

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

This study has examined the practice of Community Based Tourism in Tarubatang Village, a settlement situated within the buffer zone of Mount Merbabu National Park in Boyolali Regency, Central Java. The inquiry was organised around two research questions, the first concerning the level at which the local community participates in the governance of tourism activities across the stages of planning, development, and management, and the second concerning the impact of those activities upon the community across the economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political dimensions of Community Based Tourism. The findings reported in the present study yield a coherent and structurally consequential picture.

Community participation in tourism governance in Tarubatang Village falls predominantly within the tokenism range of the ladder of citizen participation across all three governance stages. At the planning stage, residents are notified of developments prior to their implementation but exercise no formal authority over the content of plans, and engagement falls between the informing and consultation rungs. At the development stage, residents perform an extensive range of indispensable operational functions including manifest verification, ranger and search and rescue coordination, waste management, and trail maintenance, all without formal institutional standing or compensation, and participation occupies the consultation to placation range. At the management stage, all consequential decisions including the visitor quota, fee structures, conservation priorities, and trail

access conditions are made by the Mount Merbabu National Park Authority alone, and participation falls between the informing and placation rungs. At no stage does involvement approach the partnership threshold that marks the entry into substantive citizen power.

The participation deficit is structural rather than capacitive. The volunteer ranger network, the manifest verification arrangement, the environmental stewardship practices, and the responsive hospitality infrastructure together demonstrate an organisational sophistication that would, under a more equitable institutional arrangement, fully qualify the community for a meaningful co-management role. The tokenism observed is therefore not an inevitability of community condition but a product of the present governance architecture, which concentrates formal authority within the Authority whilst absorbing community labour into institutional processes without conferring institutional standing in return.

Across the five dimensions of impact, the substantive promise of Community Based Tourism is most fully realised in the cultural domain, partially realised in the economic, social, and environmental domains, and largely unrealised in the political domain. The dimension in which residents retain greatest de facto authority over the activities shaping outcomes is also the dimension in which the model most fully delivers its substantive promise, whilst the dimension in which authority is most thoroughly concentrated within the Authority is the dimension in which the model least fully delivers. Within the economic dimension, the fourteen basecamps documented in Dusun Genting further reveal a within basecamp distributive pattern

in which visitor traffic and revenue concentrate at better equipped operators, with the operators of less equipped basecamps capturing a substantially smaller share of the available revenue.

The level of community participation, in other words, conditions the dimensions of impact. The substantive realisation of Community Based Tourism along the Selo route requires not merely the active involvement of residents in operational tasks, of which there is already an abundance, but the institutional reconfiguration of authority such that the community holds decisional rights commensurate with its operational contributions. Participation that does not redistribute authority cannot, by the terms of the framework adopted in this study, count as participation in any substantive sense. The level of impact cannot be raised without first raising the level of participation, and the level of participation cannot be raised without altering the institutional architecture through which authority is presently distributed.

4.2 Recommendation

The findings of this study suggest several directions through which Community Based Tourism in Tarubatang Village, and in comparable contexts within the Indonesian national park system, may be repositioned toward more equitable and sustainable practice. Because the analytical premise of the study holds that the level of participation determines the realisation of impact, the recommendations advanced in this section are oriented toward redressing the deficit identified at the level of governance architecture itself. They are addressed in turn to the National Park Authority, the village government, the host community,

regional and national policy makers, and future researchers. Taken together, the recommendations propose a coordinated transition from the present tokenistic arrangement toward a formalised partnership in which the operational contributions of the community are matched by institutional standing, equitable compensation, and structurally protected decisional authority

4.2.1 Recommendations for the Mount Merbabu National Park Authority

For the Mount Merbabu National Park Authority, the most urgent priority consists in the formalisation of a co management arrangement with the host community of Dusun Genting. The present condition, in which residents discharge stewardship functions indistinguishable in practical terms from those of formal Ranger personnel without corresponding authority or compensation, is institutionally untenable over the long term. A formally negotiated co management memorandum should accordingly be developed, granting community representatives binding rather than advisory standing in decisions concerning visitor quotas, fee structures, conservation priorities, and trail management. The instrument should specify the procedural mechanisms through which local input is integrated into institutional decisions, the conditions under which community representatives may exercise binding rather than consultative authority, and the means by which non compliance with co management obligations may be addressed through formal accountability arrangements. The substantive effect of such an instrument would be to shift involvement from the consultation rung toward the partnership rung of the framework adopted in this study, and to strengthen the institutional robustness of tourism governance along the Selo route accordingly.

Beyond formalisation of the co management relationship, recruitment policies for formal Ranger and operational positions should prioritise qualified residents of Tarubatang Village. The prevailing inequity in access to formal employment requires redress, and compensation should be aligned with the contributions residents already provide informally. The Authority should additionally invest in capacity building programmes designed to prepare residents for the expanded formal roles such reconfiguration would entail, recognising that the existing organisational sophistication of the community provides a strong foundation whilst formal institutional standing requires complementary technical and administrative competencies. Engagement practices between the Authority and the broader village community should also shift from the instrumental and infrequent pattern currently described by community side respondents toward a sustained and structured relationship characterised by regular community forums, transparent information sharing concerning institutional decisions and the rationales underlying them, and clear mechanisms for receiving and responding to community concerns. The transition would address the principal social vulnerability identified in the findings, namely the perception of institutional distance and instrumentality that currently characterises the relationship between the community and the Authority.

4.2.2 Recommendations for the Village Government

For the village government, the strengthening of institutional capacity to negotiate with the National Park Authority and to coordinate community side involvement constitutes a parallel priority. The establishment of a formally

constituted village tourism body, composed of representatives drawn from the active tourism engaged population, the broader residential community including currently disengaged residents, and the village administration itself, would provide a structured channel through which collective positions can be developed, deliberated upon, and conveyed to the Authority. The body should be granted formal recognition through a village regulation known as Peraturan Desa, ensuring that its standing is institutionally durable rather than dependent upon the continued commitment of particular individuals. Its deliberative procedures should be transparent and inclusive, with explicit provisions for representation of older residents and other currently underrepresented groups whose perspectives are essential to a fully representative community position.

The drafting of a community authored visitor code of conduct, supported by visible signage at the trailhead and by orientation procedures at the basecamps, would address the cultural vulnerability identified in the findings and shift the regulatory posture of the community from informal sanctioning toward formally legitimated stewardship. The code should specify behavioural expectations of visitors with respect to local cultural norms, environmental conduct, and interaction with residents, and should be developed through a participatory process that draws upon the existing knowledge of the community concerning the principal concerns associated with visitor behaviour. The village government should additionally develop and publicise a structured allocation framework for the deployment of Pendapatan Asli Desa revenue derived from tourism, ensuring that the fiscal resource is invested in development priorities identified through participatory

processes rather than allocated unilaterally by the village administration. The transparency such a framework would secure would both strengthen public trust in the fiscal management of the village government and reinforce the substantive stake of residents in the continued development of tourism along the route.

4.2.3 Recommendations for the Host Community

For the host community of Dusun Genting, the existing organisational infrastructure, including the volunteer ranger network, the manifest verification arrangement, the basecamp coordination practices, and the monthly cleaning activities, provides a sound foundation upon which more formalised cooperative structures may be developed. The gradual transition of voluntary hosting and stewardship functions toward modestly remunerated cooperative enterprises, governed by transparent benefit sharing arrangements, would address the structural sustainability concerns identified in the economic dimension whilst preserving the cultural integrity of communal hospitality. The cultural value associated with hospitality need not stand in opposition to modest compensation. Formal remuneration may be understood as an institutional recognition of contributions that residents currently provide at full personal cost, thereby reinforcing rather than displacing the values that animate hospitality practice in the village.

Capacity building initiatives focused on tourism management, environmental interpretation, financial literacy, and digital service infrastructure would further enhance the preparedness of the community for the expanded governance role that a formalised co management arrangement would entail. Such initiatives should be designed in partnership with academic institutions, tourism sector training

providers, and the National Park Authority, with curriculum content reflecting the specific operational realities of Tarubatang Village rather than generic templates of tourism management practice. Residents should additionally consider the establishment of formal partnerships with academic and civil society organisations whose advocacy and technical capacity may support the negotiating position of the community in its dealings with the Authority. The active integration of currently disengaged residents, particularly older community members, into tourism governance should be pursued as a deliberate institutional priority, through outreach mechanisms that recognise the legitimacy of their perspectives and the value of their contributions, even where these may differ in form from those of the currently active subgroup.

4.2.4 Recommendations for Regional and National Policy Makers

For policy makers at the regional and national levels, the findings of this study suggest several institutional reforms that would support the broader realisation of the substantive promise of Community Based Tourism within the Indonesian national park system. The legal and regulatory frameworks governing the relationship between national park authorities and host communities should be reviewed and revised to provide explicit institutional grounding for co management arrangements that grant binding decisional authority to community representatives. Existing regulations governing community involvement in protected area management, whilst normatively supportive of local participation, do not consistently specify the procedural and structural conditions under which such

involvement is meaningful rather than tokenistic. The normative gap thus identified should be addressed through clarifying regulations and operational guidelines.

Funding mechanisms designed to support Community Based Tourism at the village level should be reviewed and, where necessary, expanded, with particular attention to the structural barriers that currently impede the transition of communities from informal to formalised cooperative enterprise. The integration of tourism considerations into national development planning, presently uneven across institutional jurisdictions, would also benefit from greater coherence, ensuring that protected area management and tourism development are pursued as complementary rather than competing institutional priorities. The regulatory framework governing the allocation of formal employment opportunities within protected area operations should furthermore be reviewed to ensure that host communities receive priority access to formal positions, addressing the inequity identified in the economic dimension of the present findings.

4.2.5 Recommendations for Future Research

For future research, several directions emerge from the present findings as analytically productive. A longitudinal study tracing the evolution of participatory dynamics in Tarubatang Village across successive years would clarify whether the structural conditions described in the present analysis are static or amenable to change through deliberate institutional intervention. Such an investigation would be particularly valuable if conducted in conjunction with the implementation of the reforms recommended in the foregoing sections, since it would provide empirical evidence concerning the conditions under which formalised co management

arrangements produce substantive shifts in participatory quality and, by extension, in the dimensions of impact that participation conditions.

Comparative research conducted across other access villages within the Mount Merbabu National Park system, and across analogous national park contexts elsewhere in Indonesia, would establish whether the patterns identified here are specific to the Selo route or constitute a more generalised governance condition of Community Based Tourism in protected area settings. Comparative work of this kind would also identify the contextual factors, including community organisational capacity, the institutional culture of the managing authority, and the regional regulatory environment, that condition the realisation of meaningful involvement. Further qualitative inquiry into the perspectives of older and tourism disengaged residents, who constitute a substantial proportion of the village population yet were necessarily underrepresented in the present informant sample, would enrich understanding of the social distribution of tourism's effects and the institutional conditions under which broader community engagement might be cultivated.

Scholarly attention to the legal and policy instruments through which co management arrangements may be constituted within the Indonesian national park system would provide a foundation upon which the recommendations advanced in the present chapter may be translated into actionable institutional reform. Comparative analysis of co management arrangements in protected area contexts internationally, including those in which formalised power sharing has been achieved, would identify transferable institutional designs that may be adapted to the Indonesian context. Quantitative research complementing the qualitative

findings of the present study, including survey based measurement of community attitudes toward tourism development and statistical analysis of the economic distribution of tourism revenues within Tarubatang Village, would furnish a more comprehensive empirical foundation for both academic understanding and policy intervention. The combined pursuit of these directions would contribute substantively to the broader scholarly project of clarifying the institutional conditions under which Community Based Tourism delivers upon its name, and would equip future practitioners with the empirical and conceptual resources.