



Collaborative Governance in Tourism Destination Development from the Initial Condition Dimension in Wajo Regency

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Abstract

This study examines collaborative governance in tourism destination development in Wajo Regency, South Sulawesi, with specific attention to the initial conditions that shape collaboration among stakeholders. Tourism development in Wajo has strong potential through cultural heritage, Bugis identity, silk weaving, Lake Tempe, coastal areas, and rural landscapes. However, this potential has not been fully optimized because of limited institutional capacity, weak coordination, uneven stakeholder participation, and insufficient tourism infrastructure. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study collected data through field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Informants included officials from the Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office, Bappelitbangda, technical agencies, tourism business actors, community representatives, and academics. The analysis focused on three dimensions of initial conditions in collaborative governance: the distribution of resources, power, and knowledge; incentives and barriers to participation; and the history of previous cooperation or conflict. The findings show that Wajo Regency has a strong formal foundation for collaboration through planning documents, regional regulations, budget allocation, and cross-sector involvement. Nevertheless, collaboration remains largely government-centered, while community, private sector, and academic participation is still limited and mostly consultative. Incentives for participation exist through investment opportunities, community empowerment, tourism promotion, and academic support, but they are constrained by weak human resources, limited infrastructure, unclear role division, sectoral ego, and uncertain program sustainability. Previous cooperation has occurred through planning forums, cultural activities, promotion programs, Pokdarwis development, and academic partnerships. The study concludes that Wajo needs stronger institutional coordination, substantive participation, capacity building, and sustainable partnership mechanisms to improve tourism governance.

Introduction

The shift from government to governance has changed the way public administration understands development. Development is no longer viewed as a task controlled only by formal government institutions. It is now understood as a shared process that requires the active role of public institutions, private actors, local communities, civil society organizations, and academic institutions. This change reflects the growing complexity of public problems, especially at the regional level, where development issues often involve limited resources, competing interests, fragmented authority, and different levels of stakeholder capacity. In this context, the governance paradigm offers a more inclusive approach because it places cooperation, participation, and shared responsibility at the center of public problem solving (Wilkes, 2022; Rajendran et al., 2024; Habibi et al., 2025).

Public administration studies have shown that governance requires stronger interaction between the state and non-state actors. The government still holds formal authority, but it cannot work effectively without support from other stakeholders. The need for cooperation becomes clearer when public programs involve social, economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions at the same time. Rosenbloom et al. (2022) explains that modern public administration has moved from a narrow focus on responsiveness toward broader collaboration between government and citizens. Martinus (2022) also argue that public participation can strengthen policy legitimacy when citizens and stakeholders have space to contribute to public decision-making. In this sense, governance is not only about administrative control. It is also about building networks, trust, communication, and collective action among actors with different interests and resources (Ansell et al., 2023).

Collaborative governance has become one of the important approaches in this changing administrative landscape. It emphasizes the direct involvement of public and non-public actors in joint forums to solve public problems and manage public programs. Afandi et al. (2023) define collaborative governance as a governing arrangement where public agencies engage non-state stakeholders directly in a collective decision-making process. Pilon & Brouard (2024) also highlight that cross-sector collaboration is needed when public problems cannot be solved by a single organization. This view is relevant for regional development because local governments often face limited budgets, limited human resources, and limited technical capacity. Through collaboration, these limitations can be reduced by combining government authority, private investment, community knowledge, academic expertise, and civil society support.

The importance of collaborative governance can also be seen in tourism development. Tourism is a multi-sectoral field that depends on many interconnected elements, such as attractions, accessibility, amenities, promotion, institutions, community readiness, environmental quality, and cultural preservation. Tourism development cannot rely only on local government programs because the sector involves public infrastructure, private services, local cultural assets, community behavior, and market dynamics. Taufik et al. (2023) state that tourism development involves interaction between tourism and other resource sectors. Xiao et al. (2022) also shows that tourism revitalization requires the involvement of various governance actors. In addition, Igoumenakis et al. (2023) emphasize that collaborative governance can support the development of tourism objects through coordination between government, communities, and other stakeholders. further explain that multi-stakeholder cooperation is important for building tourism resilience in heritage areas.

Tourism destination development requires coordination between actors because each actor controls different resources. Local governments usually provide policy direction, planning documents, budget allocation, regulation, infrastructure support, and institutional coordination. The private sector provides investment, accommodation, restaurants, transportation, travel services, and tourism products. Communities contribute local knowledge, cultural identity, social support, hospitality, environmental care, and destination management at the grassroots level. Academic institutions support research, training, planning, and human resource development (Harsanto & Wahyuningrat, 2024). Civil society organizations and media can support promotion, advocacy, awareness, and public communication. Without coordination among these actors, tourism development can face overlapping programs, weak promotion, low community ownership, limited investment, and conflict between economic interests and cultural or environmental protection (Wang & Weng, 2025; Chen et al., 2025). Wajo Regency in South Sulawesi has strong potential to develop tourism based on cultural, historical, and natural resources. Wajo is closely associated with Bugis cultural identity, local wisdom, traditional heritage, silk weaving, historical sites, and community-based cultural practices.

These assets provide a distinctive identity that can support regional tourism competitiveness. Wajo also has natural tourism potential, including Lake Tempe, coastal areas, rural landscapes, and other local attractions that can be developed as tourism destinations. These resources can support regional income, local employment, creative economy growth, cultural preservation, and community welfare when managed through clear planning and strong collaboration. However, tourism potential does not automatically become a competitive destination. It requires institutional capacity, stakeholder commitment, investment support, promotional strategy, infrastructure development, and active community participation (Hart, 2024; Markatos et al., 2024; Laetitia & Amolo, 2025).

The development of tourism in Wajo Regency still faces several practical challenges. Local tourism management remains affected by limited bureaucratic capacity, uneven human resource competence, weak cross-sector coordination, limited private investment, inadequate promotion, and low community participation. These conditions show that tourism development cannot depend only on sectoral programs from the tourism office. Tourism requires support from regional planning agencies, public works agencies, fisheries agencies, investment offices, tourism businesses, academic institutions, tourism awareness groups, cultural communities, and local residents. Lopes & Farias (2022) explain that collaborative governance can encourage innovation in public service settings when actors are able to work across institutional boundaries. This view is important for Wajo because tourism development requires integrated work across sectors, not fragmented administrative action (Lee, 2022; Wang & Ran, 2023).

The urgency of collaboration also relates to the sustainability of tourism destinations. A destination may attract visitors in the early stage, but weak management can reduce its long-term value. Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle explains that destinations can move from exploration to involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and possible decline or rejuvenation. This means that tourism development needs early coordination to prevent stagnation and decline. In Wajo, collaborative governance can help strengthen the foundation of destination development by improving shared planning, clarifying actor roles, building community ownership, and aligning tourism programs with regional development priorities. Collaboration can also reduce conflict when tourism development intersects with land use, cultural values, environmental concerns, and economic expectations (Kangas et al., 2022; Bhatta & Joshi, 2023; Talukder, 2025).

Based on these conditions, collaborative governance is important for understanding tourism destination development in Wajo Regency (Ringa et al., 2023; Nuh et al., 2024; Maturbongs & Lekatompessy, 2025; Mulyanto & Rahayu, 2025; Saidi et al., 2025). The issue is not only whether Wajo has tourism potential, but also how local actors work together to transform that potential into sustainable destination development. The presence of cultural heritage, natural attractions, and local economic opportunities provides a strong basis for tourism growth. At the same time, challenges in coordination, capacity, investment, promotion, and participation show the need for stronger governance arrangements. Therefore, the discussion of collaborative governance in Wajo tourism development becomes relevant to public administration because it connects regional development, stakeholder participation, institutional coordination, and sustainable tourism management within one integrated policy concern.

Method

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design to examine the implementation of collaborative governance in tourism destination development in Wajo Regency. The qualitative approach was selected because the research focused on understanding governance processes, stakeholder

relations, institutional roles, resource distribution, participation dynamics, and previous patterns of cooperation or conflict among actors. These issues require an in-depth explanation rather than numerical measurement. Through this approach, the study sought to describe how collaboration takes place, how actors interact, what factors support or limit participation, and how the initial conditions of collaborative governance shape tourism destination development in the region.

The study applied a descriptive-analytical orientation. This means that the research did not only describe the phenomenon but also interpreted the meaning of each finding in relation to the collaborative governance process. The descriptive aspect was used to present the actual condition of tourism development in Wajo Regency, including the role of government institutions, communities, private actors, academics, and other stakeholders. The analytical aspect was used to examine the relationship between these actors, the availability and distribution of resources, participation incentives and barriers, and the history of cooperation or conflict in tourism governance.

Research Location and Institutional Context

The research was conducted within the Wajo Regency Government, South Sulawesi Province. The main institutional focus was the Wajo Regency Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office, which functions as the leading sector in regional tourism development. This office was selected because it has direct authority in planning, coordinating, and implementing tourism-related programs, especially those related to tourism destination development. The study also involved other regional agencies that have functional links with tourism development, including agencies responsible for regional planning, public works, infrastructure, fisheries, investment, and other supporting sectors.

The selection of Wajo Regency as the research location was based on its tourism potential and governance challenges. Wajo has cultural, historical, and natural tourism assets, including Bugis cultural heritage, silk weaving, historical sites, Lake Tempe, coastal areas, and rural landscapes. However, the development of these tourism assets still faces several problems, such as limited institutional capacity, weak coordination among sectors, low private investment, limited tourism promotion, inadequate infrastructure support, and limited community participation. These conditions make Wajo Regency relevant for examining collaborative governance, especially from the perspective of initial conditions.

Research Focus

The focus of this study was the initial condition dimension of collaborative governance in tourism destination development. This focus refers to the early conditions that influence the formation and quality of collaboration among stakeholders before the collaborative process develops more deeply. The study examined three main aspects of initial conditions. First, it examined the distribution of resources, power, and knowledge among stakeholders involved in tourism development. Second, it examined incentives and barriers that influence stakeholder participation. Third, it examined the history of previous cooperation or conflict among actors in tourism destination development.

The research focus was limited to tourism destination development, not tourism marketing, tourism industry development, or tourism institutional development as separate objects. However, these related sectors were still considered when they influenced destination development. This limitation was important to keep the study focused and to ensure that the analysis remained consistent with the problem of collaborative governance in managing and developing tourism destinations in Wajo Regency.

Data Sources

The study used primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from field observations and interviews with stakeholders who were involved in or had knowledge of tourism development in Wajo Regency. These stakeholders included government officials, regional planning actors, technical agencies, tourism business actors, local communities, cultural communities, tourism awareness groups, and academics. Primary data were used to understand the actual experiences, perceptions, roles, constraints, and expectations of each actor in the collaborative governance process.

Secondary data were obtained from official documents and relevant supporting sources. These documents included the Wajo Regency Tourism Development Master Plan, the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan, the Strategic Plan of the relevant regional office, annual work plans, tourism potential profiles, regional regulations, planning documents, reports, and other documents related to tourism destination development. Secondary data were used to support the interpretation of interview and observation data. They also helped the researcher understand the formal policy direction, regulatory basis, planning structure, and institutional framework of tourism development in Wajo Regency.

Informant Selection

Informants were selected purposively based on their authority, knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in tourism destination development. This technique was used because the study required information from actors who understood the planning, implementation, coordination, and challenges of tourism development. The informants included officials from the Wajo Regency Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office, the Wajo Regency Regional Development Planning and Research Agency, the Wajo Regency Public Works and Housing Office, tourism entrepreneurs, academics, and community representatives.

The inclusion of different informant groups was intended to provide a broader understanding of collaboration from multiple perspectives. Government officials provided information about policy direction, planning, budgeting, regulation, coordination, and institutional constraints. Business actors provided information about investment, facilities, services, promotion, and private sector participation. Community representatives provided information about local participation, community benefits, cultural involvement, and obstacles faced by residents around tourism destinations. Academics provided information about research support, human resource development, capacity building, and the role of higher education institutions in tourism governance.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through field observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation study. Field observation was conducted to observe the real condition of tourism destination development, stakeholder interaction, tourism facilities, community involvement, and the practical context of collaboration. Observation helped the researcher obtain direct information about the situation in the field and compare it with information provided by informants and official documents.

In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain detailed information from informants. The interviews explored the role of each actor, the form of collaboration, the distribution of resources, the availability of knowledge and technical capacity, incentives for participation, barriers to collaboration, and previous experiences of cooperation or conflict. The interview process allowed informants to explain their views in detail, including problems that may not appear in formal planning documents. This technique was important because collaborative

governance involves perceptions, trust, communication, institutional behavior, and informal dynamics among stakeholders. Documentation study was used to examine written materials related to tourism development policy and planning. The documents reviewed included regional tourism planning documents, development plans, strategic plans, work plans, local regulations, reports, and tourism profiles. Documentation was important to verify interview findings, identify formal policy commitments, understand the legal basis of tourism development, and trace how tourism destination development has been planned by the local government.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was conducted through qualitative descriptive analysis. The analysis began with organizing data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. The data were then read carefully to identify relevant information related to the research focus. After that, the data were categorized based on the initial condition dimension of collaborative governance, namely the distribution of resources, power, and knowledge; incentives and barriers to participation; and the history of previous cooperation or conflict.

After the data were categorized, the researcher interpreted the meaning of each category by comparing information from different sources. Interview results were compared with observations and official documents to identify consistency, differences, and important patterns. For example, statements from government officials about stakeholder involvement were compared with community responses and planning documents. This process helped the researcher assess whether collaboration was only formal and administrative or had developed into substantive participation.

The final stage of analysis involved drawing conclusions based on the relationship between empirical findings and the research focus. The researcher examined how initial conditions influenced the quality of collaboration in tourism destination development. The analysis also identified supporting factors, limiting factors, and governance challenges that affected stakeholder participation in Wajo Regency. Through this process, the study produced a systematic explanation of collaborative governance in tourism destination development from the initial condition dimension.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and discussion of collaborative governance in tourism destination development in Wajo Regency. The findings are organized according to the research focus described in the methodology, namely the initial conditions of collaborative governance. The analysis covers three main dimensions: distribution of resources, power, and knowledge; incentives and barriers to participation; and the history of previous cooperation or conflict among stakeholders.

The data were obtained through field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted with government officials, regional planning actors, technical agencies, tourism business actors, community representatives, and academics. Documentation data were obtained from regional tourism planning documents, regional regulations, budget documents, strategic plans, and other policy documents related to tourism destination development in Wajo Regency. Field observations were used to understand the actual condition of stakeholder involvement, coordination practices, and tourism development activities in the region.

The findings show that collaborative governance in tourism destination development in Wajo Regency has begun to develop. Several actors have been involved in planning, technical preparation, promotion, community empowerment, academic assistance, and destination development. However, the collaboration has not yet reached an optimal level. The process remains strongly driven by the local government, while community, business, and academic participation still requires stronger institutional support, clearer roles, and more consistent coordination.

Table 1. Alignment of Research Focus, Data Sources, and Empirical Findings

Research Focus	Data Sources	Main Findings
Distribution of resources, power, and knowledge	Interviews with the Tourism Office, Bappelitbangda, PUPR, PHRI, academics, and community representatives; budget documents; regional planning documents	The local government controls formal authority, planning documents, and budget allocation. Other actors support technical studies, infrastructure, business services, and community participation. However, power and knowledge remain unevenly distributed.
Incentives and barriers to participation	Interviews with government officials, business actors, community members, and academics; observation of participation forums; regulation on investment incentives	The main incentives include regional development targets, economic opportunities, community empowerment, and academic contribution. The main barriers include weak coordination, limited human resources, limited infrastructure, low community awareness, and unclear role division.
History of previous cooperation or conflict	Interviews with the Tourism Office, tourism entrepreneurs, academics, and community actors; documentation of cooperation with Makassar Tourism Polytechnic	Previous cooperation exists through planning forums, promotion activities, cultural events, Pokdarwis development, and an MOU with Makassar Tourism Polytechnic. Conflicts relate to role division, sectoral ego, budget limits, tourism area management, and program synchronization.
Data triangulation	Comparison between interviews, observations, and documents	Interview data, observation findings, and documents show the same general pattern. Wajo Regency has a formal foundation for collaboration, but the quality of collaboration remains limited in implementation.

Table 1 shows that the findings are directly linked to the research design. The results do not only describe tourism development in general. They specifically explain the initial conditions that shape collaborative governance in Wajo Regency. This makes the discussion consistent with the qualitative descriptive-analytical method used in the study.

Distribution of Resources, Power, and Knowledge

The first dimension concerns the distribution of resources, power, and knowledge among actors involved in tourism destination development. In collaborative governance, this dimension is important because unequal resources can affect the ability of actors to participate in decision-

making. Actors with stronger authority, budget, technical knowledge, and institutional access tend to dominate the collaboration process. Meanwhile, actors with limited capacity tend to participate only as supporting actors.

The findings show that the Wajo Regency Government has the strongest formal authority in tourism destination development. This authority is exercised mainly through the Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office as the leading sector. The office has responsibility for preparing tourism development programs, coordinating tourism stakeholders, supporting destination development, and aligning tourism programs with regional development policies. The government’s formal role is also supported by planning documents such as the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan, the Strategic Plan of the Tourism Office, and the Wajo Regency Tourism Development Master Plan.

The distribution of financial resources also shows that the government plays a dominant role. Budget allocation for tourism destination development experienced a major increase in 2025. This shows stronger government commitment to tourism development, especially the development of the Bangsalae tourism area.

Table 2. Budget Allocation for Tourism Destination Development in Wajo Regency

Program	Budget Allocation 2023	Budget Allocation 2024	Budget Allocation 2025
Tourism Destination Development Program	Rp 169,352,600	Rp 163,000,000	Rp 7,879,290,000

Source: Processed from interview data and budget information from the Wajo Regency Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office.

Table 2 shows a significant increase in the tourism destination development budget in 2025. The budget increased from Rp 163,000,000 in 2024 to Rp 7,879,290,000 in 2025. This increase indicates that tourism destination development has received stronger attention in the regional development agenda. The main focus of this allocation is the development of the Bangsalae tourism area, which was previously used as a fish auction site and later directed to become a marine tourism area.

The development of Bangsalae shows how tourism destination development requires cross-sector support. The transformation of a fish auction site into a tourism area cannot be carried out only by the Tourism Office. It requires asset transfer, technical planning, infrastructure preparation, feasibility studies, and revenue projection. This condition confirms that tourism development is multi-sectoral and requires coordination between several regional agencies.

Table 3. Actor Roles in Tourism Destination Development in Wajo Regency

Actor or Institution	Role in Collaboration	Type of Resource Controlled
Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office	Prepares tourism studies, destination programs, coordination activities, and supporting documents for the Bangsalae development plan	Sectoral authority, tourism program planning, coordination access
Fisheries Office	Provides data and documents related to the former Fish Auction Center and its revenue potential	Sectoral data, technical information, previous asset function
Public Works and Spatial Planning Office	Prepares cost estimates, budget plans, technical specifications, accessibility support, and infrastructure planning	Technical expertise, infrastructure planning, construction support

Regional Finance and Asset Management Agency	Supports budget allocation and prepares asset transfer documents	Budgeting authority, asset management authority
Bappelitbangda	Formulates tourism development policy and supports feasibility study preparation	Planning authority, development policy integration, research coordination
Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association	Provides input and recommendations related to tourism business needs	Industry knowledge, service perspective, business network
Makassar Tourism Polytechnic	Supports studies on destination development, tourism marketing, tourism industry development, and institutional strengthening	Academic expertise, research capacity, human resource development
Local communities and Pokdarwis	Support environmental management, cultural activities, local participation, and destination awareness	Local knowledge, cultural resources, social legitimacy
Tourism business actors	Provide accommodation, culinary services, transportation, and tourism support services	Investment capacity, market knowledge, tourism services
Media and tourism communities	Support promotion, public communication, and tourism awareness	Information dissemination, social network, destination promotion

Source: Processed from interview data, observation, and document review.

Table 3 shows that tourism destination development in Wajo Regency already involves several actors. Each actor holds different resources. Government actors control formal authority, planning, budget, and infrastructure. Business actors control investment and tourism services. Communities control local knowledge and cultural resources. Academics control research and capacity development. This distribution provides an initial basis for collaboration.

However, the findings also show that the distribution of power remains unequal. The government still dominates decision-making because it controls planning documents, budget allocation, program priorities, and formal coordination forums. Non-government actors are involved, but their role is mostly consultative. They provide input, participate in forums, or support specific programs, but they do not yet have equal influence in determining the direction of tourism destination development.

The unequal distribution of knowledge also affects collaboration. Government officials have better access to planning documents, regulations, and formal information. Academics have technical and research knowledge, but their involvement remains limited to certain activities. Business actors understand tourism market needs, but they are not fully included in policy-making. Communities have local cultural knowledge, but their understanding of sustainable tourism management remains limited. This condition creates an imbalance in participation.

The regulatory basis of tourism development also supports the formal role of the government. Several local regulations provide guidance for tourism planning, tourism business registration, investment, and regional development priorities.

Table 4. Regulatory Basis for Tourism Destination Development in Wajo Regency

Regulation or Policy Document	Main Substance	Relevance to Collaborative Governance
Regional Regulation Number 9 of 2020 concerning the Wajo Regency Tourism Development Master Plan for 2013-2025	Provides the main direction for tourism development and serves as a guideline for government, regional agencies, communities, private actors, and other stakeholders	Establishes tourism development as a shared responsibility among stakeholders
Wajo Regency Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2017 concerning Tourism	Regulates tourism development, strategic areas, tourism businesses, tourism promotion, Pokdarwis, tourism associations, training, standardization, certification, supervision, and local government authority	Provides institutional and legal support for stakeholder involvement in tourism
Wajo Regency Regional Regulation Number 11 of 2012 concerning Tourism Business Registration Certificates	Provides guidance for tourism business registration and business development	Supports private sector involvement in tourism development
Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2025 concerning the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan for 2025-2029	Defines regional development direction based on the political commitment of the elected regent and deputy regent	Aligns tourism development with broader regional development priorities
Wajo Regency Regulation Number 3 of 2025 concerning Incentives and Investment Facilitation	Provides incentives and facilitation for communities and investors that support regional development, employment, infrastructure, innovation, MSMEs, and priority programs	Provides a policy basis to encourage private sector and community participation

Source: Processed from document review and interview data.

Table 4 shows that Wajo Regency has a strong formal foundation for tourism destination development. The existence of planning documents and regulations supports collaboration because tourism development is not positioned only as a government program, but also as an activity involving communities, private actors, and other stakeholders. However, formal regulations do not automatically create effective collaboration. The implementation still depends on coordination, actor capacity, benefit distribution, and clarity of roles.

The findings also show that human resource capacity remains a major weakness. Interviews with officials from the Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office indicate that tourism human resources within the bureaucracy and tourism industry remain limited. This affects the quality

of collaboration. For example, hotel and restaurant classification has not been optimally implemented because of limited technical capacity. PHRI has been established, but its collaboration with the Tourism Office remains weak. This shows that institutional presence alone is not enough. Collaboration requires skilled actors who understand destination management, service standards, hospitality, and sustainable tourism.

Community capacity also remains limited. Although the government has formed Pokdarwis, community participation is still low. Some community members have not fully understood that they are part of the tourism destination system. The implementation of Sapta Pesona has not been evenly internalized. Communities are involved in environmental management and cultural activities, but their participation has not fully reached planning, decision-making, and evaluation. This condition shows that community-based tourism has been recognized in planning documents, but it has not yet been fully implemented in practice.

Based on these findings, the distribution of resources, power, and knowledge in Wajo Regency can be described as formally available but substantively unequal. Government institutions have the strongest authority and resources. Communities, business actors, and academics have important resources, but their access to decision-making remains limited. This condition affects the quality of collaborative governance because collaboration requires not only the presence of actors, but also balanced participation and shared influence.

Incentives and Barriers to Participation

The second dimension concerns incentives and barriers that influence stakeholder participation. In collaborative governance, stakeholders will participate more actively when they see clear benefits, have sufficient capacity, and receive institutional support. Conversely, participation becomes weak when actors face unclear roles, limited resources, weak communication, low trust, or uncertain program sustainability.

The findings show that each actor has different incentives to participate in tourism destination development. The local government sees collaboration as a way to improve tourism performance, strengthen regional development, increase local revenue, and build Wajo's tourism competitiveness. Business actors see tourism as an economic opportunity through accommodation, culinary services, transportation, and tourism support facilities. Communities see tourism as a potential source of income, employment, cultural preservation, and local economic activity. Academics see collaboration as an opportunity to support research, training, mentoring, and community service.

The local government has provided several participation spaces. These include Musrenbang, regional apparatus forums, coordination meetings, tourism promotion activities, socialization, and Pokdarwis development. These forums allow stakeholders to provide input and convey aspirations related to tourism destination development. However, participation through these forums remains limited because not all stakeholders attend actively, understand tourism issues, or influence final decisions.

Table 5. Incentives and Barriers to Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder	Main Incentives	Main Barriers	Resulting Condition
Local government	Achievement of regional development targets, tourism performance improvement, increased regional income,	Limited budget, weak cross-sector coordination, sectoral ego, limited human resources	Government remains the main driver of collaboration, but implementation is not fully integrated

	stronger destination competitiveness		
Bappelitbangda	Integration of tourism into regional development planning and evidence-based policy	Limited use of data and research, coordination barriers among institutions	Planning coordination exists, but it is not yet fully supported by strong data integration
PUPR and technical agencies	Support infrastructure for accessibility and development	Program synchronization problems and sectoral priorities	Infrastructure support exists, but cross-sector alignment still needs improvement
Tourism business actors	Market expansion, investment opportunity, service development, economic benefit	Limited infrastructure, weak promotion, uncertainty of program sustainability, limited role in policymaking	Business actors participate, but their involvement is not yet strategic
Local communities and Pokdarwis	Income generation, job creation, cultural preservation, local empowerment	Limited information, low tourism awareness, low capacity, limited assistance, unclear direct benefit	Community participation exists, but it remains passive and program-based
Academics	Research application, training, human resource development, institutional support	Limited budget for studies, weak integration into policy process	Academic involvement exists, but it is not yet fully substantive
PHRI and tourism associations	Service standard improvement, business development, tourism quality control	Weak coordination with local government, limited technical assessment capacity	Institutional role exists, but collaboration remains weak

Source: Processed from interviews, observations, and documentation.

Table 5 shows that incentives are present in each stakeholder group. However, these incentives are weakened by several barriers. The most common barriers are limited human resource capacity, weak coordination, limited infrastructure, low community awareness, limited program continuity, and unclear role division. These barriers reduce stakeholder commitment and make participation less sustainable.

The interviews with planning officials show that the government has attempted to involve stakeholders through Musrenbang, OPD forums, and coordination meetings. However, stakeholder participation remains less than optimal. Several actors attend only when invited or when a government program requires their presence. This shows that participation is still formal and administrative rather than substantive. Stakeholders have space to speak, but they do not always have strong influence over planning decisions.

The interview with Bappelitbangda also shows that collaborative governance in tourism development still faces problems in coordination, data use, research utilization, and stakeholder

capacity. Bappelitbangda has a strategic role as a planning coordinator, but tourism development still tends to be influenced by sectoral priorities. The limited use of data and research means that tourism policy is not yet fully evidence-based. This weakens the quality of decision-making because collaboration requires shared information, shared understanding, and shared policy direction.

Community participation shows a similar pattern. Communities have participated in environmental cleanliness, cultural activities, and local economic activities around tourist areas. However, community involvement remains limited by low access to information, limited assistance, and low capacity. Some communities have not yet felt the direct benefits of tourism development. This affects their motivation to participate. When the community does not see concrete benefits, tourism development is often seen as a government program rather than a shared community agenda.

Business actors also face participation barriers. Tourism entrepreneurs have been involved through accommodation, culinary services, transportation, and destination support services. The government has opened communication through meetings and tourism promotion activities. However, business actors still face inadequate infrastructure, limited destination promotion, unclear investment certainty, and limited involvement in policy-making. These barriers reduce private sector confidence and weaken their incentive to invest more actively.

Investment incentives have been regulated through Wajo Regency Regulation Number 3 of 2025. This regulation allows communities and investors to receive incentives or investment facilitation if their activities support income growth, local labor absorption, local resource use, infrastructure development, technology transfer, innovation, MSME partnerships, and priority development programs. This regulation is important because it provides a formal mechanism to attract investment. However, the findings show that regulation must be followed by practical support, especially infrastructure improvement, licensing facilitation, investment certainty, and stronger communication between government and business actors.

Academic participation also needs stronger support. Makassar Tourism Polytechnic has contributed through tourism studies, human resource development, tourism village development, and Sapta Pesona socialization. However, the role of academics is still not fully integrated into the policy cycle. Their contribution is more visible in specific cooperation activities than in continuous policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This shows that academic involvement needs to move from project-based cooperation to institutionalized knowledge partnership.

Based on these findings, stakeholder participation in Wajo Regency can be described as open but not yet strong. The government has provided forums and regulations, but participation is still constrained by capacity, resources, coordination, and benefit clarity. The main challenge is to transform stakeholder involvement from formal participation into substantive participation. Substantive participation means that stakeholders do not only attend meetings but also influence planning, share responsibility, support implementation, and take part in evaluation.

History of Previous Cooperation and Conflict

The third dimension concerns the history of previous cooperation or conflict. In collaborative governance, previous interaction shapes trust, commitment, and willingness to collaborate. Positive cooperation can strengthen future collaboration. Previous conflict, weak coordination, or unclear responsibility can reduce trust and create resistance among actors.

The findings show that Wajo Regency already has experience in stakeholder cooperation. Cooperation has been carried out through planning forums, tourism promotion activities, cultural events, destination development activities, Pokdarwis development, academic cooperation, and coordination among regional agencies. These forms of cooperation show that collaborative governance is not a new practice in Wajo tourism development. However, the quality of cooperation varies across actors and programs.

Table 6. Previous Cooperation and Conflict in Tourism Destination Development

Aspect	Empirical Finding	Analytical Meaning
Planning cooperation	Stakeholders have been involved through Musrenbang, OPD forums, regional forums, and public consultation forums	Collaboration has a formal planning channel, but participation remains mostly consultative
Inter-agency cooperation	Tourism Office works with Bappelitbangda, PUPR, Fisheries Office, Finance and Asset Management Agency, and other agencies	Tourism development is recognized as cross-sectoral, but program synchronization remains weak
Community cooperation	Communities and Pokdarwis are involved in environmental management, cultural activities, and local tourism support	Community involvement exists, but it remains limited and needs stronger empowerment
Business cooperation	Tourism entrepreneurs provide accommodation, culinary services, transportation, and business input in forums	Private sector involvement exists, but policy influence and investment certainty remain limited
Academic cooperation	Cooperation with Makassar Tourism Polytechnic has existed since 2023 through an MOU	This is the strongest formal cooperation pattern, but academic integration into policy remains limited
Promotion and cultural events	Cooperation occurs in tourism promotion, cultural events, and Lake Tempe related activities	Promotional collaboration exists, but budget limitations reduce its reach
Conflict over tourism area management	Differences occur in role division, tourism area management, budget priorities, and sectoral ego	Conflict remains manageable, but it shows weak institutional clarity
Bangsalae development issue	The transformation of a fish auction site into a marine tourism area created debate about study readiness and asset function	The case shows the need for transparent feasibility studies and stronger stakeholder communication
Sectoral ego	Some agencies still prioritize their own institutional agenda	Sectoral ego weakens integrated tourism development
Informal cooperation	Several cooperation patterns are not supported by binding agreements	Informal coordination makes implementation vulnerable to leadership changes and budget shifts

Source: Processed from interviews, observations, and documentation.

Table 6 shows that Wajo Regency has a history of cooperation, but it also shows several conflict patterns. The cooperation is visible in planning, promotion, cultural activities,

infrastructure coordination, academic support, and community involvement. However, the collaboration is not yet fully institutionalized. Several forms of cooperation rely on coordination meetings rather than formal agreements, joint work plans, or shared monitoring mechanisms.

One important formal cooperation is the MOU between the Youth, Sports, Culture, and Tourism Office and Makassar Tourism Polytechnic. This cooperation began in 2023 and covers tourism human resource development, destination development planning, tourism marketing development planning, tourism industry development planning, and tourism institutional strengthening. This MOU is important because it provides a formal basis for knowledge sharing, research support, and capacity development.

However, similar formal cooperation has not been equally developed with other actors. For example, cooperation with technical agencies such as PUPR is important for accessibility and infrastructure, but it is not always supported by specific cooperation agreements. Cooperation with business actors also tends to occur through communication forums and promotional activities rather than long-term partnership schemes. Community participation is supported through Pokdarwis, but it still requires stronger assistance and clearer benefit-sharing mechanisms.

The history of conflict in Wajo tourism development is generally related to technical and institutional issues. Conflicts occur in tourism area management, role division, budget allocation, development priorities, and sectoral ego. These conflicts do not necessarily indicate failure. They show that tourism development involves different interests and institutional mandates. The problem is not the presence of conflict itself, but whether the conflict is managed through transparent communication, clear rules, and shared decision-making.

The Bangsalae development case shows the importance of transparent communication. The plan to transform a former fish auction site into a marine tourism area created debate because some actors questioned the readiness of studies and the basis for changing the function of the area. The local government later explained that supporting studies had been prepared. This case shows that even when the government has formal authority, collaborative governance still requires early communication, clear justification, and stakeholder involvement before major development decisions are implemented.

Sectoral ego remains one of the strongest barriers. Tourism is a multi-sectoral field, but regional agencies often work according to their own institutional priorities. This makes program synchronization difficult. When tourism infrastructure, promotion, community empowerment, investment, and environmental management are not planned in an integrated way, destination development becomes fragmented. This weakens the impact of tourism programs and reduces the effectiveness of collaboration.

Overall, the history of cooperation and conflict in Wajo Regency creates both opportunity and challenge. Previous cooperation provides a foundation for future collaboration. However, unresolved coordination problems, informal cooperation patterns, sectoral ego, and unclear role division can weaken trust and commitment. Therefore, Wajo Regency needs stronger institutional arrangements to convert previous cooperation into sustainable collaborative governance.

Integrated Discussion Based on the Initial Conditions of Collaborative Governance

The findings show that the initial conditions of collaborative governance in Wajo Regency are partially supportive but not yet fully enabling. They are supportive because the region has formal planning documents, regulations, budget commitments, stakeholder forums, previous

cooperation, and academic partnerships. These elements provide a foundation for collaboration.

However, the initial conditions are not yet fully enabling because resources, power, and knowledge remain unequally distributed. The government controls most formal resources, while non-government actors have limited influence in decision-making. Communities have cultural and local knowledge, but their capacity and access to information remain limited. Business actors have market knowledge and investment potential, but their participation in policy-making is still weak. Academics have research capacity, but their involvement is not yet fully integrated into all stages of tourism governance.

Table 7. Summary of Initial Conditions and Implications for Collaborative Governance

Initial Condition Dimension	Main Result	Implication for Collaborative Governance
Distribution of resources, power, and knowledge	Formal resources are strong, especially budget, regulations, planning documents, and government authority. However, knowledge and decision-making influence are unevenly distributed.	Collaboration remains government centered. Equal participation requires capacity building, information access, and clearer stakeholder roles.
Incentives and barriers to participation	Incentives exist for government, business actors, communities, and academics. Barriers include weak coordination, limited human resources, limited infrastructure, low awareness, and uncertain program sustainability.	Participation is open but not yet substantive. Stakeholders need clearer benefits, stronger facilitation, and more consistent involvement.
History of previous cooperation or conflict	Cooperation has occurred through planning forums, promotion, cultural events, Pokdarwis, inter-agency coordination, and an MOU with Makassar Tourism Polytechnic. Conflicts relate to role division, sectoral ego, budget limits, and tourism area management.	Previous cooperation can support trust, but conflict and informal coordination must be managed through formal agreements and joint evaluation mechanisms.
Overall collaborative condition	Collaboration has begun but remains formal, administrative, and government driven.	Wajo Regency needs to strengthen collaboration from consultation-based participation into shared planning, shared implementation, and shared accountability.

Source: Author’s analysis based on interviews, observations, and documentation.

Table 7 confirms that collaborative governance in Wajo Regency has not failed, but it remains in a developing stage. The local government has created the formal structure for collaboration. However, the quality of collaboration still depends on whether actors can move beyond formal participation. Stakeholders need to be involved not only as participants in meetings but also as partners in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The findings also show that the strongest actor in the collaboration process is the local government. This is understandable because the government controls legal authority, planning documents, budget allocation, and coordination forums. However, collaborative governance requires a shift from government dominance to shared governance. This does not mean reducing the government's role. It means that the government must act more as facilitator, coordinator, and enabler of stakeholder participation.

The role of communities must also be strengthened. Tourism destination development depends on local acceptance, cultural preservation, environmental care, and hospitality. If communities do not feel the benefits of tourism, their participation will remain weak. Therefore, community-based tourism in Wajo should not stop as a planning concept. It needs practical programs such as training, local business assistance, Pokdarwis strengthening, benefit-sharing mechanisms, and involvement in destination management.

Business actors also need clearer space in tourism development. Their role is not only to provide accommodation, restaurants, transportation, and services. They can also contribute to market analysis, product development, destination packaging, and promotion. However, their participation will remain limited if infrastructure is weak, destination promotion is low, and program sustainability is uncertain. The government needs to create a more predictable investment climate by improving facilities, simplifying licensing, and providing clear partnership schemes.

Academic institutions can fill the knowledge gap in tourism governance. Makassar Tourism Polytechnic has already become an important partner. However, the partnership needs to be expanded into continuous research, training, policy evaluation, tourism village assistance, destination management studies, and service quality improvement. Academic involvement can help make tourism policy more evidence-based and reduce decisions that rely only on administrative routines.

The findings also confirm the importance of institutionalizing collaboration. Many cooperation patterns in Wajo Regency still depend on meetings, coordination, and informal communication. This creates flexibility, but it also creates uncertainty. Stronger collaboration requires written agreements, shared work plans, clear role division, joint monitoring, and measurable targets. Without these mechanisms, collaboration can weaken when leadership changes, budgets shift, or institutional priorities differ (Læg Reid & Rykkja, 2022; Onyango, 2025).

Based on the results of interviews, field observations, and documentation analysis, collaborative governance in tourism destination development in Wajo Regency has a strong formal foundation but still faces implementation weaknesses. The formal foundation can be seen from the existence of planning documents, regional regulations, budget allocation, institutional involvement, and previous cooperation. The implementation weaknesses can be seen from unequal resource distribution, government dominance, limited stakeholder capacity, weak private sector involvement, low community participation, limited academic integration, and unresolved sectoral ego (Leonard et al., 2022; Feng et al., 2023; Wadipalapa et al., 2024).

The main result of this study is that the initial conditions of collaborative governance in Wajo Regency are not yet fully balanced. They support the beginning of collaboration, but they do not yet guarantee effective collaboration. The government has opened participation spaces, but stakeholder involvement remains largely formal and consultative. The region has regulations and budget support, but human resources and infrastructure remain limited. Previous cooperation exists, but many partnerships are still informal and not supported by binding mechanisms (Wang et al., 2023; Ramjaun et al., 2024; Gutiérrez et al., 2025).

Collaborative governance in Wajo Regency needs to be strengthened through more equal resource distribution, clearer role division, stronger stakeholder capacity, substantive participation, research-based planning, and sustainable partnership mechanisms. These improvements are necessary so that tourism destination development does not remain a government-centered program, but becomes a shared development agenda involving government, communities, business actors, academics, and other stakeholders.

Conclusion

This study concludes that collaborative governance in tourism destination development in Wajo Regency has shown positive progress, but it has not yet reached an optimal and sustainable level. Based on the initial condition dimension, the local government has a strong formal foundation through planning documents, regional regulations, budget allocation, and cross-sector coordination involving the Tourism Office, Bappelitbangda, PUPR, Fisheries Office, PHRI, communities, business actors, and academics. However, the distribution of resources, power, and knowledge remains unequal because decision-making is still dominated by government institutions, while community, private sector, and academic participation remain limited and mostly consultative. Incentives for participation already exist through economic opportunities, community empowerment programs, investment facilitation, tourism promotion, and Pokdarwis development, but these incentives are weakened by limited human resources, weak infrastructure, low community awareness, unclear role division, limited data use, and uncertain program sustainability. Previous cooperation has also been established through planning forums, cultural events, promotion activities, inter-agency coordination, and an MOU with Makassar Tourism Polytechnic, yet several obstacles remain, including sectoral ego, budget limitations, weak program synchronization, informal cooperation patterns, and differences of interest in tourism area management. Therefore, tourism destination development in Wajo Regency requires stronger coordination, clearer institutional roles, broader stakeholder capacity building, more substantive community and private sector participation, research-based planning, and sustainable partnership mechanisms so that collaborative governance can move from formal involvement toward shared responsibility and long-term destination sustainability.

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