
	<p>Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam  P-ISSN: 14110881   E-ISSN: 25414534  Vol. 27, No. 3, 2026, pp. 925-946  <a href="https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v27i03.17999">https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v27i03.17999</a></p>	
<p>Received  January 23, 2026</p>	<p>Revised  May 19, 2026</p>	<p>Accepted  July 02, 2026</p>

# The Impact of Cultural Tourism on Tourism Progress and Local Original Income: An SDGs Perspective in Alor Regency

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## Abstract

**Objective:** This study aims to analyze the influence of cultural tourism on tourism progress and Regional Original Income (PAD) in the tourism sector and examine the mediating role of tourism progress from the perspective of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Alor Regency. **Theoretical Framework:** This study is based on the theory of cultural tourism, sustainable tourism development, and regional economic development that places culture as a strategic asset in increasing destination competitiveness and regional fiscal capacity. **Literature Review:** Although various studies have discussed the economic benefits of cultural tourism, regional tourism development, and PAD in the tourism sector in island regions are still limited. **Method:** The study used a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional explanatory design. Data were obtained from 60 tourism stakeholders through purposive sampling and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). **Results:** Cultural tourism has a positive and significant effect on tourism progress ( $\beta=0.507$ ;  $p<0.001$ ) and PAD in the tourism sector ( $\beta=0.597$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). Tourism progress also has a positive effect on the tourism sector's PAD ( $\beta=0.252$ ;  $p=0.004$ ) and partially mediates the relationship between cultural tourism and PAD ( $\beta=0.128$ ;  $p=0.033$ ). The effect size value ( $f^2=0.620$ ) indicates that cultural tourism is the main determinant of increasing the tourism sector's PAD. **Implications:** These findings provide an empirical basis for formulating cultural tourism development policies that support the achievement of SDGs 8, SDG 11, and SDG 17. **Novelty:** This study offers an empirical model that integrates cultural tourism, tourism progress, and tourism sector PAD in a single SDGs-based analytical framework in the context of an archipelagic region, which is still relatively rarely studied in Indonesian tourism literature.

**Keywords:** cultural, tourism, local original income, sdgs, alor regency.

## INTRODUCTION

Alor Regency is one of the island regions in East Nusa Tenggara Province which has a wealth of diverse tourism resources, including natural, marine and cultural tourism [1]. Among these various potentials, cultural tourism is the main identity that distinguishes Alor from many other tourist destinations in Eastern Indonesia. Geographically, Alor consists of a

cluster of large and small islands inhabited by a multi-ethnic community with more than fifty local languages and dialects, making it one of the regions with the highest levels of cultural diversity in Indonesia [2]. This cultural richness is manifested through the existence of traditional villages, traditional houses, religious rituals, dances, traditional music, Alor's unique ikat weaving, local knowledge systems, and social practices that have been maintained from generation to generation [3][4]. From the perspective of modern tourism development, culture is no longer viewed merely as a heritage to be preserved, but also as a strategic asset capable of creating economic value, strengthening regional identity, increasing destination competitiveness, and serving as an instrument for sustainable development. Therefore, the development of cultural tourism in Alor Regency is crucial not only for the preservation of local culture but also for the transformation of the regional economy, oriented towards community welfare.

Over the past two decades, the global tourism development paradigm has undergone a fundamental shift. While previously focused on increasing tourist arrivals and economic growth, this orientation has now shifted toward the concept of sustainable tourism development, which balances economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions [5]. This paradigm shift is influenced by increasing global awareness of the importance of maintaining the sustainability of cultural and natural resources as the main foundation of the long-term tourism industry. Organizations such as UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO) emphasize that the success of tourism development is no longer measured solely by the number of tourists, but also by the extent to which the tourism sector is able to improve the welfare of local communities, preserve culture, create decent jobs, reduce social disparities, and maintain environmental sustainability [6]. Thus, culture becomes a key component in sustainable destination development because it has the potential to create authentic tourism experiences while strengthening the social resilience of local communities.

This approach is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda, particularly Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) [7]. Within the SDGs framework, tourism is viewed as a cross-sector capable of driving inclusive economic growth, strengthening cultural preservation, creating job opportunities, improving the quality of life, and strengthening collaboration between stakeholders. Cultural tourism holds a highly strategic position because it integrates the economic dimension with cultural conservation through empowering local communities. Revenue generated from tourism activities not only improves household welfare but can also be used to finance cultural heritage preservation, strengthen traditional institutions, and develop destinations sustainably. Thus, the development of cultural tourism not only generates short-term economic benefits but also provides sustainable social and cultural impacts in accordance with global development principles.

In the Indonesian, the government has designated the tourism sector as one of the main drivers of national economic development through various strategic policies that position tourism as a leading non-oil and gas sector. This development approach further emphasizes the importance of developing destinations based on local culture as a form of differentiation for Indonesia's competitiveness at the international level. Indonesia is known as a country with extremely high cultural diversity, thus offering significant opportunities to develop cultural tourism as a competitive advantage. Various studies have shown that destinations that maintain cultural authenticity have higher levels of tourist loyalty than destinations that rely solely on artificial attractions [8][9]. Therefore, local governments are encouraged to develop tourism development models that are based on local cultural potential and can also create added economic value for the community.

Alor Regency is one of the regions with significant potential to implement this paradigm. The Alor Regency Government, through the 2025–2029 Tourism Office Strategic Plan,

positions the tourism sector as a driving force for regional economic development by optimizing cultural and maritime potential. This policy aligns with the regional development vision of "Alor Berkemas" and the "Building from the East" (GERBANG TIMUR) strategy, which emphasizes development based on local resources, innovation, and sustainability. Based on potential mapping conducted by the local government, Alor Regency has more than one hundred tourist destinations with dozens of tourist villages spread across various sub-districts. The traditional villages of Takpala, Monbang, Bampalola, Ternate, and various other indigenous communities represent a tangible representation of cultural richness that has a high appeal for domestic and international tourists. The existence of these destinations provides significant opportunities for local communities to gain economic benefits through the provision of homestays, tour guide services, cultural performances, craft sales, and various micro-enterprises based on the creative economy.

However, this significant cultural potential has not yet been fully translated into improved tourism sector performance or increased Regional Original Income (PAD). In recent years, the growth in the number of tourist destinations has not always been accompanied by an increase in the tourism sector's contribution to regional revenues. This phenomenon indicates a gap between the potential of cultural resources and the ability of local governments to manage and optimize the economic value of the sector. Various obstacles remain, including limited quality of human resources in tourism, low institutional capacity in tourist villages, weak innovation in cultural tourism products, limited investment, suboptimal digitalization of destination marketing, poor inter-island transportation connectivity, and minimal integration between the tourism sector and the local creative economy. Alor Regency's geographical location as an archipelago also results in relatively high transportation and logistics costs, thus impacting the destination's competitiveness compared to other regions.

These issues demonstrate that developing cultural tourism is not sufficient solely through the physical construction of destinations or tourism promotion. The success of tourism development is greatly influenced by the ability to create a synergistic relationship between cultural preservation, destination quality, tourist experience, community participation, institutional governance, and the resulting economic benefits. From a tourism development theory perspective, culture acts as a driving force that can increase the attractiveness of destinations, thus impacting the growth of tourist visits, investment, job creation, and increased regional revenue [10]. However, this relationship isn't always straightforward, as it's often influenced by intermediary variables like the progress of the tourism sector itself. In other words, the presence of cultural assets doesn't necessarily automatically increase local revenue (PAD) if it doesn't drive improvements in the quality and progress of the tourism sector as a whole.

Empirical studies on the relationship between cultural tourism, tourism development, and Regional Original Income (ROI) have yielded mixed results. Some studies have found that cultural tourism contributes significantly to regional economic growth through increased tourist numbers and increased local economic activity. However, other studies have shown that the economic impact of cultural tourism is relatively small if not supported by good destination governance, adequate institutional capacity, quality infrastructure, and government policies that adapt to changes in the tourism market. Furthermore, most previous research has focused on developed tourist destinations, while studies on small island regions such as Alor Regency are relatively limited. Previous research has also tended to examine the direct relationship between tourism and economic growth without incorporating tourism development as a mediating mechanism explaining how these economic benefits are generated. This situation indicates a research gap that needs to be filled through a more comprehensive empirical approach.

Based on these gaps, this study offers a different perspective by constructing a causal relationship model between cultural tourism, tourism progress, and Regional Original

Income within a sustainable development framework. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) perspective into the analysis of relationships between variables, so that tourism development is not only measured based on economic indicators, but also considers the dimensions of social and cultural sustainability. This study also examines the role of tourism progress as a mediating variable that explains how cultural tourism development can indirectly increase Regional Original Income. Thus, this study is expected to expand the development of sustainable tourism development theory, particularly in the context of island regions that have different geographic, social, and cultural characteristics from major tourist areas in Indonesia.

Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the influence of cultural tourism on tourism progress, analyze the influence of cultural tourism on Regional Original Income in the tourism sector, test the influence of tourism progress on Regional Original Income, and examine the mediating role of tourism progress in the relationship between cultural tourism and Regional Original Income in Alor Regency

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism is a form of tourism that makes culture the main attraction, whether in the form of values, traditions, customs, art, rituals, or human works that have historical and symbolic meaning [11]. Cultural tourism emphasizes tourism experiences that enable tourists to understand, appreciate, and interact with living local cultures, rather than simply passively consuming tourist attractions [12].

From a development perspective, cultural tourism is seen as a strategic instrument for preserving cultural heritage while improving community well-being. Cultural tourism development encourages the preservation of local values because culture is positioned not only as a source of identity but also as an economic resource. Therefore, the sustainability of cultural tourism depends heavily on the active involvement of local communities as the owners and primary actors of that culture. Cultural tourism has the following main characteristics: (1) based on the uniqueness and authenticity of local culture, (2) involving the participation of local communities, (3) oriented towards preserving culture and the social environment, and (4) generating economic benefits for local communities [13]. In the context of an archipelago and a region with high cultural diversity such as Alor Regency, cultural tourism has a strong comparative advantage because it is not easily imitated by other destinations.

### Regional Tourism Development

Regional tourism development is an integral part of regional development which aims to increase economic growth, expand employment opportunities, improve community welfare, and strengthen regional identity and competitiveness [14]. Tourism development is not only understood as the physical development of destinations, but also encompasses the development of human resources, institutions, promotion, and sustainable tourism governance. The concept of sustainable tourism development emphasizes a balance between economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects. Within this framework, the success of regional tourism development is measured not only by the increase in the number of tourist visits, but also by the quality of the tourism experience, increased community income, preservation of local culture, and its contribution to regional finances [8].

The progress of regional tourism can be seen through several main indicators, including: increasing the number and quality of tourist destinations, growth in tourist visits, increasing length of stay and tourist spending, development of tourism businesses and the creative economy, and improving infrastructure and accessibility [15]. Tourism progress is also

reflected in the increasing image and competitiveness of destinations at the regional and national levels. In the context of Alor Regency, regional tourism development is directed at utilizing local potential, particularly marine and cultural tourism, as a driving force for economic development in the island region. Therefore, cultural tourism plays a strategic role in driving the overall progress of regional tourism.

### **Local Original Income (PAD) from the Tourism Sector**

Regional Original Income (PAD) is one of the main sources of financing for regional development, originating from local economic potential. PAD reflects the level of regional fiscal independence in financing governance and development [16]. In the context of tourism, PAD is obtained through, among other things, regional taxes, regional levies, and other legitimate income that is directly or indirectly related to tourism activities.

The PAD can be sourced from hotel taxes, restaurant taxes, tourist attraction levies, tourism business service levies, and contributions from other supporting sectors. Thus, increased activity and progress in regional tourism are expected to have a positive impact on increasing PAD. However, the magnitude of tourism's contribution to PAD is greatly influenced by the effectiveness of destination management, the quality of tourism services, and regional fiscal and institutional policies. In many regions, substantial tourism potential does not always translate into optimal PAD contributions. This indicates a gap between potential and realization, often caused by weak governance, low tax and levy compliance, and the lack of integration of tourism development with the regional financial system.

### **The Relationship between Cultural Tourism, Tourism Progress, and Local Revenue in the Tourism Sector**

Theoretically, cultural tourism has an influence on the progress of regional tourism by increasing the attractiveness of destinations, differentiating tourism products, and strengthening the image and identity of the region [17]. Strong cultural attractions encourage increased tourist visits, longer length of stay, and increased tourist spending, which ultimately impacts the growth and progress of the tourism sector as a whole.

The progress of tourism, which is marked by increased tourism activities, the development of tourism businesses and the creative economy, as well as improvements in tourism infrastructure and services, will then have an impact on increasing PAD in the tourism sector [18]. Thus, tourism development acts as an intervening variable in the influence of cultural tourism on increasing the tourism sector's regional revenue (PAD). Therefore, the relationship between cultural tourism, tourism development, and tourism sector PAD is causal and interrelated. Cultural tourism not only directly influences PAD through the economic activities it generates, but also indirectly influences it through the overall progress of regional tourism. This framework serves as the theoretical basis for this research to empirically test the relationship between these variables in the context of Alor Regency.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design and a cross-sectional survey to test the causal relationship between cultural tourism, tourism progress, and PAD in the tourism sector in Alor Regency [19]. The research is built on the theory of Sustainable Tourism Development, cultural tourism, and regional economic development, with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as an analytical framework that explains the contribution of cultural tourism development to inclusive economic growth (SDG 8), preservation of cultural heritage and sustainable communities (SDG 11), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), and strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships

(SDG 17). The SDGs perspective in this study is not treated as a research variable, but as a conceptual basis in interpreting the research results.

The research model consists of three latent constructs, namely Cultural Tourism (X) as an exogenous variable, Tourism Progress (Z) as a mediating variable, and Tourism Sector PAD (Y) as an endogenous variable. Cultural tourism is measured through five dimensions, namely cultural uniqueness and authenticity, cultural heritage preservation, community participation, cultural attraction quality, and cultural product and creative economy development. Tourism progress is measured through increasing destination quality, growth in tourist visits, length of stay and tourist expenditure, quality of facilities and services, and development of tourism and creative economy businesses. Meanwhile, PAD in the tourism sector is measured based on regional tax revenues, tourism levies, the contribution of the tourism sector to PAD, and optimization of the regional revenue collection system. All indicators are measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The study population included all tourism stakeholders in Alor Regency, including local government officials, destination managers, tourism village managers, tourism entrepreneurs, creative economy actors, traditional leaders, community leaders, academics, and Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis). The sampling technique used purposive sampling with the criteria of respondents having direct involvement in cultural tourism management, understanding the development of the regional tourism sector, and being willing to provide objective information. A sample size of 60 respondents was deemed adequate for PLS-SEM analysis.

The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through the distribution of a structured questionnaire compiled based on theoretical studies and previous research, then validated through expert judgment and instrument trials (pilot study). Secondary data were obtained from the Strategic Plan of the Alor Regency Tourism Office for 2025–2029, the Alor Regency Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD), publications by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), reports on the realization of local revenue (PAD) in the tourism sector, and national and international policy documents regarding sustainable tourism development. Limited interviews with several key informants were also conducted to strengthen the interpretation of the quantitative analysis results [20].

Data analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage was descriptive analysis using the Levis model to describe the condition of each research variable based on the percentage of achievement scores, ranging from very poor to very good [21]. The second stage uses Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS 4 software. Evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) includes testing convergent validity (outer loading  $\geq 0.70$ ; AVE  $\geq 0.50$ ), discriminant validity (Fornell–Larcker, HTMT  $< 0.90$ , and cross loading), and construct reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability  $\geq 0.70$ ). Furthermore, evaluation of the structural model (inner model) is carried out through testing  $R^2$ , effect size ( $f^2$ ), predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), PLSpredict, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), and hypothesis testing using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamplings. The relationship between variables is declared significant if it meets the criteria for T-statistic  $\geq 1.96$ , p-value  $< 0.05$ , and the bias-corrected confidence interval does not cross the zero value [22].

Using this approach, this study examines the direct and indirect effects of cultural tourism on the tourism sector's regional revenue (PAD) through tourism development. The developed model is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the role of cultural tourism as a driver of sustainable regional economic development while supporting the achievement of SDGs 8, 11, 12, and 17 in Alor Regency.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Respondent Profile

The sample in this study consisted of 60 respondents. Based on gender, respondents consisted of 37 men (62%) and 23 women (38%). This composition indicates that male respondents are more dominant than female respondents, which can illustrate that in activities related to the tourism sector in Alor Regency, men still have a significant role, both as business actors, destination managers, and as community leaders involved in tourism development. However, the percentage of women, reaching 38%, indicates that women's participation in the tourism sector is also quite significant. In the context of cultural tourism, women's involvement is often seen in various activities such as managing handicraft businesses, traditional culinary, performing arts, and other creative economic activities. In the context of sustainable tourism development, women's involvement is one of the important indicators in realizing inclusive development as emphasized in the Sustainable Development Goals [23]. Women in Alor Regency generally play a role in developing a culture-based creative economy, such as ikat weaving production, traditional crafts, local culinary arts, homestay management, and organizing cultural attractions that are part of the tourist experience. The representation of both genders provides a more comprehensive perspective on cultural tourism development in the research area.

Based on age group, the majority of respondents were in the productive age group, specifically in the 25–35 years (35%) and 36–45 years (32%). This indicates that the majority of respondents are individuals in the economically and socially active age phase. This productive age group plays a crucial role in the development of the tourism sector, as individuals at this age generally have relatively high levels of mobility, creativity, and decision-making abilities. Meanwhile, respondents aged 45 and over (15%) also made significant contributions, particularly in terms of local cultural knowledge, traditional values, and social experience. Eleven respondents (18%) were under 25 years old.

In terms of occupation, the most dominant respondents were tourism entrepreneurs (32%), followed by MSMEs/creative economy entrepreneurs (28%), civil servants (22%), community leaders (13%), and others (5%). This indicates that this study involved a significant number of respondents directly involved in tourism economic activities. Tourism entrepreneurs include homestay managers, tour guides, tour transportation service providers, marine tourism operators, and tourist attraction managers. Meanwhile, MSMEs or creative economy entrepreneurs are generally involved in the production of handicrafts, regional culinary specialties, and various cultural products that have a selling point for tourists. This diversity of professions indicates that this study accommodates the perspectives of various actors involved in tourism governance. From the perspective of the SDGs, the involvement of various stakeholder groups reflects the principle of multi-stakeholder partnership as reflected in SDG 17, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration between actors in realizing sustainable tourism development [24].

In terms of their level of involvement in tourism activities, the majority of respondents are directly involved in the tourism sector, primarily as business actors (42%) and managers of tourism destinations or activities (35%). This means that approximately 77% of respondents are key actors in tourism activities. The predominance of respondents directly involved in tourism activities provides an advantage for this research, as they have real-world experience with the dynamics of tourism development in their regions. Meanwhile, the presence of respondents from the general public (13%) is also important because they directly experience the social and economic impacts of tourism sector development. The remaining 10% are from other categories. This condition strengthens the validity of the research data because the majority of respondents have practical experience in destination management, interaction with tourists, cultural product development, and implementation of

tourism policies at the local level. Meanwhile, general public involvement is still needed to provide an overview of the perceived social and economic impacts of tourism sector development on the lives of local communities.

**Table 1. Sample Characteristics**

Characteristics	Amount	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Man	37	62
Woman	23	38
Age		
< 25 years	11	18
25–35 years	21	35
36–45 years	19	32
> 45 years	9	15
Work		
ASN	13	22
Tourism Business Actors	19	32
MSME/Creative Economy Actors	17	28
Public figure	8	13
Other	3	5
Involvement in Tourism		
Manager	21	35
Businessmen	25	42
Public	8	13
Other	6	10

*Source: Processed Research Questionnaire*

Respondent characteristics indicate that the research sample has met the principle of information-rich respondents, namely respondents who have adequate experience, knowledge, and involvement in the research object. The dominance of respondents from the productive age group, tourism business actors, destination managers, and creative economy actors indicates that the information obtained comes from individuals who directly understand the dynamics of cultural tourism development in Alor Regency. In addition, the diversity of respondent backgrounds reflects a multi-stakeholder approach that is in line with the principles of sustainable development in the SDGs, thus enabling the research to capture the relationship between cultural tourism, tourism progress, and increasing Regional Original Income from various institutional, social, economic, and cultural perspectives. These characteristics strengthen the credibility of the research results and support the testing of the structural model developed using the PLS-SEM approach, because all respondents have the relevant competencies to evaluate the research indicators based on their empirical experience in cultural tourism development in Alor Regency.

## Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

The Cultural Tourism variable is an exogenous construct in the research model that represents the level of development and utilization of local cultural potential as the main attraction of tourist destinations in Alor Regency. In accordance with the operationalization of the variables in this study, cultural tourism is measured through five main dimensions, namely the uniqueness and authenticity of local culture, preservation of customs, arts, and traditions, local community involvement, availability and quality of cultural tourism attractions, and development of cultural products and the creative economy. Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an initial overview of respondents' perceptions of the actual conditions of cultural tourism before testing causal relationships using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

The analysis results show that the dimensions of uniqueness and authenticity of local culture received relatively high ratings. Item PB1 obtained an average score of 3.50 with an achievement of 70% (good category), while PB2 obtained an average score of 3.53 or 71% (good category). These findings indicate that respondents considered Alor Regency to have a strong and authentic cultural identity as the main capital in developing cultural tourism destinations. Cultural riches such as the existence of the Abui indigenous community, the Moko tradition, traditional houses, the diversity of local languages, and the Takpala Traditional Village are perceived as competitive advantages that distinguish Alor Regency from other tourist destinations in Eastern Indonesia. From the perspective of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), this condition reflects that local cultural heritage is still maintained and has great potential to support sustainable destination development through the preservation of the community's cultural identity.

The preservation of customs, arts, and traditions dimension received the highest score compared to other dimensions. The item measuring the statement that cultural tourism activities encourage the preservation of community customs and traditions received an average score of 3.67 or 73% (good category), while the item regarding increasing the recognition of local arts and traditions through tourism activities received an average score of 3.90 or 80% (good category). These results indicate that cultural tourism activities in Alor Regency not only function as economic activities, but also serve as a medium for local cultural conservation. Various cultural practices such as the Lego-lego dance, Cakalele, traditional rituals, the use of traditional houses, the ikat weaving tradition, and the preservation of cultural artifacts such as Moko are still maintained by the community and are an important part of tourist attractions. These findings demonstrate that the development of cultural tourism has provided an incentive for communities to maintain their cultural heritage, thus aligning with the principles of sustainable development that place cultural preservation as an integral part of local economic development.

In contrast, the local community involvement dimension received a relatively lower score compared to the other dimensions. The item concerning active community involvement in cultural tourism management received an average score of 3.25, or 65%, while the item concerning direct economic benefits received by the community received an average score of 3.13, or 63%, both in the sufficient category. These results indicate that although the community has been involved in various activities such as organizing cultural performances, producing traditional crafts, providing tourism services, and developing creative economy businesses, the level of participation and economic benefits obtained are still not optimal and not felt evenly. This condition indicates that the development of cultural tourism in Alor Regency still requires strengthening the community-based tourism model, which provides greater space for the community as the main actor in the planning, management, and distribution of economic benefits. From the perspective of SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), increasing community participation is a crucial factor in creating

inclusive economic growth, expanding employment opportunities, and improving the welfare of local communities [25][26].

The availability and quality of cultural tourism attractions also received ratings that were still in the sufficient category, with an average score of 3.12 (62%) for the first item and 3.03 (61%) for the second item. These findings indicate that respondents assessed that the quality of cultural attraction presentation, accessibility to destinations, cultural interpretation for tourists, and consistency in organizing cultural activities still require improvement. Although Alor Regency has very rich cultural resources, not all of this potential has been developed into integrated tourism products that are capable of providing quality tourism experiences. This condition indicates the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of destination managers, improve the quality of human resources for tourism, innovate in the packaging of cultural attractions, and utilize digital technology in cultural promotion and interpretation. These efforts are in line with the principles of SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), which emphasizes the importance of managing cultural resources responsibly and sustainably.

The dimensions of cultural product development and the creative economy also received relatively good ratings. The item stating that cultural products such as ikat weaving, handicrafts, and other traditional products have been developed as tourist attractions received an average score of 3.67, with a score of 73% (good category). Meanwhile, the item measuring respondents' perceptions regarding the increased sales value of culture-based creative economy products received an average score of 3.60, or 70% (good category). These findings indicate that respondents believe the development of cultural products in Alor Regency has provided added economic value while strengthening the identity of the tourist destination. Various local products such as Alor's traditional ikat weaving, natural crafts, traditional accessories, and local culinary products not only serve as tourist souvenirs but also serve as a medium for preserving local knowledge and an alternative source of income for the community. This condition reflects the synergy between cultural preservation and creative economy development, which supports the realization of SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) through job creation and increased community income, and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) through the productive and sustainable use of cultural resources.

**Table 2. Respondents' Responses to Cultural Tourism (PB)**

Indicator	Item	JR	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}/5$	x100 (%)	Category
Uniqueness & Authenticity of Local Culture	PB1	210	3.50	0.70	70	Good
	PB2	212	3.53	0.71	71	Good
Preservation of Customs, Arts, and Traditions	PB3	220	3.67	0.73	73	Good
	PB4	235	3.90	0.80	80	Good
Local Community Involvement	PB5	195	3.25	0.65	65	Enough
	PB6	188	3.13	0.63	63	Enough
Availability & Quality of Cultural Tourism Attractions	PB7	187	3.12	0.62	62	Enough

	PB8	18 2	3.0 3	0.6 1	61	Enough
Cultural & Creative Economy Product Development	PB9	21 6	3.6 7	0.7 3	73	Good
	PB10	21 7	3.6 0	0.7 0	70	Good
Average					<b>68.8</b>	<b>Good</b>

Source: Processed Research Questionnaire

Tourism progress in Alor Regency is measured through five indicators. Indicators for increasing the number and quality of tourist destinations received varying scores: KP1 (item "The number of tourist destinations in Alor Regency continues to increase") received an average score of 3.70 (70% achievement, good category), while KP2 (item "The quality of tourist destination management is improving") received an average score of 3.35 (67% achievement, fair category). Tourist visit data for 2024 showed a total of 21,497 visits, consisting of 3,827 foreign tourists and 17,670 domestic tourists. There was a very significant spike in October with a total of 3,465 visits (1,719 foreign, 1,746 domestic), far exceeding other months, indicating the presence of strong driving factors such as the holding of cultural events during that period.

**Table 3. Data on Foreign and Domestic Tourist Visits in 2024**

No	Month	Foreign National	Foreign National IP	Foreign Nationals Total	DOM L	DOM P	DOM Amount	Total
1	January	19	11	30	893	685	1,578	1,606
2	February	114	62	176	822	621	1,443	1,619
3	March	95	30	125	845	785	1,630	1,755
4	April	100	87	187	987	835	1,822	2,009
5	May	99	79	178	745	604	1,349	1,527
6	June	109	56	165	708	366	1,074	1,239
7	July	113	50	163	820	480	1,300	1,463
8	August	125	73	198	920	560	1,480	1,678
9	September	127	85	212	953	620	1,573	1,785
10	October	950	769	1,719	978	768	1,746	3,465
11	November	298	189	487	798	595	1,393	1,880
12	December	98	89	187	690	592	1,282	1,469
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,247</b>	<b>1,580</b>	<b>3,827</b>	<b>10,159</b>	<b>7,511</b>	<b>17,670</b>	<b>21,497</b>

Source: Alor Regency Tourism Office

The overall tourism progress variable obtained an average value of 70% (good category). The tourist visit growth indicator obtained an average KP3 value of 3.40 (achievement of 68%, good category) and an average KP4 value of 3.42 (achievement of 68%, good category), indicating an increasing trend in visits although it is still fluctuating. The length of

stay and tourist spending indicators obtained an average KP5 value of 3.73 (achievement of 75%, good category) and an average KP6 value of 3.42 (achievement of 68%, sufficient category). The quality of tourism services and facilities indicator obtained the highest value among all tourism progress indicators, namely an average KP7 value of 3.86 (achievement of 74%, good) and an average KP8 value of 3.57 (achievement of 71%, good). The tourism and creative economy business development indicators obtained an average KP9 of 3.52 (achievement of 70%, good) and an average KP10 of 3.47 (achievement of 69%, good).

**Table 4. Respondents' Responses to Tourism Progress (KP)**

Indicator	Item	JR	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}/5$	x100 (%)	Category
<b>Increasing the Number &amp; Quality of Destinations</b>	KP1	22 3	3.7 0	0.7 0	70	Good
	KP2	20 1	3.3 5	0.6 7	67	Enough
<b>Growth in Tourist Visits</b>	KP3	20 4	3.4 0	0.6 8	68	Good
	KP4	20 5	3.4 2	0.6 8	68	Good
<b>Length of Stay and Tourist Spending</b>	KP5	22 4	3.7 3	0.7 5	75	Good
	KP6	20 5	3.4 2	0.6 8	68	Enough
<b>Quality of Tourism Services and Facilities</b>	KP7	22 1	3.8 6	0.7 4	74	Good
	KP8	21 4	3.5 7	0.7 1	71	Good
<b>Development of Tourism &amp; Creative Economy Business</b>	KP9	21 1	3.5 2	0.7 0	70	Good
	KP10	20 8	3.4 7	0.6 9	69	Good
Average					<b>70.0</b>	<b>Good</b>

*Source: Processed Research Questionnaire*

The Locally Generated Revenue (PAD) variable in the Tourism Sector is an endogenous construct in the research model that describes the level of contribution of tourism activities to the regional financial revenue of Alor Regency. In accordance with the operationalization of the variable, the PAD of the tourism sector is measured through four main dimensions, namely hotel and restaurant tax revenue, tourism object and service levies, the contribution of the tourism sector to PAD, and optimization of the tourism sector tax and levy collection system. Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of respondents' perceptions of the economic contribution of the tourism sector before testing the causal relationship using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

The results of the descriptive analysis indicate that respondents generally have a positive perception of the tourism sector's contribution to increasing the Alor Regency's Regional Original Income. This finding is supported by secondary data showing an increasing trend in regional revenue from the tourism sector in recent years. Based on data from the Alor Regency Government, in 2025, revenue from hotel and restaurant taxes reached Rp2,923,277,672, while levies on tourist objects and services amounted to Rp332,962,892,

bringing the total tourism sector's Regional Original Income (PAD) to Rp3,256,240,564. These achievements indicate that tourism activities have become an increasingly important source of regional revenue in supporting regional development financing.

Historically, the tourism sector's contribution to Alor Regency's Regional Original Revenue (PAD) has consistently increased. In 2010, the tourism sector's PAD was recorded at Rp642,981,566, or approximately 3.93% of Alor Regency's total PAD of Rp16,358,004,811. Meanwhile, in 2024, the tourism sector's PAD value increased to Rp3,108,367,285, contributing 5.36% to the total regional PAD. This increase indicates that the tourism sector is increasingly playing a role as a driver of the regional economy through increased business activities in tourism services, accommodations, restaurants, and the utilization of various cultural and marine tourism objects. Although its contribution to total PAD is still relatively limited compared to other sectors, this increasing trend indicates significant potential for continued development through strengthening destination governance, improving service quality, and diversifying tourism products.

The results of the primary data analysis also show that the dimension of the tourism sector's contribution to PAD received the highest rating compared to other dimensions. PADsp5 item, which states that tourism is an important source of Alor Regency's Original Regional Income, received an average score of 3.80 with an achievement of 76% (good category). Meanwhile, PADsp6 item, which measures respondents' perceptions regarding the increasing contribution of the tourism sector to PAD over time, received an average score of 3.88 or 78% (good category). The high ratings for both indicators indicate respondents' belief that the development of the tourism sector, particularly cultural tourism, has had a real economic impact on increasing regional revenue. This perception is in line with the increasing trend in the realization of PAD from the tourism sector as reflected in local government financial data.

From the perspective of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), the increase in PAD in the tourism sector shows that tourism activities are able to create added economic value, expand employment opportunities, and increase community business activities [27]. Furthermore, increased regional revenue provides greater fiscal space for local governments to finance infrastructure development, cultural heritage preservation, improving the quality of public services, and developing sustainable tourism destinations. This also aligns with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), which emphasizes the importance of cultural heritage preservation as part of a sustainable regional development strategy [28]. Thus, increasing local revenue (PAD) is not only seen as an indicator of economic success but also as an instrument to support cultural conservation and empower local communities. However, descriptive results also indicate that optimizing regional revenue from the tourism sector still faces several challenges. The increase in tourist visits has not been fully accompanied by optimization of regional tax and levy revenue. This condition indicates that there is still room for improvement in tourism destination management, tax and levy collection systems, service digitization, and strengthening coordination between regional agencies related to tourism sector management. Therefore, increasing local revenue (PAD) in the tourism sector depends not only on increasing tourist numbers but also on effective governance, the quality of destination services, and the ability of local governments to integrate cultural tourism development with regional fiscal policies.

The results of the descriptive analysis show that the Regional Original Income (PAD) variable of the Tourism Sector received a good assessment, which indicates that the tourism sector has made an increasingly significant contribution to the regional income of Alor Regency. This finding provides an initial indication that the development of cultural tourism has the potential to be an important factor in driving tourism progress and increasing Regional Original Income. However, this relationship still requires empirical proof through

PLS-SEM analysis to test whether the influence occurs directly or indirectly through the Tourism Progress variable, in accordance with the conceptual model of the research developed in the perspective of sustainable tourism development based on the SDGs.

**Table 5. Respondents' Responses to the Increase in Tourism Sector Locally-Generated Revenue (PADsp)**

Indicator	Item	JR	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}/5$	x100 (%)	Category
Hotel and Restaurant Tax Revenue	PADsp1	20 6	3.4 3	0.6 9	69	Good
	PADsp2	21 3	3.5 5	0.7 1	71	Good
Retribution for Tourist Attractions and Services	PADsp3	21 5	3.5 8	0.7 2	72	Good
	PADsp4	22 0	3.6 7	0.7 3	73	Good
Tourism Contribution to PAD	PADsp5	22 8	3.8 0	0.7 6	76	Good
	PADsp6	23 3	3.8 8	0.7 8	78	Good
Optimization of the PAD Collection System	PADsp7	22 8	3.8 0	0.7 6	76	Good
	PADsp8	22 1	3.6 8	0.7 4	74	Good
Average					<b>73.6</b>	<b>Good</b>

*Source: Processed Research Questionnaire*

Overall, the tourism sector's PAD variable obtained an average value of 73.6% (good category), the highest average value among the three research variables. All indicators showed a consistent assessment in the good category, with the highest value for the tourism contribution indicator to PAD (76–78%) and the lowest for hotel and restaurant tax revenue (69–71%). This indicates that the tourism sector has made a significant contribution to regional income and has great potential for further development. To increase this contribution more optimally, strengthening aspects of tourism object management, improving facilities, and optimizing the tax and levy collection system are still needed.

#### **Evaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model)**

Evaluation of the measurement model was conducted through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability testing. In the first outer loading test (iteration 1), it was found that two indicators in the Tourism Sector PAD variable, namely Y3 and Y4, had outer loading values below the minimum criterion of 0.70 (0.637 and 0.677, respectively), so they were eliminated. After re-analysis (iteration 2), all indicators in all variables had met the outer loading criteria  $\geq 0.70$ . In the Cultural Tourism variable, the outer loading values ranged from X1.1 = 0.754 to X1.4 = 0.897. In the Tourism Sector PAD variable, the outer loading values were Y1 = 0.974 and Y2 = 0.980. In the Tourism Progress variable, the outer loading values ranged from Z1 = 0.707 to Z5 = 0.889.

**Table 6. Outer Model Results After Eliminating Indicators Y3 and Y4**

Indicator	Tourism Progress	Tourism Sector PAD	Cultural Tourism
X1.1			0.754
X1.2			0.801
X1.3			0.781
X1.4			0.897
X1.5			0.865
Y1		0.974	
Y2		0.980	
Z1	0.707		
Z2	0.794		
Z3	0.820		
Z4	0.853		
Z5	0.889		

*Source: SmartPLS Processed Results*

Convergent validity testing through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) shows that the three variables in this study have AVE values above 0.50. The AVE value for Tourism Progress is 0.664, PAD Tourism Sector is 0.955, and Cultural Tourism is 0.675. All of these values meet the AVE criteria  $\geq 0.50$  so that all constructs have met the convergent validity criteria and the indicators used are considered valid in measuring each variable studied. Discriminant validity testing using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion shows the square root of the AVE value of each construct (Tourism Progress = 0.815; PAD Tourism Sector = 0.977; Cultural Tourism = 0.821) which is greater than the highest correlation between constructs, so that discriminant validity is met (Ghozali & Latan, 2015).

Cross Loading Testing shows that all indicators in each variable have the highest loading value on the measured construct compared to other constructs. The Tourism Sector PAD Indicator (Y1 and Y2) shows a very high loading on its construct (0.974 and 0.980) and is much greater than the loading on other constructs. The HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) test obtained inter-construct values that were all far below the threshold of 0.90: HTMT between Tourism Progress and Tourism Sector PAD was 0.590, between Tourism Progress and Cultural Tourism was 0.473, and between Tourism Sector PAD and Cultural Tourism was 0.589. Based on the three discriminant validity tests, all variables have met the required criteria so that the measurement model is declared valid.

Construct reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha shows a value of Tourism Progress of 0.874, PAD Tourism Sector of 0.953, and Cultural Tourism of 0.899. All three values are above the minimum required limit of 0.70, so all variables have a high level of internal consistency. Composite Reliability (CR) testing produces a value of Tourism Progress of 0.908, PAD Tourism Sector of 0.977, and Cultural Tourism of 0.912. All three CR values have also exceeded the threshold of 0.70, meaning all variables have a very good level of reliability. Thus, based on all outer model tests, the research instrument for each variable is declared valid and reliable, so it is suitable for use in structural model analysis and hypothesis testing.

The summary table of the measurement model evaluation results comprehensively demonstrates the validity and reliability profiles of all constructs. The Cronbach's Alpha,

Composite Reliability, and AVE values for all constructs exceeded the required threshold, confirming that the measurement model in this study met the psychometric standards required for SEM-PLS analysis. Overall, these satisfactory outer model evaluation results provide a solid foundation for proceeding to the structural model evaluation and hypothesis testing stages (Hair et al., 2019).

**Table 7. Results of Measurement Model Evaluation: AVE, Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability**

Construct	CA	rho_A	CR	AVE	Note:
Tourism Progress	0.874	0.889	0.908	0.664	Valid & Reliable
Tourism Sector PAD	0.953	0.964	0.977	0.955	Valid & Reliable
Cultural Tourism	0.899	1,062	0.912	0.675	Valid & Reliable

CA=Cronbach's Alpha; CR=Composite Reliability; AVE=Average Variance Extracted.  
Source: SmartPLS Processed Results

### Structural Model Evaluation and Hypothesis Testing

The evaluation of the structural model begins with the R Square ( $R^2$ ) test. The results show that the  $R^2$  value for the Tourism Progress variable is 0.257 ( $R^2$  Adjusted = 0.244), which indicates that the Cultural Tourism variable is able to explain the variation in Tourism Progress by 25.7%, while the remaining 74.3% is explained by other variables outside the research model. Thus, the model's ability to explain Tourism Progress is categorized as weak to moderate. The  $R^2$  value for the Tourism Sector PAD variable is 0.573 ( $R^2$  Adjusted = 0.558), which indicates that the Cultural Tourism and Tourism Progress variables together are able to explain the variation in Tourism Sector PAD by 57.3%, while the remaining 42.7% is influenced by other variables outside the model.

The f Square (effect size) test shows that the influence of Cultural Tourism on Tourism Progress has an  $f^2$  value of 0.346 (large category), which indicates that Cultural Tourism makes a strong contribution in increasing Tourism Progress. The influence of Tourism Progress on PAD in the Tourism Sector has an  $f^2$  value of 0.110 (small category), which indicates that although Tourism Progress has an influence on PAD, its contribution is relatively limited. The influence of Cultural Tourism on PAD in the Tourism Sector has an  $f^2$  value of 0.620 (very large category), which indicates that Cultural Tourism is the most dominant factor in increasing PAD in the tourism sector (Brida et al., 2020; Richards, 2018).

Hypothesis testing was conducted by examining the path coefficient, T-statistic, and P-value using the Bootstrapping procedure. The hypothesis was accepted if the T-statistic was  $> 1.96$  and the P-value was  $< 0.05$ . The results of testing Hypothesis 1 showed that Cultural Tourism had a positive and significant effect on Tourism Progress ( $\beta = 0.507$ ; Sample Mean = 0.519; STDEV = 0.084; T = 6.041; p = 0.000). This indicates that the stronger the management of local culture, the higher the level of development of the tourism sector. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was accepted. This finding is in line with the research of Pinke and García-Almeida which stated that Cultural tourism provides opportunities for destinations to differentiate themselves in an increasingly competitive market [29][30], and Seyfi and Escobar-Farfán who emphasized that cultural tourism plays a vital role in the development and formation of destination identity [31][32].

The results of hypothesis 2 testing indicate that Cultural Tourism has a positive and significant effect on the Tourism Sector's PAD ( $\beta=0.597$ ; Sample Mean=0.604; STDEV=0.073; T=8.179; p=0.000). With a coefficient value of 0.597 which is the highest value in the model and  $f^2=0.620$  (very large category), Cultural Tourism is the most dominant variable in the research model. Hypothesis 2 is accepted. This indicates that

culture-based tourism activities have a real economic contribution to regional income. The results of hypothesis 3 testing indicate that Tourism Progress has a positive and significant effect on the Tourism Sector's PAD ( $\beta=0.252$ ; Sample Mean=0.248; STDEV=0.087; T=2.885; p=0.004). Hypothesis 3 is accepted. Although significant, its contribution is relatively smaller compared to the influence of Cultural Tourism.

**Table 8. Path Coefficients, T-Statistic Values, and P-Values (Bootstrapping)**

Hypothesis Path	$\beta$ (O)	M	STDEV	T-Stat	P-Value	Decision
H1: PB $\rightarrow$ KP	0.50 7	0.51 9	0.084	6,041	0,000	Accepted
H2: PB $\rightarrow$ PAD	0.59 7	0.60 4	0.073	8,179	0,000	Accepted
H3: KP $\rightarrow$ PAD	0.25 2	0.24 8	0.087	2,885	0.004	Accepted
H4: PB $\rightarrow$ KP $\rightarrow$ PAD (indirect)	0.12 8	0.13 3	0.060	2,139	0.033	Accepted (Partial)

*PB=Cultural Tourism; KP=Tourism Progress; PAD=Paid Regional Revenue from Tourism Sector;  $\beta$ =Path Coefficient (O=Original Sample); M=Sample Mean. Source: SmartPLS Processed Results*

The results of testing hypothesis 4 indicate that the indirect effect of Cultural Tourism on PAD in the Tourism Sector through Tourism Progress has a coefficient value of 0.128 (Sample Mean=0.133; STDEV=0.060; T=2.139; p=0.033), so Hypothesis 4 is accepted. Because the value of the direct effect of Cultural Tourism on PAD ( $\beta=0.597$ ) is greater than the indirect effect ( $\beta=0.128$ ), the type of mediation that occurs is partial mediation. This means that Tourism Progress acts as a mediating variable that strengthens the effect of Cultural Tourism on PAD, but does not completely replace the direct effect. This finding is in line with Spillane (1994) who stated that the development of the tourism sector drives regional economic growth, and Sharpley (2015) who showed that the relationship between tourism and economic development is complex and involves various mediating variables.

Based on the overall results of the structural model analysis, it can be concluded that Cultural Tourism is the most dominant variable in the research model, both in influencing Tourism Progress ( $f^2=0.346$ , large category) and the Tourism Sector's PAD directly ( $f^2=0.620$ , very large category). Tourism Progress is also proven to play a role as a partial mediating variable that strengthens the influence of Cultural Tourism on PAD [5][10]. The implications of these findings are clear: policy investment in the development and strengthening of cultural tourism in Alor Regency will provide the highest economic returns for the region through two channels simultaneously: the direct channel through local revenue (PAD) and the indirect channel through increasing overall tourism progress.

### **Analysis of Tourism's Contribution to Regional Original Income from the SDGs Perspective**

The analysis shows that the tourism sector has developed into an increasingly strategic source of regional revenue within the economic structure of Alor Regency. This indicates that tourism activities are no longer viewed solely as a service sector generating tourist visits, but have transformed into an instrument for regional economic development capable of creating a multiplier effect. According to Surgawati, Increased tourism activity will trigger growth in demand for various supporting sectors, such as accommodation, transportation, trade, culinary, and creative industries, which will ultimately increase government revenue through taxes and levies [33][34]. Thus, the growing development of cultural tourism

activities in Alor Regency has the potential to expand the regional fiscal revenue base by increasing the economic activity of the community and business actors involved in the tourism value chain.

From a regional development perspective, these findings demonstrate that cultural tourism has economic functions that extend far beyond its role as a means of preserving cultural heritage. Endogenous development theory explains that development that utilizes local resources tends to generate more sustainable economic growth because it relies on the region's comparative advantages [35]. In the context of Alor Regency, cultural riches in the form of traditional traditions, traditional houses, performing arts, ikat weaving, and various other cultural expressions constitute development capital that can create new economic value when managed professionally. Utilizing culture as a tourist attraction not only increases demand for local products and services but also strengthens the destination's identity, creating a competitive advantage over other regions [36][37]. Therefore, the tourism sector's contribution to Regional Original Income reflects the success of local governments in transforming cultural assets into economic assets without eliminating the authentic cultural value held by the community.

However, this substantial economic potential does not fully reflect the optimal governance of the tourism sector. From the perspective of good tourism governance put forward by the UNWTO, increasing regional revenue is not only determined by high tourist numbers, but also influenced by the effectiveness of destination management systems, institutional quality, transparency of revenue management, and integration between the government, the private sector, and local communities. This means that increasing Regional Original Income requires a fiscal system capable of capturing all tourism economic activity through efficient, accountable, and digital-based tax and levy collection mechanisms. Without strong governance, increased tourism activity has the potential to cause leakages in regional revenue, thus preventing the economic benefits generated from being fully utilized to support regional development [38].

The results of this study also show that the development of cultural tourism is closely linked to the sustainable development paradigm as formulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The economic contribution generated by the tourism sector supports the achievement of SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) through the creation of employment opportunities, increasing the productivity of micro-enterprises and the creative economy, and strengthening local economies based on cultural potential [39]. At the same time, strengthening regional fiscal capacity provides space for the government to allocate greater investment in the preservation of cultural sites, improving the quality of destinations, developing supporting infrastructure, and empowering communities, thereby contributing to the achievement of SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Thus, increasing Regional Original Income not only reflects economic success but also serves as an indicator of the region's ability to maintain a balance between cultural conservation, community welfare, and sustainable development [40][41].

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that cultural tourism is a strategic factor driving tourism progress while increasing the tourism sector's Regional Original Income (PAD) in Alor Regency. The richness of local culture, manifested through traditional heritage, traditions, performing arts, traditional villages, and a culture-based creative economy, has proven to be a development asset capable of increasing destination competitiveness and strengthening regional fiscal capacity. The results of the SEM-PLS analysis indicate that cultural tourism has a positive and significant effect on both tourism progress and the tourism sector's PAD. Tourism progress also contributes positively to increasing PAD and acts as a partial mediator in this relationship. These findings confirm that the development of cultural tourism not only

impacts increased tourist visits but also generates broader economic benefits through the growth of business activities, the creative economy, and regional revenue. Theoretically, this study strengthens the concept of sustainable tourism development that positions culture as a strategic asset for regional economic development. From a policy perspective, the results of the study emphasize the importance of strengthening cultural preservation, empowering local communities, improving the quality of tourist attractions, digital transformation in destination promotion and governance, and optimizing the PAD collection system in the tourism sector. This strategy will not only enhance Alor Regency's tourism competitiveness but also support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Therefore, cultural tourism development in Alor Regency needs to be positioned as a sustainable, inclusive, and evidence-based regional development strategy to improve community welfare while strengthening regional fiscal independence.

### **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to all institutions and individuals who contributed to the completion of this research. Special appreciation is addressed to Universitas Muhammadiyah Kupang Indonesia, Universitas Fajar Makasar Indonesia, Riset for their academic support, collaboration, and encouragement throughout the research process. The authors hope this scientific article contributes positively to the advancement of knowledge, research development, and international academic collaboration at the global level.

### **Author Contribution**

All authors contributed significantly and collaboratively to the preparation and completion of this research article. Their contributions included conceptual development, data collection, research supervision, financial support, manuscript translation, editing, and final review of the paper. Each author participated actively according to their respective expertise and responsibilities. Furthermore, all authors carefully read, reviewed, and approved the final version of the manuscript before submission and publication in the selected academic journal.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this research, publication, or authorship of this article. All research activities were conducted objectively, independently, and professionally without any financial, institutional, or personal influence that could affect the results or interpretation of the study. The authors also confirm that the manuscript has not been submitted simultaneously to another journal and complies fully with ethical standards in academic publishing.

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