

Policies Towards Baduy Tribe and its Impacts: A Brief Review

Puguh Toko Arisanto*

International Relations Department, Universitas Teknologi Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: ptas002@gmail.com

Abstract. The Baduy tribe is an indigenous community in Banten Province divided into two main groups, namely Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy, with varying levels of adherence to customary law and exposure to modernization. This article examines various government policies that affect the survival and identity of the Baduy tribe. These policies include the recognition of customary rights through Lebak Regency Regulation No. 32 of 2001, the designation of Kanekes Village as customary land, and the designation of the Baduy area as a tourist destination. Although these policies aim to protect the rights and preserve the culture of the Baduy, their implementation has created a dilemma. On the one hand, tourism opens up new economic opportunities and raises cultural awareness. On the other hand, the influx of tourists triggers significant social, cultural, economic, and environmental changes, especially among the Outer Baduy, including the adoption of modern technology, shifts in consumption patterns, and increased environmental pollution. Thus, preservation policies have ironically become drivers of change that undermine the Baduy community's original identity.

Keywords: Baduy Tribe; Government Policy; Indigenous Peoples; Socio-Cultural Change; Tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a diverse nation residing over 1,300 ethnic groups, a record by Central Statistics Agency. Of all tribes, Javanese are still the majority population living in Java Islands who are almost 100 million population (Ayu, 2024). Yet, this island is also home to other tribes such Baduy Tribe, indigenous ethnic residing in Banten Province. The following section points the location of the Baduy within Banten Province, a small province in Java Island:



Figure 1. Baduy Location Map in Banten Province, Java Island

Source: (Maftukha, 2019)

The Baduy, a sub-group of the Sundanese people, are a minority community known for their adherence to customary law and their tendency to isolate themselves from external influences and cultures. Basically, they usually strive to be self-sufficient, refraining from seeking external assistances (Muhibah & Rohimah, 2023). The Baduy community strongly

upholds the principle of harmony between humans and nature, a legacy passed down through generations from their ancestors. They maintain this principle by living simply, avoiding from advanced technology and modernization. This natural lifestyle is preserved without reliance on modern technology or chemicals and walking is the primary mode of transportation for daily activities (Abduh et al., 2023). However, they maintain their loyalty to the Indonesian government, one of evidences is their annual practice of presenting a portion of their harvest to the Governor. The Baduy practice the *Kepu'unan*, a customary law and adhere to the Sunda Wiwitan belief, an ancient monotheism practice inherited by their ancestors (Muhibah & Rohimah, 2023).

The influx of foreign values and culture, particularly through tourism, has time after time caused socio-cultural changes within the Baduy (Bahrudin & Zurohman, 2021). The tribe then has split into two main groups: the Inner Baduy, also known as Baduy Tangtu, and the Outer Baduy or Baduy Panamping. Both the Inner and Outer Baduy reside within the same administrative village, Kanekes Village, but are separated into different hamlets. The Outer Baduy inhabit various hamlets in the northern parts, while the Inner Baduy reside in the southern part, especially in three hamlets: Cibeo, Cikertawana, and Cikeusik. The distinctions between the two groups, Aside from geographical location, are their cultural practices, daily life patterns, and the values they hold (Pudjiastuti et al., 2023). The Outer Baduy are those who have loosened themselves from the strict customary laws and traditions through a modernization of local traditions. Conversely, the Inner Baduy remain unwaveringly committed to preserving these indigenous traditions.

The Outer Baduy usually have loosened their adherence to customary law; while some still follow *Sunda Wiwitan*, others have adopted Islam or Christianity (Muhibah & Rohimah, 2023). A high openness has emerged among the Outer Baduy, who have adopted various social changes originating from the wider world particularly in social and technological aspects, such as using mobile phones for communication and information. They have also begun wearing clothing with motifs different from their traditional attire (Bahrudin & Zurohman, 2021). In terms of livelihood, aside from farming the Outer Baduy sustain themselves by selling agricultural products such as fruits, honey, cocoa, bananas, and other goods (Nurfalah et al., 2023).

In contrast to the Outer Baduy, the Inner Baduy continue to preserve their customs and beliefs. They are resistant to external influences identical with modernization in all aspects. Regarding their livelihood, the Inner Baduy firmly maintain their traditions and seek to reject all modern behaviours and lifestyles. They are primarily associated with farming and

agriculture using traditional tools. For the Inner Baduy, formal school is considered a taboo. The community holds the assumption that if the Baduy become educated and intelligent, they will damage the environment and potentially disrupt the order established by their ancestors (Senoaji, 2011). The knowledge, practice and insights deemed necessary for them pertains to survival skills and customs, including mantras used for rice planting, traditional ceremonies, and craft-making skills, which are typically taught by family, customary leaders, and peers (Asyari et al., 2017). However, outsiders are permitted to enter the Inner Baduy area, but under strict conditions; for instance, they are prohibited from bringing cameras or chemical products like shampoo (Sitorus, 2025). The Inner Baduy view that the Outer Baduy are no longer considered truly the Baduy because they have abandoned the adhered customs and beliefs. However, they are still regarded as kin due to their shared ancestral origin (Muhibah & Rohimah, 2023).



Figure 2. Inner Baduy : White and Black

Source: (Darmawan, 2021)



Figure 3. Inner Baduy: Blue and Black

Source: (Patricia, 2023)

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In an increasingly modern era, the process of cultural commodification has become an important factor in tourism-related development and the well-being of local communities. Cultural commodification is the process of transforming elements of local culture into products marketed for tourist consumption, with both positive and negative impacts on the communities that own the culture. On the positive side, commodification can provide significant economic benefits through job creation, increased income, and the promotion of local businesses, as has happened in South Africa, where cultural heritage has been commercialized to stimulate economic development (Conradie, 2019; Mbaiwa, 2011). In addition, this process can also

trigger a cultural revival by preserving traditional practices that are nearly extinct, as seen in the Kaili community in Indonesia, which utilizes tourism to preserve the production of bark cloth, or in China, where ethnic music is commodified to maintain cultural identity (Saefudin, 2024; Su, 2011). On the negative side, however, commodification is often criticized for causing the loss of cultural authenticity, where traditional practices and artifacts are altered to meet tourist expectations, thereby eroding their original meaning as has happened with traditional Indonesian art, which has been modified for the tourism industry (Irianto & Laksono, 2017). Furthermore, this process also triggers the erosion of traditional values and practices that can fundamentally change the structure of society, as well as lead to exploitation and socio-economic inequality when economic profits are prioritized over the welfare of the host community (Al-Romeedy et al., 2025; Philip et al., 2026; Wickens, 2017).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Policies and Its Impacts Towards Baduy Tribe

The Baduy are one of the indigenous communities whose rights are protected under Indonesian legislation. The national constitution, specifically the 1945 Constitution, contains at least three articles that recognize and protect indigenous peoples: Article 18B paragraph (2), Article 28I paragraph (3), and Article 32 paragraph (1) and (2) (Haris et al., 2024). Furthermore, various other regulations at different levels govern issues related to indigenous communities, including the Baduy. In the context of local laws, the local government has implemented several rules to protect the sustainability of the Baduy community.

The first is a Local Law of Lebak Regency no 32 of 2001 concerning the Protection of the Customary Rights of the Baduy Community. This regulation covers: the stipulation of customary rights or *Ulayat Rights* and exceptions to these rights; the boundaries of the Baduy customary territory, including village and natural borders; criminal provisions; investigation procedures; and other stipulations. *Ulayat Rights* is a concept in Baduy customary law that establishes a communal land ownership system based on traditional stipulations. Through this rights, the Baduy community has the authority to manage their interaction with the environment, including regulating land governance within their territory, to ensure the community's sustainability and well-being (Tuasalamony, 2024). With this law, the Baduy community carries out one of their customary practices related to the environment, known as "*Pikukuh*". This customary law strictly prohibits any potentially destructive and exploitative actions against the forest. For them, the forest is a sacred trust. Furthermore, it also forbids

activities such as hoeing the land or using modern technology (Astheria et al., 2022; Pratama, 2025).

This local law of Lebak Regency initiative originated from the Baduy community itself, driven by three main issues: illegal logging, theft of harvests, and the shifting of territorial boundaries by outsiders claiming the land as state property. However, the existence of this law has not immediately resolved problems. Its implementation is still hindered by a lack of socialization, leading to the persistence of illegal practices like logging and forest product theft on the Baduy borders. Additionally, this indigenous community faced a new threat in the form of planned oil drilling in their territory (Sumawijaya et al., 2020).

The second is Kanekes Village Law, no 1 of 2007, which elaborates on local law of Lebak Regency No 32 of 2001 concerning cultural visits (*Saba Budaya*) and the protection of the indigenous community of the Kanekes area. This regulation stipulates that Kanekes Village is designated as customary land. The recognition of this customary land, spanning 5,130.36 hectares, grants the Baduy community full authority to manage their ancestral domain. As the only indigenous community in Indonesia with specific regulations, their local wisdom serves as an example for other regions in this era of autonomy (Sumawijaya et al., 2020).

Among the numerous government laws in any levels, the one with the most significant impact on the Baduy's sustainability is the local law designating the Baduy area, Kanekes Village, as a tourist destination. This began with **a local law of Lebak Regency No 13 of 1990**, concerning the fostering and development of Baduy customary institutions. This regulation was based on the rationale that Baduy culture would be more easily preserved alongside the increasing public interest in visiting the Baduy area.

The designation of the Baduy area as a tourist attraction is believed by some to be the starting point for changes in the Baduy way of life, as they began to be influenced by the outside world, leading naturally to the split the Baduy into the Inner and Outer Baduy. Kanekes Village became increasingly crowded with visitors after 1992. The government opened Ciboleger Village in Bojongmenteng as the gateway to the Baduy territory. The parking area and a shop established in Ciboleger have now transformed into a basecamp for tourists intending to enter the Baduy area. Subsequently, through a Decree of the Leuwidamar Sub-district Head in **2005**, Kanekes Village was authorized to manage Baduy tourism independently. In 2019, the Lebak Tourism Office recorded 42,174 domestic and 54 foreign tourists visiting Baduy (Zaenudin, 2020). The main draw for tourists is the Baduy community's pristine environment and deep-rooted local wisdom. Their steadfast adherence to a traditional way of life offers a uniquely authentic experience for visitors seeking something different from conventional tourism.

In an interview, Jaro Saija, the Head of Kanekes Village, stated that "The Baduy community prefers the concept of *Saba budaya* (cultural visit) over tourism. Tourism usually requires permanent development, while *saba budaya* is about building relationships. We want to show our lives as they are our homes, our behaviours, and our daily routines. As hosts, we are happy to welcome guests who want to learn directly about our culture" (Mutaqien et al., 2022).



Figure 4. Tourists Visiting Baduy Area

Source: (Planet Merdeka, 2025)

Tourist visits to Kanekes Village bring about a significant socio-cultural change within the Baduy community, especially among the Outer Baduy. Baduy community show a deeper appreciation for their culture by studying their ancestral history. The literacy rate among the Baduy is showing improvement. Their linguistic abilities have expanded from speaking only Sundanese to acquiring proficiency in Indonesia language. Cross-cultural interaction expands views and reducing preconceptions among the Baduy community towards foreign tourists. Yet, these also leave negative impacts. The Baduy community starts to violate customs by owning modern devices and secretly organizing formal educations. A shift in the Baduy people's lifestyle occurs, such as adopting social media use from tourists (Mutaqien et al., 2022).

Economically, new job opportunities and markets have opened up for the Baduy community to sell their handicrafts and fruits in addition to farming (Darmadi et al., 2024). Improved infrastructures support their online businesses and the distribution of goods. Yet, negative economic impacts show that economic inequality has emerged between Baduy residents who interact with tourists and those who do not. The consumption patterns of the Baduy community have shifted towards being more consumerist and unhealthy (Mutaqien et al., 2022). Ecologically, there are positive impacts; Baduy settlements have become more organized, and the community has started adopting cleaner habits like using waste bins and joining sanitation programs. However, tourism has also caused environmental issues: plastic

litter, river pollution from chemicals, and violations of sacred areas through photography or drone use (Mutaqien et al., 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

Government policies toward the Baduy tribe, which include recognition of customary rights (Lebak Regency Regulation No. 32/2001), designation of Kanekes Village as customary land, and designation of the Baduy area as a tourist destination, have created a complex dilemma. On the one hand, these policies have succeeded in providing legal recognition, opening new economic opportunities through tourism, and increasing cultural awareness among the wider community. On the other hand, their implementation, especially the tourism policy, has become the main trigger for significant social, cultural, economic, and environmental changes. The negative impacts are particularly felt by the Outer Baduy community, which has begun adopting modern technology, experienced shifts in consumption patterns, and faced environmental pollution from tourist waste and garbage. Ironically, the policy designed to protect and preserve the original identity of the Baduy tribe has, in practice, accelerated a process of change that is slowly eroding traditional values and deepening the segregation between the Inner Baduy and the Outer Baduy.

REFERENCES

- Abduh, M., Ma'arif, A. S., Ari, D., Nurmalawati, N. N., & Unaedi, R. (2023). Implementasi Gaya Hidup Berkelanjutan Masyarakat Suku Baduy Banten. *Jurnal Citizenship Virtues*, 3(2), 607–614. <https://doi.org/10.37640/jcv.v3i2.1879>
- Al-Romeedy, B. S., Hussein, H., & Singh, A. (2025). Peaks and valleys: Navigating over-tourism in mountain destinations. In *Balancing Mountain Tourism, Cultural Heritage, and Environmental Stability* (pp. 431–444). Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-8764-1.ch029>
- Asteria, D., Alvernia, P., Kholila, B. N., Husein, S. I., & Asrofani, F. W. (2022). Forest conservation by the indigenous Baduy community in the form of customary law. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 14(2), 175–189. <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1108/JCHMSD-12-2020-0171>
- Asyari, H., Syaripullah, S., & Irawan, R. (2017). Pendidikan dalam Pandangan Masyarakat Baduy Dalam. *IJER (Indonesian Journal of Educational Research)*, 2(1), 11. <https://doi.org/10.30631/ijer.v2i1.25>
- Ayu, R. D. (2024, October 29). Daftar Suku di Indonesia dan Asalnya, Ada Lebih dari 1.300 Suku. *Tempo.Co*. <https://www.tempo.co/ekonomi/daftar-suku-di-indonesia-dan-asalnya-ada-lebih-dari-1-300-suku-1161325>

- Bahrudin, B., & Zurohman, A. (2021). Dinamika kebudayaan Suku Baduy dalam Menghadapi Perkembangan Global di Desa Kanekes Kecamatan Leuwidamar Kabupaten Lebak Provinsi Banten. *Journal Civics & Social Studies*, 5(1), 31–47. <https://doi.org/10.31980/civicos.v5i1.795>
- Conradie, A. (2019). Remaking Culture for Sale: The Strategic Commodification, Construction and Performance of ‘Traditional’ Cultural Identity in South African Cultural Villages. In *Interculturalism, Meaning and Identity* (pp. 65–76). Scopus. https://doi.org/10.1163/9781848881594_007
- Darmadi, A., Fidrayani, Subchi, I., Fadhilah, S., Sadawi, & Asmu’i. (2024). The Resilience of Indonesia’s Economy in the Post-Covid-19 Pandemic: Social and Cultural Aspects of the “Baduy Tribe” People’s Economy. *WSEAS Transactions on Business and Economics*, 21, 164–172. <https://doi.org/10.37394/23207.2024.21.15>
- Darmawan, R. K. (2021, April 25). Mengenal Kawalu, Upacara Adat Masyarakat Baduy untuk Menyucikan Diri. *RegionalKompas*. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2021/04/25/130344178/mengenal-kawalu-upacara-adat-masyarakat-baduy-untuk-menyucikan-diri?page=all>
- Haris, Ginting, S., & Fitriani, A. (2024). Perlindungan Hukum terhadap Masyarakat Adat Baduy Atas Kepemilikan Hak Atas Tanah Adat dalam Kerangka Negara Hukum. *Journal of Innovation Research and Knowledge*, 3(9), 1993–2008. <https://doi.org/10.53625/jirk.v3i9.7502>
- Irianto, A. M., & Laksono, A. (2017). The marginalization of traditional arts from the demands of tourism industries: Cultural commodification strategy in the global era. *Advanced Science Letters*, 23(10), 9978–9980. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1166/asl.2017.10359>
- Maftukha, N. (2019). Visualisasi Motif Tenun Hasil Anak Usia Dini di Suku Baduy Luar. *Narada : Jurnal Desain dan Seni*, 6(2), 295. <https://doi.org/10.22441/narada.2019.v6.i2.007>
- Mbaiwa, J. E. (2011). Cultural commodification and tourism: The Goo-moremi community, Central Botswana. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, 102(3), 290–301. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9663.2011.00664.x>
- Muhibah, S., & Rohimah, R. B. (2023). Mengenal Karakteristik Suku Baduy Dalam dan Suku Baduy Luar. *JAWARA-Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 9(1), 73–85.
- Mutaqien, N. F., Pujaastawa, I. B. G., & Suwena, I. W. (2022). Baduy Dalam Sentuhan Pariwisata: Studi Antropologi Tentang Perkembangan Pariwisata di Desa Kanekes dan Implikasinya. *Sunari Penjor : Journal of Anthropology*, 5(2), 69. <https://doi.org/10.24843/SP.2021.v5.i02.p03>
- Nurfalah, L., Claesya, C. S. D., & Bidjaksono, M. B. (2023). Adaptasi masyarakat suku baduy luar terhadap perkembangan global berbasis kearifan lokal. *Journal of Socio-Cultural Sustainability and Resilience*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.61511/jscsr.v1i1.2023.182>
- Patricia, P. (2023, June 6). Pakaian Adat Suku Baduy Luar, Ada Kampret Sebagai Atasan Para Lelakinya. *Tangerangdaily*. <https://tangerangdaily.id/pakaian-adat-suku-baduy-luar-ada-kampret-sebagai-atasan-para-lelakinya/>

- Philip, B., Jeeva, M., Allwyn, F., & Samsonraj, C. (2026). Culture for Sale: Neocolonialism in Tourism, its Impact on Indigenous Communities, and the Commodification of Heritage. In *Neocolonialism: Re-Presenting Narratives, Realities and Responses* (pp. 524–527). Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003725138-94>
- Planet Merdeka. (2025, May 12). Saba Budaya Badui: Ribuan Wisatawan Padati Desa Kanekes, Lebak. *Planet Merdeka*. <https://planet.merdeka.com/hot-news/saba-budaya-badui-ribuan-wisatawan-padati-desa-kanekes-lebak-404770-mvk.html?page=4#>
- Pratama, T. R. P. (2025, October 25). *Medium.Com*. <https://medium.com/sekolah-hukum-indonesia/mengenal-praktik-pikukuh-karuhun-d632caeba97d>
- Pudjiastuti, S. R., Permatasari, A., Nandang, A., Kamila S, A., & Gunawan, I. (2023). Tantangan Dalam Menjaga Identitas Budaya Baduy Luar Dan Baduy Dalam Pada Era Perubahan. *Jurnal Citizenship Virtues*, 3(2), 630–637. <https://doi.org/10.37640/jcv.v3i2.1876>
- Saefudin, A. (2024). The Dilemma of cultural commodification policy of barkcloth: A study of the Kaili Community in Pandere Village, Indonesia. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 45(2), 625–632. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.34044/j.kjss.2024.45.2.29>
- Senoaji, G. (2011). Perilaku Masyarakat Baduy dalam Mengelola Hutan, Lahan, dan Lingkungan di Banten Selatan. *Humaniora*, 23(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jh.1006>
- Sitorus, S. A. (2025, February 10). Berkunjung ke Suku Baduy, ini hal yang tidak boleh dilakukan. *Antaraneews*. <https://www.antaraneews.com/berita/4639221/berkunjung-ke-suku-baduy-ini-hal-yang-tidak-boleh-dilakukan>
- Su, X. (2011). Commodification and the selling of ethnic music to tourists. *Geoforum*, 42(4), 496–505. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2011.03.006>
- Sumawijaya, Sumaryadi, I. N., Hasan, E., & Lukman, S. (2020). Implementasi Kebijakan Pembangunan Suku Baduy Kabupaten Lebak Provinsi Banten. *PAPATUNG: Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Publik, Pemerintahan dan Politik*, 3(2), 130–145. <https://doi.org/10.54783/japp.v3i2.124>
- Tuasalamony, A. A. (2024). Analisis Sistem Pemerintahan dan Perlindungan Hukum terhadap Hak Ulayat Masyarakat Baduy. *Jurnal Hukum Statuta*, 3(3), 167–174. <https://doi.org/10.35586/jhs.v3i3.9446>
- Wickens, E. (2017). The consumption of cultural experiences in city tourism. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 17(3), 264–271. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1467358416646606>
- Zaenudin, A. (2020, July 24). Desa Baduy: Wilayah Adat yang Dipaksa Jadi Objek Wisata. *Tirto.Id*. <https://tirto.id/desa-baduy-wilayah-adat-yang-dipaksa-jadi-objek-wisata-fSzE>