



Strengthening the capacity of Women’s Family Welfare Group (PKK) members in managing local tourism potential

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ABSTRACT

This community service program was implemented by the D4 Tourism Destination Study Program, Universitas Merdeka Malang, in collaboration with POKJA 3 of the Women’s Family Welfare Group (PKK) of Purwantoro Village, Malang City. The program aimed to strengthen the capacity of PKK members to manage local tourism potential through an empowerment-based and community-based tourism approach. The program, entitled “Creating, Empowering, and Tourism Development” (Berkarya, Berdaya, Berwisata), integrated training in culinary and handicraft product innovation, packaging and branding, digital marketing, basic hospitality, and simple business management. The method applied a participatory community empowerment model through coordination, needs mapping, experiential training, mentoring, evaluation, and follow-up planning over a three-month period. Thirty active PKK members participated in the program and were evaluated using a 20-item pre-test and post-test instrument, observation, interviews, focus group discussions, product assessment, and documentation. The average pre-test score was 43.0 and the average post-test score was 75.3, indicating a 75.1% increase in participant understanding and practical capacity. The program also produced five flagship culinary and handicraft products, improved packaging and branding, promotional social media content, simple SOPs, and the community product identity “PKK Berkarya Purwantoro.” These results show that PKK empowerment can support the creative economy and strengthen the local tourism destination support system when accompanied by structured training, digital promotion, institutional mentoring, and stakeholder collaboration.

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INTRODUCTION

Purwantoro Village, located in Blimbing District, Malang City, is an urban area with considerable community-based socio-economic potential. Community activities carried out by the Women’s Family Welfare Group (PKK) have a strategic role in supporting household

economic resilience through culinary processing, handicrafts, social initiatives, and family empowerment activities. The growth of home-based creative economic activities also reflects increasing public awareness of family economic independence. This condition is aligned with the concept of community empowerment, which positions individuals and groups as active subjects of development rather than passive beneficiaries (Sutopo, 2021; Chambers, 2020).

POKJA 3 of PKK Purwanto has a strong organizational structure and social networks reaching the neighborhood (RT/RW) level. This organizational strength represents important social capital for community-based economic development. However, the potential of PKK members has not been fully optimized in relation to local tourism development. Most products made by PKK members are still intended for internal consumption or small-scale sales, so their added value, quality consistency, product identity, and competitiveness in wider markets remain limited.

The main challenges identified during preliminary observation, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) were: (1) limited skills in product innovation and quality standardization; (2) the absence of a collective community brand; (3) weak digital marketing literacy; (4) limited understanding of hospitality and tourism entrepreneurship; (5) limited access to mentoring and partnership networks; and (6) the absence of simple documentation systems and standard operating procedures (SOPs). Similar problems are frequently found in community-based micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in relation to innovation, managerial capacity, and digitalization (Badan Pusat Statistik Kota Malang, 2024; Hadi, 2021).

Malang City is widely recognized as one of the tourism destinations in East Java, supported by culinary, cultural, educational, and creative economy activities. This context creates opportunities for local communities to participate in the tourism value chain through local products, souvenirs, educational visits, and community-based tourism services. In this perspective, empowering PKK members is not only a social activity, but also a strategy to connect household-based creative production with the local tourism destination support system (Scheyvens, 2021; Richards, 2020).

This program offers a capacity-strengthening model based on the integration of science, technology, and arts (IPTEKS), including local product innovation, packaging design, branding, digital marketing, basic hospitality, simple financial administration, and SOP preparation. The novelty of the program lies in the development of the “Berkarya, Berdaya, Berwisata” model, which connects women’s empowerment, creative economy products, and community-based tourism into one practical implementation cycle. The model consists of five

components: local resource-based product innovation, community branding, digital promotion, tourism service readiness, and institutional-business governance. Unlike general skills training, this model positions PKK members as actors in the tourism support ecosystem through products and experiences that can be developed into local tourist attractions.

Based on these conditions, the objective of this community service program was to strengthen the capacity of PKK members in managing local tourism potential through participatory empowerment. Specifically, the program aimed to improve production and product innovation skills, strengthen branding and packaging, increase digital marketing literacy, introduce basic hospitality and tourism entrepreneurship, and prepare a follow-up system for program sustainability.

METHOD

This community service program employed a participatory community empowerment approach that positioned POKJA 3 PKK Purwanto as an active partner in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The approach emphasizes direct community involvement in decision-making and practical implementation so that the partner group develops ownership of the program and is more prepared to sustain the outcomes (Sutopo, 2021; Chambers, 2020).

Conceptually, the program adopted the principles of community-based tourism (CBT) and women's empowerment. CBT emphasizes the role of local communities as primary actors in managing resources and tourism potential, while empowerment emphasizes strengthening capacity, participation, confidence, and control over productive activities (Scheyvens, 2021; Goodwin, 2022). In this program, PKK members were positioned not only as producers of culinary and handicraft products, but also as potential hosts and promoters of local tourism experiences.

The implementation method applied experiential learning, namely a direct practice-based learning process. Participants did not only receive theoretical explanations, but were also involved in product creation, packaging design, content production, business administration exercises, and role-play activities related to hospitality and product storytelling. This approach was selected because direct experience is effective for transferring practical skills and encouraging behavioral change (Kolb, 2020).



Figure 1. Experiential Learning Process in Community-Based Tourism Development

The participants were 30 active members of POKJA 3 PKK Purwantoro. They were selected purposively based on three criteria: active involvement in PKK activities, interest in culinary or handicraft production, and willingness to attend the training and mentoring activities. Participant attendance was recorded in each meeting, and participants who attended at least four of the five core training and mentoring sessions were included in the final evaluation. The activity was implemented over three months through five stages: preparation, training, mentoring, evaluation, and publication/follow-up.



Source: Analysis Results, 2025

Figure 2. Activity Implementation Flow

The evaluation design was strengthened by combining quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitatively, a pre-test and post-test were administered using a 20-item instrument. The instrument measured five domains: product innovation and hygiene (5 items), packaging and branding (4 items), digital marketing (5 items), hospitality and tourism entrepreneurship (3 items), and business management and SOP understanding (3 items). Each item was scored on a five-point scale and converted to a 0-100 score. The percentage increase was calculated using the formula: $((\text{post-test score} - \text{pre-test score}) / \text{pre-test score}) \times 100\%$. Content validity was ensured through expert review by two lecturers in tourism destination management and community empowerment, while data credibility was strengthened through triangulation of test results, observation notes, interviews, FGDs, and product documentation.

Table 1. Evaluation Instrument and Program Measurement Design

Evaluation domain	No. of items	Score range	Evidence source	Success indicator
Product innovation and hygiene	5	0-100	Test, observation, product review	Participants produce improved local products hygienically.
Packaging and branding	4	0-100	Test, packaging review, documentation	Participants apply labels, brand identity, and storytelling.
Digital marketing	5	0-100	Test, social media output, observation	Participants create photos/videos, captions, and manage accounts.
Hospitality and tourism entrepreneurship	3	0-100	Role-play, interview, FGD	Participants explain products and apply service ethics.
Business management and SOP	3	0-100	Worksheet, cash book, SOP draft, FGD	Participants use basic records and production/marketing SOPs.

Data were collected through direct observation, semi-structured interviews, FGDs, pre-test and post-test questionnaires, product assessment, and program documentation. Direct observation was used to identify participant involvement and the application of training outcomes. Interviews and FGDs were used to capture participants' experiences, perceived benefits, constraints, and follow-up needs. Program documentation included photos, videos, packaging designs, promotional content, SOP drafts, and activity reports. The qualitative data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2020). The analysis focused on changes in technical skills, self-confidence, product readiness,

digital promotion capacity, institutional strengthening, and the potential contribution of PKK activities to community-based tourism development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Activity Results

The program produced measurable improvements in the capacity of PKK members as actors in the local tourism-based creative economy. The science and technology transfer process was implemented through direct training, mentoring, and practical assignments. The main results were reflected in four aspects: improved production skills, stronger packaging and branding, increased digital marketing literacy, and better understanding of simple business management.

In the production aspect, participants gained practical skills in processing local culinary products and creating handicraft items using local and recycled materials. They were introduced to hygiene principles, simple tools, product consistency, and basic quality control. In the branding aspect, participants developed product identities through packaging labels, logo design, and product storytelling using accessible applications such as Canva. In the digital marketing aspect, participants practiced product photography, short video creation, caption writing, and social media account management. In the business management aspect, participants were introduced to simple cash books, cost of goods sold calculation, and basic SOPs for production and marketing.



Figure 3. IPTEKS Implementation in Community-Based Tourism Development

The pre-test and post-test results indicate that the training and mentoring process increased participant understanding and practical skills. The average pre-test score was 43.0, while the average post-test score reached 75.3. The increase was calculated using the formula $((75.3 - 43.0) / 43.0) \times 100\%$, resulting in a 75.1% improvement. In addition, the average target achievement reached 93.3%, which was calculated from the achievement of activity outputs and performance indicators in each training component. These results support the claim that the program exceeded 90% of the planned targets.

Table 2. Participant Capacity Improvement and Program Outputs

Training component	Participants	Main outputs	Pre-test	Post-test	Achievement indicator
Production and hygiene	30	Two culinary prototypes and three handicraft/souvenir prototypes using local and recycled materials.	44.0	76.0	28 of 30 participants were able to reproduce the product steps independently (93.3%).
Packaging and branding	30	Community brand “PKK Berkarya Purwanto,” logo concept, product labels, and improved packaging.	40.0	73.0	Five flagship products received packaging/identity improvement (100%).
Digital marketing	30	Product photos, short promotional videos, captions, content calendar, and social media/WhatsApp Business practice.	42.0	74.0	25 of 30 participants were able to upload promotional content independently (83.3%).
Hospitality and tourism entrepreneurship	30	Product storytelling script, guest service role-play, and basic tourism service orientation.	46.0	76.0	Participants completed product explanation and service role-play activities (90.0%).
Business administration and SOP	30	Cash book format, cost calculation worksheet, production SOP, marketing SOP, and PKK Creative Team structure.	43.0	77.5	Financial templates, SOP drafts, and team structure were completed (100%).

Average	30	Integrated capacity improvement across five domains.	43.0	75.3	Average program target achievement: 93.3%.
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The outputs of the program were not limited to training activities. Five flagship products were developed with improved packaging and product identity. Promotional content in the form of photos, videos, captions, and simple content calendars began to be prepared by the participants. A collective identity, “PKK Berkarya Purwanto,” was also introduced as a community brand to strengthen product recognition. In addition, a PKK Creative Team was formed to coordinate production, content creation, packaging control, and administrative records as part of program sustainability.



Figure 4. Community Service Activities with PKK Members in Purwanto Village

Discussion

The findings show that participatory empowerment can strengthen women’s capacity when the community is directly involved in identifying needs, practicing skills, and evaluating program outcomes. PKK members did not only receive information, but also transformed ideas into products, packaging, promotional content, and simple management tools. This process increased their sense of ownership and responsibility, which is a key principle of community empowerment (Sutopo, 2021; Chambers, 2020).

The improvement from 43.0 to 75.3 indicates that the program changed participants’ capacity in both cognitive and practical dimensions. The highest practical achievements were found in packaging-branding and business administration because the outputs were concrete and directly applicable, such as labels, packaging designs, cash books, and SOP drafts. Digital marketing showed improvement but still had the lowest achievement percentage compared with

other components. This suggests that digital literacy requires longer mentoring, especially for participants who are not accustomed to creating visual content, using business accounts, or maintaining regular posting schedules.

The program also strengthened the relationship between women's empowerment and the creative economy. Local culinary and handicraft products became instruments for increasing confidence, creativity, and economic participation among PKK members. Product innovation using local and recycled materials shows that household-based production can be upgraded into products with stronger market potential when supported by design, packaging, and branding. This finding is consistent with the creative economy perspective that emphasizes the value of ideas, creativity, and symbolic identity in generating product competitiveness (Howkins, 2019).

From the tourism perspective, the program contributes to the development of a destination support system. PKK products can function as souvenirs, culinary products, and educational demonstration materials for community-based tourism activities. Thus, the program does not directly create a full tourist destination, but it prepares the community capacity and product base needed to support tourism experiences. This distinction is important because tourism development requires not only attractions, but also local products, service readiness, storytelling, and community participation (Scheyvens, 2021; Goodwin, 2022).

The "Berkarya, Berdaya, Berwisata" model can be interpreted as an empowerment logic that connects inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes, and long-term impacts. The inputs are local resources, PKK social networks, university expertise, and stakeholder support. The processes include needs mapping, experiential training, mentoring, evaluation, and follow-up planning. The outputs are products, packaging, social media content, SOPs, and community branding. The outcomes are improved capacity, stronger self-confidence, better digital promotion, and institutional readiness. The expected long-term impacts are women's economic empowerment, stronger social capital, and community-based tourism support.

The model is replicable because it uses accessible technology, local resources, and an existing community organization. Similar urban villages or tourism-oriented communities can adapt the model by adjusting product types, local stories, stakeholder support, and market channels. The essential components that should be maintained are participatory needs assessment, practice-based training, product and branding development, digital promotion, simple business governance, and institutional mentoring. Without these integrated components, empowerment may stop at short-term training and fail to produce sustainable changes.

The program also faced several barriers. Some participants required more time to understand digital marketing tools, while product standardization still needs further improvement to ensure consistency in taste, size, packaging, and pricing. In addition, the economic impact has not yet been measured through long-term sales data, customer feedback, or tourist purchase behavior. Therefore, future monitoring should include monthly production records, sales reports, social media analytics, customer responses, and participation in tourism or MSME events. These data will strengthen evidence of the program’s economic and tourism-related impacts.

Problem-Solving Solutions and Sustainability Strategy

Based on the situational analysis and program evaluation, the solutions implemented in this program covered production, branding, digital marketing, hospitality, business management, partnership, SOP preparation, and follow-up planning. These solutions were designed not only to answer immediate skill gaps but also to create a practical empowerment system for PKK members.

First, production training and mentoring addressed limitations in product innovation and quality through culinary processing, souvenir production, hygiene practice, and packaging improvement. Second, the development of community identity and PKK branding strengthened product image through a collective brand name, logo concept, product labels, and storytelling. Third, digital marketing training expanded participants’ promotional capacity through Instagram, WhatsApp Business, TikTok, product photography, caption writing, and content scheduling.

Fourth, hospitality and tourism entrepreneurship training prepared participants to explain products, welcome visitors, and understand the relationship between local products and tourism experiences. Fifth, business management assistance introduced cash books, cost calculation, simple business planning, and SOPs. Sixth, networking activities connected the PKK group with the village government, tourism-related institutions, MSME support agencies, university mentors, and local business actors. Seventh, the evaluation and follow-up plan became the basis for sustaining the program after the formal community service activities ended.

Table 3. Follow-up Roles for Program Sustainability

Stakeholder	Main role after the program	Expected sustainability output
PKK Creative Team	Coordinate production groups, maintain packaging standards, prepare content calendars, collect sales and activity records, and report monthly progress.	Consistent product quality, regular promotion, and internal coordination.

Purwatoro Village Government	Provide meeting space, support local bazaars, facilitate village-level promotion, and help connect PKK products with community events.	Institutional support and local market access.
Tourism Office	Curate products for tourism events, connect PKK members with destination networks, and provide guidance on tourism service standards.	Integration of PKK products into local tourism promotion.
Cooperative and MSME Office	Assist business legality, PIRT/halal certification preparation, packaging improvement, and marketplace access.	Product legality, standardization, and wider market readiness.
University team	Provide periodic mentoring, involve students in monitoring and content development, and assist evaluation of product and tourism outcomes.	Continuous knowledge transfer and evidence-based program improvement.
Local business/tourism actors	Support consignment opportunities, collaborative promotion, and product testing with consumers or visitors.	Expanded distribution and stronger tourism-market linkage.

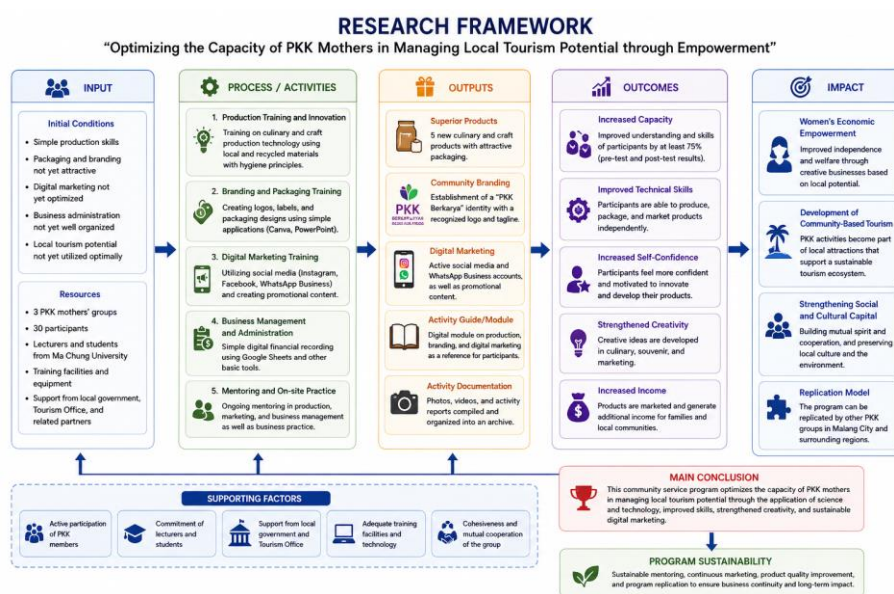


Figure 5. Program Framework and Research Results Diagram

Overall, the program demonstrates that PKK empowerment can become a strategic entry point for community-based tourism development. The integration of product innovation, branding, digital promotion, hospitality readiness, and simple business governance enables local women's groups to move from household-based production toward tourism-oriented creative economic activities. However, the sustainability of this impact depends on continued mentoring, stakeholder collaboration, product standardization, and systematic monitoring of economic and tourism-related outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The community service program in Purwantoro Village successfully strengthened the capacity of PKK members in managing local tourism potential through an empowerment-based and community-based tourism approach. The participatory and experiential learning methods enabled participants to improve their technical, managerial, and digital literacy skills. The program resulted in an average capacity improvement of 75.1%, as indicated by the increase in the average score from 43.0 in the pre-test to 75.3 in the post-test. The main outputs of the program included five flagship culinary and handicraft products, improved packaging and branding, the community identity “PKK Berkarya Purwantoro,” promotional social media content, simple financial administration tools, SOP drafts, and the formation of the PKK Creative Team. These outputs indicate that the program strengthened not only individual skills but also institutional readiness for sustainable community-based economic development.

The program also contributed to local tourism development by preparing PKK products and activities as part of the tourism destination support system. The products can be developed further as souvenirs, culinary items, educational workshop materials, or components of community-based tourism packages. Nevertheless, future programs need to strengthen long-term evidence by measuring sales growth, customer response, social media performance, product legality, and participation in tourism or MSME events.

Based on the implementation results, several recommendations are proposed. First, continuous mentoring is needed in digital marketing, product standardization, business administration, and tourism service readiness. Second, market access should be expanded through collaboration with local government, tourism actors, MSMEs, and digital platforms. Third, product legality and standardization, including PIRT and halal certification, should be facilitated to increase consumer trust. Fourth, the PKK Creative Team should be strengthened through clear task distribution, SOP implementation, and monthly monitoring. Fifth, the “Berkarya, Berdaya, Berwisata” model can be replicated in other communities by adapting the product focus, local stories, and stakeholder support to each local context.

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