

Developing rural communication through digital innovation for village tourism

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Abstract This study examines how digital information facilitates communication in the tourism industry to spur innovation in rural communities. Digital platforms have helped Pentingsari Village improve its tourism economy and document its development. This study used content analysis on social media and online reviews to examine Pentingsari Village's change from the New Regime era to the present day. Our research reveals minor alterations in popular perceptions towards village tourism and its effects on local culture and land ownership - effective use of Internet platforms has changed negative perceptions about the tourism industry's exploitation of indigenous land and culture. This approach is viewed as an innovative means of achieving sustainable development while preserving the cultural heritage of local communities and bolstering their economies. This study is a blueprint for how other rural communities can harness similar insights to enhance their well-being. It demonstrates how rural towns can draw inspiration from Pentingsari's utilisation of digital communication to stimulate creativity, showcase their unique attractions, and monitor their progress via digital platforms, which is instrumental in attracting tourists and investors to these areas.

Keywords: content analysis; digital marketing communication; rural communication; village tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Village tourism, often referred to as rural or countryside tourism, has witnessed a significant surge in popularity in recent years, leading to substantial economic consequences at the national level (Aryanti, 2015; Hidayat et al., 2022). This trend allows individuals to escape the fast-paced and chaotic urban environment by relocating to rural areas, where they can immerse themselves in the natural beauty and hospitable atmosphere these regions offer. It provides tourists with a unique opportunity to connect with the natural environment, gain insights into indigenous cultures, and retreat from the fast-paced and chaotic aspects of modern existence (Nilasari et al., 2019; Pradjoko et al., 2021; Shinta et al., 2014).

Village tourism is significant for various stakeholders, including tourists, local communities, and the broader economic system (Bahtiar et al., 2020; Untari & Suharto, 2021). One of the primary reasons for its importance lies in preserving and promoting local cultures and ways of life. Rural communities often possess deeply rooted cultural traditions, handicrafts, and artistic expressions that face threats from the globalisation prevalent in today's society. By welcoming tourists as part of cultural exchange initiatives, these communities can generate income while safeguarding their cultural heritage. Village tourism can also serve as a catalyst for rural economic development, generating job opportunities and income for residents, thus reducing the need for migration to urban areas in search of employment. This contributes to the sustainability of rural communities and promotes balanced regional development.

Many rural areas are blessed with natural beauty and biodiversity. Village tourism can support environmental preservation by promoting responsible tourism practices to ensure that tourism does not negatively impact local ecosystems. Tourists can learn about the importance of environmental conservation and engage in activities such as nature walks, bird watching, and tree planting to contribute to the sustainability of these ecosystems.

Village tourism offers several benefits, not only for tourists but also for the host communities. One of the most significant advantages is the opportunity for visitors to experience authenticity and immersion. Tourists can connect with locals, participate in traditional activities, and savour local cuisine to gain a deeper understanding of the region (having authentic experiences). Village tourism provides a much-needed respite from the stresses and fast-paced lifestyles of urban areas, offering tranquillity, fresh air, and a chance to disconnect from electronic devices and reconnect with nature, which can alleviate the frenetic pace of modern society. Cultural exchange benefits both travellers and local populations. Tourists gain insights into the customs, traditions, and lives of the villages they visit, while villagers are exposed to diverse cultures and ideas, fostering mutual understanding and tolerance. Village tourism injects wealth into rural economies (Haryo, 2015; Prasetyo et

al., 2020). Tourist expenditures on accommodation, food, and locally made souvenirs directly support the community, creating a sustainable source of income (Local Economic Support).

While village tourism offers various advantages, it is not without its drawbacks, despite ongoing efforts to promote progress. Rural areas often lack the infrastructure and facilities that tourists might expect in urban centres (Gwaka et al., 2018; Kutto & Mulwo, 2015). Issues such as insufficient transportation options, limited lodging choices, and the availability of necessities like clean water and sanitation can pose significant challenges for visitors. Without effective management, an influx of tourists can have adverse environmental consequences, including overcrowding, pollution, and habitat destruction, which necessitate the implementation of sustainable tourism practices (Environmental Impact). Tourists must also exhibit cultural sensitivity to respect local customs and traditions, as insensitive behaviours, such as taking photographs without permission or dressing inappropriately, can lead to cultural misunderstandings and difficulties (Al-Shimari et al., 2019; Wright, 2015). It may be difficult to find the correct balance between keeping a village's uniqueness and developing it for tourists. Over-commercialisation runs the risk of diminishing the charm that initially attracted visitors.

Village tourism holds immense potential, which can be harnessed through strategic planning and sustainable practices that benefit the local population and businesses (Christie et al., 2014). Community Empowerment in village tourism involves local communities in decision-making and revenue-sharing, ensuring that the benefits of tourism are distributed equitably. Education and awareness in village tourism can be employed to raise awareness about rural issues such as sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and the importance of traditional knowledge. Income Diversification is crucial, as rural populations often rely heavily on agriculture, which is susceptible to weather and market fluctuations. Village tourism generates additional income, reducing vulnerability. Investment in rural infrastructure, such as roads, sanitation facilities, and healthcare, can improve living conditions for both residents and visitors (Nizar, 2015).

Numerous destinations worldwide have successfully embraced village tourism, showcasing its potential (Li et al., 2021; Mulyani et al., 2022). In Bhutan, for instance, this Himalayan country has implemented a high-value, low-impact tourism programme. Visitors are required to pay a daily fee that covers accommodation, meals, and the services of a guide. This approach has contributed to preserving Bhutan's culture and environment while benefiting local communities. In India's Kerala state, known for its backwaters and scenic landscapes, village tourism has been employed to promote sustainable development. Tourists can stay in traditional homestays, participate in farming activities, and learn about local crafts. In Shirakawa-go, Japan, renowned for its thatched-roof cottages and designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site, tourists

can appreciate the unique architecture, sample local cuisine, and gain insights into traditional crafts.

Village tourism acts as a bridge connecting the past and the future, enabling visitors to step back in time and relish life as it once was. It not only benefits rural communities by creating economic opportunities but also enriches the lives of tourists by exposing them to the beauty of simplicity and the richness of culture. However, village tourism must be approached with empathy, sustainability, and a genuine commitment to preserving the distinctiveness of the rural experience to fully unlock its potential in terms of business and societal value. When executed correctly, it can result in a mutually beneficial situation for all parties involved, fostering enduring memories and a greater appreciation for the charm of rural living.

Tourism is a dynamic global industry that significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation, and cultural exchange. With millions of travellers exploring new destinations each year, there is a growing demand for well-trained professionals in the tourism sector. Tourism Training Programs have become crucial in meeting this demand and ensuring the industry's sustainability and competitiveness. This article delves into the realm of tourism training programmes, their importance, key components, and their role in shaping the future of the tourism industry while boosting economic growth.

The significance of educational programmes in tourism, as emphasised (Baroroh et al., 2021; Ramadhani et al., 2021), is multifaceted and essential for fostering the resilience and growth of the tourism industry. One of the primary factors contributing to their overall significance is the cultivation and enhancement of various competencies. Given the multifaceted nature of tourism, a diverse range of skills is required, and training programmes offer a structured framework for honing these skills. They encompass various abilities, including customer service, destination knowledge, event management, and language proficiency.

Furthermore, these programmes place a strong emphasis on delivering high-quality service. Ensuring a satisfactory tourism experience hinges on the provision of exceptional service. Training initiatives underscore the importance of customer satisfaction and aim to educate participants about the nuanced aspects of visitor interactions, effective problem-solving techniques, and strategies for creating exceptional travel experiences that leave a lasting impact. Such skills are essential for individuals in roles such as tour guides, hotel staff, and travel agents.

Tourism education enhances the travel experience by promoting a deeper cultural awareness and historical understanding of various destinations. Tour guides and travel agents must possess comprehensive knowledge of the culture, history, and attractions of the regions they represent or promote. Training courses often incorporate sections that focus on location-specific expertise. This equips

professionals with the ability to provide travellers with valuable information, enhancing their overall experience and facilitating cultural exchange.

Safety considerations and adaptability to evolving trends are critical aspects comprehensively addressed by these training programmes. Safety measures, emergency response protocols, and first aid procedures are integral components of many training curricula, aiming to ensure tourists' safety while enhancing the industry's reputation in terms of security standards. Furthermore, given the ever-changing nature of the tourism sector, influenced by technological advancements, shifting tourist preferences, and global events, staying well-informed is imperative for ensuring sustainability and success. Training programmes play a crucial role in fostering adaptability among professionals by regularly updating them on emerging trends. This enables professionals to offer new services that align with customers' evolving demands.

The Essential Elements of a Tourism Training Program to expand the business in greater grade (Ramadhani et al., 2021; Wijaya et al., 2020). At the core of every Tourism Training Programme lies a well-structured curriculum encompassing customer service, cultural sensitivity, destination knowledge, marketing, and sustainability. The curriculum should be tailored to the specific needs of various sectors within the tourism industry, such as hospitality, tour guiding, and travel agency management. The quality of its instructors often determines the effectiveness of a training programme. Utilising industry experts and experienced professionals as instructors ensures that participants gain practical insights and access to up-to-date information. Industry relationships can facilitate access to guest speakers and real-world experiences. Practical training components, such as internships, site visits, and role-playing exercises, are essential in the tourism sector, allowing learners to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios and bridging the gap between theory and practice. Many tourism training programmes offer certifications upon completion, often industry-recognised, which enhances graduates' employability.

Additionally, certification programmes may include examinations and assessments to verify participants' compliance with industry standards. In the tourism sector, soft skills are as crucial as technical skills. Effective communication, problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and adaptability can make or break a career in tourism. Modules focused on acquiring these skills should be integral to training programmes. Given the diverse nature of interactions in tourism, cultural sensitivity and understanding are essential to provide all tourists with a courteous and inclusive experience. Cultural competency and diversity training modules should also be incorporated into training programmes.

The profound impact of tourist training programmes on the industry's future (Herawati et al., 2018; Kusumawati et al., 2022). encompasses several key areas, with sustainability being a prominent

domain. Given the increasing concern for environmental preservation, it is vital to acknowledge the substantial role of training programmes in imparting knowledge to professionals about sustainable tourism practices. These measures encompass strategies to mitigate environmental impact, promote sustainable tourism practices, and support local communities. With travellers' growing awareness of environmental issues, there will be an increasing demand for individuals with expertise in sustainable tourism practices.

Furthermore, these training initiatives exert a significant influence on the realm of technological advancement. The emergence of innovative technologies such as virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and online booking systems is fundamentally reshaping the operational landscape of the tourism industry. Professionals must be trained to acquire the necessary skills to utilise these evolving technologies effectively. Additionally, they should comprehensively understand how these technologies can be strategically employed to enhance the customer experience and optimise operational procedures.

Moreover, the programmes in question effectively address the challenge posed by shifts in the demographic profiles of travellers. The growing presence of millennials and Generation Z individuals in global travel necessitates industry professionals to adopt a distinct approach to cater to their specific preferences and aspirations. Training programmes equip professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to adequately meet the needs of younger generations, who often seek unique and engaging experiences. Additionally, crisis management has become a vital competency for individuals working in the tourism industry, as underscored by global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tourist Training Programs are the foundation of a thriving, long-term tourism economy. They play a critical role in providing professionals with the essential skills, expertise, and adaptability to meet the ever-evolving demands of travellers. As the tourism landscape evolves, these initiatives will be instrumental in shaping the industry's future, ensuring that it continues to be a source of economic growth, cultural exchange, and memorable experiences for future generations.

Tourism has long been recognised as a significant economic growth and cultural exchange driver. While bustling cities and renowned destinations often steal the spotlight, village tourism, a subset of the industry, is gaining prominence for its substantial impact on local economies. This article delves into the significance of village tourism for indigenous economies, specifically focusing on how it empowers communities and safeguards their unique cultural heritage (Sumarto et al., 2020).

Village tourism plays a pivotal role in the economic development of local communities. In contrast to mass tourism, which tends to concentrate income in urban areas, village tourism enables communities to capitalise on their natural and cultural assets. Tourism generates a heightened demand for local products and services, facilitating the

growth of small businesses. Guesthouses, restaurants, artisan shops, and transportation services benefit from increased tourism, injecting wealth into the local economy. This, in turn, triggers a ripple effect of economic activity and encourages entrepreneurship.

Beyond its economic empowerment, village tourism serves as an effective means of preserving indigenous cultures and traditions. Many traditional ways of life are at risk of extinction as globalisation advances. Village tourism offers incentives for the preservation of these traditions. Cultural interactions between tourists and local communities are nurtured through village tourism. Tourists are keen to learn about local customs, traditions, and rituals, while residents are eager to share their rich heritage in return. This cross-cultural exchange fosters mutual respect and understanding.

The economic benefits of village tourism are often intertwined with the conservation of cultural and natural assets. Villagers have a vested interest in safeguarding their unique customs and ecosystems to attract future tourists. This motivation has the potential to result in the preservation of historical sites, languages, folklore, and traditional practices. In certain instances, village tourism has played a role in revitalising fading customs. When communities realise tourists' interest in their culture, they may reinvest in preserving and promoting once-dwindling traditions. This cultural renaissance enriches the tapestry of the world's cultural heritage.

Moreover, village tourism stimulates investments in much-needed rural infrastructure development. As tourism grows, local governments and private businesses often invest in roads, transportation networks, sanitation facilities, and healthcare services. This undertaking enhances the overall quality of life for residents.

Isolation and limited economic opportunities are common challenges in remote settlements. Tourism can change this situation by encouraging roadways, transportation options, and communication infrastructure investments. Improved accessibility benefits tourists and local residents by enhancing access to education, healthcare, and markets. Village tourism has a particularly significant impact on indigenous women and young people, offering opportunities for empowerment and personal growth that may not be available in other sectors. In many societies, women have historically faced restrictions on economic participation. However, village tourism often allows women to enter the workforce as entrepreneurs, tour guides, or artisans. This newfound economic independence can potentially promote gender equality in these communities. Village tourism actively engages young people, offering educational and skill development opportunities that enable adolescents to remain in their villages rather than seek employment in distant urban areas. Retaining young talent is crucial for the preservation of village life and culture.

Village tourism is important for indigenous economies, serving as a pathway to economic empowerment, cultural preservation,

infrastructure development, and the empowerment of marginalised individuals. It connects traditional rural life to the globalised world, fostering mutual understanding and respect. As we continue to explore the possibilities of sustainable tourism, it is essential to recognise the pivotal role of village tourism in safeguarding local communities' prosperity and cultural diversity. Supporting and promoting village tourism can create a mutually beneficial situation for visitors and their explored villages.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative analysis seeks to explore and comprehend qualitative data's underlying meanings, patterns, and themes. It is a valuable approach applied across various disciplines, including the social sciences, communication studies, and anthropology. Klaus Krippendorff, a prominent researcher in communication and qualitative research, has substantially contributed to developing and enhancing qualitative analytical methodologies. This paper examines Klaus Krippendorff's work and the key concepts in qualitative analysis. He is renowned for his significant contributions to content analysis and qualitative research methodologies. Over several decades, Krippendorff has authored numerous books and papers that have greatly advanced the field of qualitative analysis.

One of Krippendorff's most notable achievements was the development of content analysis as a systematic and rigorous approach to evaluating textual and visual data. He has emphasised the utility of content analysis as a method for deciphering the latent meanings embedded in various forms of communication, including written texts, audio recordings, photographs, and videos. Krippendorff's approach to content analysis is characterised by a commitment to interpretative and contextual understanding (Malayati & Daniel Susilo, 2020; Susilo, Putranto, et al., 2021). The content analysis framework developed by Krippendorff is focused on identifying and analysing patterns, themes, and discourses within qualitative data. He underscores the importance of scholars engaging in a hermeneutic process involving careful reading and reflection on evidence to comprehend and make sense of it. In contrast to quantitative content analysis, which involves counting and categorising discrete elements, Krippendorff's qualitative content analysis aims to unveil the subtle meanings and implications within the data.

Krippendorff's method of qualitative analysis places a strong emphasis on context and reflexivity. He argues that researchers should be mindful of their perspectives, biases, and preconceptions while evaluating qualitative data. This self-awareness is crucial to ensure that the analysis remains faithful to the data and does not impose the researcher's pre-existing views on the findings. Krippendorff promotes research transparency by encouraging researchers to disclose their decision-making processes and techniques for interpreting data.

Another pivotal concept within Krippendorff's qualitative analysis framework is "meaning units." These are segments of data that convey specific meanings or ideas. Researchers identify and code these meaning units to capture the essential content and themes within the data. Coding meaning units involves categorising them into meaningful groups or themes, enabling researchers to systematically organise and evaluate data (Kolil et al., 2020).

Krippendorff underscores the iterative nature of qualitative analysis. He suggests that researchers should revisit and refine their categorisation and interpretation as they engage more deeply with the data. This iterative process enhances the understanding of underlying themes and patterns, ensuring the reliability and rigour of the analysis. Additionally, Krippendorff acknowledges the importance of intercoder reliability in qualitative analysis. Intercoder reliability measures the extent to which multiple researchers or coders agree on data coding and interpretation. Krippendorff advocates using well-defined coding criteria and regular coder meetings or discussions to resolve discrepancies and maintain consistency in the analysis, thus enhancing reliability.

Krippendorff's work has also influenced the development of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). These software tools assist researchers in managing and analysing extensive sets of qualitative data by simplifying the coding and organisation of meaning units and facilitating the iterative data interpretation process. In summary, Klaus Krippendorff's contributions to qualitative analysis have significantly advanced the field of qualitative research. His emphasis on interpretative understanding, context, reflexivity, and systematic coding of meaning units provides researchers with a comprehensive framework for conducting rigorous and insightful qualitative analysis. Krippendorff's work continues to impact researchers and practitioners across various disciplines, enabling them to uncover the rich and nuanced meanings embedded in qualitative data.

The author intends to use @desawisatapentingsari's Instagram account for analysis using the above-mentioned analytical method. Content selection will be based on their communication material, and the data will be presented in a tabular format before undergoing a thorough analysis.


RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Village Tourism and Development

In our exploration of village tourism, we initially focus on the vital role of rural communication in promoting innovative practices within rural communities. The advent of digital technology has brought about a significant transformation in how communities connect and the global community as a whole. New technologies offer a unique opportunity for progress and development, particularly in rural areas that have traditionally faced geographical and social isolation.



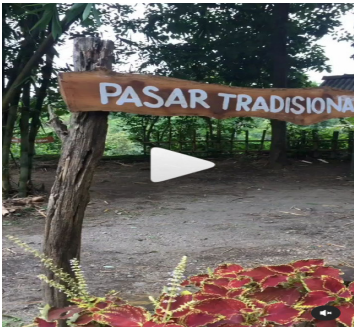
In this context, village tourism is a notable example of how digital platforms can be harnessed to foster growth and transformation. As we delve deeper into our investigation, we will focus on examining how these villages employ digital communication to stimulate innovation. This includes showcasing their distinctive attractions and documenting their evolutionary journey, a crucial process for attracting tourists and investors. Our aim in analysing data related to village tourism is to unravel the complexities of this phenomenon and grasp its implications for other rural communities.

Table 1. Content Analysis Table (1)

Content	Caption	Details
	Back in the day, folks in Pentingsari didn't have cows or modern equipment like nowadays. To plow the rice fields, they used hoes, and to level the soil, they used banana tree leaves.	Content about farming tool innovations
	#desawisata #merapi #lavatourmerapi #wisatajogja #jakarta #sandiuno #kemenparekraf #pesonaindonesia #wisatasleman #visitingjogja #jokowi #hutri78 #wisataistimewa	
	Community-based tourism field trip from UGM's tourism program. Thanks for learning with us in Pentingsari.	Village tourism education
	#outbound #teambuilding #desa #desawisata #desawisatapentingsari #dewiperi #sleman #jogja #merapi #pentingsari #jadesta #studybanding #diindonesiaaja #pesonaindonesia #wonderfulindonesia #sandiuno #kemenparekraf #wisatasleman #baktibca #desasatukataseribuceritase jutakarya	

Source: Author Processed (2023)

Table 2. Content Analysis Table (2)

Content	Caption	Details
	Outbound team building, relaxation, and hypno-motivation. #baktibca #adwi2022 #pentingsari #desa #desawisatapentingsari #kemenparekraf #diindonesiaaja #wonderfulindonesia #sandiuno #merapi #jogja #sleman #outbound #wisatasleman #pesonaindonesia Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un	Hypnotism technique as part of education training.
	One of the founding figures of Pentingsari's tourism village, Mr. Tony Sukoyo, affectionately known as Mbah Joker, has passed away. Mbah Joker was best known as a gamelan instructor. With his experience, he could teach tourists to play the gamelan musical instrument in just 10 minutes. The songs he often performed were "Sluku-sluku Batok" and "Suwe Ora Jamu." His kindness and sincerity will always be remembered in our hearts. May he rest in peace with the Almighty. Thank you, Mbah Joker, for your hard work in building Pentingsari's tourism village from the beginning until now. 🙏🥹	Learning traditional gamelan
	#jogja #sleman #merapi #lavatourmerapi #baktibca #desawisatapentingsari #desa #desawisata #desabinaanbca #wisatasleman #diindonesiaaja #demiindonesia #ATF2023 #kampanyesadarwisata #wonderfulindonesia #unwto #sandiuno #pesonaindonesia_id Have a great weekend, friends. Don't forget, tomorrow, Sunday, from 07:00 to 12:00, enjoy the culinary delights at the Ndoereng traditional market. Indulge in the local dishes that Pentingsari residents typically serve to tourists. #pasar #pentingsari #merapi #sleman #jogja #kulinerjogja	Traditional market event

Source: Author Processed (2023)

Based on the data provided on table 1 and Table 2, there are a total of five posts, each highlighting different aspects of communication

in the development of tourism in Pentingsari Village. In the first post, we can observe how Pentingsari Tourism plays a role in innovating their agricultural communication, transitioning from traditional banana trees to modern machinery. The second and third posts demonstrate how the villagers actively engage in education to expand tourism in Pentingsari Village. Additionally, there is an emphasis on the importance of teaching Gamelan by local experts. The final post showcases the traditional open market designed to enhance tourism in Pentingsari Village. These posts cover various content, from agricultural tools and education to public facilities (Table 2).

Education has the potential to break the cycle of poverty and enhance the overall quality of life in rural areas. By investing in education, these communities can equip future generations with the knowledge and skills needed to participate more effectively in the tourism industry. Education prepares young individuals for careers as tour guides, hospitality professionals, or entrepreneurs, thereby contributing to the growth of village tourism (Cole et al., 2021; Quinton et al., 2022). Moreover, education can promote sustainable tourism practices by raising awareness about preserving the environment and local culture. When educated about protecting these elements, visitors are more likely to engage in responsible and sustainable tourism behaviours that benefit the community and the environment.

Rural villages must also invest in essential public infrastructure such as clean and safe drinking water, sanitation, transportation, and accommodation to attract and accommodate tourists. These facilities not only enhance the village's appeal to tourists but also improve the quality of life for the local residents. Access to clean drinking water and proper sanitation facilities is vital for residents' and tourists' health and well-being. A healthy population is more productive and can actively participate in tourism-related activities. Transit infrastructure, including roads and public transportation, facilitates tourist access to these remote areas, increasing visitor numbers and revenue for the community (Phillips et al., 2021). Accommodation options like guesthouses and eco-lodges provide an additional source of income for locals while offering guests a more immersive experience. These facilities often incorporate traditional architectural styles and materials, contributing to the cultural authenticity of the village tourism experience.

One of the most attractive aspects of village tourism is the opportunity to explore the rich cultural history of rural communities. However, as tourism becomes more popular, there is a risk of cultural dilution or commercialisation. Striking a balance between economic development and cultural preservation is essential. Achieving this equilibrium involves improved agriculture equipment, education, and public amenities. Communities can maintain and present their cultural traditions authentically to tourists by modernising agriculture while still honouring traditional methods. Education ensures that the next

generation values and preserves their cultural heritage, which they will pass on to future generations and visitors. When public facilities are developed with cultural sensitivity, they can enhance the overall experience by immersing visitors in the local way of life (Wilhelmsson et al., 2022). Village tourism offers a unique opportunity to empower rural communities economically and socially, but its success depends on investments in agricultural tools, education, and public amenities. These three pillars not only enhance the quality of life for villagers but also enrich the tourism experience for visitors.

Rural villages can establish a sustainable and culturally vibrant tourist economy by modernising agriculture, investing in education, and creating essential infrastructure (Tyan et al., 2020). This, in turn, ensures the preservation of cultural heritage, community empowerment, and a positive impact on the global tourism landscape. When executed correctly, village tourism becomes a win-win situation for all parties involved, fostering mutual understanding and respect between tourists and villages while contributing to long-term development (Gelter et al., 2022).

Cultural Heritage as Key Promotion of Village Brand

The findings of our study indicate a significant shift in attitudes resulting from the effective use of digital platforms in promoting tourism. Throughout history, the tourism industry has often been met with scepticism and seen as a potentially exploitative sector that encroaches on local land rights and erodes indigenous cultural heritage. This negative perception has posed a barrier to the growth and acceptance of tourism in many rural communities. However, the strategic use of digital channels has played a crucial role in challenging this prevailing discourse (Haryo, 2015; Hidayat et al., 2022; Prasetyo et al., 2020; Susilo, Hidayat et al., 2021).

Digital platforms have emerged as a means for rural communities to effectively showcase their unique cultural heritage and pristine natural landscapes directly to potential tourists (Murti, 2020; Pantelidis et al., 2018). By engaging in direct communication, local communities can take control of their narrative, highlighting the potential of tourism to promote the preservation, rather than the dilution, of their cultural heritage. Through engaging digital content, the portrayal of traditional practices, folklore, artisanal crafts, and celebratory events helps foster a deeper understanding among visitors about the importance of preserving these cultural traditions.

Furthermore, these platforms have enabled rural communities to demonstrate how tourism can be integrated into their local economies sustainably while minimising adverse impacts on the environment and local culture. Narratives that exemplify responsible tourist behaviours, sustainable accommodation options, or eco-friendly tourist activities are educational tools to enlighten prospective travellers about the significance of adopting respectful travel practices (Thompson, 2007).

Additionally, these digital narratives effectively showcase the economic benefits arising from tourism. They illustrate improvements in infrastructure and increased engagement of local businesses as a direct result of the growing number of visitors. This transparency helps alleviate concerns that the tourism industry favours external companies at the expense of local communities.

Furthermore, digital platforms provide a space for communication and exchanging ideas between residents and prospective tourists. These interactions allow villagers to express their concerns or expectations directly to visitors, promoting mutual respect and understanding (Angelia & Susilo, 2023; Susilo & Hui Chen, 2023). Consequently, this process dispels negative stereotypes often associated with tourist behaviour.

In summary, our research findings demonstrate that the effective use of digital communication strategies has the potential to reshape public perceptions of village tourism. Instead of being seen as exploitative, village tourism can be recognised as an innovative approach to sustainable development that benefits local communities. This approach achieves a dual objective of preserving cultural heritage while boosting the local economy.

CONCLUSION

The research findings suggest Pentingsari Village has implemented several innovative strategies to enhance village tourism. These innovations primarily focus on advancing agricultural tools, educational initiatives, and enhancing public facilities. This illustrates the significant transformation of Indonesia, moving from a predominantly agrarian society in rural communities to a more diverse and expanded economy driven by the establishment of village tourism initiatives. It also signifies the successful development of village tourism in Pentingsari.

The tourism sector is susceptible to the negative consequences of land expropriation, leading to converting local land into labour resources for foreign individuals or entities. However, the demonstration of innovative practices within rural villages indicates that sustainable development can be achieved through tourism. With effective management and comprehensive education, implementing village tourism can bring about economic prosperity for the local residents.

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