

Preserving *Randai* Through Tourism in West Sumatra: Opportunities, Challenges, and Strategies

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Abstract

Randai is a traditional Minangkabau performing art that integrates dance, music, drama, and *pencak silat*, recognized as the only dramatic art form authentically belonging to the Minangkabau ethnic group. However, this art form faces serious threats due to declining public interest caused by urbanization, modernization, and globalization. This study aims to analyze how tourism can serve as a strategic instrument for preserving *Randai* in West Sumatra, while identifying the challenges and opportunities involved. The research employs a qualitative approach with descriptive analytical methods. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Data analysis utilized PESTLE (*Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental*) framework and cultural thematic analysis. The finding reveals that tourism can effectively serve as a preservation instrument through cultural festivals, tourist attractions at destination areas, and community-based cultural tourism. The PESTLE analysis identified macroenvironmental factors influencing preservation, including government policy support, creative economy potential, youth social dynamics, digital technology opportunities, regional legal frameworks, and environmental sustainability aspects. Four main themes emerged: commodification versus authenticity, regeneration and knowledge transfer, repertoire innovation based on local wisdom, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. The study recommends integrated policies that synergize cultural and tourism sectors, along with collaboration among government, universities, art communities, and indigenous communities.

Keywords: cultural preservation, cultural tourism, Minangkabau, *Randai*, PESTLE, West Sumatra.

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Introduction

Randai is a traditional performing art of the Minangkabau people that combines elements of dance, music, theater, and *Pencak Silat* in a circular formation (Fahrozi, 2021; Tulzahra, 2023). This art form has long been an integral part of the Minangkabau cultural identity in West Sumatra and has flourished in the villages of the Minangkabau region (Tulzahra, 2023). *Randai* is a form of traditional, folk-based theater found in the Minangkabau region of West Sumatra, which remains vibrant and popular to this day, particularly in rural areas (Fahrozi, 2021). *Randai* is also regarded as a traditional dramatic art that represents a hybrid form of performance art originating from the martial arts of silek and mancak (Yuliza et al., 2022).



Picture 1. *Randai* Performance
(Source: Author's Documentation, 2025)

The preservation of *Randai* is of crucial importance to the continuity of Minangkabau customs and culture. This can be seen from several key perspectives. First, *Randai* serves as the identity and pride of the Minangkabau ethnic group. For the Minangkabau people in West Sumatra, *Randai* is one of—if not the only—dramatic arts recognized as “their own” (Pramayoza et al., 2022). *Randai* is not merely entertainment but a cultural performance that, within Minangkabau society, serves as a means to internalize values, and to the outside world, reflects a form of pride and identity, distinguishing the Minangkabau people from other ethnic groups. Thus, the loss of *Randai* signifies the loss of one of the primary markers of identity that distinguishes the Minangkabau ethnic group from other ethnic groups in the Indonesian archipelago.

Second, *Randai* serves as a vehicle for passing down traditional values and character education. *Randai* embodies a wealth of educational values, including the values of togetherness, discipline, creativity, courage, morality, cultural appreciation, and empathy (Tulzahra, 2023). Furthermore, *Randai* scripts contain religious, social, traditional, and ethical values that form the main pillars of Minangkabau society (Junita et al., 2024). The language used in *Randai* dialogues is the Minang language, which includes pantun lyrics and prose containing metaphors, making *Randai* also serve as a medium for the preservation of the Minangkabau language and oral

literature. The stories performed in *Randai* are derived from kaba or oral tales popular within the community (Fahrizal & Fitriani, 2021), meaning that *Randai* serves as a vehicle for transmitting Minangkabau oral traditions and local wisdom from one generation to the next.

Third, *Randai* serves as a social cohesive force and a pillar of the traditional system. The Anggun Nan Tongga Art Group in Pariaman City demonstrates that *Randai* fulfills three crucial functions: the preservation and transmission of values, the education of the younger generation, and the development of community talent (Fahrizal & Fitriani, 2021). These functions demonstrate that *Randai* is not merely a performing art but a socio-cultural institution that strengthens the cohesion of the village community. Even for the Minangkabau community living abroad, *Randai* performances serve to help their descendants living in foreign lands become familiar with the arts of their homeland and to preserve Minangkabau regional culture (Junita et al., 2024). This demonstrates that *Randai* acts as a bridge of cultural identity between the Minangkabau community in their hometowns and those living abroad.

Fourth, *Randai* is a legally protected cultural heritage. The importance of preserving *Randai* is also formally recognized through West Sumatra Provincial Regulation No. 6, Article 13 of 2014 regarding the "Preservation of Minangkabau Cultural Values" (Fahrizal & Fitriani, 2021). The existence of this regulation affirms that the local government recognizes *Randai* as an integral part of Minangkabau cultural values that must be preserved. *Randai* is also included in the intangible cultural heritage of West Sumatra, which holds strategic value (Haries & Riesa, 2023).

Fifth, *Randai* as a potential for cultural tourism and economic empowerment. The traditional art of *Randai* is essential for preserving its existence, empowering the arts, and enhancing the value of traditional and cultural tourism in West Sumatra. Traditional *Randai* art can be used as an attraction and represents cultural tourism potential that can be packaged and adapted to contemporary contexts (Syamsir et al., 2022, 2023). By integrating *Randai* into cultural tourism, local communities can derive economic benefits through performances, the sale of traditional cultural arts, and related creative products.

Despite its immense significance, various challenges threaten the survival of *Randai*. The decline of *Randai* is occurring in various regions of West Sumatra, including in relatively new districts such as South Solok (Pramayoza et al., 2022). *Randai* in West Sumatra is in decline and even faces the threat of extinction due to urbanization and modernization, in contrast to the situation in outlying areas like Kuantan Singingi, where it remains thriving (Aygilia & Naldi, 2024). This decline in interest in *Randai* has been particularly pronounced since the *Orde Baru* Era (1966–1998), and has become increasingly evident from the 1980s to the present (Syamsir et al., 2023). Globalization also poses a serious threat, making it imperative to accelerate research efforts before *Randai* is marginalized by foreign cultures.

In various villages, there are still signs of low public awareness and understanding regarding the importance of preserving the traditional *Randai* art form, as well as the poor management of art studios as platforms for developing cultural tourism potential due to the lack of knowledge and skills among studio groups. The five main obstacles to the preservation of traditional arts are: lack of funding, lack of government involvement, lack of academic involvement, lack of understanding of artistic aesthetics, and the massive influx of foreign culture (Syamsir et al., 2022, 2023).

In addition, West Sumatra holds great potential as a heritage tourism destination. *Randai* is part of West Sumatra's recognized intangible cultural heritage and possesses tourism value

(Haries & Riesa, 2023). The development of inclusive and sustainable cultural tourism— including the transformation of rituals and traditional customs into festivals—has become a key strategy in West Sumatra to attract more tourists while preserving cultural heritage. By integrating the traditional art of *Randai* into cultural tourism, local communities can gain economic benefits through *Randai* performances, the sale of traditional cultural arts, and related creative products. *Randai* has also become a cultural attraction in various tourist areas in West Sumatra, such as the Mandeh tourist area in South Pesisir Regency (Husna & Zengga, 2023).

Therefore, suboptimal management of tourist destinations and a lack of exposure to intangible cultural and philosophical values remain major challenges in the development of heritage tourism in West Sumatra (Haries & Riesa, 2023). The preservation of traditional arts such as *Randai* in the face of massive globalization requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach, including documentation, education, partnerships, adaptation, youth engagement, and policy development. Furthermore, several previous studies have not addressed how this preservation can be achieved through tourism. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how tourism can serve as a strategic instrument in the preservation of *Randai* in West Sumatra, as well as to identify the challenges and opportunities encountered in these efforts. This study integrates the PESTLE framework with a cultural heritage preservation through tourism perspective to analyze the external factors influencing the development of cultural tourism.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive-analytical methods. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is a research procedure that generates descriptive data and is oriented toward the search for meaning and a deep understanding of the phenomenon under study (Sugiyono, 2020). As emphasized by various previous studies on *Randai*, a qualitative approach allows researchers to comprehensively explore the dynamics of traditional art preservation in the context of tourism (Khairunnisa et al., 2025).

The research was conducted at several strategic locations in West Sumatra where *Randai* preservation and cultural tourism development are active. The research sites included art studios actively promoting *Randai* (in Pariaman, Payakumbuh, Sijunjung and Tanah Datar Regency), cultural tourism areas (Kubu Gadang, Koto Gadang, and Nagari Adat Sijunjung), and relevant government agencies such as the District/Municipal Tourism and Culture Offices. The selection of these locations was based on the consideration that these areas have the potential to integrate *Randai* preservation with tourism development.

Data were collected using three main techniques. First, direct observation of *Randai* performances in various contexts, including cultural festivals, tourist attractions, and rehearsals at art studios. Second, in-depth interviews with various informants selected through purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2015). Informants included *Randai* artists, art studio managers, officials from the Department of Tourism and Culture, indigenous community leaders, youth, and tourists. Based on these criteria, 27 informants were identified who could provide highly significant information for this study. Third, a documentary study covering archives, policy documents, and related literature. Data analysis utilized the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2020). To test the credibility of the data, a triangulation technique was used through

a strategy of verifying the degree of confidence in the research findings using several data collection techniques, namely method and source triangulation (Junaid, I. 2016).

To identify the strategic factors influencing the preservation of *Randai* through tourism, this study employs the PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental) analytical framework combined with cultural thematic analysis. This approach was chosen because it can systematically evaluate the external factors influencing the development of cultural tourism (Azhara et al., 2023; Harrisa et al., 2023). PESTLE is an analytical framework that comprehensively evaluates the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental aspects of a phenomenon (Kansongue et al., 2023; Mathura & Maharaj, 2025). Unlike SWOT analysis, which tends to be general in identifying strengths and weaknesses, PESTLE provides a more structured and specific framework for analyzing macro-environmental factors that influence the sustainability of cultural preservation through tourism. Meanwhile, cultural thematic analysis is used to identify themes through data collected from in-depth interviews with stakeholders, where interview recordings are transcribed into verbatim text and then thematically coded and grouped into an analysis table (Harrisa et al., 2023).

This combination of PESTLE and cultural thematic analysis provides a more holistic understanding than a single-analysis approach, as PESTLE identifies macro-environmental factors in a structured manner, while cultural thematic analysis captures the nuances and depth of meaning from the perspectives of cultural actors and tourism stakeholders (Harrisa et al., 2023; Jeong et al., 2023). This approach also aligns with the recommendation that, before developing a cultural tourism concept, an in-depth analysis of local cultural values, community characteristics, and resources capable of supporting such a concept is necessary (Rachman et al., 2022).

Results and Discussion

The Current State of *Randai* in West Sumatra

Research findings indicate that the *Randai* art form in West Sumatra is undergoing complex changes. In some areas, there has been a decline in public interest and participation in *Randai* due to urbanization and the influence of global culture. A *Randai* performer stated, “We have performed *Randai* at several events in West Sumatra, but at some of these performances, we didn’t attract much interest from young people.”

On the other hand, various preservation efforts have been undertaken through the establishment and development of art studios (*sanggar*). One such *sanggar* is Sanggar Anggun Nan Tongga in Pariaman City, which fulfills three main functions in the preservation of *Randai*: the preservation and transmission of cultural values, the education of the younger generation, and the development of community talent. This studio actively participates in various cultural arts performances organized by the government, including the Tabuik Cultural Festival in 2017 and 2018. The *sanggar* owner stated, “The reason I wanted to build this studio is to preserve and maintain Minangkabau culture—specifically *Randai*—which we rarely see practiced in Minangkabau society as it becomes progressively more modern.”

In South Solok, the Department of Tourism and Culture organized a *Randai* development workshop attended by 36 participants from 14 art studios. The workshop results showed that the art groups in South Solok have mastered the basic techniques for developing a new *Randai* repertoire, which includes the creation of *legaran* based on local silat and the integration of traditional musicality. Similar efforts were also carried out in the village of Padang Laweh Malalo,

Tanah Datar, through a mentoring and training program for young people affiliated with the Salapan Suku Art Studio.

PESTLE Analysis: Macro-Environmental Factors Affecting the Preservation of *Randai* Through Tourism

Based on the PESTLE analysis framework combined with a thematic cultural analysis, the following are the macro-environmental factors identified as influencing the preservation of *Randai* through tourism in West Sumatra:

Political Factors

From a political perspective, there is strong policy support for the preservation of *Randai*. West Sumatra Provincial Regulation No. 6 of 2014 on the Preservation of Minangkabau Cultural Values provides a clear legal basis for efforts to preserve traditional arts, including *Randai*. The Tourism and Culture Office at the district level also plays an active role in organizing *Randai* development programs, such as workshops on creating new repertoires in South Solok. Furthermore, cultural tourism development policies in West Sumatra—which include the festivalization of rituals and traditional customs—demonstrate the local government’s political commitment to integrating cultural preservation with tourism development. Active collaboration among all stakeholders significantly influences the sustainability of traditional cultural festivals and events. However, challenges remain, particularly regarding the lack of consistent and sustained government involvement in supporting the preservation of traditional arts.

Economic Factors

From an economic perspective, *Randai* has the potential to drive a culture-based creative economy. Through *Randai* performances, the sale of traditional cultural arts, and related creative products, local communities can generate additional income (Syamsir et al., 2023). Cultural tourism that integrates *Randai* as a main attraction can provide direct economic benefits to local communities, including through the provision of accommodation, culinary, and souvenir services. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a significant blow to the tourism sector in West Sumatra as a whole (Arivetullatif et al., 2023), which has also affected the sustainability of *Randai* performances as a tourist attraction. Furthermore, a lack of funding is one of the main obstacles to the preservation of traditional arts, making a sustainable funding model necessary.

Social Factors

Randai has very deep roots in Minangkabau society. *Randai* serves as a vehicle for the internalization of traditional values, a medium for character education, and a social cohesive force within the nagari community. The educational values embodied in *Randai* include solidarity, discipline, creativity, courage, morality, respect for culture, and empathy. However, the social challenges faced include a lack of interest and awareness among the younger generation regarding the importance of preserving *Randai*, as well as urbanization, which has led to a decline in the number of *Randai* artists in their regions of origin (Aygilia & Naldi, 2024). Local community participation is one of the key drivers of successful cultural tourism development, as demonstrated by the experience in the traditional village of Nagari Sijunjung (Prasetyo & Syafrini, 2023).

Technological Factors

In terms of technology, there is significant potential to leverage digital media and information technology for the preservation and promotion of *Randai*. The traditional art form of

Randai can be rebroadcast through various electronic media to expand its reach and enhance its tourism value. Digital documentation through video, social media, and online platforms can serve as effective tools for introducing *Randai* to a broader audience, including potential tourists. However, the use of these technologies remains suboptimal among art studios and *Randai* preservation communities in West Sumatra.

Legal Factors

West Sumatra Provincial Regulation No. 6 of 2014, Article 13, on the Preservation of Minangkabau Cultural Values serves as the primary legal framework for the preservation of *Randai*. A new law regarding the implementation of Islamic Sharia in the West Sumatra region also affirms that the province's historical heritage, language, arts, traditional villages (nagari), rituals, traditional ceremonies, cultural sites, and local wisdom constitute the defining characteristics of West Sumatra that must be protected. This legal framework provides legitimacy for efforts to preserve *Randai*, but its implementation on the ground still requires strengthening, particularly regarding regulatory enforcement and adequate budget allocation.

Environmental Factors

The preservation of *Randai* through tourism must take into account environmental sustainability in tourist areas. In the Mandeh tourist area, Pesisir Selatan Regency, *Randai*, along with pencak silat, Minang dances, and other traditions, serves as a cultural attraction that complements the natural beauty (Husna & Zengga, 2023). The development of tourism villages based on local wisdom, such as Kampung Minang Nagari Sumpur, also demonstrates that environmental conservation is one of the pillars supporting cultural tourism (Masesa & Fatimah, 2023). A balance between tourism development and the conservation of the natural environment as well as the socio-cultural environment is a crucial prerequisite for the sustainable preservation of *Randai* through tourism.

Cultural Thematic Analysis: Key Themes in the Preservation of *Randai* Through Tourism

Based on a cultural thematic analysis of interview and observation data, four main themes were identified that illustrate the dynamics of *Randai* preservation through tourism:

Theme 1: Commodification versus Authenticity. There is a tension between the need to market *Randai* as an attractive tourism product and the imperative to preserve its authenticity and traditional values. An overly dominant tourism logic can lead to excessive commodification. The commodification of cultural content is, on the one hand, important for the preservation of cultural heritage, but on the other hand, it needs to be managed so as not to erode the essence of rituals and traditions.

Theme 2: Regeneration and Knowledge Transfer. *Randai* training programs in elementary schools, such as at SDN 13 Salimpaung, and the development of art studios, such as the Salapan Suku Art Studio in Padang Laweh Malalo, demonstrate that the regeneration of *Randai* artists requires a systematic approach involving both formal and non-formal educational institutions. The transfer of knowledge from senior artists to the younger generation is key to sustainability.

Theme 3: Repertoire Innovation Based on Local Wisdom. Experience in South Solok shows that the creation of a new *Randai* repertoire featuring local folklore (Bancah Birunguik), local silat (Silek Luncua), and local musical traditions (Balam-Balam from the Saluang Panjang tradition) can result in a region-specific repertoire that serves as a tourist attraction while enriching the *Randai* tradition.

Theme 4: Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration. The success of *Randai* preservation through tourism depends heavily on synergistic collaboration between local governments, universities, arts communities, and indigenous communities. Cross-cultural collaboration in arts festivals can also produce performances with tourism value.

The Potential of Tourism as a Tool for Preserving *Randai*

The research findings identified several forms of *Randai* integration in tourism:

Festivals and Cultural Events

Cultural festivals serve as an important platform for *Randai* performances as well as tourist attractions. In Kuantan Singingi, the organization of *Randai* festivals has encouraged each subdistrict to establish its own *Randai* group with distinct local characteristics, which in turn has spurred the growth of *Randai* groups. The Pasa Harau Art and Culture Festival also serves as an example of how an arts festival can produce performing arts with tourism value through crosscultural collaboration. The festivalization of rituals and traditional customs in Padang Panjang demonstrates that a model for developing cultural festivals requires stakeholder collaboration to ensure sustainability.

Tourist Attractions in the Destination Area

Randai has become one of the cultural attractions in the tourist area. In the Mandeh tourist area, South Pesisir Regency, *Randai*, along with pencak silat, Minang dances, and other traditions, serves as a cultural attraction that complements the natural beauty. The development of tourism villages based on local wisdom, such as Kampung Minang Nagari Sumpur, also demonstrates that the arts of the local community, including *Randai*, can support niche tourism.

Community-Based Cultural Tourism

The development of cultural tourism that involves the local community is an effective way to introduce *Randai* to tourists while providing economic benefits to the local community. Local community participation is a key factor in the success of cultural tourism development, as demonstrated by the experience in the traditional village of Nagari Sijunjung. One example of cultural preservation through tourism that has also successfully helped the local community is in Bali. The Kecak dance performance helps reduce poverty, preserves culture, and serves as a sustainable source of income for the Balinese people (Dewi & Fazri, 2025).

Strategies for Preserving *Randai* Through Tourism

Based on PESTLE analysis and thematic cultural analysis, several strategies for preserving *Randai* through tourism have been identified:

- a. Education and regeneration. The preservation of *Randai* requires the transfer of knowledge and skills to younger generations. *Randai* training programs in elementary schools, such as the one implemented at SDN 13 Salimpaung, demonstrate that *Randai* can serve as both an educational tool and a platform for developing children's potential. At the community level, fostering art studios by involving youth is key to sustainability.
- b. Innovation and adaptation of the repertoire. The creation of a new *Randai* repertoire rooted in local wisdom is a key strategy for ensuring that *Randai* remains relevant and engaging.
- c. Packaging the performance for tourists. *Randai* needs to be packaged in a format that meets the needs of the tourism industry without losing its essence and traditional values.

The commodification of cultural content must be managed carefully so as not to compromise its authenticity.

- d. government policy support. West Sumatra Provincial Regulation No. 6 of 2014 provides a legal basis for the preservation of *Randai*. The establishment of regulations regarding the transformation of rituals and traditional customs into festivals is also necessary because they serve not only as cultural tourist attractions but also as a form of cultural diplomacy.
- e. Documentation and the use of technology. The traditional art form of *Randai* can be rebroadcast via various electronic media to expand its reach and enhance its value for tourism.
- f. Networking and collaboration. Synergistic collaboration among local governments, universities, arts communities, and indigenous peoples is key to success.

Challenges in Preserving *Randai* Through Tourism

Based on the PESTLE analysis, the key challenges identified include:

1. The suboptimal management of tourist destinations and the lack of exposure to intangible cultural values (social and environmental factors).
2. A lack of interest and awareness among the younger generation regarding the importance of preserving the traditional art of *Randai* (social factor)
3. The threat of commodification, whereby *Randai* performances for tourism risk losing their authentic values (social and cultural factors).
4. Competition from foreign cultures and modern entertainment, which are increasingly shifting public interest away from traditional arts (social and technological factors).
5. Lack of funding and limited involvement of the government and academia in the development and production of traditional art performances (political and economic factors).
6. The suboptimal use of digital technology for the documentation and promotion of *Randai* (technological factors).

Conclusion

Randai plays a crucial role in the preservation of Minangkabau customs and culture. As the only dramatic art form recognized as indigenous to the Minangkabau people, *Randai* serves as a vehicle for the internalization of traditional values, a medium for character education, a social glue for the nagari community, and a marker of cultural identity that distinguishes the Minangkabau from other ethnic groups. The loss of *Randai* would mean the loss of one of the main pillars of Minangkabau cultural identity. Although it holds great significance, *Randai* faces serious challenges in the form of declining public interest and participation due to urbanization and globalization. This situation calls for a comprehensive and sustainable preservation strategy. This study only presents strategies that can be applied to the preservation of *Randai*; it does not provide a measure of the success of these strategies.

A PESTLE analysis shows that the preservation of *Randai* through tourism is influenced by complex and interrelated macro-environmental factors, including political and legal support, economic potential and challenges, social dynamics, opportunities presented by digital technology, and environmental sustainability. Understanding these factors is a prerequisite for formulating effective preservation strategies. Tourism has proven to be a strategic tool for preserving *Randai*. Through cultural festivals, tourist attractions in destination areas, and

community-based cultural tourism, *Randai* can be introduced to a wider audience while providing economic benefits to local communities. The successful preservation of *Randai* through tourism requires a multifaceted approach that includes education and regeneration through art studios and educational institutions, repertoire innovation based on local wisdom, the adaptation of performances to the tourism context without sacrificing authenticity, government policy support, the use of technology for documentation and dissemination, and the development of collaborative networks among artists, educational institutions, local communities, and the government.

This study recommends that the local government of West Sumatra develop an integrated policy that synergizes the cultural and tourism sectors in the preservation of *Randai*. Priority should be given to developing a community-based cultural tourism model that positions local communities as the primary actors. Regulations regarding the festivalization of traditional customs are necessary, as these events serve not only as cultural tourism attractions but also as a form of cultural diplomacy. *Randai* education programs in formal and non-formal educational institutions need to be expanded to ensure the sustainable regeneration of *Randai* artists. Synergistic collaboration between local governments, universities, arts communities, and indigenous peoples is key to the successful preservation of *Randai* through tourism. Further research is needed to quantitatively measure the economic impact of *Randai* cultural tourism and to develop a preservation model that can be replicated in various regions of West Sumatra.

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