

Marine Tourism Resilience and Ecosystem Sustainability: The Role of Blue Economy Policy

Selfia Alke Mega¹, Ardansyah Ardansyah², M.Yusuf Sulfarano Barusman³, Andala Rama Putra Barusman⁴, Habiburrahman Habiburrahman⁵

Universitas Bandar Lampung, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia^{1,2,3,4,5}

fiefiealmega2@gmail.com¹, ardansyah@ubl.ac.id², yusuf.barusman@ubl.ac.id³, andala@ubl.ac.id⁴, habiburahman@ubl.ac.id⁵



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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the influence of the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) on marine tourism destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability, while assessing the moderating role of Blue Economy policy.

Research Methodology: This study employed a quantitative explanatory design using survey data from 212 managers of marine tourism destinations across Indonesia. The research model was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to assess the measurement and structural models.

Results: NRBV positively and significantly affects destination resilience ($\beta = 0.801, p < 0.001$) and ecosystem sustainability ($\beta = 0.312, p < 0.001$). Destination resilience also significantly enhances ecosystem sustainability ($\beta = 0.623, p < 0.001$). Blue Economy policy strengthens the relationships between NRBV and destination resilience ($\beta = 0.218, p < 0.01$) and between destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability ($\beta = 0.197, p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: Integrating NRBV, destination resilience, and supportive Blue Economy policies provides a framework for strengthening marine tourism ecosystem sustainability.

Limitations: The study focuses on Indonesian marine tourism destinations and selected NRBV constructs, limiting generalizability across tourism sectors and different institutional, environmental, and policy contexts.

Contributions: The state of the art lies in integrating NRBV, destination resilience, ecosystem sustainability, and Blue Economy policy, addressing the limited research examining these relationships and the moderating role of policy support.

Keywords: *Blue Economy, Destination Resilience, Ecosystem Sustainability, Marine Tourism, NRBV*

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1. Introduction

Marine tourism has become one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global blue economy, contributing significantly to economic growth, coastal community welfare, and environmental conservation, particularly in archipelagic countries such as Indonesia (Pina, Sibua, & Nur, 2026).

However, the rapid expansion of marine tourism has intensified environmental pressures, including coral reef degradation, biodiversity loss, marine pollution, and excessive tourism activities, thereby threatening the sustainability and competitiveness of marine tourism destinations ([Karani & Failler, 2020](#); [Phelan et al., 2020](#)). Consequently, strengthening destination resilience has become a strategic priority to ensure that marine tourism development achieves economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

From a strategic management perspective, the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) provides a relevant theoretical foundation for explaining how environmental capabilities create sustainable competitive advantages through pollution prevention, green innovation, and sustainable resource management ([Hart, 1995](#)). Recent studies have further demonstrated that NRBV is highly applicable to nature-based tourism because destinations possessing strong environmental capabilities are better able to adapt to environmental change while maintaining ecosystem integrity ([Wang, Kim, Kim, & Koh, 2024](#)). Despite these developments, empirical studies investigating the NRBV in marine tourism remain relatively limited, particularly regarding its role in enhancing destination resilience.

Although previous studies have investigated NRBV, destination resilience, and Blue Economy policy, these research streams have largely evolved independently. NRBV studies have predominantly examined environmental performance and competitive advantage ([Hart, 1995](#); [Royer & Simon, 2024](#)), whereas resilience research has mainly focused on destinations' adaptive and recovery capacities following environmental disturbances ([Simarangkir et al., 2021](#)). Similarly, Blue Economy research has emphasized sustainable ocean governance and marine economic development ([Pace, et al., 2023](#); [Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2020](#)). Consequently, limited empirical evidence explains how strategic natural resource management enhances destination resilience, how resilience contributes to ecosystem sustainability, and whether Blue Economy policy strengthens these relationships simultaneously within a unified framework. This fragmentation represents an important theoretical gap in the sustainable marine tourism research ([Adam, Mohamad, Shuib, & Awang, 2024](#)).

The practical urgency of this research is reflected in the current condition of Indonesian marine tourism destinations. Several destinations continue to experience coral reef degradation, declining environmental quality, and decreasing tourism competitiveness despite increasing governmental commitment to the Blue Economy ([Ramli, Marzuki, & Badarulzaman, 2024](#)). Furthermore, the implementation of Blue Economy policies remains uneven across regions, limiting their effectiveness in strengthening sustainable resource management and ecosystem conservation ([Suharyanto, Fauzi, Adrianto, & Wahyudin, 2024](#)). These conditions indicate that environmental capability alone is insufficient unless supported by institutional policies that can strengthen destination resilience and ensure long-term ecosystem sustainability ([Butler, 2024](#)).

The novelty of this study lies in three important aspects of the research. First, this study extends the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) by positioning destination resilience as a strategic capability that links natural resource management with ecosystem sustainability in marine tourism destinations. Second, unlike previous studies that have examined the NRBV, destination resilience, and Blue Economy policy separately ([Hart, 1995](#); [Phelan et al., 2020](#); [Pace et al., 2023](#)), this study integrates these constructs into a single comprehensive research framework. Third, this study empirically demonstrates that the Blue Economy policy functions not only as a regulatory context but also as a moderating mechanism that strengthens both the relationship between the NRBV and destination resilience and the relationship between destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the influence of the Natural Resource-Based View on destination resilience, investigate the effect of destination resilience on ecosystem sustainability, and evaluate the moderating role of Blue Economy policy in strengthening these relationships. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically by extending the NRBV within the context of sustainable marine tourism and practically by providing evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and destination managers to design integrated strategies for resilient and sustainable marine tourism

development ([González-Morales, Rodríguez Donate, & Santana-Talavera, 2022](#); ; [Tappy & Mandagi, 2024](#)).

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV)

The Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV), introduced by [Hart \(1995\)](#), extends the traditional Resource-Based View (RBV) by integrating environmental considerations into strategic management. The NRBV emphasizes that a sustainable competitive advantage can be achieved through the effective management of natural resources. It identifies three key capabilities: pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development. In the context of marine tourism, NRBV is highly relevant because this sector heavily depends on the quality and sustainability of natural ecosystems ([Cavagnaro, Copping, Green, Greene, Jenne, Rose, & Overhus, 2020](#)). In this study, NRBV was operationalized through environmental capability, green innovation, and sustainable resource management. These dimensions reflect the ability of tourism destinations to utilize and manage natural resources efficiently and sustainably in the long term. Destinations possessing these capabilities are more likely to adapt to environmental changes and sustain long-term resilience ([Wang, Kim, Kim, & Koh, 2024](#)).

Although the NRBV has been widely applied in environmental management and manufacturing industries, its application in tourism research remains fragmented. [Hart \(1995\)](#) argued that environmental capabilities create sustainable competitive advantages by enabling organizations to use natural resources more efficiently. [Wang et al. \(2024\)](#) demonstrated that environmental capability and green innovation improve the sustainability performance of nature-based tourism destinations. However, other studies have primarily associated NRBV with environmental performance or competitive advantage without explicitly examining their contribution to destination resilience or ecosystem sustainability ([Royer & Simon, 2024](#)). Consequently, previous research provides limited theoretical explanations regarding how NRBV-based capabilities are transformed into adaptive capacities that enable destinations to withstand environmental disturbances while maintaining ecosystem integrity. This unresolved issue indicates an important theoretical gap that requires further investigation.

2.2 Marine Tourism Destination Resilience

Ecosystem sustainability refers to the ability of an ecological system to maintain its structure, function, and ecological integrity over time despite environmental and anthropogenic pressures. In marine tourism, ecosystem sustainability is a critical determinant of destination attractiveness and long-term viability because the quality of marine ecosystems directly influences tourism experiences and destination competition. Coral reef degradation, biodiversity loss, water pollution, and excessive tourism can significantly reduce ecological resilience and tourism performance ([Cavagnaro, Copping, Green, Greene, Jenne, Rose, & Overhus, 2020](#)). Therefore, this study measures ecosystem sustainability through environmental quality, biodiversity conservation, and ecological carrying capacity, which collectively reflect the long-term health and resilience of marine tourism ecosystems ([Royer & Simon, 2024](#)).

[Simarangkir, Utami, Ricky, Nani, Tawang, Irwan, and Kodiran \(2021\)](#) demonstrated that resilient marine tourism destinations exhibit stronger adaptive capacity in responding to environmental disturbances while simultaneously improving environmental conservation outcomes. This finding indicates that ecosystem sustainability is closely associated with a destination's ability to maintain ecological functions through adaptive management and resilience-based strategies. [Butler \(2024\)](#) emphasized that long-term tourism sustainability depends on maintaining ecological carrying capacity and preventing environmental degradation throughout the destination life cycle. Likewise, [Sumarmi \(2020\)](#) argue that ecosystem sustainability depends not only on environmental conservation but also on adaptive governance, stakeholder collaboration, and the integrated management of social-ecological systems. Together, these studies suggest that sustainable marine tourism requires coordinated institutional arrangements capable of preserving ecological integrity while simultaneously supporting local community well-being and destination competitiveness.

Existing studies consistently acknowledge that ecosystem sustainability depends on biodiversity conservation, environmental quality, adaptive governance and ecological carrying capacity ([Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, 2021](#); [Royer and Simon, 2024](#)). However, previous tourism research has predominantly examined sustainability as a direct outcome of environmental management and governance practices. Although ([Simarangkir et al., 2021](#)) highlighted the importance of destination resilience for environmental conservation, limited attention has been given to explaining how strategic capabilities derived from the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) generate destination resilience that subsequently enhances ecosystem sustainability. Consequently, the causal relationship among the NRBV, destination resilience, and ecosystem sustainability remains theoretically underdeveloped, particularly in the context of marine tourism destinations.

2.3 Ecosystem Sustainability

Ecosystem sustainability refers to the ability of an ecological system to maintain its structure and function over time. In marine tourism, ecosystem sustainability is a crucial determinant of destination attractiveness and its long-term viability ([Mallin & Barbesgaard, 2020](#)). The degradation of marine ecosystems, such as coral reef damage and water pollution, directly affects tourism performance. This study measured ecosystem sustainability through environmental quality, biodiversity, and carrying capacity. These indicators reflect the ecological integrity of marine tourism destinations and emphasize the importance of preserving natural resources for sustainable tourism development ([Royer & Simon, 2024](#)).

[Butler \(2024\)](#) emphasizes that long-term tourism sustainability depends on maintaining ecological carrying capacity and preventing environmental degradation throughout destination development. Consequently, resilience and sustainable resource management are essential strategies for preserving ecosystem quality and sustaining destination competitiveness. [Li, Ruzzo, Collu, Gao, Failla, and Arena \(2020\)](#) emphasized that ecosystem sustainability depends not only on environmental conservation but also on effective governance, stakeholder collaboration, and adaptive management within social-ecological systems. Therefore, sustainable marine tourism requires integrated institutional arrangements capable of maintaining ecological integrity while supporting the well-being of local communities.

Existing studies consistently acknowledge that ecosystem sustainability depends on biodiversity conservation and environmental quality ([Royer & Simon, 2024](#)). However, previous tourism research has predominantly examined sustainability as a direct outcome of environmental management practices. Limited attention has been paid to the role of destination resilience as an intermediary mechanism through which strategic resource management contributes to long-term ecosystem sustainability. Consequently, the causal relationship between the NRBV, destination resilience, and ecosystem sustainability remains theoretically underdeveloped.

2.4 Blue Economy Policy

The Blue Economy concept promotes the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihood, and ecosystem health. It integrates environmental sustainability with economic development, making it a strategic framework for managing marine tourism destinations ([Sutama, Dewi, & Rahayu, 2024](#)). In this study, the Blue Economy policy is conceptualized as a moderating variable because it provides regulatory, institutional, and strategic support that can influence the effectiveness of resource management practices. From an NRBV perspective, environmental capabilities and sustainable resource management may not automatically translate into higher destination resilience unless they are supported by policies that encourage sustainable marine governance and resource utilization.

Likewise, the positive impact of destination resilience on ecosystem sustainability may vary depending on the extent to which Blue Economy principles are implemented through regulation, stakeholder coordination, and sustainable development programs. Therefore, rather than acting as an antecedent or mediator, the Blue Economy policy is expected to strengthen the relationships between NRBV and destination resilience, as well as between destination resilience and ecosystem

sustainability ([Pace, Saritas, & Deidun, 2023](#)). [Croft, Breakey, Voyer, Cisneros-Montemayor, and Schutter \(2024\)](#) argue that effective Blue Economy implementation extends beyond economic development by integrating marine governance, ecosystem conservation, stakeholder participation and adaptive institutional arrangements. Their study emphasizes that policy effectiveness depends on coordinated governance mechanisms that can balance marine resource utilization with long-term environmental sustainability.

Although the Blue Economy policy has become an important governance framework for sustainable marine development by [Pace et al. \(2023\)](#), previous studies have produced differing perspectives regarding its role. Some studies consider the Blue Economy policy as a strategic governance framework that promotes sustainable resource utilization and environmental conservation by [Hampton and Jeyacheya \(2020\)](#), whereas others primarily regard it as an economic development strategy emphasizing growth and resource productivity ([Alharthi & Hanif, 2020](#)). These differing perspectives indicate that the role of Blue Economy policy in strengthening the relationship between strategic resource management and ecosystem sustainability remains unclear. Therefore, this study conceptualizes the Blue Economy policy as a moderating mechanism that reinforces the effectiveness of NRBV-based capabilities in improving destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability.

2.5 Integrating NRBV into the Marine Tourism Sustainability Framework

Sustainable marine tourism cannot be explained solely by environmental management practices or resilience theory. Rather, sustainability emerges through the interaction of strategic environmental capabilities, adaptive destination resilience and supportive institutional policies. Within this framework, NRBV provides a strategic foundation by emphasizing environmental capability, green innovation, and sustainable resource management as valuable organizational resources [Hart \(1995\)](#). These capabilities enhance destination resilience, enabling tourism destinations to adapt to environmental disturbances while maintaining their ecological integrity.

Destination resilience subsequently functions as a mechanism through which the NRBV contributes to ecosystem sustainability. Furthermore, the Blue Economy policy provides institutional support that strengthens these relationships by facilitating sustainable governance, stakeholder collaboration, and environmental protection. Accordingly, this study proposes an integrated sustainability framework in which NRBV serves as the strategic antecedent, destination resilience as the adaptive mechanism, ecosystem sustainability as the ultimate outcome, and Blue Economy policy as a contextual moderator. This framework extends previous tourism sustainability studies by integrating strategic management and sustainability theory into a single explanatory model.

2.6 Hypotheses Development

2.6.1 The Effect of NRBV on Destination Resilience

The Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) argues that organizations possessing superior environmental capabilities, green innovation, and sustainable resource management are more capable of developing long-term strategic advantages [Hart \(1995\)](#). In marine tourism destinations, these capabilities enable managers to anticipate environmental disturbances, utilize natural resources efficiently, and adapt continuously to changing ecological conditions. Consequently, NRBV-based capabilities strengthen the adaptive capacity that constitutes the resilience of the destination. Recent empirical evidence supports this.

[\(Wang, Kim, Kim, & Koh, 2024\)](#) found that environmental capability and green innovation significantly improve the sustainability performance of nature-based tourism destinations, while [\(Royer & Simon, 2024\)](#) demonstrated that sustainability-oriented strategic capabilities enhance organizational adaptability in the face of environmental uncertainty. Therefore, destination resilience can be viewed as an adaptive outcome generated by strategic environmental resource management, rather than merely a recovery mechanism following disturbances. Based on these theoretical and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H₁: NRBV has a positive effect on marine tourism destination resilience

2.6.2 Destination Resilience → Ecosystem Sustainability (H2)

Destination resilience reflects the ability of tourism destinations to anticipate, absorb, and recover from environmental disturbances while maintaining essential ecosystems. From a systems perspective, resilient destinations are more capable of implementing adaptive management practices that preserve biodiversity, environmental quality, and ecological carrying capacity over time. Consequently, resilience serves as an important mechanism through which environmental management practices contribute to sustainable ecosystems. Previous studies have supported this relationship. ([Simarangkir et al., 2021](#)). reported that resilient marine tourism destinations exhibit stronger adaptive capacity and environmental conservation outcomes. Likewise, [González-Morales et al. \(2022\)](#) found that socially responsible destination management contributes to long-term environmental sustainability through adaptive governance and collaboration with stakeholders. Accordingly, higher destination resilience is expected to enhance the sustainability of ecosystems.

H₂: Destination resilience has a positive effect on ecosystem sustainability

2.6.3 NRBV on Ecosystem Sustainability (H3)

According to NRBV, organizations create sustainable value by integrating environmental capability, pollution prevention, and sustainable resource management into their strategic decision-making [Hart \(1995\)](#). Within marine tourism destinations, these capabilities improve environmental quality by promoting efficient resource utilization, conserving biodiversity, and protecting ecosystems. Recent empirical studies have indicated that environmental capabilities significantly contribute to sustainability-oriented performance and ecological preservation ([Wang et al., 2024](#); [Royer & Simon, 2024](#)). Therefore, beyond its indirect influence through destination resilience, NRBV is also expected to directly enhance ecosystem sustainability by improving the effectiveness of strategic environmental management.

H₃: NRBV has a positive effect on ecosystem sustainability

2.6.4 Blue Economy Policy Moderates NRBV → Resilience (H4)

Although NRBV provides organizations with strategic environmental capabilities, these capabilities may not be fully translated into destination resilience without a supportive institutional environment. The Blue Economy policy offers regulatory guidance, stakeholder coordination, and sustainability incentives that facilitate the implementation of environmental capability and green innovation. Consequently, destinations operating under stronger Blue Economy policies are expected to obtain greater resilience benefits from NRBV-based resource-management. Previous studies have suggested that Blue Economy policies strengthen sustainable marine governance and improve the effectiveness of environmental management practices ([Pace et al., 2023](#); [Suharyanto et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, Blue Economy policy is expected to reinforce the influence of NRBV on destination resilience.

H₄: Blue Economy policy moderates the relationship between NRBV and destination resilience

2.6.5 Blue Economy Policy Moderates Resilience → Sustainability (H5)

Destination resilience alone may not always guarantee ecosystem sustainability because adaptive capacity requires supportive institutional mechanisms to ensure long-term environmental governance. The Blue Economy policy provides regulatory frameworks that encourage ecosystem conservation, sustainable tourism development, and collaboration among stakeholders. Therefore, policy implementation strengthens the ability of resilient destinations to translate adaptive capacity into sustainable ecological outcomes. Previous research indicates that Blue Economy governance promotes sustainable marine resource utilization and strengthens conservation initiatives ([Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2020](#); [Pace et al., 2023](#); [Suharyanto et al., 2024](#)). Consequently, stronger Blue Economy policy implementation is expected to amplify the positive influence of destination resilience on sustainable ecosystems.

H₅: Blue Economy policy moderates the relationship between destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the causal relationships between the proposed variables. This study focused on marine tourism destinations in Indonesia, with destination managers serving as the unit of analysis. The respondents included operational managers, tourism area managers, and individuals involved in environmental management decision-making. A purposive sampling technique was employed because only respondents possessing sufficient knowledge of environmental management and tourism governance were considered capable of evaluating the research constructs.

The inclusion criteria required respondents to occupy managerial or supervisory positions within marine tourism destinations, have at least three years of professional experience in destination management, and be directly involved in environmental conservation, tourism planning, or sustainability-related decision making. Managers were selected because they possess comprehensive knowledge of strategic resource management, destination resilience, and Blue Economy policy implementation, enabling them to provide reliable assessments of organizational practices. In addition, the selected destinations were required to have been operating for at least three years, conduct environment-based tourism activities, and be officially registered in regional tourism databases.

Data were collected between January and March 2026 from marine tourism destinations in several Indonesian coastal regions. A total of 212 valid responses were obtained, exceeding the minimum sample size recommended for the PLS-SEM analysis ([Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, Danks, & Ray, 2021](#)). The adequacy of the sample size was justified using several considerations as follows. First, according to [Hair et al. \(2021\)](#), PLS-SEM requires a relatively smaller sample size than covariance-based SEM because it is variance-based and prediction oriented. Second, the sample exceeded the widely accepted ten-times rule, which recommends that the minimum sample should be at least ten times the largest number of structural paths directed at the latent construct. Because the most complex endogenous construct in this study received three incoming structural paths, the minimum required sample size was 30 respondents. Therefore, the 212 valid responses were considered statistically adequate to estimate both the structural relationships and moderating effects with sufficient statistical power.

The measurement instrument was developed by adapting validated scales from previous studies to ensure content validity and theoretical coherence. All questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) construct was operationalized using three indicators: environmental capability, green innovation, and sustainable resource management, adapted from [Hart \(1995\)](#) and ([Wang, Kim, Kim, & Koh, 2024](#)). Destination resilience was measured using adaptability, resistance, and recovery capacity based on ([Simarangkir, Utami, Ricky, Nani, Tawang, Irwan, & Kodiran, 2021](#)). Ecosystem sustainability was measured using environmental quality, biodiversity conservation, and ecological carrying capacity, adapted from ([Royer & Simon, 2024](#)). The Blue Economy policy was operationalized using environmental regulation, resource efficiency, and sustainable marine governance ([Pace, Saritas, & Deidun, 2023](#); [Suharyanto, Fauzi, Adrianto, & Wahyudin, 2024](#)).

Prior to full-scale distribution, the questionnaire was reviewed by three academics specializing in sustainable tourism and strategic management and two tourism practitioners to assess its content validity, item relevance, and wording clarity. Minor revisions were subsequently made to improve readability and ensure consistency with the Indonesian marine tourism context of the study. Respondents were recruited through direct contact with destination management organizations and tourism stakeholders. Participation was voluntary, and the respondents were informed of the academic purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured throughout the research process, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents before the questionnaire was administered.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software following the two-stage analytical procedure recommended by [Hair et al. \(2021\)](#).

First, the measurement model was evaluated by assessing indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability), convergent validity using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion. Second, the structural model was assessed by examining collinearity (Variance Inflation Factor), coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples. The moderating role of the Blue Economy policy was examined using the product indicator approach by creating interaction terms between NRBV and Blue Economy policy ($\text{NRBV} \times \text{Blue Economy Policy}$) and between destination resilience and Blue Economy policy ($\text{Destination Resilience} \times \text{Blue Economy Policy}$).

The significance of the interaction effects was evaluated using bootstrapping, where significant positive interaction coefficients indicated that stronger Blue Economy policy implementation enhanced the positive influence of the NRBV on destination resilience and strengthened the relationship between destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability. To minimize common method bias, the questionnaire items were arranged in different sections, and the respondents were assured that there were no right or wrong answers. Furthermore, Harman's single-factor test indicated that no single factor accounted for the majority of the total variance, suggesting that common method bias was not a serious concern. Non-response bias was assessed by comparing early and late respondents, and no statistically significant differences were found.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Result

4.1.1 Respondent Characteristics

The results of this study show that data were obtained from 212 respondents who were managers of marine tourism destinations in various regions of Indonesia. The respondents in this study had diverse characteristics, including gender, age, work experience, and type of destination managed. The diversity of these characteristics shows that the data used have a good level of representativeness in describing the empirical conditions of marine tourism destination management in Indonesia. In addition, the dominance of respondents with more than five years of work experience indicates that the information obtained comes from individuals with a deep understanding of destination management, especially in the context of sustainability and resilience. To provide a clearer picture of the characteristics of the respondents in this study, the data are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Respondent characteristics (n = 212)

Categories	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	129	61
	Women	83	39
Age	20–29 years old	38	18
	30–45 years	122	58
	>45 years old	52	24
Experience	<3 years	29	14
	3–5 years	31	14
	>5 years	152	72
Destination Type	Beach	95	45
	Small island	64	30
	Conservation areas	53	25

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the majority of respondents in this study were men (61 %), while women accounted for 39%. This shows that the marine tourism destination management sector is still dominated by men, although women's involvement has started to show a significant increase. In terms of age, the majority of respondents are in the 30–45 year age range, which shows that destination managers are in the category of productive age with a level of maturity in strategic decision-making.

Furthermore, in terms of work experience, most of the respondents have more than five years of experience, which shows that they have sufficient capacity and experience in managing marine tourism destinations. This experience is an important factor in improving adaptability and resilience to environmental changes. Meanwhile, the distribution of destination types shows that this study covers various types of marine tourism destinations, so the results of the study have a wide scope and are relevant for various destination management contexts.

This condition shows that the characteristics of respondents who are dominated by individuals with long work experience and are at a productive age should be the main capital in improving the quality of marine tourism destination management. However, in reality, this capacity has not been fully accompanied by the implementation of sustainability-based management strategies. Many destination managers continue to focus on short-term economic aspects, such as increasing the number of tourist visits, without considering the optimal carrying capacity of the environment. This has an impact on the emergence of various problems, such as over-tourism, marine pollution, and degradation of coastal ecosystems, which can ultimately reduce the quality of the destination itself. Thus, although human resources demonstrate strong capabilities, there are still gaps in the implementation of management practices oriented toward resilience and sustainability ([Ahmad, Abdullah, Khalik, & Putra, 2025](#)).

Furthermore, the differences in destination types, including beaches, small islands, and conservation areas, show that management challenges are not homogeneous but highly contextual. Small island destinations, for example, have higher carrying capacity limitations than coastal areas, whereas conservation areas require a stricter approach to maintaining ecosystem balance. However, the initial findings of the study show that most managers have not fully implemented the principles of the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) in natural resource management and have not optimally implemented Blue Economy policies in a practical way. This leads to a low ability of destinations to adapt to external pressures and reduces the effectiveness of their environmental conservation efforts. Therefore, a more integrated approach involving human resource capacity, NRBV-based strategies, and Blue Economy policy support is needed to enhance the resilience of marine tourism destinations ([Bucak, Ayaz, & Esmer, 2025](#)).

4.1.2 Outer Model Test Results

The results indicate that all indicators used to measure the research variables demonstrated satisfactory validity based on the outer-model assessment. This evaluation was conducted to ensure that each indicator adequately represented its respective construct. The loading factor values show strong relationships between the indicators and their corresponding constructs, indicating that the measurement model satisfies convergent validity requirements. Further assessments of construct reliability, discriminant validity, and structural model quality were conducted to ensure the robustness of the PLS-SEM results were robust. The loading factor values of each indicator are shown in the following table:

Table 2. Loading factor value

Variables	Indicator	Loading
NRBV	Environmental Capability	0.812
	Green Innovation	0.891
	Resource Management	0.845
Resilience	Adaptation	0.873
	Durability	0.854
	Recovery	0.829
Sustainability	Environmental Quality	0.888
	Biodiversity	0.876
	Carrying capacity	0.842
Blue Economy	Environmental Policy	0.821
	Resource Efficiency	0.834

Variables	Indicator	Loading
Blue Economy	Sustainable Economy	0.857

Based on Table 2, all indicator loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming satisfactory reliability and convergent validity. Among the NRBV indicators, Green Innovation demonstrates the highest loading (0.891), indicating that environmentally oriented innovation is the most influential component in strengthening environmental capabilities at marine tourism destinations. Adaptation recorded the highest loading within the destination resilience construct (0.873), suggesting that the ability to respond proactively to environmental and tourism-related disturbances is the most critical dimension of resilience. Likewise, Environmental Quality exhibits the strongest loading for ecosystem sustainability (0.888), highlighting that maintaining ecological conditions is the primary determinant of sustainable marine tourism development. Overall, these findings confirm that the measurement model adequately represents the proposed latent constructs and provides a reliable basis for the subsequent structural model analysis.

In addition, the high value of adaptation indicators in the resilience variable shows that the ability to respond to environmental changes is a crucial aspect of the management of marine tourism destinations. However, the results of this study also indicate that although adaptation has been made, there are still limitations in the integration between adaptation and broader policies, especially within the Blue Economy framework. Many destinations are adapting reactively, not strategically, so the impact on ecosystem sustainability has not been maximized. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of synergy between environmental innovation (NRBV), adaptive capacity (resilience), and policy support (Blue Economy) as an integrated system in improving the sustainability of marine tourism destinations. To test the validity and reliability of the construct as a whole, the test results are presented in the following table:

Table 3. Validity and reliability tests

Variables	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
NRBV	0.673	0.902	0.871
Resilience	0.689	0.914	0.889
Sustainability	0.701	0.921	0.896
Blue Economy	0.665	0.889	0.854

The results presented in Table 3 indicate that all constructs satisfied the recommended measurement quality criteria. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeded the threshold of 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity. Furthermore, the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's alpha values were consistently above 0.70, demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency reliability. These findings indicate that the measurement instrument is both valid and reliable, allowing the proposed structural relationships to be examined with confidence in the PLS-SEM analysis.

4.1.3 Inner Model (SEM) Test Results

The results of this study show that the developed structural model has a good ability to explain the relationship between variables. Internal model testing was conducted to determine the strength of the relationship between latent variables and test the research hypothesis. The results of the analysis showed that the model had a high level of explanation for the endogenous variables. To see the model's ability to explain the dependent variables, the following R-square values can be observed:

Table 4. R-Square value

Variables	R ²
Resilience	0.642
Sustainability	0.701

Table 4 shows that NRBV explains 64.2% of the variance in destination resilience ($R^2 = 0.642$), indicating substantial explanatory power, according to the guidelines proposed by [Hair et al. \(2021\)](#). Furthermore, NRBV and destination resilience jointly explain 70.1% of the variance in ecosystem sustainability ($R^2 = 0.701$), demonstrating that the proposed research model has a strong predictive capability. These findings indicate that environmental capabilities and destination resilience are key determinants of sustainable ecosystem management at marine tourism destinations. However, approximately 29.9% of the variance remains unexplained, suggesting that additional factors, such as stakeholder collaboration, governance quality, community participation, and environmental regulations, may also contribute to ecosystem sustainability and should be considered in future research.

4.1.4 Structural Model (SEM)

The structural model was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the causal relationships among the study variables. The model evaluates the direct effects of the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) on destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability, as well as the moderating role of Blue Economy policy. Figure 1 presents the structural model and illustrates the hypothesized relationships among the constructs. The model shows that NRBV directly influences destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability, while destination resilience acts as an intermediary mechanism linking NRBV to ecosystem sustainability. In addition, the Blue Economy policy interacts with both NRBV and destination resilience, indicating its role in strengthening relationships within the model.

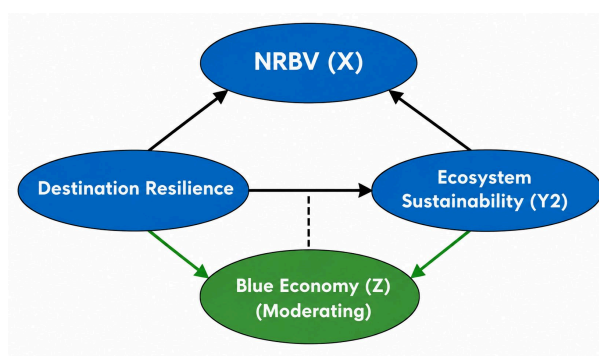


Figure 1. Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Figure 1 provides a more detailed representation of the structural relationships, including the moderating effects of the Blue Economy policy. The figure demonstrates how policy support enhances the influence of the NRBV on destination resilience and strengthens the contribution of destination resilience to ecosystem sustainability.

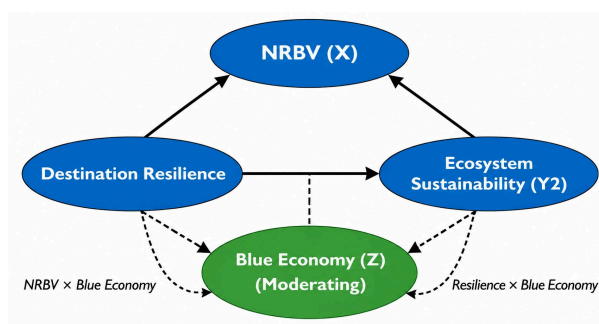


Figure 2. SEM (detailed version)

Figure 2 shows that the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) has a direct influence on destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability. Destination resilience in this model acts as an intervening variable that bridges the influence of the NRBV on ecosystem sustainability. This shows that sustainability-based natural resource management not only has a direct impact on environmental

conditions but also increases the adaptive capacity of destinations in the face of various disturbances. Figure 2 provides a more detailed picture of the direction of the relationship between variables, including the role of Blue Economy policy moderation. In this model, the Blue Economy serves not only as an additional variable but also as a factor that strengthens the relationship between NRBV and resilience, as well as between resilience and ecosystem sustainability. This shows that the success of marine tourism destination management depends not only on internal capacity (NRBV and resilience) but also on integrated external policy support.

Thus, together, the two models provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship structure in this study, both conceptually and empirically. This model confirms that the sustainability of marine tourism ecosystems results from dynamic interactions between natural resource management, destination adaptability, and Blue Economy-based policies that support sustainable development practices. The results of the structural model analysis and hypothesis testing, including the estimated relationships among the study variables, are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Structural model and hypotheses testing results

Hypotheses	Path	Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H_1	$X_1 \rightarrow Z$	0.469	15.468	0.000	Supported
H_2	$X_2 \rightarrow Z$	0.315	9.140	0.000	Supported
H_3	$X_3 \rightarrow Z$	0.381	12.200	0.000	Supported
H_4	$Z \rightarrow Y$	0.849	47.518	0.000	Supported
H_5	$X_1 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$	0.398	14.696	0.000	Supported
H_6	$X_2 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$	0.267	9.146	0.000	Supported
H_7	$X_3 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$	0.324	11.706	0.000	Supported

Structural model evaluation was conducted to examine the direct and indirect relationships among the latent variables using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. The significance of the hypothesized relationships was assessed based on the standardized path coefficients (β), t-statistics, and p-values. A hypothesis was accepted when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96, and the p-value was less than 0.05.

The results indicate that all direct relationships proposed in the research model were positive and statistically significant. Specifically, Destination Uniqueness had a positive and significant effect on Competitive Advantage ($\beta = 0.469$; $t = 15.468$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H_1 . This finding suggests that destinations with unique natural, cultural, and experiential attributes are more capable of developing competitive advantages.

Furthermore, Pollution Prevention and Digital Technology Adaptation positively influenced Competitive Advantage ($\beta = 0.315$; $t = 9.140$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H_2 . This result demonstrates that environmental conservation practices supported by digital technology contribute significantly to strengthening the competitive position of marine-ecotourism destinations.

The findings also reveal that Digital Technology Adaptation has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Advantage ($\beta = 0.381$; $t = 12.200$; $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting H_3 . The results indicate that the adoption of digital technologies enhances marketing effectiveness, operational efficiency, and destination attractiveness, ultimately improving competitive advantage.

Moreover, Competitive Advantage exerts a strong positive influence on Sustainable Business Performance ($\beta = 0.849$; $t = 47.518$; $p < 0.001$), confirming H_4 . Among all direct relationships, this path exhibits the largest standardized coefficient, indicating that competitive advantage is the most influential determinant of sustainable business performance.

The mediation analysis further demonstrates that Competitive Advantage significantly mediates the relationship between the exogenous variables and Sustainable Business Performance. The indirect effect of Destination Uniqueness on Sustainable Business Performance through Competitive

Advantage was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.398$; $t = 14.696$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H_5 . This finding indicates that destination uniqueness enhances sustainable business performance by strengthening the competitive advantage.

Similarly, Pollution Prevention and Digital Technology Adaptation positively affect Sustainable Business Performance through Competitive Advantage ($\beta = 0.267$; $t = 9.146$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H_6 . This suggests that environmental sustainability initiatives, when integrated with digital technology, improve sustainable business performance by enhancing competitive advantage.

Finally, Digital Technology Adaptation has a positive and significant indirect effect on Sustainable Business Performance through Competitive Advantage ($\beta = 0.324$; $t = 11.706$; $p < 0.001$), confirming H_7 . This finding implies that digital transformation contributes to sustainable business performance primarily through its ability to strengthen competitive advantage.

Overall, all seven hypotheses are supported, confirming that Competitive Advantage serves as a significant mediating mechanism linking the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) dimensions—Destination Uniqueness, Pollution Prevention and Digital Technology Adaptation, and Digital Technology Adaptation to Sustainable Business Performance

4.2 Discussion

Based on the results of the analysis, NRBV has a positive and significant influence on marine tourism destination resilience. While previous studies have primarily associated NRBV with environmental performance and sustainable competitive advantage [Hart \(1995\)](#), this study's findings suggest that NRBV also contributes to the development of destination resilience. This indicates that environmental capability, green innovation, and sustainable resource management are not only sustainability-oriented practices but also strategic capabilities that enable destinations to adapt to environmental disturbances and external shocks to their sustainability.

In the context of marine tourism, where destinations are highly vulnerable to climate change, pollution, and ecosystem degradation, the NRBV serves as a foundation for building long-term adaptive capacity. Furthermore, the strong relationship between NRBV and destination resilience implies that resilience should not be viewed solely as a recovery mechanism for the destination. Resilience can be understood as a strategic outcome derived from the effective management of natural resources and organizational capabilities. This interpretation extends previous tourism resilience studies, which have largely focused on adaptation and recovery processes without explicitly incorporating resource-based strategic perspectives [\(Phelan et al., 2020\)](#). Therefore, the findings contribute to refining the theoretical understanding of destination resilience by positioning the NRBV as an important antecedent.

The results also demonstrate that destination resilience has a positive influence on ecosystem sustainability. This finding suggests that ecosystem sustainability is not achieved merely through environmental conservation efforts but also through destination managers' ability to anticipate, respond to, and adapt to environmental change. In other words, resilience functions as a mechanism through which sustainable resource management is translated into long-term ecological results. This supports the systems perspective of sustainable tourism, which emphasizes the interdependence between organizational adaptability and ecosystem integrity [\(Simarankir et al., 2021\)](#).

In addition, NRBV had a direct effect on ecosystem sustainability, although the magnitude of this effect was lower than the indirect effect through destination resilience. This finding indicates that sustainable resource management contributes directly to environmental quality and biodiversity preservation, whereas its broader sustainability impact depends on the destination's adaptive capacity. Consequently, destination resilience is a critical pathway linking strategic resource management to ecosystem sustainability [\(Alharthi & Hanif, 2020\)](#).

Another important contribution of this study is the moderating role of the Blue Economy policy. The findings indicate that the Blue Economy policy strengthens the relationship between the NRBV and destination resilience, as well as the relationship between destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability. This suggests that policy frameworks do not merely function as external regulatory instruments but also as enabling institutional mechanisms that enhance the effectiveness of sustainability-oriented practices. When supported by strong Blue Economy policies, destinations are better positioned to convert environmental capabilities into resilience and resilience into sustainable ecosystem outcomes ([Pace, Saritas, & Deidun, 2023](#)).

Theoretically, these findings contribute to the tourism sustainability literature by integrating the NRBV, destination resilience, and Blue Economy policy into a single explanatory framework. Previous studies have generally examined these constructs independently, focusing on sustainable resource management, resilience, or Blue Economy governance ([Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2020](#); [Phelan et al., 2020](#)). This study demonstrates that ecosystem sustainability emerges from the interaction of strategic resource management, adaptive capacity, and institutional support. This integrated perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability at marine tourism destinations and offers a foundation for future research on resilience-based tourism development.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that destination managers should focus not only on environmental conservation but also on strengthening adaptive capabilities through innovation, sustainable resource management and stakeholder collaboration. At the policy level, governments should enhance the implementation of Blue Economy principles through integrated regulations and governance mechanisms that support sustainable tourism development. Such efforts will improve the effectiveness of NRBV-based practices and contribute to the long-term sustainability of marine tourism destinations ([Satizábal, Dressler, Fabinyi, & Pido, 2020](#)).

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) significantly enhances marine tourism destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability. The findings further confirm that destination resilience serves as a strategic mechanism through which the NRBV translates environmental capabilities into long-term ecosystem sustainability. In addition, the Blue Economy policy significantly strengthens both the relationship between the NRBV and destination resilience and the relationship between destination resilience and ecosystem sustainability, indicating that supportive institutional policies amplify the effectiveness of sustainable resource management practices.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the sustainable tourism and strategic management literature by extending the Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) beyond its traditional focus on environmental performance and competitive advantage. Specifically, this study conceptualizes destination resilience as a strategic capability linking the NRBV to ecosystem sustainability and demonstrates that Blue Economy policy functions as an institutional moderator rather than merely a regulatory context. By integrating NRBV, destination resilience, ecosystem sustainability, and Blue Economy policy into a single explanatory framework, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how strategic environmental capabilities, adaptive resilience, and institutional support jointly contribute to sustainable marine tourism development.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that destination managers should move beyond conventional environmental conservation practices by strengthening their strategic environmental capabilities, promoting green innovation, improving sustainable resource management, and enhancing adaptive resilience. At the policy level, governments should reinforce the implementation of Blue Economy principles through integrated regulations, stakeholder collaboration, environmental monitoring systems, and sustainable investment incentives to maximize the effectiveness of destination resilience and ecosystem conservation.

The proposed research model represents the specific contribution of this study by offering an integrated sustainability framework that explains the interaction between strategic resource management, destination resilience, and institutional policy support to achieve ecosystem sustainability. Unlike previous studies that examined these constructs separately, this model empirically demonstrates how Blue Economy policy strengthens the transformation of NRBV-based capabilities into resilient destinations and sustainable marine tourism ecosystems. Therefore, the model provides a valuable theoretical foundation for future sustainability research and serves as a practical decision-support framework for governments, destination management organizations, and policymakers seeking to develop resilient and sustainable marine tourism destinations.

5.2 Research Limitations

This study is limited to marine tourism destinations in Indonesia and focuses only on selected variables in the NRBV framework. Other factors, such as governance quality, stakeholder participation, and environmental uncertainty, were not included in the model.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Future studies should include broader variables related to governance, community participation, and environmental risk management. Comparative studies across countries or tourism sectors are also suggested to strengthen the generalizability of these findings.

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Author Contributions

SAM contributed to the conceptualization, data collection, analysis, and manuscript writing. AA contributed to the methodology and supervision. MYSB contributed to the validation and formal analysis. ARPB contributed to the review and editing. HH contributed to the data interpretation and final manuscript revision.

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