

Empowering educational tourism managers by strengthening managerial capacity through field-based training in Pagelaran Village

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ARTICLE INFO:

Received: 2025-08-14
Revised: 2025-09-17
Accepted: 2025-10-24
Published: 2025-11-30

Keywords:

Capacity building, Community-based tourism, Cultural tourism management, Educational tourism village

ABSTRACT

The Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village faces challenges related to limited managerial capacity, low literacy in community-based tourism management, and suboptimal governance sustainability. This community service program aimed to strengthen the managerial capacity of tourism managers, particularly in planning, institutional organization, resource management, and tourism service standardization. An experiential learning-based capacity-building approach was applied through socialization, thematic training, field-based practice, technology application, evaluation, and continuous mentoring. The results indicate a significant improvement in managerial capacity across key indicators, including planning, coordination, institutional management, tourism guiding literacy, and digital technology utilization. Quantitative evaluation shows that over 80 percent of participants achieved good to very good competency levels and expressed positive perceptions of the effectiveness of field-based learning. The program also contributed to improving the quality and diversity of art and cultural tourism products, optimizing digital promotion, and strengthening community participation. Sustainability was supported through the formulation of a five-year tourism village development roadmap, initiation of village-level regulatory support, reinforcement of collaborative networks, and ongoing partnerships with higher education institutions. These findings demonstrate that experiential learning-based managerial capacity strengthening grounded in local potential is effective in promoting sustainable and professional management of art and cultural tourism villages.

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How to cite: Winarno, A., Aini, D. N., Sopingi., Singgih, M. N., & Muhammad, N. D. (2025). Empowering educational tourism managers by strengthening managerial capacity through field-based training in Pagelaran Village. *Abdimas: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Universitas Merdeka Malang*, 10(4), 981-996. <https://doi.org/10.26905/abdimas.v10i4.16329>

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism villages have emerged as a strategic model for sustainable tourism development that integrates economic growth, education, and the preservation of art and cultural heritage. In Indonesia, the development of tourism villages and educational tourism has been promoted to strengthen community-based tourism by optimizing local cultural assets and creative practices rooted in local

wisdom (Destiningrum et al., 2018). Art and cultural tourism villages not only function as tourism destinations but also as learning spaces that support cultural transmission, creative economies, and social cohesion. However, the expansion of tourism villages has also revealed persistent challenges related to management quality, professional governance, and the capacity of local actors to deliver standardized and sustainable tourism services (Wibowo & Belia, 2023).

Such a model highlights the strategic role of tourism in empowering communities and encouraging participatory and creative efforts to preserve local culture. Tourism is one of the most strategic sectors capable of driving economic growth and social development, particularly when it is oriented toward community empowerment and cultural preservation. Within this framework, tourism villages have emerged as an important model that integrates educational tourism (edutourism) with local art and cultural resources, enabling communities to maintain, develop, and revitalize their cultural heritage through participatory and creative initiatives (Aini et al., 2024). Art and cultural tourism villages not only serve as destinations for visitors but also function as educational and social spaces that support cultural transmission, creative economic activities, and community cohesion. Empirical evidence from the Edutourism Village of Mentaraman in Malang, East Java, demonstrates that community-based tourism can effectively contribute to the preservation of local arts and culture by positioning cultural performances and creative practices at the core of tourism experiences. However, despite their growing significance, tourism villages and edutourism initiatives continue to face substantial challenges related to managerial capacity, professional governance, service standardization, and the ability of local actors to manage tourism activities in a sustainable and competitive manner (Mulyadi & Rahayu, 2025).

Pagelaran Village in Malang Regency possesses substantial art and cultural potential, reflected in the active presence of various performing arts such as karawitan, wayang, kentrung, ludruk, campursari, ketoprak, and traditional dance, involving approximately 300 artists from different age groups. This cultural richness encouraged the village government to initiate the development of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village as part of a phased and community-based tourism program. The establishment of the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) positioned local residents as the primary managers of tourism activities (Winarno & Aini, 2025). However, field observations reveal that the managerial capacity of the Mentaraman tourism managers remains limited. Human resource competencies related to tourism management and guiding are uneven, service delivery lacks standardized procedures, collaboration networks with external stakeholders are underdeveloped, and digital promotion strategies have not yet been optimally utilized. These managerial weaknesses constrain the effective transformation of cultural potential into professional and competitive tourism services.

As the managing body of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Tourism Village, POKDARWIS receives continuous support and guidance from a community service team at Universitas Negeri Malang. This collaboration includes monthly training sessions led by tourism experts, covering topics such as service excellence standards, homestay management, food and beverage handling, and tourism product and package development. These capacity-building activities serve as essential preparation for POKDARWIS members to enhance professionalism in managing the tourism village.

Field observations indicate that the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village has not yet developed essential managerial instruments to support professional tourism management. Specifically, the partner community lacks standard operating procedures (SOPs) for systematic program planning, clearly defined service standards for tourism activities, and adequate capacity among tourism guides to deliver informative and engaging visitor experiences. The absence of these managerial and service frameworks has resulted in inconsistent service quality, limited interpretive value of art and cultural performances, and suboptimal visitor satisfaction. Moreover, insufficient guiding competencies and the lack of standardized operational references hinder effective coordination among tourism actors

and reduce the village's competitiveness as an edutourism destination. If these service gaps are not addressed, the tourism village risks stagnation in program development, declining visitor trust and repeat visits, weakened community participation, and ultimately the unsustainability of art and cultural tourism management (Sani & Anam, 2022).

To address the identified service gaps, this community service program adopts a field-based training approach integrated with capacity building grounded in local potential. Field-based training is selected because it enables tourism managers to develop managerial and service competencies through direct engagement with real tourism operations, allowing learning to occur through practice, reflection, and problem-solving in authentic contexts (Renjaan et al., 2023). This approach is particularly effective for community-based and edutourism settings, where abstract or classroom-based training alone is insufficient to address operational complexities and service quality challenges. Existing community empowerment models tend to be top-down, emphasizing short-term or technical training rather than fostering transformative learning processes that integrate local cultural values, practical experience, and critical reflection (Darwis et al., 2022). Furthermore, capacity building based on local potential ensures that managerial strengthening is closely aligned with the cultural assets, social structures, and community dynamics of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village. By utilizing local arts, cultural performances, and existing community practices as learning resources, this approach avoids dependence on externally imposed models and instead fosters community ownership, relevance, and sustainability. Such a locally grounded capacity-building strategy not only enhances managerial professionalism but also supports the long-term resilience of art and cultural tourism management by empowering local actors as adaptive and reflective practitioners (Aditiawati et al., 2016; Croft & Wang, 2025).



Figure 1. The Mentaraman Art and Cultural Village

Figure 1 depicts the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Village as the actual location where the community service activities were conducted, illustrating the existing physical setting and community environment of the tourism village. This existing condition provides the contextual foundation for the formulation of the program objectives aimed at strengthening managerial capacity and supporting sustainable, community-based tourism management. The general objective of this community service program is to strengthen the managerial capacity of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village in order to support professional, community-based, and sustainable tourism management. The specific objectives of the program are to: (1) Enhance the ability of tourism managers to conduct systematic program planning through the development and application of standard operating procedures; (2) Improve institutional governance and coordination among tourism stakeholders at the village level; (3) Strengthen the competencies of tourism guides in delivering standardized, informative, and culturally meaningful tourism services; and (4) Optimize the utilization of local cultural potential and digital technology to improve service quality, destination competitiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Responding to the managerial and service gaps identified in the Mentaraman tourism village, this community service program was implemented through a structured field-based training and mentoring model. The subsequent section outlines the methodological framework, implementation stages, and evaluation mechanisms applied in this program.

2. METHODS

This community service program employed a Creative Economy Development approach, integrating local cultural values with creative economy strategies to generate sustainable economic opportunities within the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village. The approach emphasizes community empowerment through the identification and optimization of local potential, as well as the strengthening of managerial knowledge, practical skills, and self-confidence of tourism managers through contextual learning and direct experiential activities (Setiawan, 2023). This approach aligns with the principles of capacity building and field-based experiential learning, positioning local actors as active participants in the learning and implementation process.

The program was implemented over a ten-month period, from March to November 2024, allowing sufficient time for staged intervention, mentoring, and evaluation. The overall implementation was structured into five main stages: (1) Socialization; (2) Training; (3) Technology implementation; (4) Mentoring and evaluation; and (5) Program sustainability. Participants in this community service program consisted of 32 individuals representing key stakeholders involved in the management of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village. The participants ranged in age from 21 to 55 years, reflecting a combination of young and senior community members. In terms of roles, 18 participants were core managers and administrators of the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) who function as the main decision-makers and operational managers of tourism activities. Additionally, 8 participants were homestay owners and micro and small enterprise (MSME) actors supporting tourism services, while 6 participants were community volunteers and members of local art groups involved in cultural performances and visitor services. This composition ensured that capacity-building activities addressed both managerial and operational aspects of tourism village management.

Socialization Phase

The socialization phase began with an assessment of the real conditions and needs of the Mentaraman community to obtain a comprehensive understanding of local potential, managerial challenges, and community expectations. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation. Based on the assessment results, the community service team formulated priority needs and designed a program plan aligned with actual field conditions. The program design was then refined through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving village officials, POKDARWIS administrators, community leaders, and representatives of art groups to ensure institutional support and active participation. Participant mobilization and preparation of training facilities were subsequently carried out to support effective implementation.

Training Phase

To achieve the objectives of this community service program, strategic measures were required to ensure that the implementation process was effective and efficient. Based on the results of the partner needs assessment, training was identified as a key component that needed to be integrally embedded within the community engagement process. The training phase was implemented gradually and tailored to the specific needs of the local community and program partners. Activities included management

training for members of the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) to strengthen organizational capacity in destination management, as well as guest service training for homestay owners to enhance their ability to provide friendly, comfortable, and tourism-standard-compliant services.

In addition, participants received training in the use of information technology-based promotional applications and visitor service systems, aimed at improving community capacity to utilize digital media for expanding marketing reach. Training was also provided on the development of creative industry products in the form of art- and culture-based souvenir items, enabling local potential to be transformed into products with economic value. Training participants represented diverse stakeholder groups, including POKDARWIS administrators, micro and small enterprise (MSME) actors, homestay owners, and art community members involved in the development of cultural performances. To support the smooth implementation of all activities, adequate accommodation and training facilities were also prepared.

Technology Implementation

The technology implementation phase in the tourism village development program was carried out through several strategic steps. The activities began with the application and implementation of a tourism information system and e-marketing platform, designed to facilitate promotion, reservations, and digital-based service management. Subsequently, an interactive cultural mapping system was developed to present the locations and information related to various local art forms.

Mentoring and Evaluation

Mentoring and evaluation were conducted to ensure the sustainability of program outcomes while strengthening community capacity in managing the potential of the tourism village. These activities were implemented through several stages.

Reflection

Reflection was carried out through structured discussions involving the community service team, local community members, and partner institutions to review program achievements, constraints, and future development opportunities. The results of this reflective process served as an essential basis for assessing the extent to which the program addressed on-site challenges and for identifying aspects requiring further improvement to ensure the continuity and sustainability of activities.

Mentoring program and follow-up actions

At this stage, the team and community partners collaboratively formulated strategic plans focusing on strengthening institutional management, optimizing marketing strategies, and ensuring the sustainability of the cultural and creative products that had been developed. The planning process was conducted participatorily to align with the actual needs of the community and incorporated measurable targets to support the professional and sustainable management of the tourism village.

Implementation of mentoring

The implementation of mentoring was carried out gradually based on priority needs in the field and guided by the established work plan. Activities included technical assistance in managing the POKDARWIS institution, strengthening human resource capacity through management and tourism service training, and providing operational guidance for the development of performing arts products and creative tourism-supporting products. In addition, the team provided administrative assistance, such as drafting organizational statutes and bylaws (AD/ART), preparing standard operating procedures

(SOPs) for homestay services, and developing information technology-based marketing governance. An adaptive approach was employed, allowing mentoring methods to be adjusted to community dynamics while ensuring alignment across all program components including institutional management, marketing, and technology utilization, to reinforce the sustainability of the Mentaraman art and cultural edutourism village.

Continuous monitoring

The final stage involved continuous monitoring to assess progress in institutional governance, marketing performance, and the development of cultural and creative products. Monitoring was conducted periodically to ensure that program achievements were maintained and generated tangible socio-economic impacts for the community. Through this process, the team was also able to identify additional needs and potential innovations that could be further developed.

Evaluation Methods

The evaluation of managerial capacity improvement in this community service program was conducted using structured field observation, focusing on participants' actual performance and behavioral changes during tourism management activities. This approach was selected to ensure that capacity enhancement was assessed based on real practices in the field, rather than solely on cognitive understanding. Structured observations were carried out throughout the guided action, mentoring, and post-intervention implementation phases. The observation process employed standardized observation sheets developed based on key managerial and service indicators, including: (1) The application of standard operating procedures (SOPs) in tourism planning and service delivery; (2) Clarity of organizational structure and task distribution within POKDARWIS; (3) Coordination and communication among tourism actors; (4) Tour guiding performance and visitor interaction; and (5) The utilization of digital platforms for tourism promotion and visitor services.

Observations were conducted directly by the community service team during training sessions, tourism service simulations, cultural performances, and actual visitor handling. Behavioral changes were documented by comparing participants' practices before and after mentoring, particularly in terms of service consistency, professionalism, and adherence to agreed operational standards. This observational evaluation allowed the team to identify tangible improvements in managerial capacity, service quality, and guiding performance. To enhance the validity of the findings, observational data were complemented by reflective discussions with participants. The results of the structured observations formed the primary basis for assessing program effectiveness and were subsequently used to formulate follow-up actions and sustainability strategies.

Program Sustainability

Program sustainability was initiated through the strengthening of networks and collaborative partnerships with the regency government and other tourism destination managers. Through these networks, the Mentaraman Educational Tourism Village has been able to expand its promotional reach, exchange best practices, and develop innovations that contribute to improving the quality of tourism services and attractions. Such collaborations also provide greater opportunities for the village to access policy support and resources that are essential for long-term sustainability. To ensure a clear legal foundation for tourism village development, efforts were undertaken to encourage the issuance of a village regulation concerning the Educational Tourism Village. This regulation serves as both a legal framework and a guiding instrument to ensure that the management of art and cultural tourism destinations is

conducted in a structured, measurable, and consistent manner aligned with the development vision of Pagelaran Village. As a strategic guideline, a five-year development roadmap for the Educational Tourism Village was formulated, outlining key targets related to institutional strengthening, marketing strategies, and the enhancement of art and cultural products. The roadmap functions as a strategic compass that helps managers maintain focus on development priorities and facilitates periodic evaluation of program achievements.

In addition, the Mentaraman Educational Tourism Village continues to strengthen its position as a strategic partner of a higher education institution. This partnership is realized through collaborative activities in research, community service, and community development programs. Synergy with the university provides sustained access to knowledge, technology, and relevant mentoring, thereby contributing to continuous improvement in the quality of tourism village management.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section presents the empirical results of the community service program implemented in the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village, Pagelaran District, Malang Regency. The results are organized according to the main stages of implementation, namely socialization and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), guided action and capacity building, technology implementation, mentoring and evaluation, as well as measurable program outcomes.

Socialization and focus group discussion (FGD)

The socialization stage involved community leaders, local artists, members of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), micro and small enterprise (MSME) actors, and village officials. This stage functioned as an initial forum to communicate the program's objectives, implementation stages, and expected outcomes related to the development of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village. The Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) produced explicit outcomes in the form of agreed priority issues and program directions, as shown as in Figure 2. The main issues identified included: (1) The absence of structured program planning and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for tourism services; (2) Inconsistent service quality due to limited guiding capacity; (3) Weak institutional coordination within Pokdarwis; and (4) Underutilization of digital promotion platforms.

Based on these findings, stakeholders agreed on priority interventions focusing on managerial capacity strengthening, tour guide competency development, formulation of SOPs, and the optimization of digital-based tourism promotion.



Figure 2. Socialization with Community Service (PkM) partners

Guided action phase/ socialization phase

The guided action phase constituted the core component of the capacity-building program implemented in the Mentaraman Cultural and Educational Tourism Village. At this stage, participants were not merely passive recipients of theoretical material but were actively engaged in hands-on practices related to tourism destination management, tailored to the unique local potentials of the village. Intensive mentoring was conducted to ensure that each participant could comprehend, internalize, and apply the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the program. The implementation of this stage was operationalized through the following structured activities:

Management training for educational tourism managers through field-based instruction

Guided action activities were implemented through field-based training and benchmarking visits to Semen Village, Blitar Regency, which has successfully developed a community-based tourism model aligned with ASEAN standards. Participants included Pokdarwis administrators and core tourism managers of the Mentaraman Village. The benchmarking activity, as shown as in Figure 3, was attended by the Community Service (PkM) team, managers of the Mentaraman Cultural and Educational Tourism Village, officials from Semen Village, and representatives from the Semen Tourism Village management team, fostering knowledge exchange and collaborative learning among participating stakeholders.

Prior to the intervention, most participants demonstrated limited understanding of tourism destination management, including program planning, SOP formulation, and promotional strategy development. Following the guided action activities, participants were able to formulate draft SOPs, clarify organizational roles within Pokdarwis, and develop short-term action plans for tourism village management. These outcomes indicate measurable improvements in managerial capacity based on observable institutional outputs and operational practices.



Figure 3. Field Visit to Semen Village, Blitar Regency

The results of the program indicated a significant improvement in the managerial capacity of the Mentaraman Cultural and Educational Tourism Village managers following a series of practice-based training sessions and field studies. Prior to the intervention, most participants demonstrated limited understanding of fundamental principles of tourism destination management, including the formulation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for tourist services, promotional strategy development, and the management of cultural and artistic attractions. After completing the training and field mentoring activities, participants exhibited a marked increase in both conceptual comprehension and practical application, as evidenced by their ability to formulate follow-up action plans for destination development and to establish a more systematic organizational structure within the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis). This progression underscores the effectiveness of experiential and participatory learning approaches in enhancing local managerial competencies within community-based tourism contexts.

Strengthening tour guide competencies and developing tourism packages

The program was designed to enhance the human resource capacity of individuals serving as tour guides in the Mentaraman Cultural and Educational Tourism Village. Its primary objective was to equip guides with the knowledge, practical skills, and professional attitudes necessary to deliver friendly, informative, and culturally grounded tourism services in accordance with community-based tourism standards. The competency strengthening activities were implemented through a training session held on August 30, 2025, which began with a needs assessment to identify specific areas of improvement. The training, as shown as Figure 4, was conducted in the form of an interactive workshop, focusing on developing participants' communication abilities, information presentation techniques, and tour group management skills, thereby fostering professionalism and enhancing the overall quality of visitor experiences. In addition, Pokdarwis members were assisted in developing tourism packages aligned with local artistic and cultural potential and integrated with the Pottery Village. The outputs of this activity included structured tourism package concepts and simulated visitor flow designs.



Figure 4. Tour guiding training program

Field observations during the guided action and mentoring phases revealed clear behavioral changes among local tour guides. Before the program, guiding practices were predominantly informal and unstructured. Guides provided fragmented explanations based on personal experience, with limited cultural or educational interpretation. Information delivery mainly involved naming performances or locations without sufficient historical or cultural context, and interactions with visitors were largely one-directional, resulting in inconsistent service quality. After the intervention, observable improvements were evident. Tour guides delivered more structured and coherent explanations by integrating cultural narratives, historical context, and educational elements. Communication became more interactive and visitor-oriented, with guides adapting explanations to different visitor profiles. Guides also demonstrated increased confidence, clearer role awareness, and better coordination with other tourism actors, indicating a shift toward more professional and standardized guiding practices.

Technology implementation

Various technological products and innovations, encompassing both hard technology and soft technology, have been implemented to support the development of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Village as a community-based tourism destination. The realized technological outputs include UMKM display facilities, which function as media for showcasing and marketing local products including handicrafts, culinary products, and other creative works, as illustrated in Figure 5. Supporting equipment for traditional dance and musical arts, which facilitates rehearsals and performances in cultural studios as well as during tourist visits (Figure 6)



Figure 5. SME's display facilities

Figure 6. Karawitan Art Equipment at Sanggar Lestari Budaya Mentaraman

In addition to physical infrastructure (hard technology), innovation was also realized through soft technology in the form of the development and assisted management of the Mentaraman SITARAN website (Sistem Informasi Wisata Mentaraman) and a digital catalog, as illustrated in Figure 7. This platform was designed to promote local arts and cultural potential, provide comprehensive information on tourism packages, and support a visit reservation system, thereby enhancing the professionalism and efficiency of tourist services.



Figure 7. Homepage of SITARAN (<https://sitaran.co.id/>)

Mentoring and evaluation

Evaluation was conducted through structured observations, reflective discussions, and analysis of institutional documents. The results indicate increased managerial capacity, improved community knowledge, and enhanced practices in cultural production and tourism services. These outcomes were supported by documented improvements in institutional coordination, service consistency, and cultural activity management. Quantitative indicators show that 87 percent of participants reported improved managerial capacity, while 88 percent reported increased knowledge and skills related to arts, culture, and tourism management (Table 1).

Figure 8 depicts a mentoring and evaluation session conducted with members of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village. The activity illustrates a participatory forum where tourism managers, local artists, and community members engaged in reflective discussion to review program implementation, assess progress in managerial capacity building, and identify follow-up actions. Through dialogical interaction and collective reflection, this session functioned as a key mechanism for evaluating program outcomes, strengthening institutional coordination, and ensuring the sustainability of community-based tourism management in Mentaraman Village. The evaluation results indicate that the intervention generated outcomes in the form of increased managerial capacity, enhanced community

knowledge, and improved practices in arts and cultural production. These outcomes contributed to medium-term impacts, including more sustainable cultural governance, increased consistency of cultural activities, and the strengthening of a community-based tourism village ecosystem.

Table 1. Outcome–impact indicators of the community service program for the development of the art and cultural village in Pagelaran, Malang

Intervention Aspect	Short-Term Outcomes (Post-Intervention)	Outcome Indicators	Medium-Term Impacts (Sustainability)	Impact Indicators
Strengthening Community Managerial Capacity	The Mentaraman community is able to apply basic management functions in managing cultural and artistic activities	87 percent of respondents reported an improvement in managerial capacity (61 percent agree; 26 percent strongly agree)	The establishment of a more stable and well-organized cultural governance system	Consistency in the implementation of arts and cultural activities based on community-based planning
Enhancement of Community Knowledge and Skills	Improved understanding of arts and culture as assets for tourism villages and sources of economic value	88 percent of respondents reported increased capacity (60 percent agree; 28 percent strongly agree)	Increased social capacity of the community in managing the tourism village	Active community involvement in cultural planning and decision-making processes
Development of the Quality and Quantity of Cultural Art Products	Cultural art products demonstrate improved standards of presentation and curation	Products exhibit clearer performance concepts, cultural narratives, and improved visual standards	Cultural art products become sustainable tourism attractions	Consistent use of cultural products in village programs and festival agendas
Strengthening Community Participation and Institutional Capacity	Broader and more coordinated community participation	Increased involvement across age groups and artistic actors	The formation of a community-based cultural arts ecosystem	Sustained collaboration among communities and key stakeholders



Figure 8. Mentoring and evaluation session with the Mentaraman Village Community

The community service program implemented in the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Village, Pagelaran, demonstrated a significant performance impact on strengthening partner capacity in managerial competence, skills and knowledge development, as well as cultural arts production. Through structured interventions focusing on community role organization (organizing), activity planning (planning skills), task allocation, resource management, and coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, community managerial capacity increased in a systematic manner. The measurable improvement in managerial capacity is illustrated in Figure 9.

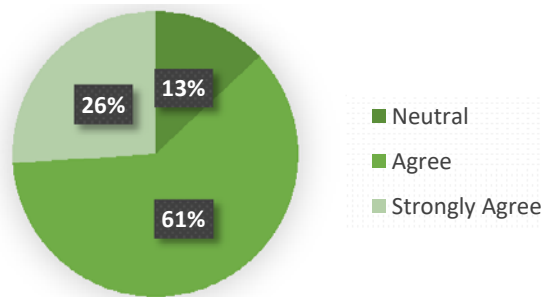


Figure 9. Strengthening community managerial capacity

As shown in Figure 8, 61 percent of respondents indicated agreement and 26 percent expressed strong agreement regarding improvements in managerial capacity, reflecting a cumulative positive acceptance rate of 87 percent toward the effectiveness of the program intervention. This achievement indicates a tangible enhancement in the community's ability to manage cultural arts activities in a more structured and organized manner, as evidenced by the application of fundamental managerial functions, including activity planning, community role organization, resource management, and coordination among cultural actors. Meanwhile, 13 percent of respondents fell into the neutral category, suggesting that although the program's impact was predominantly positive, a small proportion of partners still require further assistance, particularly in integrating managerial concepts into long-established informal community practices.

Educational interventions integrated with festival activities and hands-on practices were also found to broaden community understanding of cultural arts as both an economic asset and a marker of village identity. The community experienced not only an increase in conceptual knowledge regarding community-based tourism management but also a shift in attitudes and perspectives—from being primarily cultural performers to becoming managers of cultural activities oriented toward sustainability. This enhanced awareness serves as a critical foundation for strengthening the village's social and institutional capacity.

Accordingly, the program's performance outcomes were not merely perceptual but were substantiated by observable changes in cultural production practices and arts management at the community level. Overall, these findings affirm that the integration of educational activities and festivals within a community empowerment framework constitutes an effective strategy for enhancing the sustainable competitiveness of art- and culture-based tourism villages.

Program sustainability

The sustainability of the community service program is demonstrated by the establishment of strengthened networking and cross-stakeholder collaboration mechanisms that support the continuity

of the Mentaraman Educational Tourism Village after the completion of the program. Through facilitated interventions, village managers successfully built and expanded collaborative networks with the district government and other tourism destination managers. These networks contributed to enhanced promotional capacity, the exchange of best practices, and the development of service innovations and cultural arts-based tourist attractions. Strategically, such collaboration also opened broader access to policy support and sustainable resources, ensuring that village development does not rely solely on short-term community service interventions.

From an institutional perspective, the program encouraged the initiation of village-level regulations concerning the Educational Tourism Village as a formal legal framework to guide structured management aligned with the development vision of Pagelaran Village. Program sustainability was further reinforced through the formulation of a five-year development roadmap outlining strategic directions for institutional strengthening, marketing, and the development of cultural arts products. This roadmap serves as a strategic guide for managers to maintain consistency and conduct periodic evaluations of program achievements. In addition, the establishment of a sustained partnership with Universitas Negeri Malang constitutes a critical supporting factor in ensuring continued access to academic mentoring, innovation, and community capacity strengthening, thereby institutionalizing program sustainability within the ecosystem of community-based tourism village development rather than limiting it to operational continuity.

Discussion

The socialization stage represented a critical phase in the process of developing the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Village into a sustainable tourism destination capable of reinforcing local identity while simultaneously enhancing community welfare. This stage served as a foundational platform for building a shared understanding among stakeholders, fostering collective commitment, and ensuring that the principles of community-based and culturally grounded tourism development were effectively internalized by all participants (Sidqi et al., 2022). At this stage, the implementing team initiated a social forum involving community leaders, local artists, members of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), micro and small enterprise (MSME) actors, and village officials. Through this participatory meeting, the program's vision, objectives, and expected benefits were comprehensively communicated, emphasizing their relevance to the strengthening of local identity and the enhancement of community welfare. The forum functioned as a collaborative platform for dialogue and consensus-building, ensuring that all stakeholders shared a common understanding of the program's purpose and its contribution to sustainable cultural tourism development.

The socialization process extended beyond mere information dissemination, serving also as a platform for open dialogue between the implementing team and the local community. During this stage, detailed information regarding the planned activities, required support, and potential areas for collaboration was clearly communicated to ensure that all stakeholders gained a comprehensive understanding of the strategic direction for developing the art and cultural village. The session concluded with an interactive discussion forum, providing community members the opportunity to express their aspirations, insights, and ideas concerning the management and preservation of local arts and culture. This dialogical approach fostered mutual trust, participatory engagement, and shared ownership in the process of community-based cultural tourism development (Irfan & M, 2018). The forum demonstrated strong community enthusiasm and served as a foundation for planning the current year's program implementation. This collective engagement reflected the community's readiness and commitment to actively participate in the development of the art and cultural tourism village, while also providing valuable input for refining program priorities and strategies in alignment with local needs and potentials.

The learning visit to Semen Village served as a field study aimed at observing exemplary practices in managing well-established tourism villages, providing valuable insights and inspiration for the development of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Village. This program strengthened the managerial and human resource capacities of tourism managers through a combination of workshops, mentoring sessions, and thematic discussions focusing on the village's vision and mission, tourism service standards, and professional management strategies. Additionally, the program emphasized the empowerment of local cultural and environmental assets as key attractions, consistent with a participatory approach that promotes active community involvement and the regeneration of local tourism managers to ensure program sustainability. These findings align with the theoretical framework of transformative experiential learning, which underscores the importance of reflection, participation, and real-world engagement in fostering sustainable community-based tourism development (Kolb, 1984) which emphasizes the importance of direct experiential engagement in fostering reflective skill development.

The subsequent phase involved assistance in developing diverse tourism packages, aimed at enriching service options for visitors and enhancing the attractiveness of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Village. The Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Group) committee was guided in designing travel concepts aligned with the village's artistic and cultural potentials, available resources, and integration with the Pottery Village. The formulation process was conducted participatorily through group discussions, analysis of attraction potentials, and simulation of visitor flow patterns. Through this activity, it was expected that the quality of tour guiding services would improve, visitors would gain a more engaging and memorable experience, and the image of the Mentaraman Cultural and Educational Tourism Village would be further strengthened as a professional and sustainable cultural destination. In addition, a study visit to Semen Village served as a field learning activity to observe best practices in managing developed tourism villages, which subsequently provided inspiration for the continued development of Mentaraman Village (Gautama et al., 2020). In terms of tour guiding competencies, the evaluation results indicated a significant improvement in communication skills and guiding literacy. Based on field observations and participants' reflections, it was initially found that many local guides lacked contextual understanding when explaining local art and cultural attractions. However, following the training, their competencies improved notably, as evidenced by their ability to deliver information in a more communicative, friendly, and audience-oriented manner, aligned with the characteristics and expectations of different types of tourists.

The implementation of digital platforms such as the SITARAN website demonstrates how technology can enhance the professionalism and efficiency of tourism services. These findings align with studies emphasizing the role of digitalization in expanding market reach and improving service management in tourism villages. The mentoring and evaluation process conducted with the Mentaraman village community also functioned as a reflective space to strengthen the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) in tourism management. Through participatory discussions, community members reviewed the implementation of the SITARAN digital platform as a tool for promotion, information dissemination, and service coordination. This finding aligns with Buhalis and O'Connor's argument (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2015) that ICT plays a transformative role in revolutionizing tourism by enhancing operational efficiency, expanding market reach, and supporting more professional service management through integrated digital systems. In the context of the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village, the guided mentoring process enabled local actors to not only adopt digital tools but also to understand their strategic value in improving decision-making, visitor communication, and destination competitiveness. Thus, ICT utilization in Mentaraman reflects a shift from traditional, informal management practices toward more structured and technology-supported tourism governance, reinforcing the sustainability of community-based tourism development.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This community service program successfully strengthened the managerial capacity of stakeholders at the Mentaraman Art and Cultural Educational Tourism Village, supporting more professional and sustainable destination management. In line with the program objectives, the application of a creative economy approach combined with field-based experiential capacity building effectively improved program planning, institutional organization, service standardization, and tourism guiding competencies. The results demonstrate that locally grounded and participatory capacity strengthening can generate measurable improvements in community-based tourism management. Overall, the program confirms that capacity building based on local potential and experiential learning is an effective strategy for enhancing the sustainability of art and cultural educational tourism villages.

This community service program has several limitations, including a relatively short implementation period, limited longitudinal evaluation of sustained impacts, and the basic level of digital technology utilization achieved. These constraints may have restricted deeper institutional consolidation and long-term measurement of capacity improvement. Based on these limitations, several recommendations are proposed for future community service initiatives. First, future programs should allocate a longer duration for mentoring to strengthen institutionalization and ensure sustained behavioral change. Second, subsequent community service teams are encouraged to apply longitudinal evaluation approaches to better assess long-term improvements in managerial performance and service quality. Third, advanced digital capacity building, particularly in tourism promotion and platform management, should be prioritized to enhance destination competitiveness. Fourth, broader stakeholder collaboration is recommended to expand networks, innovation, and policy support. Overall, these recommendations are expected to guide future community service programs in developing more comprehensive, scalable, and sustainable capacity-building models for art and cultural educational tourism villages.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors sincerely acknowledge the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, through the Directorate of Research and Community Service (DPPM) 2025, for the financial support provided for this community engagement program. The authors also extend their appreciation to the Pagelaran Village authorities, the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), the Mentaraman Tourism Village management team, and local artists for their valuable support, collaboration, and active participation throughout the implementation of the program.

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