

Penta-helix collaboration in West Sumatra's 'Taste of Padang' branding strategy

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Abstract The "Taste of Padang" polemic serves as an important case study to understand the formation of effective communication between cross-cultural workgroups. This polemic raises the research question, how is the stakeholder communication process in the creation of 'Taste of Padang' as a brand destination for West Sumatra? This research aims to examine the communication process of tourism and creative economy policies (Parekraf) related to 'Taste of Padang' as a destination brand for the province of West Sumatra. This research used a case study method, focusing on the communication processes in creating 'Taste of Padang'. This research delves into information through in-depth interviews with stakeholders from the penta-helix, including the government, academic, business, community, and media sectors. The main results of this study show that the Effective Intercultural Group Communicator Theory (EIWCT) can lead to a good penta-helix communication process when used with a design thinking approach. The establishment of 'Taste of Padang' as the destination branding for West Sumatra was decided by consensus to achieve equal participation among the penta-helix, although it did not reach the ideal definition. The government, as the leading sector of the penta-helix, needs to effectively manage cooperative conflict in addressing the controversy regarding the 'Taste of Padang' by prioritising open dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders.

Keywords: destination branding; tourism communication; tourism policy

INTRODUCTION

The effort to increase a region's income integrates tourism and the creative economy (Parekraf). The Central Government has launched various programs and initiatives to strengthen this sector as outlined in the Parekraf policy direction (Kemenparekraf/Barekraf, 2020), but various obstacles often hinder its implementation on the ground. This shows that the implementation of Parekraf policies at the provincial level in various regions of Indonesia is still inadequate. One of the main problems is the lack of coordination between stakeholders. Lack of communication and coordination often hinders the effective implementation of well-designed policies. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's statement aligns with the government's endeavours to revitalise the tourism and creative sectors through diverse initiatives like grant funds and incentives, often hindered by intricate bureaucracy and inadequate agency coordination ('Outlook Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Indonesia', 2022).

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A Parekraf policy can take on diverse forms and applications, one of which strives to project the region as a tourist destination, a concept known as destination branding. In a broader regional context, we refer to this as nation branding, a concept that Indonesia has already established with its 'Wonderful Indonesia' campaign. A robust and positive nation brand attracts tourists, thereby stimulating inward investment and export growth, which in turn significantly enhances a country's economic image (Temporal, 2022). On a smaller scale, destination branding can encompass a province, district, or city area (city branding), to showcase the unique features and potential of a proud region to attract tourists, investment, and regional economic income (Asshagab, 2024).

When creating a brand, be it for a corporation, product, personal, or destination, the process of naming a brand, also known as brand naming, is crucial and requires careful attention, as it will be the first thing the public will remember. One of a brand's most important and underrated aspects is its name, even though in many cases the brand name is the first point of contact with consumers that drives first impressions, associations, and expectations (Pogacar, Angle, Lowrey, Shrum, & Kardes, 2021). In the context of tourism and creative tourism, the naming of a destination brand plays a crucial role, as it must incorporate local wisdom values and have a broad meaning that reflects not only the culture but also the community.

Naming a destination brand can be very complex because, apart from involving many stakeholders, you also need to pay attention to the region's uniqueness. The larger the area, the more considerations and synergies become necessary. This includes incorporating history, involving local creators, balancing familiarity and uniqueness, and accurately representing the community (Hiorns, 2023). All these complexities begin with having the right name.

Naming 'Taste of Padang' as a destination branding for West Sumatra is considered not sufficiently representative of West Sumatra because of its diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, giving rise to polemics among stakeholders (mentawaikita.com, 2017; padangkita.com, 2017; Rachmah, 2022). Even after four years of its establishment, the 'Taste of Padang' brand has failed to significantly boost tourism in this area, prompting discussions about rebranding (Edrie, 2021; Rahmadi, 2021). According to (Subarkah, Rachman, & Akim, 2020), the creation of regional identity must not only incorporate local wisdom values but also closely align with broader meanings that represent culture and society. A brand is not just a logo; its creation needs to have holistic thinking, including all stakeholders (Revi Marta, Ilham Havifi, & Fikri Adha Safiril, 2022; Satria & Fadillah, 2021). The involvement of stakeholders is very important for the effective development of a destination brand in a region. The Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia established Regulation Number 14 of 2016, as outlined in the Sustainable Tourism Destination Guidelines. This guideline emphasises the importance of collaboration in the tourism sector to improve the quality of activities, facilities, and services by optimising contributions from academics, businesses, communities, government, and media (ABCGM) (Kementerian Pariwisata RI, 2016). Penta-helix, however, refers to this concept. The Penta-helix innovation model aims to establish an ecosystem that fosters innovation, creativity, and technology within the creative industry. This model is now commonly used to solve many problems, creating helpful ways for the people involved to work together based on their unique roles in running central and regional governments, especially in the tourism industry (Wahidah & Suherman, 2022).

The 'Taste of Padang' controversy arises from many aspects, both due to disagreements over name selection and the involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process. This underlines the importance of researching the communication process in the creation of this destination brand. Therefore, the problem-solving framework employs a policy and stakeholder communication approach, grounded in the Penta-helix model (ABCGM), to examine a creative policy and identify the functions and roles of the government, academics, business actors, communities (societies), and media as stakeholders. The theory of effective intercultural working group communication scrutinises the process of communication and involvement among stakeholders, starting with its formulation and culminating in its policy adoption. We utilised design thinking models to interpret stakeholder desires, aiming to implement, monitor, and evaluate destination branding to establish a robust identity system that shapes public perception.

Destination branding, also known as regional branding, is a series of processes for developing different identities and characteristics for competitive destinations. The purpose of

branding is to “select a combination of brand elements that are consistent in identifying and differentiating purposes as building a positive image” (Park, Cai, & Lehto, 2009). Apart from that, it is also an effort to increase tourist interest in visiting (Hanggraito, Ratri, & Cardias, 2023). Destination branding provides numerous advantages to tourists and tourism managers, it sets them apart from competitors, and elevates the expectations for the experience a tourist destination offers (Murphy, Benckendorff, & Moscardo, 2007).

Destination branding is not only a marketing activity that supports the creation of symbols, logos, wordmarks, or graphics. Collectively, these activities function to create a destination image that positively influences consumers' destination choices based on potential tourist attractions and community empowerment in a closed and sustainable system. Effective collaboration among stakeholders is essential for sustainable and mutually beneficial tourism development (Adamus-Matuszyńska, Dzik, Michnik, & Polok, 2021; Aji & Faniza, 2023) All stakeholders must understand each change to prevent implementation issues (Yuliawati, 2019).

Research on destination branding has been highlighted by previous researchers at both national and international levels. The discussion becomes interesting with various perspectives and research objectives, such as the exploration and evaluation of destination branding in several countries including India, Poland, Europe, and China, focusing on the use of logos, slogans, visualizations, and other design components to communicate values, benefits, and attributes to stakeholders (Adamus-Matuszyńska et al., 2021; Gretzel & Collier de Mendonça, 2019; Noronha, 2019). Analysing the process of reconstructing identity in terms of representational and interactive meaning is achieved through various semiotic sources, content analysis, and media message analysis that assist tourism researchers in conducting studies in the field of destination branding. (Bulearca & Bulearca, 2011; Dzulyana, Irawan, & Saragih, 2019; Kasapi & Cela, 2017; Martinavichene, 2018; Renanda, 2020; Thamrin & Hidayat, 2020; Wang & Zhang, 2019). In addition to discussing tourism marketing strategies through integrated marketing communication and the use of social media, endorsements, and vloggers (Adona, Yusnani, & Nita, 2018; Azzahrani, 2018), it analyses the rational, emotional, value, and essence benefits of tourism, as well as the internal and external factors that influence marketing communication strategies and the design of creative strategies (Pratama, Purwanti, & Wibowo, 2018; Saimima, Zpalanzani, & Mutiaz, 2019).

Based on the literature review, no research has been found regarding the debate on the development of a destination brand examined from a communication perspective during the creation process until the brand's launch as a regional policy. This research offers novelty not only through the results seen in the theoretical development in the field of tourism communication using a penta-helix interdisciplinary approach, but also by providing communication solutions in the policy-making process so that stakeholders can accept them.



Figure 1. Penta-helix ecosystem destination branding
 Source: Modified by author (2024), referred to (Kementerian Pariwisata RI, 2016)

The research used the Penta-helix model (ABCGM) as a suitable foundation for examining this case (See Figure 1). This model emphasises the importance of collaboration and synergy among stakeholders in supporting common goals and the socio-economic progress of a region (Rosardi, 2020; Vani, Priscilia, & Adiarto, 2020) and the Theory of Effective Intercultural Group Communication is used as a supporting theory. The integration of intercultural

communication theory and effective teamwork with a design thinking approach is the solution offered to unravel the controversy of the 'Taste of Padang'.

The Effective Intercultural Workgroup Theory was developed by John Oetzel, based on the input-process-output model (Littlejohn, 2007). Basically, this theory focuses on groups with members who have different cultural backgrounds. In this case, it applies not only to the various stakeholders but also because West Sumatra, with a population of over 5 million, is a province formed by a diverse array of ethnic groups, including Minangkabau, Batak, Javanese, Mentawai, Malay, Nias, Sundanese, Chinese, and other tribes. Therefore, this research aims to answer the following problem statement: how is the communication process among stakeholders involved in the creation of 'Taste of Padang' as a brand destination for West Sumatra?

The researchers created a framework to address problem formulation based on the five non-linear steps of the design thinking model (Brown, 2008). This framework is shown in Figure 2 below.

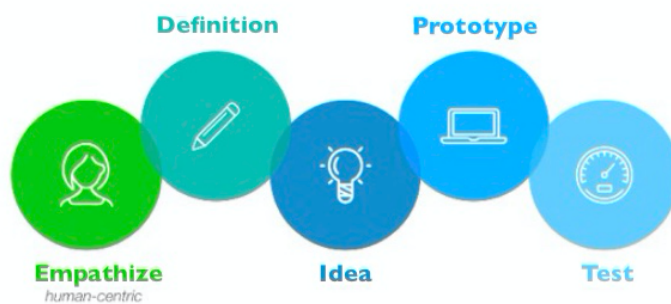


Figure 2. Model design thinking Hasso-Platner Institute of Design at Stanford
 Source: (Brown, 2008)

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative case study approach to examine how the 'Taste of Padang' project communicates with stakeholders. We obtained data through interviews and literature studies to ensure community acceptance of the destination branding establishment in West Sumatra.

Table 1. Informant profile

Name	Penta Helix	Key Informant	Supporting Informant	Profession
SL	A	√		Director of the Tourism studies centre Andalas University
RY	A		√	Dean at the Faculty of Tourism, Muhammadiyah University of West Sumatra.
D	B	√		Main Director of the Indonesia Marketing Association (IMA)
DA	B		√	GoCar driver partner in the city of Padang
SH	C	√		Former Deputy of Business Development at the Indonesia Creative Cities Network (ICCN) and Brand Activator
JT	C		√	The author of the book "Sugar Mommy" from Minangkabau.
LB	G	√		Regional Secretary of Solok City
JB	G		√	Activists from the Banteng Muda Indonesia (BMI) organization
HS	M	√		Professional Media
AV	M		√	Director of Padang Express Online Journalist

Source: Author data processed, 2024

This research begins with a review of previous literature sourced from various national and international journals on the subjects of public policy, destination branding, nation branding, and city branding, both in relation to West Sumatra and as a comparison and

reference to similar cases in other countries. To obtain primary data, the researcher conducted interviews with ten (10) informants from five stakeholder groups involved in the penta-helix destination branding to validate previous findings to understand the communication processes that occurred at that time. The researchers selected 2 (two) informants from each Penta helix who are knowledgeable and involved in the 'Taste of Padang' communication process, both at the formulation stage and after the establishment. The profile of each informant can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Informant Profile indicates that there are five informants. Academia (A), Business Actors (B), the Community (C) of West Sumatra, Government (G), and Media (M) are the five stakeholders involved in creating destination branding, also known as the penta-helix (ABCGM).

There are five key informants and five supporting informants from academics in the field of tourism from both public and private universities in West Sumatra (SL & RY); business actors who are members of the Indonesia Marketing Association (AMI), and informal business actors in the Tourism and Creative Economy industry (D & DA); community tourism activists and brand activators (SH & JT); Regional officials from the district and city government and the Tourism Office of West Sumatra (LB & JB); as well as journalists from local and national media (HS & AV).

To find meanings relevant to the theme 'Taste of Padang', the researchers conducted data analysis through the processes of reduction, categorization, and direct interpretation. Next, the researchers triangulated the data to make sure the results were correct. Finally, we summed up the data and talked about the penta-helix's functions and roles, the communication process, and the penta-helix's ideal views on how it should be run. This also examines practical intercultural communication theory in the 'Taste of Padang' controversy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

'Taste of Padang' as destination branding for Zest Sumatra

The West Sumatra Provincial Government has established a tourism policy to brand the region as a single tourism destination by utilising the series of National Press Day 2018 as an opportunity to introduce the Taste of Padang. The regional identity that was launched, which is a combination of a tagline and symbolism packaged into a logo, has not received a warm welcome from some stakeholders due to the process being perceived as not involving all elements, thus failing to fully represent the social and cultural values of the people of West Sumatra.



Figure 3. Logo Taste of Padang

Source: West Sumatra Provincial Tourism Office (dispar.sumbarprov.go.id, 2021)

Figure 3 The 'Taste of Padang' logo explains the creation of a logo that adopts the logogram colours similar to the national branding 'Wonderful Indonesia', which has five different colour components that reflect the vibrant and colourful spirit of Indonesian tourism (Indonesia.travel.id, n.d.). Afterwards, it transformed a 'bagonjong' roof, a distinctive feature of Minangkabau culture (Thamrin & Hidayat, 2020). However, during its implementation, the 'Taste of Padang' brand faced rejection due to its perceived representation of only one West Sumatra city, leaving other cities with their cultural diversity and uniqueness unrepresented.

Penta-helix "Taste of Padang" in the design thinking framework model

In several stages, design thinking provides work direction. The first level is empathy; government, academics, industry, communities, and media work together to understand the cultural values, traditions, and local identity you want to promote in destination branding. This involves listening to the needs and aspirations of various cultural groups to ensure inclusivity. In the second phase, we define the main challenges in promoting the destination, which include overcoming cultural stereotypes and broadening its international appeal. In ideation, this cross-cultural team develops creative branding concepts that reflect the destination's uniqueness and diversity, utilising insights from all elements. During the prototype stage, the team tests the ideas across various communication formats, including media campaigns and community events, to assess their influence on public perception. During phase testing, the team evaluates and refines the developed communication patterns based on feedback from all elements, ensuring that the destination branding strategy not only attracts tourists but also respects and strengthens local cultural identity. This approach makes penta-helix communication more adaptive and responsive to intercultural dynamics in the tourism industry and creative economy.

Communication process and ideal view of penta-helix 'Taste of Padang'

According to the stakeholders in the penta-helix, the communication process used to establish the 'Taste of Padang' policy as the destination branding for West Sumatra is not considered representative of the region. The people of Padang and West Sumatra generally do not widely recognise this brand. The Penta-helix (A) assesses that the communication process in branding establishments is considered less participatory and not well-structured, and the methodology used does not reflect the representation of all regions in West Sumatra. A bottom-up approach, incorporating a mixed method and emphasising the penta-helix, is essential, as it integrates the roles of Ninik Mamak, Cadiak Pandai, and Alim Ulama as significant members of the Minangkabau community.

Penta-helix (B) emphasises the importance of including the private sector in branding implementation. The brand 'Taste of Padang' is a positive initiative but lacks thorough planning in its implementation. Tourism will continue to function as a business sector, with the government's role being to regulate it. Business actors will always play the role of implementers, and they will not reject established policies if they do not hinder the industry's progress. 'Taste of Padang' is one form of policy that can positively impact business. In terms of naming, the use of the word Padang is already correct. From a marketing perspective, it serves as an anchor to reach other areas in West Sumatra, especially since its airport is in Padang. The rest involves communication about brand content using the IFA (Imagine, Focus, Action) method with the government as a facilitator.

The penta-helix (C) identifies a gap in the 'Taste of Padang' policy's formulation and laments the suboptimal participation of all stakeholders. People often make hasty decisions without adequate consultation with the community. The people of West Sumatra have a tradition of deliberation for consensus and 'duduak basamo' (sitting together to discuss), as initiatives often come from the community. Decision-making or policy cannot fully adopt a top-down or bottom-up approach. On the contrary, there should be a comprehensive balance, considering the Minangkabau tradition that upholds collective consultation.

The Penta-helix (G) evaluates the implementation of 'Taste of Padang' as a challenge amidst many districts/cities feeling unrepresented and showing resistance, as well as a lack of ownership towards that branding. Sectoral ego and a lack of effective communication are the main obstacles. The main challenge is how to integrate city branding with provincial branding without creating confusion, both locally and internationally. Effective communication is essential in the collaboration between the Ministry of Tourism, provinces, and regencies/cities. Creative ideas can come from anywhere, whether from the centre or the regions; what matters is communication and support from the relevant stakeholders. The central government needs to take a leading role in determining the branding applied in the regions to maintain consistency and uniformity across the area.

The Penta-helix (M) noted that although Padang is known internationally, this branding has sparked controversy because not all regions feel represented. Branding initiatives should be evaluated first by involving the opinions of various parties, such as tourism practitioners, travel agents, and tourism stakeholders, to see whether this branding truly enhances the popularity of

West Sumatra or not. Maintaining continuous communication within the penta-helix, which involves collaboration among government, academia, business actors, communities, and media, is crucial. The media can optimise all parties' involvement in formulating, implementing, and monitoring. Involving the media from the outset effectively communicates the message, thereby reducing public criticism of policies.

Analysis of practical intercultural working group communication theory in the 'Taste of Padang' polemic

This research used the theory of effective work group intercultural communication to explain how the cultural diversity of penta-helix stakeholders influences work group communication in producing West Sumatra destination branding and how this communication influences group work results. This theory has four main points of discussion, particularly equal participation, consensus decision-making, cooperative conflict management, and respectful communication. The table below displays the analysis of penta-helix communication in EIWCT (See Table 2).

Table 2. Penta-helix "Taste of Padang" in EIWCT

Penta-helix	Effective Intercultural Workgroup Communication Theory (EIWCT)			
	Equality of Participation	Decision by Consensus	Cooperative Conflict Management	Respectful Communication
Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited as a resource person for the penta-helix workshop Not involved in tourism research Destination branding evaluation as an independent research object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited to FGD determining Taste of Padang Invited only to agree, not involved in initial process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructive criticism is delivered through mass media due to the absence of an open forum Suggestions are given directly to individual policy makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspirations are conveyed loudly Aspirations are also channelled politely during the penta-helix workshop
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the executive level, they were not invited to the FGD to determine the Taste of Padang At the executive level, many did not know about the Taste of Padang 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business actors were not involved in its determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was no conflict because many were not exposed to the Taste of Padang 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of communication
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neither the indigenous community nor the Pokdarwis were invited to the FGD to determine the Taste of Padang Pokdarwis were invited to the penta-helix workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community was not involved in its determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some voiced concerns about the budget through the mass media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspirations were conveyed when attending the penta-helix workshop politely
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relatively limited time for determination resulted in a lack of coordination in the division of penta-helix roles Taste of Padang socialization was carried out to OPD Implementing a penta-helix workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consensus was carried out without inviting all penta-helix elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People's aspirations in the mass media have not been responded to calmly There is no known follow-up forum as a form of consolidation in handling the Taste of Padang polemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the district government's aspirations were voiced loudly
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Its role during the determination was still generally as a publication media only Invited to a penta-helix workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited to a penta-helix workshop Not involving the media in its determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles with harsh tones are no longer broadcast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The delivery of people's aspirations is presented as is

Source: Author data processed, 2024

The penta-helix of academics conveyed that their role remains unoptimised, particularly in policies related to the creative economy and tourism, where the government acts as the regulator. The media also aspires to fulfil its inherent role of amplifying information. If one does not embrace and share their role appropriately, the negative impact becomes a consequence that must be accepted.

Meanwhile, the equality of roles among the business actors is not much of an issue because the survival of a business will continue regardless of whether a policy exists or not. Similarly, if a policy does not cause harm, it will naturally become a part of the community or society.

Consensus deliberation can lead to equal participation across the penta-helix. *Duduak basamo* is a form of consolidation that facilitates cooperative conflict resolution. The Minangkabau culture, which dominates the West Sumatra region, highly upholds the principles of togetherness and consensus in decision-making. This tradition is evident in various aspects of the Minangkabau community's life, from the management of Nagari (villages) to customary affairs and family relationships. The consensus deliberation process in Minangkabau culture usually involves three local elite actors, referred to in the Minangkabau dialect as *tigo setungku sajarangan*. They consist of traditional elders (niniak mamak), religious scholars (alim ulama), and intellectuals (cadiak pandai), where every voice is heard and valued to reach the best decision for all parties involved. However, their involvement is not optimal. The establishment of 'Taste of Padang' has implemented consensus decision-making, but it falls short of the ideal definition, as consensus decision-making entails reaching an agreement that all group members accept.

Cooperative conflict management can be an effective approach to mitigate the controversies arising in the establishment of 'Taste of Padang' by prioritising open dialogue and collaboration among the involved parties, including local government, business actors, local communities, and other stakeholders. By acknowledging the differences in views and interests, cooperative conflict encourages all parties to work together to find mutually beneficial solutions.

One of the hallmarks of Eastern customs, highly valued in Indonesian culture, including West Sumatra, is respectful communication. The people of West Sumatra, who prioritise politeness, respect for others, and harmonious dialogue, reflect these values in their daily lives. Respectful communication is critical in ensuring that all parties involved (government, academia, business, community, and media) can collaborate synergistically in the context of the penta-helix. Similarly, in implementing collaborative projects like 'Taste of Padang', respectful communication will ensure that every element of the penta-helix can freely express their views and input. This creates an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels they have an important role in achieving common goals. With effective communication, the penta-helix can function optimally, bringing significant benefits to the community and strengthening the noble values of West Sumatra's culture.

CONCLUSION

Effective communication is crucial for a successful collaborative project like 'Taste of Padang'. However, challenges such as individualistic stakeholder approaches and complexity within the working group can hinder synergy. To address these issues, we need a well-organised communication structure. Clear role assignments for the government, academics, industry, community, and media are also necessary to balance the government's more dominant role compared to other Penta-helix actors. To present a distinctive cultural experience of West Sumatra to tourists, the 'Taste of Padang' initiative from the Ministry of Tourism must integrate the responsibilities of all elements and build strong synergy.

The Effective Intercultural Group Communication Theory (EIWCT) identified issues within the penta-helix communication process when developing 'Taste of Padang' as a destination brand for West Sumatra. Most people agree that the decision-making process has not yet included equal participation from all five helices. A stakeholder approach that focuses on individuals makes the working group more complicated and lessens the ability for people to work together. Combining Effective Intercultural Group Communication Theory (EIWCT) with a design thinking approach does more than just find problems. It alters communication and the conversations needed to make 'Taste of Padang'. All elements of the penta-helix must be involved in joint discussions, known as 'duduak basamo', as part of further communication efforts. The government needs to build a more well-organised communication structure,

establishing clear roles for the government, academics, industry, community, and media to balance the government's dominant role. The government also needs to manage cooperation conflicts effectively by prioritising open dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders, integrating the responsibilities of all elements, and building strong synergy to present the unique cultural experience of West Sumatra to tourists.

This research focused on the penta-helix model in the cities of West Sumatra, such as Padang, Bukittinggi, and Solok. Future research should use a broader penta-helix model to understand the roles and expectations of stakeholders in culture-based collaborative projects such as Taste of Padang. Achieving a balance of roles is crucial for the project's sustainability. We suggest comparing the penta-helix model with other cultural tourism destinations. This will help figure out how well it works to bring in more tourists and improve an area's cultural image.

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