

COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM AS A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE DESTINATIONS: QUANTITATIVE INSIGHTS FROM YOGYAKARTA'S TOURISM VILLAGES

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Abstract

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has emerged as a strategic model for achieving sustainable and inclusive destination development, particularly in rural areas where tourism serves as an alternative source of livelihood. This study quantitatively examines the socioeconomic impacts of CBT and its contribution to sustainable destination pathways in three tourism villages in Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Pentingsari, Nglanggeran, and Kembangarum. Using a stratified random sampling of 150 respondents, data were collected through structured questionnaires measuring household income, quality of life, and community wellbeing. The analysis employed descriptive statistics, paired sample t-tests, and correlation techniques using SPSS 26.

The findings reveal a significant 29.3% increase in household income among CBT participants, alongside notable improvements in access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure services such as roads, sanitation, and clean water. CBT also strengthened social cohesion, women's empowerment, and youth participation, indicating a multidimensional impact beyond economics. Moreover, several villages initiated community-based environmental programs, including waste segregation and local greening efforts, aligning CBT with the principles of green and responsible tourism.

The study concludes that CBT serves as an effective pathway toward sustainable destinations by integrating economic resilience, social empowerment, and environmental stewardship within local tourism systems. It recommends enhancing participatory governance, equitable benefit-sharing, and cultural preservation as key strategies to ensure inclusive and long-term sustainability in community-based tourism development.

Keywords: Community-Based Tourism, Sustainable Destinations, Socioeconomic Impact, Empowerment, Green Tourism

A. INTRODUCTION

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has increasingly gained recognition as a strategic approach to sustainable tourism development that prioritizes community empowerment, inclusive economic growth, and environmental sustainability (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2020; Stone et al., 2021). In the post-pandemic recovery era, CBT is widely framed as a mechanism for strengthening rural resilience, enhancing livelihood diversification, and supporting sustainable destination governance (Hampton & Jeyacheya, 2020; UNWTO, 2022). In developing countries such as Indonesia, CBT has been institutionalized through the

development of *desa wisata* (tourist villages), supported by national tourism policies aimed at promoting rural transformation and inclusive development (Kemenparekraf, 2021; World Bank, 2021).

Recent scholarship highlights that CBT contributes not only to income diversification but also to social capital formation, participatory governance, and improvements in perceived quality of life (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). However, empirical findings remain mixed. While several studies report positive economic multipliers and strengthened community cohesion, others identify persistent challenges such as unequal benefit distribution, elite capture, and limited inclusion of marginalized groups (Jeyacheya & Hampton, 2023; Dodds & Butler, 2022).

Despite its strong theoretical foundation, quantitative assessments measuring the tangible socioeconomic impacts of CBT remain relatively limited, particularly within the Indonesian context. Many studies on *desa wisata* rely primarily on qualitative case analyses, resulting in a lack of systematic and statistically grounded evaluations of income growth, welfare improvement, and inclusivity outcomes (Widiastuti et al., 2022). Contemporary tourism research increasingly calls for more rigorous empirical methodologies capable of measuring the effectiveness of sustainable tourism interventions through verifiable indicators (Nunkoo & So, 2022; Zhang et al., 2024). In response to this gap, this study evaluates the measurable socioeconomic outcomes of CBT in selected tourist villages in Yogyakarta.

Despite the growing body of literature on Community-Based Tourism (CBT), most studies remain qualitative and context-specific, with limited use of rigorous quantitative approaches to measure its socioeconomic impacts. Furthermore, existing research rarely provides statistically grounded evidence on income changes, quality of life improvements, and inclusivity outcomes at the household level, particularly in the Indonesian context. This gap highlights the need for a more systematic and data-driven assessment of CBT effectiveness.

1.1. Problem Formulation and Significance

Tourist villages have become a central instrument in Indonesia's rural development agenda. Government initiatives assume that community participation in tourism activities such as homestays, handicrafts, culinary enterprises, and guiding services will improve household income and enhance access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure (World Bank, 2021). However, recent studies indicate that tourism benefits are not always equitably distributed, particularly among women, elderly residents, and informal-sector households (Aminudin et al., 2022; Jeyacheya & Hampton, 2023). Moreover, the absence of standardized performance indicators and quantitative impact measurement reduces policy accountability and limits evidence-based refinement of CBT strategies. This condition underscores the need for systematic and data-driven evaluation of CBT's actual socioeconomic contributions.

1.2. Objectives and Research Contribution

This research has two primary objectives:

- a. To quantitatively measure the impact of CBT on household income and quality-of-life indicators.
- b. To identify patterns of inequality or exclusion within tourism benefit distribution.

Using a structured quantitative design with stratified random sampling of 150 respondents across three established tourist villages in Yogyakarta Pentingsari, Nglanggeran, and Kembangarum this study contributes updated empirical evidence to contemporary CBT scholarship. The study bridges theoretical debates on empowerment and sustainable tourism governance with measurable field-level data, thereby providing policy-relevant insights for inclusive rural tourism planning.

1.3. Motivation and Rationale

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is widely recognized as a participatory development model that promotes inclusive economic growth, local empowerment, and sustainable governance (Stone et al., 2021; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021). However, recent studies highlight that CBT does not always produce equitable outcomes due to structural inequalities, governance limitations, and uneven benefit distribution (Jeyacheya & Hampton, 2023). In Indonesia, the rapid expansion of tourist villages (desa wisata) has intensified the need for systematic and quantitative evaluation, as existing evidence on socioeconomic impacts remains limited and often qualitative (Widiastuti et al., 2022; Nunkoo & So, 2022). Without measurable indicators, claims regarding sustainability and inclusivity risk remaining normative rather than empirical. Therefore, this study aims to quantitatively assess the socioeconomic impacts of CBT in selected tourist villages in Yogyakarta, contributing to evidence-based tourism research and more informed policy development for inclusive rural transformation.

Despite the growing body of literature on Community-Based Tourism (CBT), existing studies remain largely qualitative, context-specific, and limited in providing statistically robust evidence on measurable socioeconomic outcomes. Recent studies emphasize the importance of quantitative approaches; however, empirical applications particularly in developing country contexts such as Indonesia remain insufficient and fragmented (Nunkoo & So, 2022; Zhang et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024).

Furthermore, previous research often fails to systematically measure key indicators such as household income changes, quality of life improvements, and inclusivity at the household level. This creates a gap between theoretical claims and empirical validation, limiting evidence-based policymaking.

Therefore, in response to the identified research gap, this study formulates the following research questions:

- a. To what extent does CBT influence household income in Yogyakarta's tourist villages?
- b. How does participation in CBT affect residents' quality of life?
- c. What structural challenges persist in achieving inclusive and equitable tourism benefits?

To address these questions, the study tests the following hypotheses:

H1: CBT participation significantly increases household income.

H2: CBT participation positively affects quality of life indicators.

H3: CBT participation is associated with improved social cohesion.

Accordingly, this study aims to provide a robust quantitative assessment of CBT impacts, thereby addressing the lack of measurable evidence and strengthening the empirical foundation of sustainable tourism research.

B. LITERATURE

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has been widely recognized as a strategy for promoting sustainable and inclusive development, particularly in rural areas where communities seek to improve their livelihoods while preserving cultural heritage and environmental resources. As a participatory development approach, CBT emphasizes local ownership, community participation, and equitable distribution of tourism benefits (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2020; Stone et al., 2021). Through these principles, CBT is expected to contribute to poverty reduction, strengthen local governance structures, and improve the overall quality of life for rural populations. Despite its strong theoretical foundation, recent studies suggest that the actual socioeconomic outcomes of CBT vary significantly across destinations (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021; Jeyacheya & Hampton, 2023). While many policy frameworks promote CBT as an effective tool for sustainable tourism development, empirical evaluations particularly those using quantitative indicators remain limited. In Indonesia, where the development of *desa wisata* (tourist villages) has expanded rapidly, systematic assessments of CBT outcomes are still fragmented. Therefore, understanding how CBT contributes to measurable improvements in community welfare remains an important research agenda. This section reviews the theoretical foundations of CBT, examines empirical findings from global and regional contexts, identifies gaps in existing studies, and highlights the relevance of examining CBT development in Yogyakarta.

2.1. Theoretical Foundations of Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

CBT is rooted in the broader concepts of sustainable tourism and community empowerment. The approach promotes local ownership, participatory decision-making, and fair distribution of tourism benefits among community members (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2020). In this model, local communities are not merely passive beneficiaries but active actors who participate in planning, managing, and monitoring tourism activities. Recent studies emphasize that CBT can strengthen social capital and improve local governance when communities are actively involved in tourism development (Stone et al., 2021). Participation in tourism management can also enhance community capacity, encourage collective decision-making, and support the preservation of cultural identity.

However, scholars also highlight several challenges associated with CBT implementation. Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021) argue that unequal power relations and limited institutional capacity may hinder effective participation of community members. Similarly, Jeyacheya and Hampton (2023) note that while CBT is often promoted as an inclusive development model, the distribution of tourism benefits may remain uneven if governance structures are weak or dominated by local elites. These findings suggest that the success of CBT depends not only on its theoretical principles but also on the institutional and socio-economic context in which it is implemented.

2.2. Global and Regional Evidence on CBT Impacts

Empirical research across different regions has demonstrated that CBT can generate various socioeconomic benefits for local communities. Studies have shown that CBT initiatives may increase household income, create employment opportunities, and stimulate small-scale entrepreneurship in rural areas (Stone et al., 2021; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021). In Southeast Asia, CBT development has been associated with diversification of rural economies and preservation of local cultural traditions. For instance, community-managed tourism initiatives in Thailand and Vietnam have contributed to strengthening local economic resilience and supporting community-based enterprises (Jeyacheya & Hampton, 2023).

Nevertheless, several studies also point out persistent challenges in CBT implementation. Unequal distribution of tourism benefits, elite capture, and limited scalability remain common issues that affect the sustainability of CBT initiatives. In some cases, tourism development may even lead to cultural commodification or environmental pressure if not properly managed.

These mixed outcomes highlight the need for more rigorous empirical assessments that examine both the benefits and limitations of CBT in specific local contexts.

2.3. The Indonesian Context and Research Gaps

In Indonesia, the concept of CBT has been widely adopted through the development of *desa wisata* as part of the national tourism strategy. The government promotes tourist villages as instruments for rural economic development, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. As a result, the number of officially recognized tourist villages has increased significantly in recent years. Despite this policy emphasis, academic studies on CBT in Indonesia remain largely qualitative or descriptive. Fitriyah and Hadi (2022) found that the level of community empowerment in tourist villages varies depending on leadership structures, resource management, and access to tourism markets. Similarly, Susanti and Yulianti (2023) report that although tourism development has improved infrastructure and created economic opportunities in many villages, the distribution of benefits often remains uneven.

One important limitation of existing research is the lack of quantitative evaluations that measure the socioeconomic impact of CBT using measurable indicators such as household income, access to education, or infrastructure development. Without such indicators, it becomes difficult to assess whether CBT initiatives truly contribute to long-term improvements in community welfare. Furthermore, many studies do not clearly distinguish the effects of CBT from other rural development programs, making causal attribution challenging.

2.4. Relevance to Yogyakarta's CBT Strategy

Yogyakarta represents one of the most active regions in Indonesia in developing tourist villages as part of its regional tourism strategy. Supported by local government initiatives and collaborations with academic institutions, CBT has been widely promoted as a mechanism for strengthening rural economies. According to BPS DIY (2023), more than 70 tourist villages have been officially recognized in the province, with tourism activities contributing significantly to local economic dynamics. Several studies report that tourism development in Yogyakarta has improved infrastructure and created new income-generating opportunities for local communities (Riyadi et al., 2021; Wulandari et al., 2022).

However, the long-term socioeconomic impact of CBT in these villages remains insufficiently understood. While existing research highlights potential benefits, concerns have also been raised regarding uneven distribution of tourism revenues, cultural commodification, and the risks of over-tourism. Given these dynamics, Yogyakarta provides an appropriate context for conducting a more systematic and data-driven investigation into how CBT influences household welfare and community development.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design and Approach

This study employs a quantitative research design to assess the socioeconomic impacts of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in selected tourist villages in Yogyakarta. The quantitative approach was chosen to provide measurable evidence of CBT's effects on household income and quality of life indicators. Quantitative methods are widely used in tourism research to objectively measure impacts and support evidence-based policy recommendations.

3.2 Sampling

The target population consists of households actively engaged in tourism-related activities within three selected tourist villages in Yogyakarta. These villages were purposively selected based on their engagement in CBT initiatives and diversity of tourism enterprises such as

homestays, local crafts, and culinary services. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure proportional representation from each village and various tourism sectors, enhancing the representativeness and validity of findings (Kothari, 2004).

A total of 150 respondents participated in the survey, with 50 respondents from each village. The sample size aligns with standards for community-level tourism impact studies to ensure statistical power for analysis (Bryman, 2016).

3.3 Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on previous CBT impact studies (Gursoy et al., 2017; Andereck et al., 2005). The questionnaire included sections measuring:

1. Household income before and after involvement in CBT activities.
2. Access to education and healthcare services.
3. Perceptions of infrastructure development such as roads, sanitation, and clean water.
4. Social cohesion and community safety indicators.

Data collection was conducted through face-to-face interviews by trained enumerators over two months in early 2025 to maximize response accuracy and completeness (Fowler, 2014).

3.4 Measures

Key variables were operationalized as follows:

- a. Household Income: Respondents reported monthly income before and after engaging in CBT enterprises, allowing calculation of percentage income growth (Gursoy et al., 2017).
- b. Quality of Life Indicators: Access to education and healthcare measured by self-reports of availability and usage. Infrastructure improvements were assessed through residents' perceptions. Social cohesion and safety were measured using Likert scales adapted from established community wellbeing instruments (Sharpley & Stone, 2011).

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis involved descriptive statistics to summarize the data and inferential statistics to test hypotheses. Paired sample t-tests examined significant changes in income and quality of life indicators pre- and post-CBT participation (Field, 2018). Correlation analysis explored relationships between economic and social variables. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26, following best practices for quantitative research in tourism studies (Veal, 2017).

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

This section presents the key findings from 150 respondents across three community-based tourism villages in Yogyakarta: Pentingsari, Nglanggeran, and Kembangarum. The analysis focuses on household income, quality of life, social cohesion, and community participation.

4.1.1 Impact on Household Income

CBT has significantly contributed to household economic improvement. Average monthly income increased from IDR 2,667,000 to IDR 3,500,000, representing a 29.3% rise. The highest increase was observed in Kembangarum (37.0%), followed by Nglanggeran (28.6%) and Pentingsari (28.0%). A paired sample t-test confirms that the increase is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). Income growth is primarily driven by homestays, local crafts, and culinary businesses, indicating that tourism diversification enhances household resilience.

4.1.2. Changes in Quality of Life

CBT participation has led to notable improvements in quality-of-life indicators. Education access increased from 2.8 to 4.2, healthcare access from 2.5 to 3.7, and infrastructure from 2.7 to 4.0. All changes are statistically significant ($p < 0.05-0.01$). These improvements

reflect better access to training, healthcare services, and upgraded public infrastructure, demonstrating positive spillover effects of tourism development.

Table 1. Changes in Quality of Life Indicators Before and After CBT Participation

Indicator	Mean Score Before	Mean Score After	Significance Level
Education Access	2.8	4.2	$p < 0.05$
Healthcare Access	2.5	3.7	$p < 0.05$
Infrastructure	2.7	4.0	$p < 0.01$

As shown in Table 1, all indicators experienced statistically significant improvements, particularly infrastructure ($p < 0.01$), indicating strong development spillover effects from CBT.

4.1.3. Social Cohesion and Community Safety

Social cohesion improved from 3.0 to 3.8, while perceived community safety increased from 3.2 to 3.8 ($p < 0.05$). These improvements are associated with stronger community collaboration through tourism groups and increased local economic stability. However, some respondents reported concerns regarding unequal benefit distribution.

4.1.4. Gender and Youth Participation

CBT has enhanced inclusivity, particularly for women and youth. Approximately 62% of women reported increased participation in income-generating activities, while 70% of youth were actively involved in tourism promotion and services. This indicates that CBT supports empowerment and skill development, especially in digital and entrepreneurial activities.

4.1.5. Community Perception

Overall, 81% of respondents expressed satisfaction with CBT development, while 34% raised concerns about cultural commodification. These findings highlight the need to balance economic benefits with cultural preservation.

4.2 Discussion

The findings confirm that CBT serves as an effective mechanism for promoting sustainable and inclusive rural development. The significant increase in household income (29.3%) supports existing literature that positions CBT as a viable strategy for livelihood diversification and local economic empowerment. Improvements in education, healthcare, and infrastructure demonstrate that tourism generates broader development benefits beyond income. These findings align with previous studies suggesting that CBT contributes to human capital development and public service enhancement. However, the sustainability of these benefits depends on effective governance and long-term resource management.

The increase in social cohesion and community participation indicates that CBT strengthens local institutions and collective action. Nevertheless, the persistence of unequal benefit distribution highlights structural challenges in ensuring inclusivity. Without equitable governance mechanisms, CBT may risk reinforcing existing inequalities. Gender and youth participation findings further emphasize the role of CBT in promoting social inclusion. Women's increased involvement in economic activities and youth engagement in digital tourism reflect evolving community dynamics and capacity development. At the same time, concerns about cultural commodification suggest that tourism development must be managed carefully to preserve local identity. This highlights the need for culturally sensitive tourism policies and community-led decision-making.

Overall, this study bridges the gap between theoretical assumptions and empirical evidence by demonstrating that CBT can generate measurable socioeconomic benefits while also presenting governance and sustainability challenges. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating economic, social, and cultural dimensions in sustainable tourism development.

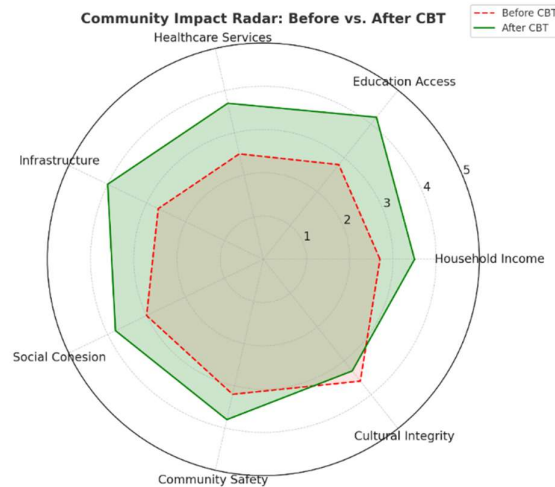


Figure 1. Comparative Analysis of Community Development Indicators Before and After Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Figure 1 presents a radar chart comparing community development indicators before and after CBT implementation across seven dimensions, including household income, education access, healthcare services, infrastructure, social cohesion, community safety, and cultural integrity.



Figure 2. Household Income Growth by Village Before and After CBT Participation

Figure 2 illustrates the growth in household income across the three villages before and after participation in CBT activities. The figure shows a consistent increase across all villages, with the highest growth observed in Kembangarum. There is the Theory-to-Practice Framework Diagram. It visually links core CBT theories such as empowerment, sustainability, participation, and governance with the actual outcomes found in your study, like income growth, infrastructure improvements, and increased inclusion.

E. CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in selected tourist villages in Yogyakarta significantly enhances household income and improves various dimensions of residents' quality of life, including education access, healthcare services, and infrastructure development. Empirically, the findings confirm that active community participation in tourism-related activities serves as a viable strategy for local economic empowerment, supporting sustainable rural development.

Theoretically, this research bridges the gap between conceptual CBT models and practical implementation by providing quantitative evidence on socioeconomic impacts, thereby contributing to the broader literature on sustainable tourism and community development. The results reaffirm that CBT not only generates direct economic benefits but also fosters social improvements when managed inclusively. However, this study also uncovers persistent challenges such as unequal benefit distribution and risks related to cultural commodification, highlighting the need for more inclusive and culturally sensitive governance. These new insights emphasize that the long-term success of CBT requires balancing economic growth with social equity and cultural preservation. For future researchers, this study suggests exploring participatory mechanisms that enhance marginalized groups' involvement and longitudinal studies to assess CBT's impacts over time. Practitioners and policymakers should focus on developing policies that promote equitable benefit sharing and safeguard local heritage to ensure that tourism-driven development remains sustainable and inclusive.

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