

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN INCREASING TOURIST INTEREST IN KERINCI REGENCY: A SWOT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of government and infrastructure in increasing tourist interest in Kerinci Regency using the SWOT analysis method. Kerinci Regency has great tourism with various natural attractions, but requires further development. The role of local government includes the preparation of a tourism master plan, budget allocation, ease of licensing, promotion, and empowerment. plan, budget allocation, ease of licensing, promotion, and community empowerment. community. Infrastructure assessment includes accessibility, accommodation, supporting facilities, utilities, and tourism facilities and infrastructure. supporting facilities, utilities, and tourism facilities and infrastructure. SWOT was used to identify internal and external factors that influence tourism development in Kerinci Regency. The results of the research are expected to provide the right strategy to increase tourist interest and tourists and encourage regional economic growth.

Keywords: Infrastructure, Travelers, Kerinci, SWOT.

INTRODUCTION

Kerinci Regency is in the westernmost position in Jambi Province and borders directly with Sumatra Barat Province and Bengkulu Province. The area of Kerinci Regency is 344,519 hectares or 3,445 km² consisting of 18 (eighteen) sub-districts, 285 villages, and 2 kelurahan. The sub-districts with the largest area are Batang Merangin sub-district (14.7%), Gunung Raya sub-district (11.3%) and Gunung Kerinci sub-district (10.0%). More than half of the Kerinci Regency area (66%) is the Kerinci Seblat National Park area and the rest is cultivated areas in the form of settlements, agricultural land, plantations, government areas, and others. The total population until 2023 is 253,863 people.

Table 1: Area of Kerinci Regency

No.	District	Area (Ha)	%
1	Gunung Raya	40.895	11,9
2	Bukit Kerman	19.556	5,7
3	Batang Merangin	50.472	14,7

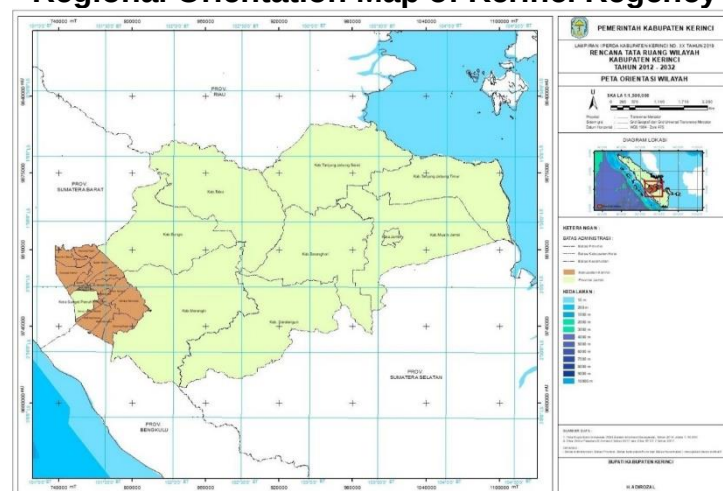
No.	District	Area (Ha)	%
4	Keliling Danau	32.878	9,5
5	Danau Kerinci Barat	3.069	0,9
6	Danau Kerinci	21.581	6,3
7	Tanah Cogok	2.029	0,6
8	Sitinjau Laut	5.340	1,6
9	Air Hangat	2.161	0,6
10	Air Hangat Timur	17.989	5,2
11	Depati Tujuh	2.556	0,7
12	Air Hangat Barat	1.256	0,4
13	Gunung Kerinci	34.564	10,0
14	Siulak	12.451	3,6
15	Siulak Mukai	48.754	14,2
16	Kayu Aro	12.542	3,6
17	Gunung Tujuh	15.382	4,5
18	Kayu Aro Barat	21.037	6,1
TOTAL		344.519	100

Source BPS Kerinci district 2024

In general, Kerinci Regency has administrative boundaries:

1. North borders with Solok Selatan Regency, Sumatra Barat Province;
2. South bordered by Merangin Regency of Jambi Province and Muko-Muko Regency of Bengkulu Province;
3. West bordered by Sungai Penuh City, Jambi Province and Pesisir Selatan Regency, Sumatra Barat Province;
4. East bordered by Bungo Regency of Jambi Province and Dharmasraya Regency of Sumatra Barat Province.

Figure 1
Regional Orientation Map of Kerinci Regency



The distance and travel time from Kabupaten Kerinci to the provincial capital, which is the main destination for various community activities, is as follows:

- Jambi City: approximately 410 km away with a travel time of 10-12 hours by road and 40 minutes by air from Depati Parbo Kerinci Airport.
- Padang distance of approximately 275 km with a travel time of 8-9 hours by road

Kerinci Regency is one of the regions in Jambi Province that has great tourism potential. With beautiful natural scenery, such as Mount Kerinci, Lake Gunung Tujuh, and various other attractions, Kerinci Regency has its own charm for tourists. However, to be able to attract tourists optimally, an active role is needed from the local government in developing and managing adequate tourism infrastructure. Table 2 below are some of the tourist attractions located in Kerinci regency

Table 2 Tourism Objects in Kerinci Regency Jambi

1. Gunung Tujuh Lake	Nature Tourism	Kayu Aro
2. Mount Kerinci	Nature Tourism	Kayu Aro
3. Semurup Hot Water	Nature Tourism	Semurup
4. Pine Tree	Nature Tourism	Sanggaran Agung
5. Kerinci Lake	Nature Tourism	Sanggaran Agung
6. Lingkat Lake	Nature Tourism	Lempur Tengah
7. Ayla Park	Nature Tourism	Siulak
8. Taman Pertiwi	Nature Tourism	Pentagen
9. Medang River Waterfall	Nature Tourism	Medang River
10. Single Princess Park	Nature Tourism	Sekungkung
11. Swarga Lodge and Home Stay	Nature Tourism	Kayu Aro
12. Rayo Shower Waterfall	Nature Tourism	Central Island
13. Pasir Panjang Beach	Nature Tourism	Tanjung Tanah
14. Beautiful Beach	Nature Tourism	Koto Petai
15. Lake Duo	Nature Tourism	Lempur Tengah
16. Kaco Lake	Nature Tourism	Lempur Tengah
17. Cafe Orange Tours	Nature Tourism	Tanjung Batu
18. Talang Kemulun Waterfall	Nature Tourism	Talang Kemulun

19. Scent of Peko	Nature Tourism	Kayu Aro
20. Telun Berasap Waterfall	Nature Tourism	Kayu Aro

Source BPS Kerinci district 2024

The local government of Kerinci Regency has the responsibility to formulate and implement policies that can encourage tourism development in the region. Some important roles of the government in this regard include: 1). Developing a comprehensive regional tourism development master plan. 2). Allocate an adequate budget for the development and maintenance of tourism infrastructure. 3). Facilitate licensing for investors who want to invest in the tourism sector. 4). Conducting regional tourism promotion and marketing, both at home and abroad. 5). Empowering local communities to actively participate in tourism activities.

Tourism Development by Inskeep (1991), which states that tourism development should consider aspects such as attractions, accommodation, supporting facilities and services, infrastructure, transportation, and institutional elements.

In addition to the role of the government, the study and development of tourism infrastructure is also an important factor in increasing tourist interest. Some of the infrastructure that needs to be considered in the development of tourism in Kerinci Regency include: 1). Accessibility, such as roads, airports, and public transportation. 2). Accommodation facilities, such as hotels, resorts, and inns. 3). Supporting facilities, such as restaurants, souvenir shops, and recreational facilities. 4). Utilities, such as electricity, clean water, and communication networks. 5). Tourism facilities and infrastructure, such as information centers, signs, and security facilities.

SWOT analysis is a very useful tool to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by an organization or region in developing its tourism potential. By conducting a SWOT analysis, the Kerinci Regency local government can find out the internal and external factors that affect the development of the tourism sector, so that it can develop the right strategy to increase tourist interest. SWOT Analysis Theory by Rangkuti (2015), which explains that SWOT analysis is a systematic identification of various factors to formulate a company or organization strategy.

Through the active role of the local government and a comprehensive study of tourism infrastructure development, it is hoped that Kerinci Regency can further increase tourist interest, both domestic and foreign tourists, so as to encourage economic growth and the welfare of the local community.

Some previous studies that are relevant to the topic of SWOT analysis of the role of government and infrastructure studies in increasing tourist interest in Kerinci Regency are *first*, research by Nugroho et al. (2016) on "SWOT Analysis of Regional Tourism Development (Case Study at the Yogyakarta Special Region Culture and Tourism Office)". This research uses SWOT analysis to identify internal and external factors that

influence tourism development in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The results show that the main strategy is to improve tourism promotion and infrastructure quality. Another study was also conducted by Susilowati and Darwanto (2018) on "The Role of Local Government in Tourism Development in Wonogiri Regency". This study analyzes the role of local government in tourism development in Wonogiri Regency. The results show that local governments have played a role in planning, developing, and promoting tourism, but still need improvement in the infrastructure aspect. Research by Ramli et al. (2019) on "Analysis of Tourism Infrastructure Conditions in the Lore Lindu National Park Conservation Area, Central Sulawesi". This research examines the condition of tourism infrastructure in Lore Lindu National Park, Central Sulawesi. The results show that there are several constraints on infrastructure, such as poor road conditions and lack of tourism support facilities.

These studies provide an overview of the importance of SWOT analysis and infrastructure studies in tourism development in an area. The results of this research can be used as a reference and comparison in analyzing the role of government and the condition of tourism infrastructure in Kerinci Regency.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

1. SWOT Analysis

The strategic decision-making process is always related to the development of the company's mission, goals, strategies and policies, so management must analyze the company's current factors and strategies.

This situation analysis is known as SWOT. According to Rangkuti (1997: 9) says that SWOT analysis (*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats*), is an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the company as well as the threats and opportunities facing the company.

SWOT analysis is carried out with the intention of recognizing the level of readiness of each function of the overall functions needed to achieve the set goals. Therefore, the level of readiness of each factor involved in each function, both factors that are classified as *internal* and *external*.

According to Rangkuti (2006: 18) SWOT analysis is a systematic identification of factors to formulate company strategy. This analysis is based on logic that maximizes *strengths* (*Strengths*) and opportunities (*Opportunities*), but can simultaneously minimize *weaknesses* (*Weaknesses*) and threats (*Threats*). The strategic decision-making process is always related to the development of the company's mission, goals, strategies and policies. Thus strategic planning (*Strategic Planner*) must analyze the company's strategic factors (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) under current conditions.

For this reason, Perum Pegadaian must pay attention to economic changes, government policies and competition as the same business, all of which can be beneficial and also detrimental to the industry. Both seen from

outside the industry and from within the industry on the ability to offer the products offered.

SWOT analysis can be shared in five steps:

1. Setting up the SWOT side
2. Identifying strengths and weaknesses
3. Identify opportunities strengths and weaknesses
4. Ranking strengths and weaknesses
5. Analyzing strengths and weaknesses

a. *Strengths* (strengths)

Is to examine the provisions owned by the company, so that the company can always maintain its existing strength so that it will have a strong foundation to outline the policies to be taken and the policy actions to achieve company goals, such as product strength, competition, prices and others.

b. *Weaknesses*

Assess the weaknesses that exist within the company, so that the company can overcome them and the company can run as desired.

c. *Oportinuties* (opportunities)

Analyze and see the conditions that can support the progress of the company so that these gaps can be best utilized by the company concerned to develop its business or make it a strength.

d. *Threats*

Namely analyzing conditions that can threaten the life of the company if it cannot be resolved immediately because it can disrupt the state of the company. This comes from more external factors because these are difficult to predict such as natural conditions, economic growth and others.

e. *SWOT Matrix*

To see the SWOT matrix according to Rangkuti (2006: 31) can be seen from the following table.

RESEARCH METHODS

Data Collection Methods

To complete the data in supporting the research so that the results obtained are more valid, the method is used through two approaches, namely as follows:

1. *Library Research*, namely by conducting library studies by studying literature and previous research that has to do with the problems studied as a theoretical basis for discussion.
2. *Field Research*, which is data collection carried out by going directly to the object under study to obtain primary data and secondary data, namely:
 - a. Observation is research directly observing the object under study.

- b. Interviews, namely by conducting direct interviews with parts or interested parties to obtain the data and information needed in this study.
- c. Questionnaires are data collection techniques using a list of questions answered by industry management relating to internal and external variables. Questionnaires are also given to consumers related to external variables.

Analyzer

The analytical tool used in this research is SWOT Analysis. SWOT analysis is used to determine the weaknesses and strengths as well as the opportunities and threats contained in the Pawnshop Corporation.

According to Rangkuti (1997), the steps in SWOT analysis are as follows:

- a. Determine internal variables that are a form of strengths and weaknesses and then determine the opportunities and threats contained in the company's external environment.
- b. The following step is to determine the tabulation of the variables to be studied, then each variable is given a weight according to its level of importance based on the influence of the company's strategic position on the general scale commonly used, namely 1 - 4, the total weight is not more than 1.0 (100%).
- c. Calculate for each variable by providing a scale ranging from 1 - 4 based on the influence of the variable on the condition of the company, namely
- d. The strengths and weaknesses of the company start from the weakest, namely 1, to the strongest, namely 4.
- e. Business opportunities and threats that must be rated from a very small 1 to a very large 4.
- f. Calculating the weighted value obtained by multiplying the weight with the rating of each variable to get a total weighted value score.
- g. Comparing the total weighted value obtained from each variable which includes strength and weakness factors as a form of internal variables and opportunities and threats as a form of external variables to determine in which position the business is carried out in the 4 quadrants in the SWOT analysis metric in Figure 2.1.
- h. Draw conclusions from the results

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Identification of Internal Factors

To find out the external factors that are key to the success of the marketing strategy of Perum Pegadaian Sungai Penuh, ETOP (*eternal threat opportunity profile*) analysis can be used. Rangkuti (2006: 8), states that ETOP analysis is a tool for analyzing two external factors, namely environmental (environmental threats) and *environmental* opportunities (environmental opportunities). The key to the success of an organization or

industry lies in the ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment. The right way and time to act will determine whether or not the organization or industry survives and thrives in an ever-changing environment.

Regarding the study of environmental threats and opportunities in the external environment of Tourism Objects in Kerinci Regency. Based on the results of direct research, the external variables are as follows:

1 . Strengths:

- 1) Kerinci Seblat National Park as a UNESCO natural heritage:
Kerinci Seblat National Park (TNKS) is a valuable asset for Kerinci tourism. As a UNESCO natural heritage site, TNKS has international appeal. The park covers an area of 1.38 million hectares, making it the largest national park in Sumatra. TNKS is renowned for its high biodiversity, including rare species such as the Sumatran tiger and Sumatran rhino. This attracts researchers, nature lovers and tourists interested in ecotourism.
- 2) Unspoiled natural beauty:
Kerinci Lake and Mount Kerinci are two natural landmarks that are the pride of the region. Lake Kerinci is the largest lake in Jambi Province, offering beautiful scenery and a variety of water activities. Meanwhile, Mount Kerinci, at 3,805 meters above sea level, is the highest volcano in Indonesia outside Papua. The mountain attracts many climbers and is a challenge for adventurers. In addition, there are many waterfalls, forests, and other natural landscapes that are still preserved in their authenticity.
- 3) A wealth of unique local cultures and traditions:
Kerinci Regency has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. This includes traditional arts such as Tauh dance and Sko music. There are also traditional ceremonies such as Kenduri Sko, which is an annual harvest feast. This cultural uniqueness is a special attraction for tourists who want to experience authentic traditional life.
- 4) The hospitality of the local people:
The people of Kerinci are famous for their hospitality towards visitors and tourists. This open and friendly attitude creates a pleasant experience for visitors. This hospitality also makes it easy for tourists to interact with locals, learn about the local culture, and feel safe while traveling.
- 5) Typical agricultural products:
Kerinci is famous for its specialty agricultural products, especially tea and cinnamon. Kerinci's Kayu Aro tea plantation is one of the highest tea plantations in the world, producing high-quality tea. Meanwhile, Kerinci's cinnamon is known to have the best quality in the world. These products are not only important export commodities, but also have the potential for agritourism development. Tourists can visit the plantations, see the production process, and buy the products directly from the source.

These strengths give Kerinci Regency a competitive advantage in the tourism industry. The combination of natural beauty, cultural richness, hospitality and regional specialty products creates a unique and well-rounded tourism experience. If managed well, these strengths can be a strong foundation for sustainable tourism development in Kerinci Regency.

2. Weaknesses:

- 1) Tourism infrastructure is still limited:
Infrastructure is one of the important components in tourism development. In Kerinci Regency, tourism infrastructure is still not optimally developed. This includes the lack of public facilities such as clean public toilets, adequate tourist information centers, and organized parking areas at tourist sites. In addition, telecommunication and internet networks in some tourist areas may still be limited, which may hinder the experience of modern travelers who rely on digital connectivity.
- 2) Inadequate transportation access:
Kerinci faces challenges in terms of accessibility, especially to reach remote tourist sites. The nearest airport, Depati Parbo in Kerinci, has a limited flight schedule. Roads to tourist attractions, especially those in mountainous or forested areas, are often in poor condition. Limited public transportation also makes it difficult for tourists to move between tourist sites without a private or rental vehicle. This can reduce the interest of tourists, especially foreign tourists who are used to easy access to transportation.
- 3) Lack of widespread tourism promotion and marketing:
Although Kerinci has a lot of tourism potential, it has not been optimally promoted at the national and international levels. The lack of an integrated and consistent marketing strategy makes Kerinci less known than other tourist destinations in Indonesia. The utilization of digital and social media for promotion has also not been maximized. As a result, much of Kerinci's tourism potential has not been explored and known by potential tourists.
- 4) Limited accommodation facilities and tourist services:
The number and variety of accommodations in Kerinci is still limited, especially those that meet international standards. This can be an obstacle for travelers looking for high comfort or special amenities. In addition, tourist services such as professional tour guides, outdoor equipment rental, or comprehensive tourist information centers are lacking. Restaurants and eateries serving a variety of international food may also be limited, which could be a problem for foreign travelers with specific food preferences.
- 5) Lack of trained human resources in the tourism industry:
The quality of human resources in the tourism industry in Kerinci still needs to be improved. This includes a shortage of professionals in tourism management, certified tour guides and trained hospitality

staff. Foreign language skills, especially English, among tourism workers may also still be limited. This can affect the quality of service and experience of tourists, especially foreign tourists.

These weaknesses may hinder the development of the tourism sector in Kerinci Regency. However, with clear identification, local government and other stakeholders can focus on improvement efforts. Investments in infrastructure, improved accessibility, better marketing strategies, development of tourist facilities, and human resource training can help overcome these weaknesses and improve Kerinci's competitiveness as a tourist destination.

Identification of External Factors

3. Opportunities:

1) Increasing trend of nature tourism and ecotourism:

Global trends show an increasing interest in nature tourism and ecotourism. Travelers are increasingly looking for authentic and sustainable experiences, and want to get closer to nature. Kerinci, with its natural wealth, is in an excellent position to capitalize on this trend. Kerinci Seblat National Park, Kerinci Lake and various other natural locations can be developed into flagship ecotourism destinations. This opportunity also includes the development of activities such as birdwatching, trekking, and conservation tours that can attract environmentally conscious travelers.

2) Potential development of local product-based agritourism:

Kerinci has great potential to develop agritourism based on its famous local products, especially tea and cinnamon. The Kayu Aro tea plantation can be developed into an attractive agritourism destination, where visitors can see the process of tea planting, picking and processing. The same goes for cinnamon plantations, which can offer a unique experience for tourists. This agritourism can not only increase revenue from the tourism sector, but also add value to local agricultural products and create new jobs for the local community.

3) Opportunities for cooperation with investors for tourism infrastructure development:

As Kerinci's tourism potential increases, there are opportunities to attract investors, both domestic and foreign, to invest in tourism infrastructure development. This could include the construction of quality hotels and resorts, the development of modern tourist facilities, or improvements to transportation infrastructure. Collaboration with investors can help overcome local government budget constraints and accelerate the development of needed tourism facilities.

4) Utilization of digital technology for promotion and marketing:

The digital age opens up great opportunities for more effective and efficient promotion and marketing of Kerinci tourism. The use of

social media, online travel platforms and mobile applications can help reach a wider audience at a relatively low cost. Virtual tours, high-quality video content, and digital storytelling can be used to introduce the beauty of Kerinci to potential tourists around the world. Digital technology can also be utilized to enhance the tourist experience, for example through interactive tour guide applications or online reservation systems for accommodation and tourist activities.

- 5) Development of integrated tour packages with surrounding areas: Kerinci has the opportunity to develop integrated tour packages that combine attractions in Kerinci with interesting destinations in surrounding areas. For example, tour packages that combine nature tours in Kerinci Seblat National Park with visits to historical sites in Jambi or beaches in West Sumatra. Regional cooperation in tourism development could extend the duration of tourist visits and increase Kerinci's appeal as part of larger travel routes in Sumatra.

These opportunities provide great potential for tourism development in Kerinci Regency. By capitalizing on nature tourism trends, developing agro-tourism, attracting investment, utilizing digital technology, and developing integrated tour packages, Kerinci can increase its competitiveness as a tourist destination and drive local economic growth through the tourism sector.

4. Threats:

- 1) Competition with other tourist destinations in Indonesia: Indonesia has many attractive tourist destinations, and competition among them is getting fierce. Destinations such as Bali, Yogyakarta, or Lombok are well known and have more established tourism infrastructure. Even in Sumatra itself, there are destinations such as Lake Toba that receive special attention from the central government. Kerinci must compete for the attention of tourists and investment. If it is not able to differentiate itself and offer a unique experience, Kerinci risks being left behind by other destinations that are more aggressive in their tourism development and promotion.
- 2) Environmental damage due to overexploitation: An increase in the number of tourists without good management can threaten the sustainability of Kerinci's natural environment. Overexploitation can cause ecosystem damage, soil erosion in trekking areas, water pollution in lakes and rivers, and disturbance to wildlife habitats. Kerinci Seblat National Park, as a major asset, is highly vulnerable to the negative impacts of uncontrolled tourism. If not managed with sustainability in mind, tourism development could actually damage Kerinci's main attraction, its natural beauty.
- 3) Changes in local culture due to tourist influence: An increase in the number of tourists, especially from outside the region or abroad, can bring changes to local culture and values. There is a risk of cultural erosion, where local traditions and customs begin to be abandoned or modified to meet tourist expectations.

Cultural commercialization can also occur, where traditional rituals or ceremonies turn into mere performances for tourists, losing their original meaning. Changes in the lifestyle of local communities due to interaction with tourists can also lead to social conflict or loss of unique cultural identity.

4) Economic instability that can affect the tourism industry:

The tourism industry is highly sensitive to economic conditions, both locally and globally. Economic recession, exchange rate fluctuations, or rising fuel prices can affect the number of tourists and their spending. Economic instability may also discourage investment in tourism infrastructure development. Furthermore, if the local economy is overly dependent on tourism, fluctuations in the industry could have a significant impact on the overall well-being of the people of Kerinci.

5) Potential natural disasters such as earthquakes or volcanic eruptions:

Kerinci is located in a region prone to natural disasters. Mount Kerinci is an active volcano with the potential to erupt. In addition, Kerinci's position on Sumatra Island makes it vulnerable to earthquakes. Natural disasters can cause infrastructure damage, disrupt tourism activities, and affect Kerinci's image as a safe tourist destination. Even the threat or warning of a potential disaster can influence travelers' decision to visit.

These threats suggest that tourism development in Kerinci should be undertaken with caution and careful planning. A comprehensive strategy is needed to address or mitigate these threats:

- Develop strong and unique branding to compete with other destinations.
- Apply the principles of ecotourism and sustainable tourism to preserve the environment.
- Involve local communities in tourism development to maintain cultural authenticity.
- Diversify the economy so that it is not overly dependent on the tourism sector.
- Development of effective early warning and disaster management systems.

By understanding and anticipating these threats, Kerinci can develop a more resilient and sustainable tourism industry. Based on this SWOT analysis, Kerinci Regency has great potential in the development of nature and culture-based tourism. However, serious efforts are needed to overcome weaknesses and anticipate existing threats. Focusing on infrastructure development, improving the quality of human resources, and proper promotion can help optimize the tourism potential in **this** area.

CLOSING

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Based on the calculation of the analysis of internal and external factors, the Kerinci Regency tourism industry can obtain a weighted average value for internal factors 2.75 external factors 3.87, which means that the Kerinci Regency tourism industry is in a less favorable quadrant where the Kerinci Regency tourism industry has opportunities but also has many weaknesses.
2. From the results of the calculation of the weighted average for internal and external factors, it can be determined that the position of the Kerinci Regency tourism industry is in quadrant II in SWOT analysis. In this quadrant, the industry must be able to take advantage of existing opportunities by minimizing existing weaknesses.
3. Based on the position of the Kerinci Regency tourism industry in quadrant II, the policies pursued by the tourism industry in Kerinci Regency by minimizing weaknesses and taking advantage of all opportunities to seize and make the most of them.
4. Effective strategies in accordance with the internal and external conditions of the Kerinci Regency tourism industry are: developing new products, increasing quality, increasing access to a wider market, supporting technological development and supporting government policies.

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