

A Local-Potential-Based Development Model for a Nature Tourism Village at the Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan Destinations, Serayu Larangan Village, Purbalingga Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to formulate a local-potential-based nature tourism village development model for the Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan destinations in Serayu Larangan Village, Purbalingga Regency. The study focuses on three interrelated dimensions: local asset identification, community governance, and ecological sustainability. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. Data were collected through field observations, in-depth interviews, and document review, and analyzed using an interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that the current development of the destination is driven by strong local initiative and relies heavily on natural assets, especially waterfalls, river landscapes, and community-based labor. However, tourism governance remains at an early stage, with management concentrated in a small core group and wider community participation not yet institutionalized. From an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) perspective, the destination has succeeded in mobilizing natural and social assets, but it has not yet fully integrated institutional and economic assets. From a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) perspective, participatory governance, benefit-sharing, and formal village-level institutions remain weak. From a Social-Ecological Systems (SES) perspective, the dual function of the area as both a tourism attraction and a community water source requires stricter ecological safeguards, especially in relation to visitor pressure, waste management, and watershed protection. This study proposes an integrated development model that combines local asset mobilization, participatory governance, and ecological carrying-capacity management. The model is expected to guide the transition from spontaneous tourism growth toward a more inclusive, accountable, and sustainable village tourism system.

Keywords: nature tourism village, local potential, ABCD, CBT, SES, waterfall tourism

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan merumuskan model pengembangan desa wisata alam berbasis potensi lokal pada destinasi Curug Kedung Siung dan Curug Surupan di Desa Serayu Larangan, Kabupaten Purbalingga. Fokus penelitian diarahkan pada tiga dimensi yang saling terkait, yaitu identifikasi aset lokal, tata kelola masyarakat, dan keberlanjutan ekologi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi lapangan, wawancara mendalam, dan telaah dokumen, lalu dianalisis dengan model interaktif melalui kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengembangan destinasi saat ini ditopang kuat oleh inisiatif lokal dan bertumpu pada aset alam, terutama air terjun, lanskap sungai, dan kerja kolektif masyarakat. Namun demikian, tata kelola wisata masih berada pada tahap awal, dengan pengelolaan yang terkonsentrasi pada kelompok inti dan partisipasi masyarakat luas yang belum terlembagakan. Dalam perspektif Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), destinasi telah berhasil memobilisasi aset alam dan aset sosial, tetapi belum optimal mengintegrasikan aset kelembagaan dan ekonomi. Dalam perspektif Community-Based Tourism (CBT), tata kelola partisipatif, distribusi manfaat, dan kelembagaan desa masih lemah. Dalam perspektif Social-Ecological Systems (SES), fungsi ganda kawasan sebagai daya tarik wisata sekaligus sumber air masyarakat menuntut pengamanan ekologis yang lebih ketat, terutama terkait tekanan kunjungan, pengelolaan sampah, dan perlindungan daerah aliran air. Penelitian ini menghasilkan model pengembangan terpadu yang menggabungkan pemanfaatan aset lokal, penguatan tata kelola partisipatif, dan pengelolaan daya dukung ekologis. Model tersebut diharapkan menjadi dasar transformasi dari pertumbuhan wisata yang spontan menuju sistem desa wisata yang lebih inklusif, akuntabel, dan berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: desa wisata alam, potensi lokal, ABCD, CBT, SES, wisata curug

Introduction

Rural tourism and tourism villages have increasingly assumed an important position in regional development strategies in Indonesia, particularly in the post-pandemic context. At the national level, the development of tourism villages places local communities at the centre of economic recovery based on authentic experience, while at the regional level in Central Java, official indicators point to a tangible recovery: tourism-attraction revenues in 2023 had already surpassed pandemic-era levels, and tourism once again became an economic driver for the region (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Jawa Tengah, 2025). The shift in tourist preferences towards nature-based experiences, tranquillity, and the authenticity of village life has created new momentum for tourism grounded in landscapes, rivers, waterfalls, and local culture.

At the same time, recent literature shows that the development of tourism villages in Indonesia is still dominated by studies that map potential, participation, or economic impact in only partial ways. A literature review on tourism villages in Indonesia underscores the strength of community-based approaches, but also shows that many studies stop at the stage of potential inventory without formulating an integrative operational model (Kusumaningrum, Digdowiseiso, & Yusof, 2023). A systematic analysis of rural tourism research in Indonesia likewise demonstrates the predominance of qualitative-descriptive approaches and the still limited integration of local potential, governance, and ecological limits within a single developmental framework (Mukti & Fadlurrahman, 2025). Studies on Desa Pulutan based on local potential and on the development of nature tourism in Desa Ngliman both confirm the importance of local assets and community participation, but they do not offer a model that explicitly links asset mapping, community institutions, and the management of ecological

carrying capacity (Septeri et al., 2024; Zulaika, Rifai, & Aripudin, 2023).

This gap becomes especially relevant in the case of Serayu Larangan Village, Kecamatan Mrebet, Kabupaten Purbalingga. Officially, Serayu Larangan has long appeared in the map of tourism-village development in Purbalingga Regency. The *Renstra Dinporapar 2021–2026* designates Serayu Larangan as an emerging tourism village, while the *Laporan Kinerja Dinporapar* records 2,712 visits in 2022 and 650 visits in 2023, indicating that the village's tourism base already exists but remains fragile and fluctuating (Dinas Pemuda, Olahraga, dan Pariwisata Kabupaten Purbalingga, 2021; 2022; 2023). In 2022, the Pokdarwis of Serayu Larangan also received institutional-refreshment assistance, and in 2023 the village was among the recipients of tourism-related financial assistance through the Central Java Provincial Budget. Beyond this, the village had already developed earlier community-based tourism and economic initiatives, such as Pasar Lohjinawi as an icon of citizen empowerment, as well as the strengthening of digital payment literacy for local business actors in 2025 (Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Desa Kabupaten Purbalingga, 2020; Desa Serayu Larangan, 2024). All of this suggests that Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan did not emerge in a vacuum, but rather upon a socio-economic landscape already endowed with embryonic tourism assets and institutional foundations.

More specifically, Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan are located in Serayu Larangan Village and began to be managed by local residents through environmental communal work in mid-2024, later developing into a self-managed tourist destination from 5 July 2024 onwards. Official sources from RRI and local media report that basic tourism facilities were subsequently built in stages through community mutual cooperation (RRI, 2026). The field findings of this study add one important fact: the

waterfall area is not only recreationally valuable, but also performs a vital socio-ecological function because it is connected to local community water sources. This means that tourism development in this area cannot be understood simply as a destination project, but rather as a process of negotiating economic utilisation, community governance, and the protection of the local ecological system.

Against this background, this study proceeds from the argument that the main problem in the development of Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan does not lie in the absence of potential, but in the lack of a nature-tourism-village development model capable of simultaneously connecting local potential, community governance strengthening, and ecological carrying-capacity protection. Accordingly, this research aims to: (1) identify the local assets that underpin destination development; (2) analyse tourism governance from a community perspective; (3) assess the socio-ecological limits and risks of the destinations; and (4) formulate a local-potential-based development model for a nature tourism village that is more directed, participatory, and sustainable.

Theoretical Framework

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

ABCD emerged as a critique of deficit-based development approaches that tend to position communities as weak, passive, and dependent on external assistance. By contrast, ABCD views communities as holders of assets and agents of development, on the assumption that sustainable change is more likely to occur when development begins from a community's internal strengths: human assets, social assets, natural assets, economic assets, and institutional assets (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

In the context of a nature tourism village, ABCD is useful for understanding how a destination is built not merely through physical investment,

but through the activation of local assets already embedded within the community. However, the literature also shows that ABCD has limitations when asset strengthening is not accompanied by attention to governance, benefit distribution, and relations of power. For this reason, the approach needs to be connected to a framework that more explicitly addresses community management and participation.

Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

CBT developed as a critique of tourism models centred on investors, characterised by exploitation, and inattentive to local community interests. In CBT, local communities are expected to become the principal actors in tourism planning, management, and benefit distribution. The CBT literature emphasises that success is determined not merely by symbolic involvement of residents, but by the extent of actual control, influence, ownership, and benefits genuinely received by the community (Dodds, Ali, & Galaski, 2018; Zielinski et al., 2020).

For the purposes of this study, CBT is employed to analyse whether the management of Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan has moved towards participatory governance, or whether it still depends largely on a small core group and informal mechanisms. This approach is also important for evaluating the risks of benefit concentration, citizen exclusion, and the weak institutionalisation of tourism at the village level.

Social-Ecological Systems (SES)

The SES approach understands society and the environment as integrated systems that mutually shape one another. Within this framework, economic activities, governance, and social practices cannot be separated from the ecological capacities that sustain them. Ostrom argues that sustainability can only be achieved when the interaction among the resource system, actors, rules, and the environment is managed within maintainable limits. McGinnis and Ostrom further strengthen the importance of

viewing the relationships among the *resource system, resource units, governance system, and actors* simultaneously (Ostrom, 2009; McGinnis & Ostrom, 2014).

For waterfall destinations, the SES approach is especially relevant because waterfalls, river flows, riparian vegetation, and water quality are not merely scenic backdrops for tourism, but the very core of the resource system that sustains local life. Consequently, sound governance of nature tourism must take into account carrying capacity, visitor pressure, and mechanisms for ecosystem protection. In this respect, the concept of carrying capacity remains useful as a management tool, although it must be treated adaptively and contextually rather than as a static numerical threshold (McCool & Lime, 2001).

Synthesis of the Analytical Framework

This study employs ABCD, CBT, and SES not as three isolated theories, but as a layered analytical framework. ABCD is used to map and activate local assets; CBT is used to examine how those assets are governed and who receives the benefits; while SES is used to ensure that development remains within ecologically safe limits. Through this synthesis, the development model of a nature tourism village is directed not merely towards promotion and visitor growth, but towards a balanced relationship among local assets, community governance, and environmental sustainability.

Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was selected because the research seeks to understand in depth the developmental dynamics of Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan as a specific case of an emerging nature tourism village. The case study design enables a contextual analysis of the interaction among local assets, community governance, and ecological conditions (Yin,

2018).

The research site is Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan in Serayu Larangan Village, Kecamatan Mrebet, Kabupaten Purbalingga. Informants were selected purposively on the basis of their direct involvement in, and knowledge of, destination development. They included core tourism managers, village government actors, nearby residents, local business actors, and community figures familiar with the development process. Informant selection continued until thematic sufficiency was reached.

Data were collected through three techniques. First, field observation was conducted to examine directly the physical condition of the area, accessibility, facilities, visitor flow, and the relationship between the tourist site, the local environment, and residents' activities. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted to elicit the history of destination development, management structures, participation patterns, promotional strategies, economic benefits, and environmental concerns. Third, document review was undertaken to analyse village monographs, regional policy documents, tourism performance reports, and other relevant official sources.

Data were analysed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was maintained through source and technique triangulation, namely by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentary sources. In this way, the research not only describes field conditions, but also formulates a development model that is analytically defensible.

Findings and Discussion

Local Assets: the Concrete Foundation of Destination Development

The findings show that Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan have developed from a combination of strong natural and social assets. The principal natural assets are the two waterfalls, the relatively pristine river landscape, the surrounding natural vegetation, and the visual quality of the area, all of which provide a compelling recreational experience for visitors. However, unlike many destinations that are understood merely as photographic or recreational objects, this area also has socio-ecological significance for local residents. Field interviews reveal that the springs and water flows around the waterfalls have long been connected to the water needs of the surrounding community, meaning that their tourism function and ecological function overlap.

From an ABCD perspective, this situation shows that tourism development at Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan did not begin from a narrative of village deficiency, but from the recognition of assets already alive within the community. This is consistent with RRI's report that tourism management emerged from communal environmental work by RT 02/RW 01 residents in mid-2024 and later developed into a self-help tourism initiative (RRI, 2026). Thus, the principal asset of the destinations is not merely the waterfalls as physical landscapes, but also traditions of mutual cooperation, collective awareness, and the social relationship between residents and the area.

The village's social and institutional assets are equally important. Serayu Larangan had already accumulated earlier experience in building tourism initiatives and community empowerment, such as Pasar Lohjinawi, promoted since 2020 as an icon of tourism and citizen empowerment, and the institutional-refreshment mentoring of Pokdarwis by Dinporapar in 2022. In addition, the official village profile shows growing digital capacity, including the promotion of local economic activities and QRIS facilitation for village business actors in 2025 (Desa Serayu Larangan,

2024; Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Desa Kabupaten Purbalingga, 2020). These findings suggest that Serayu Larangan in fact possesses socio-institutional capital that could serve as a stronger foundation for the more mature development of the waterfall destinations.

Even so, this study also shows that asset activation remains uneven. Natural assets have become the primary focus, whereas social and institutional assets have not yet been fully mobilised into a structured management system. This marks a critical point for the ABCD approach in practice: development has indeed begun from assets, but it remains heavily weighted towards physical assets rather than towards the orchestration of assets across dimensions.

Destination Governance: from Community Initiative to the Need for Institutionalisation

From the CBT perspective, the governance of Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan remains in an early phase of institutionalisation. According to interview findings, day-to-day management is handled by a relatively small core team, whose administrative and operational roles have not yet been fully institutionalised within a formal village tourism structure or village-owned enterprise (BUMDes). Such a pattern is common in destinations born of community initiative, but in the long term it creates the risk of concentrating both labour and decision-making in the hands of only a few actors.

Formally, the tourism institutional ecosystem of Serayu Larangan had in fact already been recognised by local government. The *Renstra Dinporapar Purbalingga 2021–2026* classified Serayu Larangan as an emerging tourism village. The *Laporan Kinerja Dinporapar* for 2022 and 2023 also shows that the village had been incorporated into the district's tourism-village development system, and had even received mentoring and budgetary support. However, the fluctuating official visitor figures—2,712 visits in

2022, then a drop to 650 in 2023—indicate that village tourism institutionalisation remains fragile and unstable (Dinas Pemuda, Olahraga, dan Pariwisata Kabupaten Purbalingga, 2022; 2023). In other words, Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan emerged within an already existing institutional context, but one that had not yet been fully consolidated.

Within the CBT perspective, participation cannot be reduced simply to communal labour involvement or the engagement of a small core group. Substantive participation requires decision-making space, benefit-distribution mechanisms, financial transparency, and opportunities for residents to enter the tourism value chain through food stalls, parking services, guiding, souvenirs, local products, or other services. RRI and local media report that residents have started opening small businesses and enjoying economic benefits, yet these benefits still appear preliminary and have not been governed through a transparent and institutionalised system (RRI, 2026).

Thus, the principal problem at the CBT level is not the absence of community, but the immaturity of participatory architecture. As long as governance continues to rely on a small core group and lacks resident forums, standard operating procedures, formal management bodies, or clear benefit-sharing mechanisms, the destination's social legitimacy will remain fragile. This is important, because many CBT studies show that long-term failure often arises not from a lack of natural attractiveness, but from the perception that benefit distribution and decision-making processes are unfair (Dodds et al., 2018; Zielinski et al., 2020).

The Social-Ecological System: Tourism Pressure on Resources that Also Sustain Local Life

The findings indicate that the ecological dimension is the most strategic issue in the development of Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan. The area is not merely a tourism attraction, but

also part of the water system used by the surrounding community. From an SES perspective, this means that the destination's resource system cannot be treated merely as a recreational commodity. It is a system that sustains two simultaneous interests: the tourism experience and the continuity of local life.

According to interviews with managers, visitor numbers on weekdays are relatively moderate, but on weekends they may multiply several times over. This is important not because the figures must be treated as a fixed measure of carrying capacity, but because they reveal patterns of ecological pressure that differ between ordinary days and peak days. The burden on facilities, the potential generation of waste, the risk of trail erosion, pressure on water quality, and disturbance to the serenity of the area all increase during periods of high visitation. It is precisely here that the carrying-capacity approach becomes relevant: not to produce one final number, but to help establish management thresholds, zoning, activity restrictions, and pressure-mitigation strategies (McCool & Lime, 2001).

Another ecological issue is the influx of waste from upstream river flow during heavy rains, which the managers also identified as one of the main obstacles. This is important because it shows that environmental risk at the destination does not stem solely from tourist behaviour at the site, but also from the broader ecological dynamics of the upper catchment and along the river course. Accordingly, tourism management cannot be confined to cleaning the destination point alone, but must view the area as part of a wider socio-ecological system.

The SES approach helps clarify that if visitor pressure increases without regulation, the destination may ultimately damage the very resource base on which its attractiveness depends. In the context of Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan, this threat is far from abstract:

declining water quality, waste accumulation, riparian vegetation damage, or disruption to water flow would simultaneously undermine both the tourism attraction and the basic interests of residents. SES therefore serves as a reminder that the success of nature tourism should be measured not only by visitor numbers or social-media visibility, but by the capacity of the social and institutional system to safeguard the ecological resilience of the area.

Synthesis of Findings: the Main Weakness Lies in the Relationship among Dimensions

When synthesised, the findings reveal a clear pattern. First, at the level of ABCD, natural assets and initial social assets are already present and have been mobilised. Second, at the level of CBT, community-based management has emerged but remains institutionally weak. Third, at the level of SES, the area faces real ecological risks because of its dual function as both a tourism destination and a community water source. In other words, the main problem lies not in the absence of potential, but in the fact that assets, governance, and carrying capacity have not yet been linked within a single developmental design.

This is the weak point of many emerging nature tourism villages in Indonesia: development advances rapidly through promotion and visitation, while institutional structures and ecological safeguards lag behind. Indonesian literature on tourism villages reveals a similar pattern: local potential and participation are often well described, but applicable integrative models that connect assets, institutions, and ecological sustainability remain limited (Kusumaningrum et al., 2023; Mukti & Fadlurrahman, 2025).

The Proposed Development Model: the ASET-GOV-ECO Model

Based on the synthesis of ABCD, CBT, and SES, this study formulates the ASET-GOV-ECO Model (*Asset Mobilization – Governance*

Strengthening – Ecological Safeguarding) as a local-potential-based development model for the nature tourism village of Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan.

First, participatory mapping and activation of local assets. The initial step should not be promotion, but participatory asset mapping: natural assets (waterfalls, river, vegetation, scenery), social assets (mutual cooperation, community networks, youth), economic assets (stalls, parking, guide services, local products), cultural assets (local narratives, village traditions), and institutional assets (village government, Pokdarwis, BUMDes, community groups). This process should result in the zoning of area functions: a core conservation zone, visitor zones, community economic zones, and service zones.

Second, the strengthening of governance institutions. The destination needs to be managed by a formal institution recognised by the village, for example a working unit under BUMDes or a joint management body with a clear mandate. This structure should include a community deliberation forum, clearly defined role distribution, visit SOPs, financial mechanisms, and an accountable benefit-sharing system. It is at this point that CBT principles are substantively realised.

Third, the safeguarding of the social-ecological system. Tourism development must be subject to ecological safeguards: protection of water sources, waste control, restrictions on activity in sensitive areas, environmentally friendly trail design, and periodic monitoring of cleanliness and water-flow conditions. Visitor numbers on peak days need to be managed adaptively through time-slot limitations, parking management, or capacity restrictions in particular areas where necessary.

Fourth, the integration of local products and value chains. Tourism should not stop at entrance tickets and photo spots. The village

needs to connect the destination with community products: culinary offerings, guide services, MSMEs, village tourism packages, tourism markets, cultural activities, and digital payments. This will broaden the distribution of economic benefits and reduce the concentration of income at the core management point.

Fifth, adaptive monitoring and collective learning. The model requires periodic evaluation based on simple yet measurable indicators: number of visits, number of local business actors involved, residents' perceptions, cleanliness conditions, facility quality, and key ecological issues. In this way, management becomes adaptive rather than static in response to changes in visitor numbers, seasonal conditions, and village social dynamics.

The ASET-GOV-ECO Model underscores that a sustainable nature tourism village is not the product of a single intervention, but of the alignment of three simultaneous logics: the activation of local assets, the institutionalisation of community participation, and the safeguarding of ecological limits. This is precisely what is not yet fully present at Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan today.

Conclusion

This study shows that Curug Kedung Siung and Curug Surupan possess a strong foundation for development as a local-potential-based nature tourism village. That foundation is evident in the richness of natural assets, the residents' tradition of mutual cooperation, the initial support of the village government, and the prior existence of tourism-related institutional traces in Serayu Larangan Village. However, destination development remains relatively spontaneous and is not yet bound together by an integrated governance model.

From the ABCD perspective, the destinations have successfully mobilised natural and social assets, but have not yet optimally integrated

institutional and economic assets. From the CBT perspective, community participation remains at an initial stage and has not yet been fully institutionalised within decision-making mechanisms and fair benefit distribution. From the SES perspective, the role of the area as a community water source places the destinations within ecologically sensitive limits, such that tourism development without adequate environmental safeguards risks damaging its own ecological basis.

On the basis of these findings, this study concludes that the most appropriate development model is the integrative ASET-GOV-ECO model, which requires that the development of a nature tourism village be pursued through three principal pillars: the mobilisation of local assets, the strengthening of participatory governance, and the protection of ecological carrying capacity. Without the integration of these three pillars, tourism development risks remaining confined to promotion and short-term surges in visitor numbers, while failing to build a just and sustainable village tourism system.

Recommendations

The Government of Serayu Larangan Village should immediately facilitate the establishment of a formal management institution connected to the village structure and equipped with clear community participation mechanisms. Management should also be complemented by rules on benefit-sharing, visitor SOPs, and channels of financial transparency.

Dinporapar Kabupaten Purbalingga should treat Curug Kedung Siung–Surupan as a case of an emerging destination requiring institutional coaching, rather than merely destination promotion. Such mentoring should include governance strengthening, guide training, tourism-package development, MSME strengthening, and environmental management.

The managers and village government need to formulate an area-based ecological protection system, especially for waste management, the safeguarding of springs and river flow, and the regulation of visits on peak days. At the same time, the village should integrate the destinations with local economic products so that tourism benefits are distributed more broadly and strengthen the community economy.

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