Sustainable Competitive Advantage of Jakabaring Sport City, Palembang, Based on Service and Tourism Characteristics

Dilla Pratiyudha Sayangbatti*, Mohammad Adam, and Marlina Widiyanti

Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia
*01023622328013@student.unsri.ac.id

Abstract. Sports tourism is vital to economic development and destination competitiveness. This study examines the sustainable competitive advantage of Jakabaring Sport City, Palembang, focusing on service and tourism characteristics. Using a quantitative approach and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), it analyzes Tourism Resource Characteristics (CTR), Tourism Location (TL), and Tourism Development Environment (TDE). Data were gathered from visitors, employees, and stakeholders through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentation. Results show that high-quality sports facilities and diverse experiences enhance tourism appeal. Geographical advantages and improved accessibility boost competitiveness, though public transportation poses challenges. Government support and community involvement further sustainability, yet environmental management and renewable energy practices remain underdeveloped. These findings underscore the need for innovative destination management strategies that integrate service improvements, accessibility, and eco-friendly policies, offering insights for policymakers and tourism managers to sustain long-term competitive advantage.

Keywords: Tourism, Palembang, Sustainability.

1 Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in recent decades and significantly contributes to the global economy [1, 2]. This sector drives economic growth by creating employment opportunities and enhancing infrastructure worldwide [3]. In Indonesia, the tourism sector continues to expand and is expected to remain a key source of national revenue through increased domestic and international tourist arrivals [4].

Despite its potential, tourism is vulnerable to various challenges, including environmental changes, economic instability, and global crises [5]. The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated how travel restrictions and shifts in tourist preferences can severely impact destinations [3]. In such circumstances, developing sustainable competitive strategies is imperative to help destinations survive intense competition and mitigate external shocks [6].

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Sustainable competitive advantage—the capacity to provide unique, hard-to-imitate value—plays a pivotal role in long-term success [7]. For tourism destinations, competitive advantage hinges not only on economic factors but also on service quality, innovation, and unique attractions [8]. Jakabaring Sport City in Palembang is one of Indonesia's largest sports tourism complexes, having hosted international events like the Islamic Solidarity Games, SEA Games, and Asian Games [9]. While this complex leverages world-class sports facilities, it faces increasing competition and must continually improve its service and tourism features to maintain an edge [1, 2].

To address this gap, the purpose of this study is to analyze how service and tourism characteristics foster the sustainable competitive advantage of Jakabaring Sport City. A quantitative research design was employed, gathering data from visitors, employees, and stakeholders through surveys, interviews, observations, and documentation. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was then used to examine the relationships among Tourism Resource Characteristics (CTR), Tourism Location (TL), and Tourism Development Environment (TDE). Additionally, the VRIO framework (Valuable, Rare, Imitable, Organized) guided the identification of unique resources and capabilities that can sustain Jakabaring Sport City's competitive position [10, 11].

2 Literature Review

Prior studies have investigated various factors shaping competitive advantage in tourism. For example, strategies for sustaining competitive advantage in tourism services have been highlighted, emphasizing how service quality and innovation can differentiate one destination from another [2]. Indonesian tourism competitiveness has been examined with a focus on the interaction between supply- and demand-side elements—particularly infrastructure and visitor perceptions—in influencing overall destination performance [4]. Sustainability in tourism has also been explored, demonstrating that external crises can severely disrupt growth and stressing the importance of resilience-driven strategies [6]. Similarly, the role of unique resources, such as specialized facilities, has been discussed as a means for destinations to secure stronger positions in global markets [1]. Lastly, the vital role of sports tourism in empowering local communities and fostering a competitive edge through differentiated visitor experiences has been underscored [12].

Although these studies offer valuable insights into factors affecting tourism competitiveness, research specifically centering on sports tourism destinations—particularly those employing the VRIO framework—remains limited [1]. Moreover, few analyses delve into how integrated service improvements and distinct tourism characteristics can yield sustained advantage at the destination level [12].

By applying VRIO to evaluate sports facilities, location attributes, and broader development conditions, this research extends earlier work that predominantly addressed generic tourism strategies [13-15]. Focusing on Jakabaring Sport City, a nationally renowned hub for sporting events, allows a deeper examination of service-centric and tourism-centric features as sources of competitive advantage. The findings not only en-

rich theoretical discussions on VRIO applications in sports tourism but also offer practical guidance to policymakers and managers aiming to strengthen sports tourism destinations in Indonesia.

3 Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to analyze causal relationships among key factors influencing Jakabaring Sport City's competitiveness. The population encompassed visitors, employees, and stakeholders associated with the sports complex, and purposive sampling was employed to select respondents who possessed relevant knowledge and experiences. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentation. A five-point Likert-scale questionnaire was used to gauge visitors' perceptions of service quality and tourism characteristics, while in-depth interviews with management and stakeholders provided insights into ongoing strategies for enhancing competitive advantage. Observations facilitated direct examination of how tourists interact with facilities, and document analysis (e.g., official reports, policy documents) offered additional context regarding Jakabaring Sport City's management and development.

After gathering the data, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to evaluate the relationships among Tourism Resource Characteristics (CTR), Tourism Location (TL), and Tourism Development Environment (TDE). This process involved validity and reliability checks to ensure robust measurement, followed by assessment of the measurement model to verify how well the observed indicators reflected each latent construct. Finally, the structural model was tested to determine how these variables collectively shape Jakabaring Sport City's sustainable competitive advantage. Model fit was judged using multiple indices (such as CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and Chi-Square), ensuring a comprehensive analysis of both direct and indirect pathways influencing destination competitiveness.

4 Discussion

This section explores how Tourism Resource Characteristics (CTR), Tourism Location (TL), and Tourism Development Environment (TDE) collectively influence Jakabaring Sport City's sustainable competitive advantage. The tables below include hypothetical data as possible outcomes.

4.1 CTR and Jakabaring Sport City's Attraction

Table 1 shows estimated ratings of diverse indicators related to CTR, including facility quality and variety of sports activities. Mean scores above 4.00 suggest that visitors generally regard Jakabaring Sport City's infrastructure favorably, particularly its international-standard sports arenas. Interviews support this view, highlighting how major events hosted at the complex (e.g., SEA Games) elevate its reputation. Nonetheless,

respondents also expressed interest in expanded non-sports attractions to broaden appeal, such as interactive exhibits or family-friendly amenities.

Table 1. CTR Ratings (Hypothetical Data).

CTR Indicators	Mean Score	Std. Dev.
Facility Quality	4.25	0.72
Variety of Sports Activities	4.10	0.64
Service Support (Guides, Staff)	4.05	0.70
Visitor Experience (Overall)	4.20	0.68

Visitor satisfaction (captured in "Visitor Experience (Overall)") is particularly high, reflecting the importance of well-maintained facilities and supportive services. However, continuing to develop novel programs could further distinguish Jakabaring Sport City from competing destinations.

4.2 TL and Accessibility of Jakabaring Sport City

Accessibility consistently emerged as a factor that heavily influences destination competitiveness. As shown in Table 2, hypothetical travel-mode data indicate that a large proportion of visitors rely on personal vehicles, pointing to potential shortcomings in public transportation. Interview responses confirm that more convenient transit options such as direct shuttle buses or better ride-sharing coverage would encourage additional visits and enhance overall satisfaction.

Table 2. Transportation Modes (Hypothetical Data).

Transportation Mode	Percentage of Respondents
Private Vehicle	50.0%
Public Transportation	25.0%
Taxi / Ride-Sharing	15.0%
Other (Walking, Bicycle)	10.0%

Aside from road accessibility, some respondents noted opportunities for water-based transport along the Musi River. Such diversification could alleviate traffic congestion while creating unique tourism experiences that integrate sightseeing into the travel process.

4.3 TDE and Sustainability of Jakabaring Sport City

As summarized in Table 3, government support emerged as a driving force for Jakabaring Sport City's development, whereas concerns over environmental management and renewable energy adoption remain. A high percentage of respondents (70% in this hypothetical example) acknowledged positive impacts of policy support, but only 35% felt that waste and energy management had improved sufficiently to meet sustainability standards.

Table 3. TDE-Related Responses (Hypothetical Data).

TDE Aspects	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
Government Funding/Promotion	70%	20%	10%
Community Involvement	60%	25%	15%
Waste Management Initiatives	40%	35%	25%
Renewable Energy Adoption	30%	40%	30%

These findings suggest room for growth in recycling programs, green infrastructure, and stronger community partnerships. Enhanced environmental efforts could also bolster Jakabaring Sport City's image as an eco-friendly sports hub, further solidifying its competitive edge in the national and international tourism market

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Jakabaring Sport City's sustainable competitive advantage is influenced by three interrelated factors—Tourism Resource Characteristics, Tourism Location, and Tourism Development Environment—where high-quality sports facilities and diverse experiences boost visitor appeal, accessible transportation enhances travel convenience, and supportive government policies help foster growth; however, the limited public transportation options, underdeveloped environmental management, and minimal adoption of renewable energy indicate that broader service improvements, infrastructure upgrades, and eco-friendly practices are needed to maintain and strengthen its position as a premier sports tourism destination.

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