



Integrating Community Empowerment, Innovation, and Digital Marketing in Developing Pegagan-Based Wellness Tourism Products: A Participatory Action Research in Kenderan Tourism Village

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ABSTRACT

Kenderan Tourism Village in Gianyar, Bali, possesses significant potential for the development of wellness tourism based on its abundant natural resources. However, the lack of distinctive local products and limited community capacity in production and marketing have constrained its competitiveness. This study aims to develop and evaluate a community-based model that integrates community empowerment, product innovation, and digital marketing in creating pegagan (Centella asiatica)-based wellness tourism products. This research employs a participatory action research approach involving the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) and local women's groups (PKK). The study was conducted through five stages: socialization, training, technology transfer, mentoring, and evaluation. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and pre-post assessments to measure improvements in participants' knowledge and skills. The innovation process focused on developing pegagan-based products, including herbal tea and facial masks, supported by the establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for production, quality control, and packaging. Digital marketing strategies were also implemented through social media platforms to expand market reach. The results indicate a significant improvement in participants' technical and managerial capacities, particularly in product processing, quality assurance, and marketing practices. The developed products show strong potential as distinctive wellness tourism commodities, contributing to increased product value and tourist engagement. Furthermore, the adoption of digital marketing enhances product visibility and accessibility in broader markets. This study demonstrates that integrating community empowerment, innovation, and digital marketing provides an effective and replicable model for strengthening the competitiveness of tourism villages. The findings contribute to the development of sustainable, community-based wellness tourism in the digital era.

Keywords: *Community Empowerment, Digital Marketing, Participatory Action Research, Pegagan, Tourism, Tourism Village, Wellness*

I. INTRODUCTION

Wellness tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors in the global tourism industry, driven by increasing awareness of health, well-being, and holistic lifestyles. This type of tourism emphasizes physical, mental, and spiritual balance, offering experiences such as relaxation, herbal treatments, and nature-based activities. The growing demand for wellness tourism creates opportunities for destinations with strong cultural traditions and natural resources.

Indonesia, particularly Bali, is widely recognized as a leading destination for wellness tourism due to its unique combination of natural beauty, spiritual culture, and traditional healing practices. The concept of harmony between humans, nature, and spirituality provides a strong foundation for sustainable tourism development. In this context, tourism villages play an important role in promoting community-based tourism that benefits local communities.

Kenderan Tourism Village in Gianyar Regency has strong potential for developing wellness tourism based on local resources. One of the key resources is pegagan (Centella asiatica), a medicinal plant known for its health benefits. However, the village faces several challenges, including limited product innovation, lack of distinctive local products, and underutilization of digital marketing strategies.

These challenges indicate the need for an integrated approach that combines community empowerment, product innovation, and digital marketing. Therefore, this study aims to develop and evaluate a model that integrates these three components to enhance the competitiveness of Kenderan Tourism Village.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Wellness Tourism

Wellness tourism refers to travel activities that aim to maintain or improve individual well-being, including physical, mental, and spiritual aspects. It emphasizes holistic experiences such as relaxation, meditation, and herbal treatments. Destinations that incorporate local culture and natural resources tend to be more competitive in this sector.

2.2 Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is a key element in sustainable tourism development. It involves enhancing the capacity of local communities to actively participate in decision-making and economic activities. Empowered communities are more likely to benefit from tourism and ensure its sustainability through active involvement and collaboration.

2.3 Product Innovation

Product innovation plays an important role in increasing competitiveness in tourism. It involves developing new or improved products that provide added value to consumers. In tourism villages, innovation often focuses on transforming local resources into marketable products that reflect local identity.

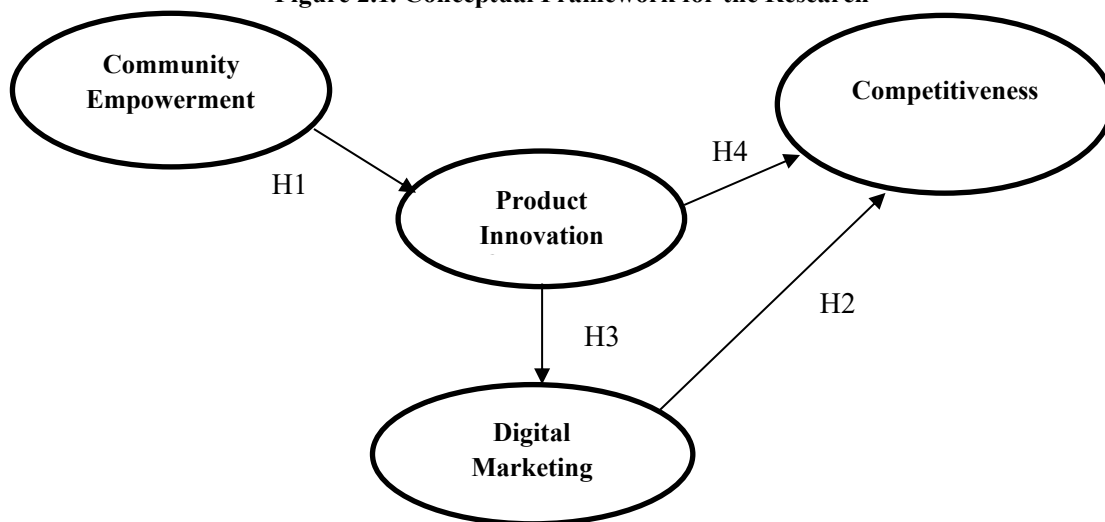
2.4 Digital Marketing

Digital marketing enables tourism destinations to reach wider audiences and improve engagement with potential customers. Social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok play an important role in promoting tourism products. For rural communities, digital marketing helps overcome geographical limitations and expand market access.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study proposes an integrated framework combining community empowerment, product innovation, and digital marketing. Empowerment enhances community capacity, innovation creates value-added products, and digital marketing expands market reach. The integration of these components strengthens competitiveness and sustainability in tourism villages.

Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework for the Research



2.6 Research Hypothesis

H1: Community empowerment has a positive and significant effect on product innovation

H2: Product innovation has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness

H3: Digital marketing has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness

H4: Community empowerment has a positive and significant effect on competitiveness

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, which emphasizes collaboration between researchers and the community. The research was conducted in Kenderan Tourism Village, Gianyar, Bali.

The participants consisted of 30 individuals, including members of POKDARWIS and PKK groups. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and pre–post assessments.

The research was implemented in five stages:

1. Socialization
2. Training
3. Technology Transfer
4. Mentoring
5. Evaluation

Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively to measure improvements, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

IV. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Research Result

Table 4.1 Improvement of Participants' Capacity

Indicator	Before (%)	After (%)	Increase (%)
Knowledge	40	90	+50
Skills	30	85	+55
Marketing	25	80	+55
Digital Usage	20	75	+55

The results show a significant improvement in all indicators. Participants' knowledge and skills increased substantially after training and mentoring activities. Digital marketing capability also improved, indicating successful adoption of technology.

4.2 Discussion

The findings indicate that the integrated approach is effective in enhancing community capacity. The increase in digital literacy is particularly important in improving competitiveness in the tourism market. The development of pegagan-based products provides a unique identity for the tourism village. In addition, digital marketing strategies enable wider promotion and stronger engagement with potential customers.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that the integration of community empowerment, product innovation, and digital marketing significantly improves the competitiveness of Kenderan Tourism Village. The participatory approach successfully enhances community capacity, develops innovative products, and expands market reach.

5.2 Suggestions

Future studies should explore long-term impacts and expand product diversification. It is also recommended to incorporate more advanced digital marketing strategies to further strengthen sustainability and competitiveness.

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