

SOCIO-CULTURAL STUDY OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES AT WAY TEBING CEPPEA

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ABSTRACT

The development of tourism at the local level has driven significant changes in the socio-cultural aspects of community life. The Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) Tourism Area in Taman Baru Village, Penengahan District, South Lampung Regency is one of the destinations experiencing this transformation. This study aims to examine the socio-cultural impacts of tourism activities in the area.

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques. The results indicate that tourism activities at WTC have a positive impact on the socio-cultural aspects of the community. In terms of cultural promotion, tourism serves as a medium for preserving and introducing local traditions through performances such as traditional dances, martial arts, and communal dining traditions, although these activities are still conducted on a limited basis. In terms of social interaction, tourism increases the intensity of relationships among community members, fostering stronger social cohesion, cooperation, and solidarity. Furthermore, in terms of behavioral change, the community becomes more open, adaptive, and professional in interacting with visitors, while still maintaining local cultural values. Overall, tourism activities at WTC contribute positively to strengthening cultural identity, enhancing social relationships, and encouraging adaptive behavioral changes. However, more consistent management is needed to optimize and sustain these socio-cultural benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a strategic sector that not only plays a role in driving economic growth but also has a significant influence on the social and cultural dynamics of society. In Indonesia, tourism development utilizes the potential of local natural resources and culture as the main attractions of tourist destinations. The national tourism development policy, through the 2010–2025 National Tourism Development Plan (RIPPARNAS), emphasizes that tourism functions not only as a

recreational activity but also as a means of cultural preservation and strengthening the social identity of local communities. In the context of regional development, tourism activities bring changes to community life patterns, both in the form of social interactions, cultural values, and community behavior patterns.

The presence of tourists can encourage cultural acculturation, lifestyle changes, and shifts in social values and norms. While tourism can strengthen the preservation of local culture, it also has the potential to lead to cultural commercialization and changes in social structures if not managed wisely. South Lampung Regency is one of the regions experiencing quite rapid development in the tourism sector. This is demonstrated by the increase in the number of tourist visits in recent years, as presented in the following table:

Table 1. Number of Foreign and Domestic Tourists to South Lampung Regency

Tourists	Number of Foreign and Domestic Tourists in South Lampung Regency (Jiwa)				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
International	135	6.229	64	17	117
Nusantara	236.038	443.250	616.728	742.501	1.559.886
Amount	236.173	449.479	616.792	742.518	1.560.003

Source: BPS, 2024

The data shows that tourist visits, especially domestic tourists, have experienced a significant increase. This increase reflects the high level of tourism activity that has the potential to impact the social and cultural conditions of the local community. One of the developing tourist destinations in South Lampung Regency is the Way Tebing Ceppa Natural Baths (WTC), located in Taman Baru Village, Penengahan District. This destination has been managed community-based since 2018 through a collaboration between the village government, the community, and the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis). The existence of WTC is not only a natural tourist attraction but also a space for interaction between tourists and the local community. Based on data from the South Lampung Regency Tourism and Culture Office (2024), Way Tebing Ceppa is included in the top ten most popular tourist attractions, as shown in the following table:

Table 2. Top Ten Tourist Attractions in South Lampung

No.	Name of Tourist Attraction	Number of Visits
1.	Marina Beach	372.837
2.	Rio by The Beach	183.258
3.	Bagus Beach	129.556
4.	M. Beach	89.089
5.	Sanggar Beach	65.073
6.	Radin Intan II Tomb	58.131
7.	Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC)	43.423
8.	Natar Hot Spring	32.945
9.	Minang Rua Beach	31.959
10.	Slanik Water Park	31.571

Source: South Lampung Regency Tourism and Culture Office (2024)

Based on the table, Way Tebing Ceppa is the only natural bathing destination in the top ten, indicating high tourist interest in this destination. The high number of visits undoubtedly increases the intensity of social interactions between local communities and tourists. The development of tourist visits to Way Tebing Ceppa can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Number of Tourist Visits to Way Tebing Ceppa

Number of Tourist Visits to Way Tebing Ceppa					
Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Amount	2.572	60.548	100.137	15.860	43.423

Source: South Lampung Regency Tourism and Culture Office (2025)

The data shows that the number of tourist visits to Way Tebing Ceppa fluctuates. A significant increase occurred in 2021–2022, followed by a decline in 2023 and a rebound in 2024. This fluctuation reflects the dynamics of tourism activities, which directly and indirectly impact the social and cultural conditions of the communities surrounding the tourist area.

According to the tourism impact theory (Mathieson & Wall, 2006), the intensity of tourist visits will influence socio-cultural changes in the community, such as patterns of social interaction, changes in livelihoods, lifestyles, and the values and norms that develop within the community. In the context of Way Tebing Ceppa, tourism activities have created a space for interaction between tourists and the local community, potentially triggering socio-cultural changes, both in the form of adaptation and shifts in local values. However, despite the continued growth of tourism activities in Way Tebing Ceppa, to date there has been no specific and in-depth study examining the resulting socio-cultural impacts. Most previous research has focused on aspects of tourism development and potential, resulting in limited studies on socio-cultural aspects. Therefore, this study aims to examine the socio-cultural impacts arising from tourism activities in the Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) area, Taman Baru Village, Penengahan District, South Lampung Regency. The results are expected to serve as a basis for formulating tourism management policies that are not only oriented towards increasing tourist visits but also maintaining the sustainability of the local community's social and cultural values.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the socio-cultural impacts of tourism activities in the Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) area. The research focused on three aspects of socio-cultural impacts based on Mathieson and Wall's perspective: (1) the promotion of culture and customs to tourists, (2) social interaction among community members, and (3) changes in community behavior.

The promotion of culture and customs examined the use of tourism activities as a means of preserving and introducing local culture to tourists. Social interaction focused on changes in social relationships, communication, cooperation, solidarity, and social cohesion among community members resulting from tourism activities. Changes in community behavior examined adjustments in attitudes, communication patterns, professionalism, and community adaptation to the presence of tourists while maintaining local cultural values.

The research was conducted at the Way Tebing Ceppa Natural Baths in Taman Baru Village, Penengahan District, South Lampung Regency. The location was purposively selected because Way Tebing Ceppa is a community-based tourism destination involving local community participation in tourism activities. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation involving tourism managers (Pokdarwis), local residents, business owners, and the village government.

Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was established through source and technique triangulation, as well as member checking.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview of the Research Location

4.1.1 Taman Baru Village

Taman Baru Village is located in Penengahan District, South Lampung Regency, Lampung Province. Administratively, this village was designated a Quality Family Village (KB Village) based on Decree of the Taman Baru Village Head No. 140/123/VII.06.07/Sk/2024. Geographically, the village is located at coordinates 5°44'23.10" South Latitude and 105°39'29.92" East Longitude, with the area dominated by residential areas and agricultural land. Its strategic location, approximately 3 km from the sub-district center and 10 km from the district capital, provides good accessibility.

The population of Taman Baru Village in 2025 was recorded at 1,163 people, consisting of 594 men and 569 women, in 342 families. The community's education level is dominated by secondary education graduates, demonstrating the potential of human resources to support village development. Economically, the majority of the population works in the agricultural sector, although there is a shift towards trade and services. The development of the tourism sector in this village has also influenced the community's lives, both economically and socio-culturally. Administratively, the Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) tourist area is located within Taman Baru Village, so the growing tourism activities have become part of the community's social dynamics, including in the patterns of interaction, participation, and daily activities of the village community.

4.1.2 Way Tebing Ceppa Tourist Attractions



Source: Visitor Archives, 2025

Figure 1. Way Tebing Ceppa Tourist Attraction

Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) is a natural bathing tourist destination located in Taman Baru Village, Penengahan District, South Lampung Regency, with water sourced from the Rajabasa Mountains spring. Initially, this area was only used by the local community for daily needs without any tourism management. As the number of visitors increased, the community began to develop this area into a tourist destination by forming a Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) in 2017. This tourist attraction was then officially opened in 2018 with a community-based management concept. The existence of WTC not only provides economic benefits but also brings changes in the socio-cultural life of the community. Tourism activities encourage increased interaction between local communities and tourists, as well as give rise to changes in activity patterns, lifestyles, and forms of community participation in tourism activities. In addition, the development of MSMEs and tourism services indicates a social transformation in the community's livelihood structure. Currently, WTC is equipped with various facilities such as a bathing pool, parking area, gazebo, bathrooms, water rides, and a MSME canteen. Management of tourism facilities and activities is carried out collectively by the community through Pokdarwis.

4.1.3 Pokdarwis Way Tebing Ceppa

The Way Tebing Ceppa Tourism Group (Pokdarwis) is a community organization established in 2017 by the residents of Taman Baru Village as the primary manager of the Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) tourism area within the village. The Pokdarwis was established to increase community participation in the management and development of community-based tourism destinations. In its implementation, Pokdarwis not only acts as a tourism manager but also as a social platform for the community to build cooperation, strengthen social interactions, and raise collective awareness of the

importance of sustainable tourism management. Pokdarwis carries out its functions based on the Sapta Pesona principle, which includes aspects of security, order, cleanliness, coolness, beauty, friendliness, and memories. Structurally, this organization has several working groups (pokja) such as those in security, facility management, promotion, MSMEs, the environment, and human resource development. Through this role, Pokdarwis is a key actor in connecting tourism activities with the socio-cultural life of the Taman Baru Village community, so that the existence of the Way Tebing Ceppa tourism not only has an economic impact but also shapes socio-cultural dynamics at the local level.

4.2 Socio-Cultural Impact

1. Promotion of Culture and Customs to Tourists

Research results indicate that tourism activities at Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) are used as a means of promoting the local culture of the Taman Baru Village community. This promotion includes performances of the Sigeh Pengunten Dance as a welcoming dance, pencak silat performances, the traditional nyeruit dance, and an introduction to Tuping Lampung. Interviews revealed that all informants reported that these activities received a positive response from tourists, demonstrated by enthusiasm, curiosity, and interest in learning more about local culture. Internally, these activities encourage the community to re-engage in cultural practices. The increased frequency of arts training, the involvement of the younger generation, and the rise of pride in local identity demonstrate that tourism activities have served as a social stimulus for maintaining cultural sustainability. This indicates that culture is not only preserved as heritage but also actively reproduced in contemporary contexts. Observations indicate that cultural performances are held at specific occasions, such as government visits or traditional events, and have not yet become part of daily routines.



(Source: Way Tebing Ceppa Tourism Group Archives, 2025)

Figure 2. Cultural Performance at Way Tebing Ceppa

The image shows that cultural expressions are still displayed in formal and ceremonial spaces. This indicates that the community still has control over when and how culture is presented to tourists.

Analyzed using Mathieson & Wall (2024), this situation indicates a tendency toward cultural revitalization, not commodification. Revitalization occurs due to the strengthening of cultural values through external appreciation, as evidenced by increased community participation.

However, because performances are not yet routine, cultural interaction between tourists and the community remains limited. More deeply, this situation indicates that culture at WTC is still in the "cultural symbolization" phase, where culture is presented as a representative identity, rather than as a practice integrated into daily tourist life. This means that tourism has not yet fully become a space for intense cultural exchange, but rather a medium for limited cultural introduction. The implication is that, despite the positive impacts (preservation), the economic and educational potential of culture has not been optimally utilized. If managed more consistently, culture can develop into a cultural experience, not just an incidental spectacle.

2. Social Interaction Between Communities

The research results show that the presence of the WTC has significantly increased the intensity of social interaction among the Taman Baru Village community. Before tourism, interactions between residents tended to be limited to specific activities. However, after the development of the WTC, residents began meeting, collaborating, and communicating more frequently in their daily activities. Initially individual interactions shifted to collective ones, particularly through involvement in tourism management activities such as tourism groups (Pokdarwis), MSMEs, and local labor. Social relationships evolved from simply "getting to know each other" to "interdependence" in the context of work and the economy. This was reinforced by practices of social solidarity such as mutual assistance, shared contributions, and shift work assignments. Observations revealed intense social interactions, both within work and outside of work, such as gatherings during breaks.



(Source: Pokdarwis Archives, 2024)

Figure 3. Community Social Interactions at the WTC

This figure demonstrates that the social interactions developed were not only formal (work-related) but also informal (social gatherings), indicating an emotional closeness among residents. According to Mathieson & Wall (2024), this increase in interaction is a result of the increased frequency of meetings due to tourism activities. However, upon closer analysis, this phenomenon indicates the formation of social capital within the community, characterized by trust, cooperation, and strong social networks. The existence of the WTC serves as a new social space that brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds, thereby accelerating the process of social integration. The absence of age restrictions in interactions indicates a more inclusive social structure. From a sustainable tourism perspective (UNWTO, 2013), this condition reflects social sustainability, due to increased social cohesion and community participation. However, on the other hand, dependence on tourism activities also has the potential to create risks such as conflicts of interest or business competition if not managed properly. Thus, social interactions at the WTC not only increased quantitatively but also underwent a qualitative transformation, from ordinary social relationships to relationships based on solidarity and shared interests.

3. Changes in Community Behavior

The research results show that tourism activities at the WTC have led to behavioral changes in the residents of Taman Baru Village. These changes are evident in increased openness to outsiders, friendlier attitudes, and the ability to control emotions when dealing with tourists of diverse characters. Previously passive in external interactions, the community has now become more adaptive and communicative. When dealing with conflict, they no longer use an emotional approach, but prioritize deliberation and communication. This indicates a shift in problem-solving patterns, leading to a more rational and collective approach. Observations indicate that conflicts between visitors and management are resolved through deliberation until a mutual agreement is reached.



(Source: Way Tebing Ceppa Tourism Group Archives, 2025)

Figure 4. Problem-Resolving Process at the WTC

This figure shows that the community has internalized the values of communication and emotional control in dealing with conflict situations. Furthermore, there have been changes in professionalism, such as improved service skills, use of the Indonesian language, and communication and marketing skills. These changes indicate that the community is undergoing a transformation from an agrarian society to a service society.

According to Mathieson & Wall (2024), this change represents a form of social adjustment. However, upon closer analysis, it also reflects a process of behavioral modernization, where people are beginning to adopt the values of efficiency, service, and professionalism required in the tourism industry. Interestingly, this change does not eliminate local values. Traditional and religious activities continue, demonstrating cultural duality, namely the community's ability to combine traditional and modern values simultaneously. Consequently, the community is not experiencing social disorganization but is instead forming new, more adaptive behavioral patterns. However, if left unchecked, lifestyle changes have the potential to lead to value shifts, especially among the younger generation. Thus, the behavioral changes in the WTC community are adaptive-constructive, where the community is able to adapt to tourism developments without losing its local cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

Based on research findings, tourism activities in the Way Tebing Ceppa (WTC) area in Taman Baru Village have had a significant impact on the community's socio-cultural aspects. This impact is evident through cultural promotion, social interaction, and changes in community behavior. In terms of cultural promotion, tourism plays a role in introducing and preserving local culture through various traditional performances that have received a positive response from tourists, although these performances are still incidental. In terms of social interaction, the presence of the WTC has improved relationships between communities, making them more intimate, open, and harmonious, and strengthening solidarity and a sense of togetherness. In terms of behavioral change, the community has become friendlier, more adaptive, and more professional in interacting with tourists without diminishing local cultural values. Overall, tourism activities at Way Tebing Ceppa have had a positive socio-cultural impact, but more consistent management is still needed to ensure optimal and sustainable development of the resulting benefits.

To sustain these socio-cultural benefits, the tourism managers and village government should establish more consistent cultural activities and involve local communities in their planning and implementation. Regular traditional performances, community-based cultural events, and visitor engagement activities can be developed to strengthen cultural preservation and social interaction. In addition, capacity-building programs for local residents, particularly in tourism services and visitor communication, should be conducted periodically to support professional and adaptive behavior while maintaining local cultural values.

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