

## **Comparative Study Of Community Tourism Development Models In Baluran, Situbondo, And Banyuwangi National Parks**

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### **Abstract**

Baluran National Park, which spans across Situbondo and Banyuwangi Regencies, presents an important case for understanding how different regional strategies affect community-based tourism (CBT) outcomes. These two regions employ distinct governance models in managing their tourism potential, resulting in varied levels of community participation, technological integration, and institutional readiness. This study aims to examine and compare community-based tourism development models applied in two strategic areas, namely Baluran National Park, located in Situbondo Regency, and Banyuwangi Regency. This study will focus on Community Capacity Building Efforts, local citizen participation. This study employs a qualitative approach, drawing on literature studies from various scientific journal references and academic literature. The findings of this study indicate that the approach to tourism development in each regional regulation, particularly in Situbondo, emphasizes local output as the foundation for its development. This study suggests that policy harmony and increasing the capacity of local communities are essential foundations for sustainable tourism development.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Baluran National Park is a conservation area that stretches across two administrative regions: Situbondo and Banyuwangi Regencies (Azizah & Cons, 2020). These regions have implemented various strategies to develop their local tourism potential (Soeswoyo et al., 2021). One of the dominant approaches is the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) model, which emphasizes the involvement of local communities as primary stakeholders in tourism development (Mtapuri et al., 2022). This approach is widely recognized for promoting not only economic growth but also the preservation of natural and cultural heritage (Hoang, 2021).

Community-based tourism is particularly relevant in ecologically sensitive areas such as national parks (Setiawan, 2021). In the context of Baluran, the dual management by Situbondo and Banyuwangi creates a unique opportunity to examine how local governance and community engagement influence the success of tourism initiatives. The sustainability of tourism in these areas is closely tied to the community’s ability to manage and benefit from tourism resources (Aquino et al., 2018).

The urgency of this study lies in the observed disparity between the two regions in the implementation of CBT. While Banyuwangi has gained recognition for its inclusive and strategic tourism policies through programs like “Smart Kampung,” Situbondo still faces limitations in community readiness, infrastructure, and stakeholder synergy (Hidayanti et al., 2024). This gap underscores the need for a comparative analysis to derive lessons and policy implications.

The key factors influencing CBT success include community participation, support from the government and private sectors, access to technology, and local institutional readiness (Zielinski et al., 2021). The differences in these aspects between Situbondo and Banyuwangi have a significant impact on the tourism outcomes in their respective regions.

<b>Table 1. Key Indicators of CBT Implementation in Baluran National Park</b>	
<b>Indicator</b>	
Community Participation	
Government Support	
Digital Infrastructure	
Community Readiness	
Tourism Facilities	

(Source: Field Observation & Local Reports, 2025)

Previous studies have explored CBT models across Indonesia, focusing on areas such as agro-tourism, marine tourism, and heritage tourism (Priatmoko & Rahmat, 2025). However, few have specifically analyzed two adjoining regions within a shared conservation area and compared their CBT approaches in a comprehensive framework (Cynthia & Tavavarigwa, 2020). Research between 2020 and 2024 primarily focuses on single-case evaluations, lacking cross-regional comparative insights (Ganis, 2024).

This research addresses that gap by offering a side-by-side evaluation of the tourism development frameworks in Situbondo and Banyuwangi. The novelty lies in the comparative methodological approach that captures variations in governance models, policy alignment, and grassroots engagement in a single protected area. It also integrates qualitative findings with community-driven development indicators for practical recommendations.

Another contribution of this study is the integration of sustainability metrics within the CBT evaluation. It highlights how tourism models that promote cultural preservation, inclusive planning, and technology adaptation are more likely to succeed in the long term (Xiao et al., 2024). This analytical framework offers transferable knowledge to other regions aiming to implement CBT in protected or sensitive ecosystems.

Moreover, as national parks face growing pressure from tourism and climate challenges, identifying resilient community-based strategies becomes essential (Sisneros et al., 2019). Situbondo and Banyuwangi provide contrasting yet

complementary cases that reveal both structural weaknesses and adaptive innovations in community engagement.

The study is also timely, given the increasing national focus on decentralization and local tourism empowerment. By comparing Situbondo and Banyuwangi, this research aligns with broader efforts in Indonesia to strike a balance between conservation goals and regional economic development. It highlights the importance of adaptive governance in managing shared ecological resources. Ultimately, this research aims to provide empirical evidence that can inform policymakers, community leaders, and conservation authorities on how to design and implement more effective CBT frameworks. The findings are expected to support integrated tourism planning that is inclusive, participatory, and responsive to local capacities and ecological considerations.

Therefore, the main objectives of this study are to (1) analyze the similarities and differences in CBT models applied in Situbondo and Banyuwangi, (2) identify the key success factors and challenges in each region, and (3) propose strategic recommendations for sustainable and inclusive tourism development in the Baluran National Park region.

## **METHOD**

### **Type of Research**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a comparative study type. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of how the community-based tourism development model is implemented in the two administrative areas of Baluran National Park, specifically Situbondo and Banyuwangi.

The research was conducted in the Baluran National Park area, which spans two districts: Situbondo and Banyuwangi. The study was conducted from April to June 2025.

The data sources in this research consist of:

- a. Primary data: obtained through in-depth interviews with local communities, tourism managers, and representatives from related agencies.
- b. Secondary data: obtained from official documents, agency reports, academic literature, and publications related to community-based tourism development.

### **Data Collection Technique**

1. Interviews: conducted in-depth and semi-structured with key informants in each region.
2. Observation: directly observing community activities and tourism management practices at the research site.
3. Documentation: Collecting relevant documents, such as tourist brochures, local government reports, and tourism statistics.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

The data was analyzed qualitatively through the following steps:

1. Data reduction: Filtering and selecting relevant information from the overall raw data to make it more focused and directed.

2. Data presentation: organizing data into narrative, table, or diagram form to facilitate the understanding process.
3. Withdrawal Conclusions: Formulate results analysis based on findings of the comparison between the Situbondo and Banyuwangi regions.

### **Data Validity**

To ensure that the data obtained is valid and trustworthy, a triangulation approach is used to validate both sources and methods. The validation process was conducted by comparing the results of interviews with documentation records and direct observations in the field.

### **Research Ethics**

The researcher adhered to research ethics, including obtaining consent from informants prior to interviews, maintaining data confidentiality, and using the information solely for academic purposes.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of this study reveal a significant difference in the successful implementation of the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) development model between Situbondo and Banyuwangi, especially in the Baluran National Park area.

Banyuwangi appears to have successfully implemented a more systematic approach that involves broad community participation, thanks to support from various stakeholders. In Situbondo, on the other hand, several obstacles remain, including limited community capacity, inadequate infrastructure, and weak government policy support.

Some of the key findings include:

### **1. Community Participation**

The study found that community participation in community-based tourism (CBT) in Banyuwangi is relatively high. Residents are involved throughout the planning stage and execution. Active tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis) operate in the area, and locals engage in economic activities such as managing homestays, guiding tours, and digital promotion. In Situbondo, participation remains passive. Most community involvement is limited to operational roles, such as parking and cleaning. Citizens are rarely involved in the strategic decision-making process. The lack of training and community empowerment has contributed to this minimal engagement.

### **2. Government Support and Collaboration**

The Banyuwangi local government provides substantial support through programs such as "Smart Kampung," tourism training, and simplified business licensing. Multi-stakeholder collaboration encompasses partnerships with the private sector, village-owned enterprises (BUMDes), and local creative communities. Conversely, Situbondo lacks a comprehensive tourism development strategy. Tourism activities in the region are still heavily dependent on the Baluran National Park Authority. Government support and private sector involvement have not been prominent in encouraging grassroots initiatives.

### **3. Technology Access and Digital Infrastructure**

Banyuwangi has successfully developed digital systems and platforms to promote and manage tourism, including online reservation platforms. The local government also provides digital marketing training to empower young people and tourism professionals. Situbondo continues to face technological limitations. Internet access in surrounding villages is inadequate, and local communities have yet to utilize digital platforms to promote their tourism potential effectively.

### **4. Institutional Readiness and Sustainability**

Institutional structures in Banyuwangi—such as Pokdarwis and BUMDes—have functioned effectively in managing tourism, including the implementation of benefit-sharing mechanisms. Routine training and impact monitoring (social, economic, environmental) are also in place. In contrast, local tourism institutions in Situbondo remain weak. Tourism groups are largely inactive or lack management systems. Heavy dependence on external facilitators poses a risk to sustainability once external programs or funding end.

## **Discussion**

### **1. Analysis of Community Participation**

Active community participation is the cornerstone of successful CBT. In Banyuwangi, early and ongoing involvement has fostered a sense of ownership and improved service quality. In contrast, Situbondo's limited participation has led to dependence on external authorities and a lack of local innovation. Participation levels are closely tied to access to information, education, and community awareness. Cultural festivals and regular training in Banyuwangi function as collective learning spaces, increasing community capacity and trust.

### **2. Government Role and Collaboration**

Proactive regional government policies primarily drive Banyuwangi's CBT success. Initiatives such as "Smart Kampung" demonstrate a synergy between technology, cultural heritage, and grassroots economics. These frameworks have created an ecosystem involving BUMDes, local MSMEs, and youth groups. In contrast, Situbondo's policy approach remains fragmented and lacks a clear direction. Limited coordination between the regional government and the national park authority has marginalized community participation.

### **3. Technology and Digital Transformation**

Digitalization is a clear differentiator. Banyuwangi has leveraged technology for destination promotion, education, and transaction systems. This aligns with global tourism trends that demand transparency, speed, and online visibility.

In Situbondo, weak digital infrastructure limits promotional efforts and reduces tourism competitiveness. However, technology is a powerful enabler of market access and economic growth. Digital infrastructure development and training must become urgent priorities.

### **4. Local Institutions and Sustainability**

Strong local institutions such as Pokdarwis and BUMDes are key to sustainable CBT. Banyuwangi has demonstrated that effective institutional structures enable

equitable benefit sharing and sustainable management. In Situbondo, institutional readiness remains poor. There is a lack of monitoring, evaluation, and transparent incentive systems, all of which are necessary to motivate local involvement. Overreliance on national park authorities also undermines local autonomy. Youth empowerment is crucial for driving innovation and promoting sustainability. Banyuwangi supports youth engagement through creative tourism incubators and digital competitions. Situbondo must initiate similar programs adapted to local needs.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussions, it can be concluded that there are significant differences in the effectiveness of the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) development model between the Situbondo and Banyuwangi regions in the Baluran National Park area. The Banyuwangi region employs a more participatory and innovative tourism development model, supported by regional policies and collaboration among multiple stakeholders. This makes tourism development in Banyuwangi more effective and sustainable. The Situbondo region, despite having the same natural potential, still faces constraints in terms of community participation, local institutions, access to technology, and low local government support. This has led to suboptimal and less sustainable tourism development in the region. Factors that most influence the successful development of CBT include: active community involvement in tourism planning and management. Policy and funding support from the government, (c) collaboration with the private sector. Readiness of human resources and supporting infrastructure.

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