrastructure, ensuring visitor safety, mitigating coastal environmental issues, and enhancing accessibility through reliable transportation systems and adequate road facilities.

Furthermore, the development strategy highlights increased community participation as key tourism actors to ensure that local communities directly benefit from tourism activities. The information and education aspect is strengthened through the establishment of secondary tourism service centers and tourist information centers to improve service quality and visitor experiences.

From a spatial development perspective, Pasir Padi Beach is envisioned as an integrated edu-recreation area, connected with the Tanjung Bunga Beach area and the Bangka Botanical Garden (BBG), complemented by seafood culinary tourism. Meanwhile, the construction focus includes the development of multifunctional infrastructure such as a breakwater that also serves as a jogging or cycling track, as well as the construction of clean and hygienic seafood culinary centers.

In conclusion, the table indicates that the development of Pasir Padi Beach is directed toward creating a competitive, safe, environmentally friendly, and sustainable tourism destination that can function as a driver of economic growth and a major tourism hub in the surrounding region.

Figure 2. Guiding Block



The figure 2 above is an example of a house building that is recommended for facilities. with some explanations for people with disabilities.

Special Facilities for Persons with Disabilities

Guiding block is a type of tactile paving or specially textured tile installed in public areas to provide guidance and directional cues for persons with disabilities particularly individuals with visual impairments—so they can walk safely and independently. These tiles have distinct patterns and shapes to convey information, such as linear grooves indicating a safe walking path and dotted (blister) patterns signaling hazards or a change in direction.

Benefits of Guiding Blocks for Individuals with Visual Impairments

Safe and Independent Navigation: Guiding blocks enable visually impaired individuals to walk more confidently and independently in public spaces, reducing their reliance on assistance from others.

Clear Orientation: With textures that can be detected by the feet or a cane, individuals with visual impairments can understand the direction and surroundings, thereby minimizing the risk of getting lost or colliding with obstacles.

Inclusivity in Public Facilities: The installation of guiding blocks on sidewalks, stations, terminals, and various other public facilities reflects a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that individuals with visual impairments can fully participate in daily life.

Ramp Facility

A ramp is a walking surface with a longitudinal slope steeper than 1:20 and is used to provide access between different elevation levels (Design, 2010). The primary function of a ramp is to enable wheelchair users to move up and down elevation changes without assistance from others. The provision of ramp facilities in the Pasir Padi Beach area is available at public restrooms and several buildings that serve as information centers. These ramps, particularly those installed at public toilets, facilitate persons with disabilities in accessing the entrances and exits, as illustrated in the image below.

The construction of ramps significantly improves accessibility by allowing wheelchair users to enter and exit buildings with ease. Ramps eliminate vertical barriers that often hinder mobility, ensuring that individuals with disabilities can move independently without requiring assistance. By providing a smooth and gradual incline, ramps support safe navigation, enhance user comfort, and contribute to the overall inclusivity of public facilities. This infrastructure is essential in creating environments that accommodate diverse mobility needs and uphold the principles of universal access.

The development of inclusive tourism that is friendly to persons with disabilities requires a fundamental paradigm shift—from merely providing physical facilities to adopting a holistic approach that positions accessibility as a core principle across the entire chain of planning, management, and service delivery within tourism destinations. In the context of modern tourism, accessibility is no longer understood simply as the provision of ramps or sloped pathways; rather, it encompasses much broader dimensions, including access to information, inclusive services, participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, and the formulation of policies that guarantee every individual's right to enjoy tourism experiences without barriers. Cross-disciplinary studies highlight the growing awareness that truly inclusive tourism destinations must prioritize principles of equity and sustainability, as inclusivity is not an additional feature but the foundation ensuring that all segments of society benefit from tourism development.

Analyses of practices in various regions show that the success of inclusive tourism is determined by the combination of adequate physical infrastructure and the readiness of human resources who are directly involved in tourism services. The provision of facilities such as ramps, sloped walkways, accessible toilets, guiding blocks, tactile paving, Braille signage, audio guidance, and rest areas friendly to wheelchair users constitutes the basic elements required to ensure that the physical environment of a destination is genuinely accessible. However, infrastructure alone is only one component. International studies reveal that physical facilities are often built but fail to provide optimal benefits due to the lack of understanding among tourism workers and service providers about how to appropriately assist visitors with disabilities. For instance, visually impaired tourists may require clear verbal guidance, while deaf tourists may depend on visual signage or sign language. When human resources lack sufficient literacy on accessibility, even high-quality facilities cannot yield maximum outcomes.

Beyond the role of frontline workers, the presence of visionary and sustainable local government policies plays a significant role in ensuring that inclusivity principles are consistently adopted by all stakeholders. Local governments hold a key position as regulators, facilitators, and supervisors in the implementation of accessibility standards in tourism destinations. Policies based on universal design should serve as the main guideline to ensure that tourism infrastructure and services are designed to meet

the needs of all users from the outset, rather than as additional adjustments after the destination has been developed. Governments also need to ensure the availability of continuous training programs for tourism sector workers, transportation providers, hotel managers, tour guides, and local communities, enabling them to possess the awareness and capability to deliver inclusive services. Without clear policies and long-term commitment, the development of inclusive tourism risks becoming inconsistent and limited to short-term projects.

Nevertheless, various challenges continue to arise in the implementation of inclusive tourism. One of the major constraints is the lack of uniform accessibility implementation standards at both national and local levels. Many regions do not yet have comprehensive technical guidelines related to inclusive design, leading to accessible facility developments that often fail to accommodate the diverse needs of different disability groups. Another challenge is the limited budget available to local governments or tourism operators. The development of accessibility facilities is often perceived as costly, causing it to be ranked low in priority compared to other tourism attractions. However, numerous studies demonstrate that investment in accessibility generates long-term economic benefits, as it opens opportunities for the disability tourism market, which represents a significant global population.

Another issue is the lack of data on persons with disabilities and their specific needs in the tourism context. Inaccurate or unavailable data results in planning that is not evidence-based. Many destinations do not know the exact number of tourists with disabilities who visit, the types of barriers they face, or the kinds of services they require. As a result, policies that are introduced often miss the mark or focus solely on one type of disability, while others remain overlooked. In reality, persons with disabilities comprise diverse groups with varying needs, including physical, sensory, intellectual, and psychosocial disabilities. To address these challenges, strategies for developing inclusive tourism must integrate cross-sector collaboration between government, tourism businesses, disability organizations, academics, and the general public. The involvement of disability organizations is crucial because they are the parties who understand accessibility needs most comprehensively. A participatory approach ensures that all policies and facility developments are truly relevant and effective. Additionally, periodic accessibility evaluations of tourism destinations are necessary to assess the extent to which existing facilities and services align with standards and the actual needs of users. Such evaluations also help destinations identify gaps and adjust in line with evolving international standards.

Within the framework of sustainable development, the advancement of inclusive tourism should not be viewed as an optional program added only in response to specific demands or pressures. Instead, inclusivity must be an integral component of destination design from the earliest planning stages. Inclusive destinations enhance tourism competitiveness by providing safe, comfortable, and meaningful experiences for all visitors while fostering an environment that is humane and equitable. This approach aligns with sustainability principles that emphasize inclusive, just, and human rights–oriented development. If all stakeholders commit to implementing these principles, inclusive tourism can evolve into a system embedded within regional development, delivering broad benefits to society, reducing access disparities, and strengthening the image of destinations as spaces that can be enjoyed by everyone, without exception.

C. CONCLUSION

The development of the tourism sector in Pangkalpinang City is not solely directed toward increasing the number of tourist arrivals or enhancing the region's economic contribution, but also represents the city government's commitment to realizing inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development. In this context, tourism development is no longer limited to physical infrastructure or destination promotion; rather, it emphasizes the importance of ensuring that every citizen, without exception, has equal

opportunities to enjoy safe, comfortable, and meaningful facilities, services, and tourism experiences. Prioritizing vulnerable groups, particularly persons with disabilities, is a fundamental element that reflects humanistic values while strengthening Pangkalpinang's identity as a progressive, inclusive city that respects diversity.

Efforts to realize inclusive tourism in Pangkalpinang are evident through initiatives aimed at providing accessible infrastructure, including sloped pathways, ramps, accessible restrooms, designated parking spaces, and supporting facilities that enable individuals with sensory or mobility impairments to move independently. Beyond physical aspects, the development of empathetic tourism services also becomes a crucial focus. This includes training for tourism stakeholders—such as destination staff, tour guides, and hospitality service providers—to enhance their understanding of the needs of visitors with disabilities and to deliver non-discriminatory services. A consciousness of humane service acts as the foundation for creating meaningful tourism experiences and fostering a sense of appreciation among visitors. The provision of easily understandable tourism information also serves as an integral component of inclusive tourism development. Clear, accessible information disseminated in multiple formats—such as signage with large and high-contrast text, accessible route maps, audio information, and disability-friendly digital guides—helps reduce barriers frequently encountered by persons with disabilities. These measures not only facilitate mobility but also foster confidence and independence in navigating tourist destinations.

Furthermore, the creation of disability-friendly tourist destinations aligns with global trends in sustainable tourism, which recognize social inclusion as one of its principal pillars. Inclusive development does not only benefit the target group but also generates long-term advantages for the broader community and the tourism sector itself. When a destination is able to accommodate the needs of diverse groups of visitors, its attractiveness increases, its reputation improves, and the potential for market expansion becomes greater. This strengthens Pangkalpinang's position as a city ready to compete in both national and international tourism arenas. Through these various initiatives, Pangkalpinang reinforces its identity as a city that upholds the rights of every individual to enjoy its public spaces, natural beauty, and cultural heritage. The development of inclusive and disability-friendly tourism is not merely a symbol of commitment to human rights, but also a social investment that enhances the quality of life and strengthens the sustainability of tourism destinations. Thus, inclusive tourism is not simply an option, but a necessity that must continue to be pursued to create a city that is truly livable for everyone.

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