

## DYNAMIC SOCIAL EQUILIBRIUM IN WAKATOBI COASTAL COMMUNITIES: AN AGIL ANALYSIS OF POST-PANDEMIC TOURISM TRANSFORMATION

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### ABSTRACT

Tourism growth in island regions has reshaped local livelihoods and social relations, raising questions about how communities maintain social balance amid economic change. This study examines how coastal communities in Wakatobi respond to tourism-driven transformation and maintain social equilibrium. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with 18 informants, participant observation, and administrative data from 23 households. The analysis applies the AGIL framework to explore how economic, social, and cultural processes interact within the community. The findings show that tourism encourages livelihood diversification but also creates unequal access to opportunities. These pressures are managed through three key mechanisms: a shared orientation toward collective welfare, village deliberation as a form of social regulation, and the preservation of local cultural values as boundaries against market pressures. This study proposes the Island Social Equilibrium in Tourism Expansion (ISETE) model to explain how coastal communities respond to tourism-driven transformation. The findings demonstrate that social equilibrium is not a stable condition but a continuously negotiated process shaped by tensions between economic change and social norms. The model offers a novel perspective by explaining how local communities actively sustain social stability rather than passively experiencing tourism impacts. These findings contribute to the understanding of social sustainability in tourism by highlighting the role of internal social system dynamics in maintaining community resilience.

**Keywords:** AGIL framework; social equilibrium; tourism transformation; coastal communities; social sustainability

## KESEIMBANGAN SOSIAL DINAMIS DI KOMUNITAS PESISIR WAKATOBI: ANALISIS AGIL TERHADAP TRANSFORMASI PARIWISATA PASCA-PANDEMI

### ABSTRAK

Pertumbuhan pariwisata di wilayah kepulauan telah membentuk ulang mata pencaharian lokal dan hubungan sosial, sehingga memunculkan pertanyaan mengenai bagaimana komunitas mempertahankan keseimbangan sosial di tengah perubahan ekonomi. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana komunitas pesisir di Wakatobi merespons transformasi yang didorong oleh pariwisata dan mempertahankan keseimbangan sosial. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap 18 informan, observasi partisipatif, serta data administratif dari 23 rumah tangga. Analisis menggunakan kerangka AGIL untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana proses ekonomi, sosial, dan budaya saling berinteraksi dalam komunitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pariwisata mendorong diversifikasi mata pencaharian, namun juga menciptakan ketimpangan akses terhadap peluang. Tekanan tersebut dikelola melalui tiga mekanisme utama: orientasi bersama terhadap kesejahteraan kolektif, musyawarah desa sebagai bentuk regulasi sosial, serta pelestarian nilai-nilai budaya lokal sebagai batas terhadap tekanan pasar. Penelitian ini mengusulkan model Island Social Equilibrium in Tourism Expansion (ISETE) untuk menjelaskan bagaimana komunitas pesisir merespons transformasi yang didorong oleh pariwisata. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa keseimbangan sosial bukanlah kondisi yang statis, melainkan proses yang terus dinegosiasikan dan dibentuk oleh ketegangan antara perubahan ekonomi dan norma sosial. Model ini menawarkan perspektif baru dengan menjelaskan bagaimana komunitas lokal secara aktif mempertahankan stabilitas sosial, alih-alih secara pasif mengalami dampak pariwisata. Temuan ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman tentang keberlanjutan sosial dalam pariwisata dengan menyoroti peran dinamika internal sistem sosial dalam menjaga ketahanan komunitas.

**Kata kunci:** kerangka AGIL; keseimbangan sosial; transformasi pariwisata; komunitas pesisir; keberlanjutan sosial

### INTRODUCTION

The recovery of the global tourism sector in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era marks a new phase in the restructuring of mobility- and experience-

based economies. As argued by Gössling et al. (2021) in the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a temporary deglobalization that fundamentally altered the structure and patterns of international tourist movement,

while simultaneously compelling the tourism industry to undertake comprehensive adaptation to the new post-crisis reality. The World Tourism Barometer report from United Nations Tourism (UN Tourism) noted that in 2024, approximately 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals occurred globally, reaching 99% of pre-pandemic levels, with total foreign exchange earnings amounting to USD 1.6 trillion (UN Tourism, 2024). These figures align with projections put forward by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), which affirmed that the global travel and tourism sector demonstrated a pace of recovery surpassing initial expectations, driven by a surge in pent-up tourism demand accumulated during the period of global mobility restrictions (WTTC, 2023). Although this quantitative recovery reflects the resilience of the global industry, numerous studies affirm that the recovery of tourist volumes does not automatically signify structural recovery at the level of destination communities, particularly in developing regions.

In Indonesia, the tourism sector is positioned as a national development strategy as mandated by Law Number 10 of 2009 on Tourism (Law (Act) Number 10 of 2009 on Tourism, 2009). Data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS), referring to 2023, indicate a 37% increase in foreign tourist arrivals, with the sector's contribution to national Gross Domestic Product standing at approximately 5–6% (BPS, 2024; Sugiyanto et al., 2022). Nevertheless, this growth has engendered more fundamental sociological questions concerning whether tourism growth produces structural transformation that strengthens the social sustainability of local communities, or whether it instead creates new forms of economic dependency and social vulnerability at the micro level (Boluk et al., 2019; Šegota et al., 2024).

International literature published in *Tourism Management* and *Annals of Tourism Research* demonstrates that tourism growth is inherently paradoxical: on one hand, it increases local income, yet on the other, it drives cultural commodification, inequitable distribution of benefits, and intensified social and ecological pressures (Bianchi, 2018; Seraphin et al., 2018). Recent studies in the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* have further emphasized the significance of community adaptive capacity in determining destination sustainability (O'Connor & Assaker, 2022; Matteucci et al., 2022). However, the majority of these studies remain focused on community perceptions or macroeconomic indicators (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Styliadis & Quintero, 2022), while analyses of the internal mecha-

nisms of social systems in responding to structural changes induced by tourism remain comparatively limited (Bec et al., 2016; Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011), particularly in the context of developing island regions (Cheer et al., 2018).

Wakatobi Regency in Southeast Sulawesi Province represents precisely such a context. As a premier marine tourism destination in Eastern Indonesia, Wakatobi recorded a total of 10,041 tourist arrivals in 2023, with projections indicating significant growth in subsequent years (BPS, 2025; Dinas Pariwisata Kabupaten Wakatobi, 2024). The figure of 10,041 tourist arrivals in 2023 reflects an increase compared to the pandemic period of 2021–2022, which was characterized by mobility restrictions and a sharp decline in tourist arrivals, thus reflecting a phase of destination recovery at the local level. In Pantai Cemara, Wapia-Pia Village, tourism growth has driven a structural economic shift within the community away from the fisheries sector toward community-based tourism services (King et al., 2021). At the household level, 14 out of 23 households have diversified into tourism-related activities, while 9 households remain dependent on traditional fisheries, indicating an uneven pattern of economic integration. This transformation has not only altered livelihood patterns but has also affected social relations, the distribution of roles within households, and the collective value orientation of coastal communities (Alarcón & Cole, 2019).

Although various studies have examined the economic impacts of tourism in Eastern Indonesia (Mahrudi et al., 2025; King et al., 2021), research situating these changes within a comprehensive social systems framework remains extremely limited (Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011; Bec et al., 2016). Most existing studies stop at identifying impacts without explicating how communities actively reproduce, negotiate, or reconstruct their social structures to maintain systemic equilibrium. This gap limits understanding of how coastal communities build collective adaptive capacity in the face of fluctuating and externally driven tourism pressures (Cheer et al., 2018). To address this gap, this study integrates tourism impact analysis with the AGIL social system framework to explain how social equilibrium is dynamically negotiated in island communities.

Theoretically, this study employs Talcott Parsons' social systems theory, specifically the AGIL schema (Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, Latency), to analyze how the community of Wapia-Pia Village responds to the economic and social changes resulting from tourism growth (Parsons, 2013; Parsons & Smelser, 2005). This approach en-

ables exploration of how the functions of economic adaptation, social integration, collective goal attainment, and value pattern maintenance operate simultaneously within the context of developmental transformation (Sciortino, 2021; Treviño & Staubmann, 2021).

The novelty of this study lies in integrating tourism impact analysis with the AGIL framework to explain how social equilibrium is dynamically negotiated in island communities. Diverging from the classical reading of social systems theory as developed by Talcott Parsons, which positions equilibrium as the default condition of any system, this study demonstrates that within island tourism communities, equilibrium is dynamic, temporary, and continuously negotiated through everyday social practices (Parsons, 2013; Parsons & Smelser, 2005). This argument is consonant with developments in contemporary systems theory that emphasize complexity, differentiation, and disequilibrium as inherent conditions of social systems. Accordingly, this study contributes to the extension of social systems theory within tourism studies by shifting the analytical focus from structural stability toward contextually grounded and multi-layered adaptive dynamics. These findings expand the sustainable tourism literature by demonstrating that social sustainability cannot be understood as a condition of static equilibrium, but rather as a process of continuous systemic negotiation within the context of global economic pressures.

This study contributes to the literature by offering an integrative analysis that combines tourism impact studies with the AGIL social system framework to explain how social equilibrium is actively negotiated at the community level. Rather than viewing communities as passive recipients of tourism impacts, this research highlights their role as active agents in sustaining social stability through adaptive, integrative, and normative mechanisms. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research question: How do coastal communities maintain social equilibrium in the context of tourism-driven transformation?

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a critical case study design. The case study is categorized as critical because Wapia-Pia represents a theoretically relevant context for examining the explanatory capacity of the AGIL schema within an island community experiencing simultaneous pressures of tourism economic transformation across economic, social, and cultural dimensions (Tight,

2017). The case study design was selected as it enables in-depth exploration of the internal mechanisms of social systems in responding to the external pressures of tourism development within a specific and dynamic localized context (Yin, 2017). The research site is Wapia-Pia Village, in the Pantai Cemara area, Wakatobi Regency, selected through purposive sampling as a representative island community that has experienced an intensification of tourism activity in the aftermath of the global tourism sector's recovery during 2023–2024. The village consists of 23 households in RW 02, which served as the primary sampling frame for mapping household-level participation in tourism activities.

Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and participatory observation (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Informant selection was conducted via purposive sampling based on the degree of involvement and knowledge pertaining to changes arising from tourism expansion (Creswell & Poth, 2017). A total of 18 informants participated, comprising: (1) 6 active tourism business operators (homestay owners, diving service providers, and culinary entrepreneurs); (2) 3 village officials (the Village Head, Village Secretary, and Head of Planning Affairs); (3) 3 customary community leaders; (4) 4 non-tourism-sector residents serving as a social comparison group; and (5) 2 informants from the Wakatobi Regency Tourism Office. These categories were selected as they represent the core actors within the local tourism value chain and reflect the most significant transformations in livelihood structure, land use, and social relations within the community. This number was determined on the basis of information saturation, confirmed following the sixteenth interview and subsequently reinforced through two additional verification interviews (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Secondary data were drawn from village planning documents (RPJMDes, 2022), tourist arrival reports from the Wakatobi Tourism Office covering the period 2021–2024, institutional archives related to the management of the Pantai Cemara destination, and demographic data at the neighborhood unit (RW) level obtained from the administrative records of RT/RW 02, Wapia-Pia Village. These demographic data were utilized as a basis for mapping household-level participation in the tourism economy, with administrative data from 23 households providing a quantitative mapping of livelihood distribution, while in-depth interviews with 18 informants enabled qualitative exploration of social system dynamics and community responses to tourism transformation.

In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide developed around four primary indicators: (1) economic change and livelihood diversification; (2) redistribution of business opportunities and benefit distribution patterns; (3) dynamics of social integration and conflict resolution mechanisms; and (4) the sustainability of local cultural values and community social control (Hennink et al., 2020). Each interview session lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, was recorded with the informed consent of participants, and was transcribed verbatim. Participatory observation was conducted continuously at daily intensity throughout the research period (May–June 2024), with a focus on tourism economic activities, village deliberation forums, and the customary practices of the coastal community. Field notes were systematically compiled using structured observation sheets. This study adhered to the ethical principles of social research. All informants were provided with a clear explanation of the research objectives and procedures and signed a participation consent form. Informant identities were anonymized during the transcription and reporting process to ensure confidentiality and protect the social safety of participants (Scheytt & Pflüger, 2024).

Data analysis was conducted iteratively following the analytical model of Miles et al. (2019) encompassing four stages: (1) data condensation through open coding and focused coding using NVivo software (Allsop et al., 2022); (2) categorization, involving the grouping of codes into analytical categories based on the AGIL functions (Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, Latency); (3) relational mapping to identify systemic patterns; and (4) interpretive conclusion-drawing grounded in Parsons' social systems theoretical framework. The entire coding and categorization process was documented in the form of an audit trail to ensure the transparency of the analytical process and to enable procedural replication. The credibility of the findings was maintained through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking, whereby preliminary findings were confirmed with three key informants (Lloyd et al., 2024). The researcher remained cognizant of their position as an external observer with the potential to influence interaction dynamics; accordingly, periodic reflexive exercises and analytical memo-writing were undertaken to minimize interpretive bias. This analytical approach enables comparison with existing studies on tourism impacts while extending the analysis toward internal social system mechanisms, which remain underexplored in prior research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the empirical findings of the study analyzed through the AGIL framework to address the research questions concerning the dynamics of the social system amid tourism expansion at Pantai Cemara, Wapia-Pia Village. Each function is analyzed on the basis of interview data, field observations, and documentation gathered during the research period of May–June 2024.

### *Adaptation (A): Economic Diversification as a Systemic Response to Tourism Expansion*

In this study, tourism expansion is conceptualized as an external structural pressure that introduces market logic, alters resource distribution, and restructures local economic relations. In the case of Pantai Cemara, this pressure has driven the reorganization of the economic structure of Wapia-Pia Village's community. The data reveals a process of livelihood diversification away from the fisheries sector toward community-based tourism services, including homestay accommodation, diving equipment rental, tourist maritime transportation, and household-based culinary enterprises.

One informant stated:

*"In the past, most people only went out to sea. Now, during peak tourism season, income from homestays can be more stable than income from fishing."*

This statement was categorized as economic diversification as adaptive response. Adaptation in this context does not signify the total replacement of the fishing economy, but rather the formation of a dual livelihood strategy as a risk-reduction mechanism against seasonal and market fluctuations. This pattern is consistent with findings on coastal economic transformation resulting from tourism expansion, which indicate that local communities tend to combine traditional sectors with service sectors in order to maintain income stability (King et al., 2021). This finding indicates that adaptation in island tourism contexts operates not merely as an economic adjustment, but as a structural mechanism that simultaneously produces both resilience and internal differentiation within the social system.

However, this diversification has not proceeded uniformly. As affirmed in the literature on the paradox of tourism growth, the expansion of economic opportunities frequently occurs in tandem with differentiated access and unequal benefit distribu-

tion (Bianchi, 2018; Seraphin et al., 2018). Field findings indicate that households possessing greater financial capital and social networks gained faster access to tourism business opportunities, while families with limited resources remained dependent on the traditional fisheries sector.

This disparity is reflected in the account of another informant, a diving equipment rental operator:

*"Before, if I didn't go to sea, there was no income. Now there are alternatives. When the waves are rough, I can still earn money from tourists who want to go snorkeling."*

By contrast, a non-tourism-sector resident stated:

*"Those who have capital can quickly open a business; those without capital just keep fishing. There is a gap now."*

Based on administrative data at the neighborhood unit (RW) level obtained from the archives of RT/RW 02 and confirmed through field observation, the total number of active household heads in RW 02 is 23 households. These data were utilized as the basis for mapping household-level participation in the tourism economy, independently of the 18 in-depth interview informants. Of this total, 14 households had developed at least one source of income from the tourism sector, while the remaining 9 households remained entirely dependent on traditional fisheries. This proportion indicates that more than half of all households have been integrated into the tourism economy; however, a significant group has yet to be reached by this economic transformation. The distribution suggests that the community's adaptive capacity is differential in nature and contingent upon structures of resource access, as similarly highlighted in studies on destination social sustainability (O'Connor & Assaker, 2022; Matteucci et al., 2022).

Within the AGIL framework, the Adaptation function operates as a mechanism of resource reallocation aimed at sustaining the social system's continuity amid changes in the economic environment. Nevertheless, this adaptation simultaneously produces internal differentiation with the potential to reconfigure social relations and the distribution of roles within the community, as identified in studies on tourism-induced social change (Alarcón & Cole, 2019). Accordingly, economic adaptation at Pantai Cemara does not merely reflect a capacity for survival, but also constitutes a new arena of structural negotiation that engenders tension between market logic and collective norms.

This capital-based adaptive gap does not straightforwardly dismantle social cohesion; rather, it creates a dialectical relationship between the Adaptation and Goal Attainment functions. On one hand, market mechanisms drive economic differentiation; on the other, collective norms and local solidarity practices function as a counterbalancing force. This relationship demonstrates that the equilibrium of the social system is not inherently harmonious but is instead constructed through the continuous negotiation of internal tensions arising from the process of economic transformation.

### **Goal Attainment (G): Consolidation of Collective Welfare Orientation**

Although the Adaptation function produces capital-based economic differentiation, the social system of Wapia-Pia Village does not allow such disparities to develop without a counterbalancing mechanism. The study identifies the presence of a normative consensus that operates as an internal corrective against the potential concentration of benefits among a small number of actors. Within this context, tourism is understood not merely as an arena of economic competition, but as a source of collective welfare that must be managed inclusively.

A community leader stated:

*"If only one or two people get ahead, jealousy will arise. So, we agreed to help each other so that everyone gets a share."*

This statement was categorized as collective welfare orientation. Within the AGIL framework, the Goal Attainment function operates through the consolidation of shared objectives that provide normative direction for individual action. This collective goal functions to limit the dominance of particular actors and to preserve social legitimacy in the distribution of economic benefits.

These findings correlate with the literature on community-based tourism governance, which emphasizes the importance of participation and social legitimacy in sustaining destination viability (Gössling et al., 2021). However, unlike formal governance models centered on state policy or official institutional frameworks, the consolidation of collective goals in Wapia-Pia Village proceeds through informal social mechanisms, such as village deliberation forums, verbal agreements, and tourist rotation practices which function as instruments for the collective distribution of opportunities.

Accordingly, goal attainment in this context is not measured solely through indicators of economic growth, but through the maintenance of social legitimacy and a sense of distributive justice at the community level. The collective welfare orientation thus serves as the normative parameter that directs individual economic action to remain aligned with the stability of the social system.

Yet this consensus is not without tension. A younger homestay operator stated:

*"There is indeed an agreement to share equally, but in practice, those with connections to the tourism office more often receive guests from official tourism packages."*

The tension between collective norms and actual distribution practices was also acknowledged by village officials:

*"We continue to try to implement a tourism package rotation so that no one feels disadvantaged, but it is not yet perfect."*

These data indicate that the Goal Attainment function does not operate harmoniously, but rather through a process of ongoing negotiation between normative ideals and structures of access that are not fully equitable. This phenomenon is consistent with critiques of community participation, which frequently remains procedural without guaranteeing transparent benefit distribution (Gössling et al., 2021), as well as with findings that social legitimacy in tourism destinations is highly dependent on perceptions of fairness and meaningful community involvement (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Styliadis & Quintero, 2022).

Thus, in the context of Wapia-Pia Village, the Goal Attainment function operates both as an arena for the consolidation of collective objectives and as a space of contestation over benefit distribution. The collective welfare orientation exists as a normative ideal, yet its implementation is continuously negotiated through everyday social practice. It is precisely through this negotiation that the social system sustains its dynamic equilibrium amid the economic differentiation produced by tourism expansion.

This finding indicates that goal attainment in island tourism contexts operates not solely as the pursuit of economic objectives, but as a normative mechanism through which collective welfare is continuously negotiated to maintain social legitimacy amid unequal access to tourism benefits.

### ***Integration (I): Norm Negotiation as a Mechanism of Social Cohesion***

The economic expansion of tourism at Pantai Cemara has intensified social interaction while simultaneously opening the potential for conflict over benefit distribution and business territory. Nevertheless, the study identifies the presence of integrative mechanisms grounded in village deliberation forums and informal social control, which function to maintain community cohesion amid economic differentiation.

One informant stated:

*"If someone takes too much profit for themselves, it is usually discussed at the village deliberation forum."*

This statement was categorized as a normative negotiation mechanism. Within the AGIL framework, the Integration function operates to prevent social fragmentation by ensuring that individual actions remain aligned with collective norms. Integration in this context does not merely signify symbolic solidarity, but constitutes an active process of negotiation over the boundaries of economically acceptable behavior within the social community.

These findings reinforce the argument that destination sustainability depends not only on economic growth but also on the community's capacity to manage internal relations and maintain social legitimacy (Bec et al., 2016; Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011). Distinct from approaches that emphasize community support perceptions toward tourism (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Styliadis & Quintero, 2022), this study demonstrates that integration operates through concrete deliberative practices that regulate the distribution of opportunities and prevent the escalation of conflict.

The village deliberation mechanism functions not only reactively but also preventively. A customary community leader explained:

*"Before the peak tourism season, we already gather first. Who manages which area, so there is no scrambling later."*

The Village Head added a semi-formal dimension to this integrative process:

*"We have established a kind of unwritten rule: homestay zones, culinary zones, maritime service zones. This is what prevents business territory conflicts."*

Field observations conducted across three village deliberation sessions during the May–June 2024 period indicate that these forums were attended by an average of 30–35 residents per session, as confirmed by official attendance records and the researcher's direct observational verification. The active involvement of women in these forums was also notable, particularly those engaged in culinary and homestay enterprises, who directly contributed proposals regarding the allocation of tourism business zones. This participation demonstrates that social integration is not exclusive in character, but rather involves diverse actors in the process of collective decision-making.

From the perspective of social systems theory, the Integration function acts as a structural counterbalance to the differentiation produced by the Adaptation function and to the distributional contestation inherent in Goal Attainment. Integration does not eliminate inequality but rather manages and negotiates it so that it does not develop into social disintegration. Accordingly, social cohesion in Wapia-Pia Village does not constitute a static condition but is rather the product of a continuous deliberative process that regulates the relationship between market logic and collective norms.

This finding indicates that integration functions not merely as a condition of social cohesion, but as an active and ongoing process of normative negotiation through which communities regulate economic behavior, prevent conflict escalation, and maintain systemic stability amid increasing market pressures.

### ***Latency (L): Value Reproduction and the Maintenance of Cultural Boundaries***

The stability of the social system in Wapia-Pia Village is determined not only by economic adaptation and the negotiation of benefit distribution, but also by the reproduction of local cultural values that constitute the foundation of collective identity. The Latency function within the AGIL framework refers to the maintenance of value patterns and symbolic orientations that ensure the long-term continuity of the system.

One informant stated:

*"Tourists are welcome to come, but customs must still be upheld."*

This statement was categorized as cultural boundary maintenance. The Latency function in this context operates through the preservation of customary values, social control over tourist behav-

ior, and the restriction of forms of cultural commodification deemed to exceed the boundaries of community norms. Accordingly, tourism expansion does not automatically erode local identity; rather, it is negotiated through mutually agreed cultural boundaries.

These findings are pertinent to the literature that highlights the paradox of tourism growth, wherein economic advancement frequently proceeds in tandem with the risks of cultural commodification and the erosion of local values (Bianchi, 2018; Seraphin et al., 2018). However, unlike perspectives that position local communities as passive subjects of market pressure, this study demonstrates that the community of Wapia-Pia Village actively reproduces and asserts cultural boundaries as a strategy for preserving the integrity of the social system.

This statement is not merely normative rhetoric. A customary community leader elaborated on the concrete mechanism:

*"If there are tourists who dress inappropriately and enter the ceremonial area, residents immediately reprimand them. We are not afraid of losing guests; what matters is that customs are not violated."*

A similar confirmation was provided by a business operator who is also a member of the customary community:

*"In fact, tourists who respect our customs are the ones who always come back. So upholding customs is actually a long-term strategy as well."*

Field observations during the May–June 2024 period documented three incidents in which tourism managers actively restricted tourist access to sacred areas during the execution of community customary rituals. These practices demonstrate that the Latency function does not operate solely at a symbolic level, but is institutionalized within the daily management of the destination. The reproduction of cultural values thus serves as a preventive mechanism against the penetration of market logic that could potentially disrupt social cohesion and collective identity.

Within the social systems framework, Latency serves as the normative foundation that undergirds the Adaptation, Goal Attainment, and Integration functions. Without consistent value reproduction, economic differentiation and the negotiation of benefit distribution risk undermining social legitimacy. Thus, the maintenance of cultural bound-

aries in Wapia-Pia Village constitutes not merely the conservation of tradition, but a systemic strategy for sustaining the community's dynamic equilibrium amid the pressures of tourism-based economic transformation.

This finding indicates that latency operates as a cultural regulatory mechanism that not only preserves value systems, but also actively constrains the penetration of market logic, thereby safeguarding collective identity and reinforcing the long-term stability of the social system.

**Table 1. Empirical Findings and AGIL Functions**

AGIL Function	Empirical Finding	Analytical Category	Empirical Evidence	Systemic Implication
Adaptation (A)	Economic diversification toward the tourism sector	Economic diversification as adaptive response	"Income from homestays can be more stable than income from fishing"	Enhanced economic capacity; potential for social differentiation
Goal Attainment (G)	Benefit distribution agreements	Collective welfare orientation	"We agreed to help each other so that everyone gets a share"	Consolidation of collective welfare orientation
Integration (I)	Village deliberation forums in business regulation	Normative negotiation mechanism	"If someone takes too much profit for themselves, it is usually discussed"	Strengthening of social cohesion and conflict prevention
Latency (L)	Affirmation of customs and local values	Cultural boundary maintenance	"Tourists are welcome to come, but customs must still be upheld"	Value stability and community identity

Source: Research Data, 2025

### ***The Island Social Equilibrium in Tourism Expansion (ISETE) Model***

Based on the integration of empirical findings across the Adaptation (A), Goal Attainment (G), Integration (I), and Latency (L) functions, this study proposes an analytical model, rather than a predictive or formal theoretical model, aimed at explaining how social equilibrium is dynamically constructed through the interaction of AGIL functions in island tourism contexts. This model is referred to as the Island Social Equilibrium in Tourism Expansion (ISETE) model. Within this model, tourism expansion is conceptualized as an external structural pressure that shapes the interaction among the four functions. In the context of Pantai Cemara, this pressure manifests not only in the form of growing tourist arrivals, but also in the intensification of market logic, business differentiation, and the potential for inequitable benefit distribution.

Drawing from Talcott Parsons' classical formulation of the AGIL schema *The Social System* in Parsons (2013), social systems are assumed to move toward relative equilibrium through the fulfillment of four functional imperatives. However, the findings of this study demonstrate that in island communities subjected to dynamic tourism pressures, all four functions are never simultaneously in a state of full equilibrium. Indeed, the tensions be-

tween functions for instance, between Adaptation, which drives economic differentiation, and Goal Attainment, which demands collective redistribution, or between Integration, which pursues consensus, and Latency, which upholds cultural boundaries constitute a normal and productive condition of the system.

The ISETE model is therefore not a mechanical application of the AGIL schema, but rather a contextual elaboration that positions productive tension between functions as the primary mechanism of systemic sustainability. This finding is consonant with developments in contemporary social systems theory that conceive of equilibrium as dynamic rather than static (Parsons & Smelser, 2005; Treviño & Staubmann, 2021). In the context of island destinations, social stability is formed through a process of continuous negotiation among economic interests, collective norms, and cultural boundaries.

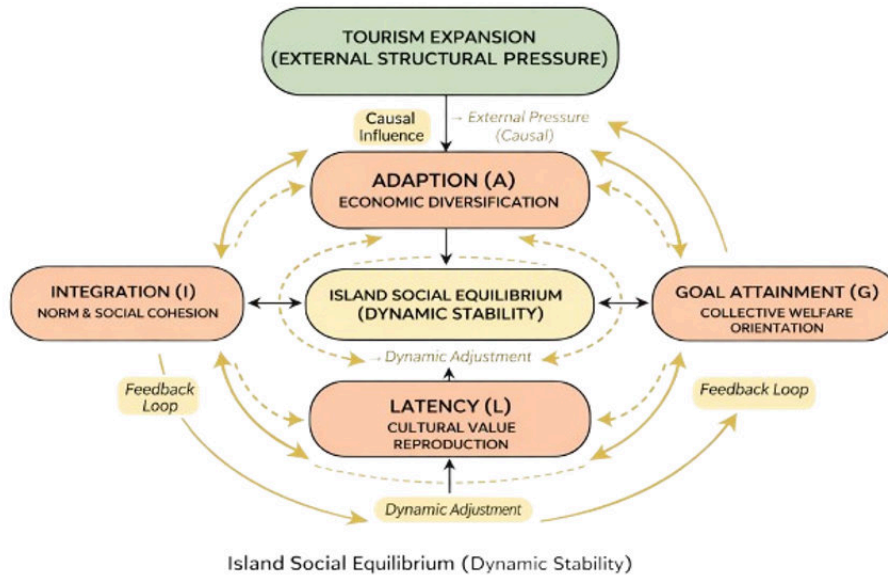
Unlike linear approaches to tourism's impact that sometimes separate the economic and social dimensions, the ISETE model demonstrates that social stability is an outcome of dynamic interaction among systemic functions:

- **Adaptation (A)** represents the community's economic capacity to diversify and respond to market opportunities.

- **Goal Attainment (G)** reflects the consolidation of collective welfare orientation through distribution mechanisms and local leadership.
- **Integration (I)** functions as a normative mechanism for maintaining social cohesion through

deliberation forums, informal social control, and business zone regulation.

- **Latency (L)** ensures the reproduction of cultural values and the maintenance of collective identity boundaries in the face of market logic penetration.



**Figure 1. Model Island Social Equilibrium in Tourism Expansion (ISETE)**

Source: Research Data, 2025

As visualized in Figure 1, Island Social Equilibrium is positioned at the center of the system, surrounded by the four AGIL functions operating under the external pressure of tourism expansion. This central position affirms that social equilibrium is not an initial precondition but rather a systemic outcome of the simultaneous activation of all four functions. The equilibrium in question is dynamic in nature, continuously negotiated through economic adaptation, normative integration, collective goal attainment, and cultural value reproduction.

When any one function weakens, for instance, when economic adaptation develops without being counterbalanced by social integration, the system risks fragmentation or inequitable benefit distribution. Conversely, when all four functions operate proportionately and mutually correct one another, the social system is capable of sustaining dynamic stability while absorbing the pressures of external change.

These findings extend the discourse on tourism sustainability by positioning the resilience of the local social system as the primary determinant of destination sustainability, rather than tourist arrival growth alone. More importantly, these findings shift the perspective from viewing tourism as an external force acting upon passive communities to understanding local communities as active systems

that continuously negotiate, regulate, and reproduce their own equilibrium.

The ISETE model was developed on the basis of a single case study in Wapia-Pia Village; accordingly, its generalizability is analytical rather than statistical. The characteristics of an island community with a relatively cohesive communal social structure constitute an important factor in the effectiveness of the integrative mechanisms identified. Future research conducted in destinations with greater degrees of social heterogeneity and varying levels of market pressure is therefore necessary to examine the external validity of this model and to explore possible modifications to its functional configuration.

## CONCLUSION

This study examines how the social system of Wapia-Pia Village maintains equilibrium under the pressures of post-pandemic island tourism expansion. The findings show that tourism expansion drives livelihood diversification as a form of economic adaptation, while simultaneously generating capital-based differentiation in access at the household level. However, this differentiation does not lead to social disintegration. Instead, it is managed through the consolidation of collective welfare ori-

entation, the use of village deliberation forums as mechanisms of social integration, and the reproduction of customary values as normative boundaries against market pressures. These processes indicate that economic change does not inherently weaken social cohesion, but rather initiates a continuous process of systemic adjustment.

This study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it provides empirical evidence on micro-level social system mechanisms that are often overlooked in tourism studies. Second, it highlights the specificity of island communities in navigating post-pandemic tourism recovery. Third, it offers an integrated analytical framework by linking tourism-induced economic transformation with the dynamics of social equilibrium through the AGIL perspective.

The findings further demonstrate that social equilibrium in island tourism contexts is not a static condition, but a dynamic outcome of interactions among Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, and Latency functions, as conceptualized in the Island Social Equilibrium in Tourism Expansion (ISETE) model. Accordingly, destination sustainability should not be understood solely in terms of tourist arrival growth, but rather in terms of the capacity of local social systems to maintain functional equilibrium through ongoing negotiation among economic interests, collective norms, and cultural values. In this sense, community resilience becomes the central determinant of sustainable tourism transformation.

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