

Community Empowerment Model through Café Sawah to Enhance Income-Generating Activities in Pujon Kidul, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Prior to the establishment of Café Sawah, Pujon Kidul Village relied primarily on agriculture and faced unemployment, limited economic diversification, and relatively low educational attainment. This study aims to analyse how Café Sawah functions as a community empowerment model that enhances income-generating activities in Pujon Kidul Village, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was employed, using semi-structured interviews with 11 informants: a community leader, village officials, a BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera manager, youth organisation representatives, and Café Sawah managers. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, and analysed through data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and thematic interpretation; triangulation and member checking were used to strengthen credibility. The findings show that Café Sawah developed through collaborative governance involving the village government, BUMDes, local communities, and external stakeholders. The empowerment process combined community participation, utilisation of local resources, institutional coordination, and capacity building, thereby expanding locally accessible employment and business opportunities beyond agriculture. Tourism development reportedly created employment opportunities for approximately 200 individuals, involved workers from poor households, strengthened MSME participation and local product markets, contributed IDR 162.5 million annually to the village's own-source revenue, and supported BUMDes-managed business activities generating approximately IDR 1.7 billion per year. These findings indicate broader access to productive activities and local economic opportunities rather than uniform income growth across all households. This study contributes an empirically grounded model showing how community-based tourism coordinated through BUMDes can connect participatory empowerment, village institutions, and local resource utilisation with diversified income-generating activities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Rural communities continue to face persistent socioeconomic challenges, particularly in developing countries where livelihoods remain highly dependent on agriculture. Limited economic diversification, fluctuating agricultural commodity prices, restricted market access, and inadequate human resource capacity often constrain rural households from achieving sustainable economic growth. These challenges are further exacerbated by unemployment, poverty, and the migration of productive-age populations to urban areas in search of better employment opportunities. Consequently, rural development policies increasingly emphasise community empowerment as a strategic approach to strengthening local capacities, expanding economic opportunities, and promoting sustainable livelihoods [1], [2].

Community empowerment refers to a process through which individuals and community groups gain the knowledge, skills, authority, and access to resources required to determine their own development priorities and improve their quality of life [1], [2], [3]. Beyond immediate economic outcomes, empowerment can strengthen community participation and collective capacity to mobilise local resources for social and economic development [4], [5]. Within this perspective, innovation plays an essential role in enabling communities to transform local resources into productive economic activities. Innovation is not limited to the creation of entirely new products or technologies but also includes the adaptation, development, or replication of existing ideas to generate greater social and economic value [6], [7]. Accordingly, rural innovation increasingly depends on interactions among local communities, governments, businesses, and other stakeholders within collaborative innovation processes [8]–[9].

One important outcome of community empowerment is the expansion of income-generating activities. Rural income-generating activities encompass agricultural and non-agricultural sources of household income, including wage employment and self-employment [10]. In this study, the concept is applied analytically to examine how community empowerment expands access to employment, entrepreneurship, value-added production, and locally organised village business activities. Village-level revenues and BUMDes business income are treated as institutional economic outcomes rather than as direct measures of household income. Diversifying income sources is particularly important in rural economies because dependence on a limited range of agricultural activities can increase vulnerability to market fluctuations, seasonal uncertainty, and production risks [11]–[12]. Tourism-based community empowerment may provide an additional pathway for diversification by creating employment opportunities, supporting local entrepreneurship, strengthening village institutions, and increasing the added value of local products [13], [14], [15].

Indonesia continues to experience disparities between urban and rural development despite progress in poverty reduction. Official national statistics indicate that poverty remains higher in rural areas than in urban areas [16]. This rural poverty disparity underscores the importance of expanding locally accessible, diversified economic opportunities. In response, the Indonesian government has promoted community-based rural

development through village autonomy, village funds, and Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) to stimulate local economic activity and strengthen village institutions [17]. These policies encourage villages to identify and utilise endogenous resources as they develop locally managed economic initiatives.

Against this national backdrop, Pujon Kidul Village in Malang Regency exemplifies a rural community that has faced many of the structural constraints common to Indonesian agricultural villages. Before the development of tourism, the village economy depended predominantly on rice cultivation, horticulture, and dairy farming. Although these sectors constituted the primary source of household income, they provided limited economic security because farmers remained vulnerable to fluctuating commodity prices, seasonal crop failures, and unstable market demand. These conditions restricted opportunities for income diversification and constrained the village's overall economic development.

The socioeconomic challenges experienced by Pujon Kidul extended beyond agricultural dependency. Limited educational attainment reduced many residents' capacity to access skilled employment or to develop entrepreneurial ventures, while unemployment, particularly among young people, encouraged labour migration to urban areas. At the same time, local agricultural and livestock products were largely marketed as raw commodities with relatively low added value, reflecting the limited development of downstream industries and value-added processing. These interconnected challenges weakened household resilience, reduced village competitiveness, and hindered the achievement of sustainable rural development. Consequently, addressing these problems required more than sectoral agricultural interventions; it demanded an integrated community empowerment strategy capable of expanding economic opportunities while strengthening local institutional capacity.

Recognising these challenges, the village government and local community initiated Café Sawah, a community-based tourism initiative designed to utilise local resources more productively. Rather than establishing tourism as a substitute for agriculture, Café Sawah was developed as an integrated rural development initiative that combines tourism, agriculture, livestock farming, culinary enterprises, and local cultural assets into a unified economic system. This approach enables visitors to experience rural life while simultaneously creating wider market opportunities for agricultural products, local cuisine, handicrafts, and community-based services. Consequently, tourism functions not merely as a recreational activity but as an economic platform that connects local production with expanding consumer demand.

A distinguishing characteristic of Café Sawah is the central role played by BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera in coordinating and managing the tourism initiative. Through BUMDes, community members participate in planning, management, and tourism-related enterprises, including food stalls, agricultural attractions, parking services, souvenir production, guest houses, and other micro and small businesses. This institutional arrangement broadens community access to tourism-related economic opportunities and links local products and services with visitor demand.

The development of Café Sawah, therefore, represents more than the establishment of a successful tourist destination. It illustrates how community empowerment can transform

locally available resources into diversified income-generating activities through collaborative governance, institutional innovation, and active community participation. This transformation makes Pujon Kidul an important empirical setting for understanding how community-based tourism can strengthen rural livelihoods while supporting sustainable local economic development.

Café Sawah, therefore, provides an empirical context for examining how community empowerment, village institutions, and collaborative innovation interact in practice. Rather than treating tourism as a substitute for agriculture, the initiative connects agricultural resources, local culture, entrepreneurship, and village-managed businesses with new market opportunities. This context positions the case within the broader literature on community empowerment, rural tourism, and innovation.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that community empowerment is a fundamental strategy for improving rural livelihoods by strengthening local capacities, increasing access to economic resources, and encouraging community participation in development processes [1], [2]. Within the context of rural development, empowerment has been widely implemented through various approaches, including community-based tourism, entrepreneurship development, agricultural diversification, and institutional strengthening. These approaches can strengthen local participation, community capacity, and locally grounded economic development [3]–[5]. Consequently, empowerment is increasingly recognised not merely as an economic intervention but as a development process that integrates social and institutional dimensions.

Tourism-based rural development has attracted growing scholarly attention because of its potential to diversify rural economies beyond conventional agricultural activities. Previous research suggests that community empowerment in tourism can support local participation and entrepreneurship [13], while agritourism can connect agricultural resources with rural development and diversification [15]. When sustained through community participation and locally grounded resource management, rural tourism may contribute to broader rural community development [18], [19].

Recent studies have also emphasised the importance of innovation in enhancing the sustainability and competitiveness of rural tourism destinations. Rural innovation is no longer understood solely as technological advancement but also encompasses institutional innovation, social innovation, and the adaptation of existing development models to local contexts [6]–[9]. In tourism villages, innovation frequently involves integrating agriculture, local culture, creative industries, and digital technology to create distinctive visitor experiences while expanding economic opportunities for local residents [20], [15]. Such innovations enable rural communities to create new sources of value from existing resources without abandoning their traditional economic foundations.

Taken together, previous studies establish the relevance of empowerment, rural tourism, innovation, and village institutions to local development. However, these bodies of literature are often discussed as separate domains, leaving the integration of empowerment processes, institutional coordination, and the transformation of local resources into income-generating activities less clear.

Although previous studies have established the importance of community empowerment, rural tourism, and innovation in promoting local economic development, several important gaps remain. First, existing research has predominantly examined the outcomes of tourism village development, such as increased tourist arrivals, employment creation, or economic growth, while providing limited explanation of the empowerment processes through which these outcomes are achieved [13], [14], [19]. Second, studies on community empowerment generally emphasise participation, capacity building, or institutional development, but seldom explain how these elements interact to transform local resources into sustainable income-generating activities through an integrated rural tourism model [1], [2], [3]. Third, although Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) have become increasingly important actors in rural economic development in Indonesia, empirical evidence on their role in coordinating community empowerment, stakeholder collaboration, and tourism-based livelihood transformation remains relatively limited [17].

Accordingly, this study addresses these gaps by examining Café Sawah in Pujon Kidul Village as a community-based empowerment model that integrates tourism, agriculture, local entrepreneurship, and institutional collaboration within a rural development strategy. Rather than focusing exclusively on tourism performance or aggregate economic outcomes, this study investigates the processes through which empowerment is initiated, implemented, and sustained, and how these processes expand the range of locally accessible income-generating activities. By analysing interactions among community participation, village institutions, BUMDes management, and multi-stakeholder collaboration, the study explains mechanisms underpinning rural economic diversification in the Pujon Kidul case.

The novelty of this study lies in three principal aspects. First, it develops an integrated analytical perspective connecting community empowerment, community-based tourism, and income-generating activities. Second, it provides empirical evidence that Café Sawah functions not merely as a tourism destination but as a community-generated innovation that connects local resources to employment, entrepreneurship, and village-managed business activities. Third, it explains the strategic role of BUMDes as local institutional mechanisms that coordinate village resources, facilitate community participation, and broaden access to tourism-related economic opportunities. These perspectives extend studies that examine rural tourism, empowerment, or village institutions as separate phenomena.

Therefore, this study aims to analyse how Café Sawah functions as a community empowerment model that enhances income-generating activities in Pujon Kidul Village, Malang Regency, Indonesia. Specifically, the study explores the community empowerment process underpinning Café Sawah's development, examines the institutional and collaborative mechanisms that support its implementation, and analyses its contribution to transforming local income-generating activities.

This study contributes to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it extends the literature on community empowerment and community-based tourism by explaining how participatory processes, village institutions, and stakeholder collaboration interact to expand locally organised income-generating activities. In practice, the findings provide evidence-based insights for village governments, BUMDes managers, development practitioners, and policymakers seeking to design community empowerment programs that diversify rural

economic opportunities while maintaining community participation and locally grounded resource management.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach to explore the processes, meanings, and impacts of community empowerment through Café Sawah in Pujon Kidul Village, Malang Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand how community empowerment was initiated, implemented, and sustained from the perspectives of individuals directly involved in Café Sawah's development. This approach enables an in-depth exploration of complex social phenomena within their natural setting and provides a comprehensive understanding of community experiences and institutional interactions [21]–[22]. Accordingly, the research design aimed to generate contextual evidence demonstrating how Café Sawah functions as a community empowerment model that enhances income-generating activities.

2.2 Research Site and Participants

Pujon Kidul Village was purposively selected as the research site because it represents a successful example of community-based tourism that integrates agriculture, local entrepreneurship, village institutions, and community participation through Café Sawah. The village has experienced significant socioeconomic transformation following the establishment of this tourism initiative, making it an appropriate setting for examining the relationship between community empowerment and income-generating activities.

Participants were selected using snowball sampling, which enabled the identification of individuals possessing direct knowledge and experience of the community empowerment process. The sampling process began with the Village Head as the first informant because of his comprehensive understanding of Café Sawah's establishment and development. Subsequent participants were identified based on recommendations from previous informants until sufficient information was obtained. In total, eleven key informants participated in the study, comprising one community leader, two village officials, one manager of BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera, three representatives of the youth organisation, and four Café Sawah managers.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation studies to obtain comprehensive information from multiple sources [23]. The combination of these techniques enabled data triangulation and facilitated a more holistic understanding of the community empowerment process.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all eleven informants, lasting between two and three hours per participant. Interviews took place at the Village Hall, Café Sawah, and participants' residences, depending on their availability and convenience. Prior to each interview, participants were informed of the research objectives and voluntarily agreed to participate. With their permission, all interviews were audio-recorded to ensure

data accuracy. The recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim and became the primary source for qualitative analysis.

Observation was undertaken throughout the research period to complement interview findings by documenting actual practices within Café Sawah and Pujon Kidul Tourism Village. Particular attention was given to community participation in tourism activities, stakeholder interactions, the operation of village business units managed by BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera, tourism facilities, entrepreneurial activities, and the utilisation of local resources to support community empowerment. These observations enabled the researchers to compare participants' narratives with actual practices observed in the field.

Documentation studies were conducted to strengthen and validate information obtained through interviews and observations. Documentary sources included village regulations, official village reports, BUMDes documents, published journal articles, government publications, official websites, and publicly accessible YouTube videos related to Café Sawah and Pujon Kidul Tourism Village. Documentary materials were selected based on their relevance, credibility, and consistency with the research objectives. Information obtained from documentary sources was cross-checked against interview and observation data to ensure consistency and accuracy.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process following the qualitative analysis procedures proposed by Miles and Huberman [24], consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Following transcription, interview data were read repeatedly to become familiar with them. Similar statements were then grouped into meaningful categories representing key aspects of community empowerment, institutional collaboration, innovation, and income-generating activities. These categories were subsequently synthesised into broader themes that formed the basis for interpreting the research findings.

To complement the thematic analysis, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis was employed to evaluate the sustainability of Café Sawah as a community-based tourism initiative [25]. The SWOT analysis was developed from empirical evidence obtained through interviews and field observations, rather than solely from secondary sources. Integrating thematic analysis with SWOT enabled the researchers to examine both the internal characteristics of Café Sawah and the external factors influencing its long-term sustainability.

2.5 Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

The credibility of the findings was strengthened through methodological triangulation and member checking [26], [27]. Triangulation was achieved by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentary sources, while member checking involved returning interview summaries and preliminary interpretations to selected participants to confirm the accuracy of the researchers' interpretations. Dependability and confirmability were enhanced by maintaining detailed documentation of the research

process, including field notes, interview transcripts, analytical memos, and coding procedures.

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. All participants received information about the research objectives before the interviews commenced and voluntarily agreed to participate through informed consent. Participants were assured that their identities and personal information would remain confidential and would be used solely for academic purposes. Permission to conduct the research and utilise information related to the village and Café Sawah was obtained from the relevant village authorities prior to data collection.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Process of Innovation

The findings indicate that the innovation process implemented in Pujon Kidul Tourism Village was not limited to the establishment of Café Sawah as a tourism destination but represented a broader strategy for community-based rural development. The innovation was initiated to address socioeconomic constraints by transforming locally available resources into sustainable economic opportunities through collaboration among village institutions, community members, government agencies, academia, businesses, and the media. This collaborative orientation is consistent with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 and 17, which promote inclusive economic growth and decent work, and emphasise partnerships for sustainable development. Thus, innovation in Pujon Kidul was directed not merely towards attracting tourists but towards strengthening local economic resilience through community participation and institutional collaboration.

The innovation emerged from the socioeconomic conditions of Pujon Kidul, where agriculture had traditionally been the dominant livelihood, driven by fertile land. The findings indicate that younger community members began proposing alternative economic activities through village deliberation forums. Although the formulation of these ideas involved debate among community actors, the village government maintained a supportive stance towards the proposal to establish a café in the village. In 2016, village funding supported the establishment of Café Sawah on approximately 6,800 m² of village treasury land. Importantly, Café Sawah was not initiated by a single individual or private investor; it emerged from collective community creativity and institutional support from the village government. This community-generated origin distinguishes the initiative from tourism projects primarily driven by external investment.

The early innovation process was particularly challenging because approximately 80% of community members had completed no more than junior high school. This condition increased the importance of community learning, practical training, and institutional support during the development of tourism-related activities. Rather than treating limited formal education only as a community deficit, the innovation process sought to mobilise residents' practical knowledge, local experience, and willingness to participate in village development.

The innovation process was implemented through a series of interconnected stages involving institutional and community participation. Village officials and community members first identified local problems and development potential through participatory discussions and village deliberation. The assessment informed short- and long-term village

development plans. Collaboration was then developed among academia, community organisations, local government, businesses, and mass media. The process also involved building trust among relevant actors, maintaining transparency in information, managing village resources in line with community needs, sustaining focus and consistency, preserving local wisdom, and involving the younger generation at every stage of village development. These activities demonstrate that innovation evolved through participatory governance rather than a top-down development approach.

The implementation of these strategies led to a substantial transformation of the village's economy. As summarised in Table 1, development shifted from a predominantly agriculture-based economy towards a more diversified rural economy supported by tourism and local entrepreneurship. Land previously used only for agricultural crops was partly opened for tourism-related activities, creating opportunities for residents to establish food stalls, recreational attractions, ATV rentals, horse-riding services, arts, and other visitor services. Development priorities also moved beyond physical infrastructure towards programmes more directly concerned with community economic welfare. Livestock and agricultural products that had previously been sold mainly as raw commodities were increasingly processed or marketed through tourism channels, while local MSMEs obtained space to sell their products at the destination.

Table 1. Pre-Innovation Conditions, Innovation Process, and Resulting Transformation

No	Pre-Innovation Condition	Innovation Process	Resulting Transformation
1	Village land was used primarily for agricultural crops.	Village land was partly developed for tourism activities.	New business opportunities emerged for shops, recreational activities, ATV and horse-riding services, arts, and other tourism-related services.
2	Village development focused mainly on physical infrastructure, including roads, drainage, paving, and bridges.	Development priorities expanded beyond physical infrastructure.	Greater attention was directed towards community economic development and access to productive activities.
3	Fresh milk from dairy farming was sold mainly as a raw product.	Women involved in the Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK) group developed value-added milk-based food and beverage products.	Processed milk products created opportunities for higher-value local product sales.
4	Vegetables and fruits were sold mainly through contractors or collectors.	Direct sales and sales through tourism village outlets were developed.	Farm products gained additional local marketing channels and opportunities to achieve higher selling prices.
5	Local MSME products had limited access to tourism markets.	MSMEs were involved in selling local products at tourism sites.	Tourism outlets broadened market access for MSMEs and expanded the range of products available to visitors.

The transformation generated employment opportunities for local residents. According to information obtained from the Village Head, approximately 85 young people who had previously been unemployed were absorbed into tourism-related occupations following the development of tourism units. The availability of work within the village was also associated with a reduction in the need for young residents to migrate to urban areas in search of

employment. These findings indicate that innovation functioned not only as a tourism strategy but also as a mechanism for creating locally accessible livelihood opportunities.

The SWOT analysis in Table 2 further demonstrates that Café Sawah's innovation capacity is rooted in its natural landscape, distinctive café concept, and tourism products. These strengths are reinforced by opportunities arising from community participation, demand for nature-based tourism, and cooperation with local farmers, MSMEs, livestock producers, and other local suppliers. However, limited human resources and infrastructure remain internal constraints, while tourism competition, changing consumer preferences, weather conditions, and regulatory uncertainty represent external threats.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis of Café Sawah

Internal Factor		External Factor	
Strengths		Opportunities	
1.	Strategic location with a cool rural environment and green natural scenery.	1.	Potential to expand employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for local residents.
2.	A distinctive café concept and design that attracts visitors' attention.	2.	High participation by the local community.
2.	3. Food and beverage products that form part of the visitor experience.	3.	Higher visitor activity on weekends.
		4.	Growing visitor interest in nature-based tourism.
		5.	Potential to expand local income-generating activities around the tourism area.
		6.	Opportunities to cooperate with local producers in sourcing raw materials and promoting local products.
Weaknesses		Threats	
1.	Limited labour resources.	1.	High competition among tourism destinations in the Pujon area.
2.	Supporting infrastructure has not yet been fully maximised.	2.	Changes in visitor preferences and lifestyles.
3.	Adverse weather conditions may affect visitor numbers.	3.	Regulatory or licensing changes that may affect café operations.

The SWOT findings suggest that Café Sawah's sustainability depends on continuous adaptation rather than on the initial success of the tourism concept alone. Product and service diversification, stronger cooperation with MSMEs and local producers, and creative marketing are therefore required to reduce dependence on specific tourism products and to maintain the destination's distinctiveness. Regular improvements to attractions, supporting facilities, and food and beverage offerings are also important for responding to changing visitor preferences.

The empirical findings demonstrate that innovation in Pujon Kidul extends beyond the introduction of a new tourism product. It represents institutional and social transformation that mobilises local resources, strengthens collaboration, and creates new economic opportunities. This supports the view that innovation is a process through which new ideas, practices, or organisational arrangements generate positive social and economic value [17], [28], [29]. Consistent with Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory [7], the process emphasised collective acceptance and adoption of new development practices rather than the creation of entirely new technology.

The stages of innovation proposed by [30] provide a useful framework for interpreting these findings. As illustrated in Figure 1, innovation involves defining intended changes,

identifying organisational requirements, analysing implementation challenges, executing planned changes, and evaluating their effectiveness. Pujon Kidul reflected these elements through participatory planning, stakeholder coordination, tourism programme implementation, and continuous evaluation. The process was not rigidly linear; interaction among actors enabled adjustment to local conditions and community needs.

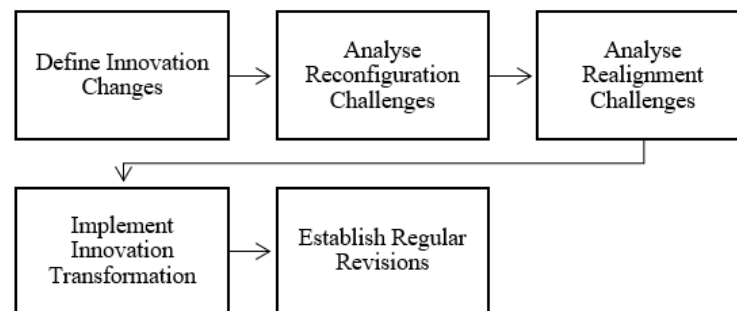


Figure 1. Stages of the Innovation Process
Source: Adapted from [30].

The diffusion process was also accelerated by visitors who independently documented their experiences through photographs and videos and shared them on social media. This visitor-generated content enabled information about Café Sawah and Pujon Kidul Tourism Village to reach audiences beyond the local area without requiring substantial promotional expenditure from tourism managers. Visitors, therefore, indirectly became actors in the diffusion of the village innovation. Together with the involvement of village government, community organisations, youth groups, businesses, and supporting institutions, this pattern is consistent with the characteristics of a decentralised diffusion process proposed by Rogers [7].

From the innovation typology proposed by [31], the Pujon Kidul initiative primarily reflects development and duplication. The village did not merely imitate existing tourism village concepts; it adapted and improved them by integrating agricultural landscapes, local cultural identity, community participation, and photographic experiences centred on rice-field scenery. As illustrated in Figure 2, existing concepts were combined with locally available resources to generate greater social and economic value. Rural innovation, therefore, does not need to depend on an entirely new product or technology but may emerge through creative adaptation and continuous improvement of existing ideas [31], [32].

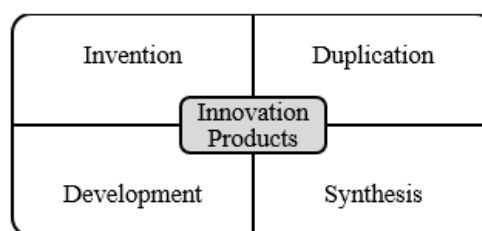


Figure 2. Innovation Typology
Source: Adapted from [31].

Overall, the innovation process in Pujon Kidul Tourism Village represents a collaborative transformation integrating institutional capacity, community participation, local wisdom, and economic diversification. Café Sawah became a platform for collectively reorganising village resources to create livelihood opportunities. The innovation process subsequently provided the foundation for the broader community empowerment mechanism discussed in the following section.

3.2. Empowerment Process in Pujon Kidul Tourism Village

The findings indicate that community empowerment in Pujon Kidul Tourism Village developed through a collective process of mobilising local resources and strengthening community capacity to participate in village development. The process involved village government, related government agencies, youth organisations, the Association of Farmers' Groups (Gapoktan), the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), community leaders, and other stakeholders. Residents were not positioned solely as beneficiaries of tourism development; they participated in identifying problems, determining needs, making decisions, and utilising village resources to create economic opportunities. The process identified in this study is illustrated in Figure 3.

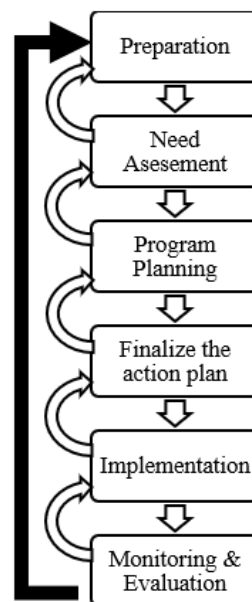


Figure 3. Community Empowerment Process in Pujon Kidul
Source: Developed by the authors based on field findings.

Description:

- ↓ : Collaborative, participatory, and purposeful
- ↪ : Return to the previous step(s)
- ↶ : Possible to return to the original step

As shown in Figure 3, the empowerment process consisted of six interconnected stages: preparation, needs assessment, programme planning, finalisation of the action plan, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The process was collaborative, participatory, and purposeful but not rigidly linear. When a stage was incomplete or implementation problems emerged, actors could return to an earlier stage and revise the programme. This iterative mechanism allowed the empowerment programme to respond to changing community needs and local conditions.

The first stage was preparation. Village officials, religious leaders, youth organisations, and other community representatives participated in discussions concerning community problems and possible solutions. External experts could be involved when knowledge or expertise was not locally available. This stage served not only as administrative preparation but also as an initial process of building awareness and willingness to change. Strengthening community literacy and knowledge is important for enabling communities to respond to wider development challenges [33].

The second stage was needs assessment and problem identification. Problems were examined across social, economic, political, cultural, environmental, and health dimensions. A SWOT analysis and the mapping of human, natural, cultural, and institutional resources complemented the assessment. In Pujon Kidul, this process helped actors recognise that agricultural landscapes, livestock activities, arts, cultural resources, and community organisations could be developed as economic assets. The needs assessment, therefore, identified both community constraints and strengths that could serve as a basis for empowerment.

The third stage involved programme planning. The action plan established the programme's vision, mission, goals, objectives, indicators, and targets. A logical framework identified inputs, outputs, outcomes, impacts, assumptions, and risks. Planning also addressed funding sources, allocation and accountability, timelines, responsible actors, working partners, and the implementation team. Community needs and village potential were thereby translated into operational programmes.

The fourth stage was finalisation of the action plan. Programme objectives were reviewed to ensure that they were specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Internal and external factors were considered, community suggestions were incorporated into decision-making, implementation strategies and instruments were specified, and financial resources for establishing and operating Café Sawah were considered. This stage demonstrates that Café Sawah was not implemented merely as a spontaneous tourism project; community participation was translated into a structured action plan supported by institutional and financial arrangements.

Community participation was also institutionalised through the Village Development Planning Consultation Forum (Musrenbang), in which village programmes were collectively discussed and agreed upon. The empowerment process was further supported by a local regulatory framework, including Pujon Kidul Village Regulation No. 6 of 2017 concerning tourism area and tourism business development, Village Regulation No. 3 of 2022 concerning the bylaws of BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera, and Village Regulation No. 2 of 2022 concerning amendments related to BUMDes governance. These arrangements indicate that

participation was supported by formal village governance mechanisms rather than by informal collective action alone.

The fifth stage was implementation, involving coordination with internal and external stakeholders, programme facilitation for the target community, and supervision. Café Sawah served as a practical arena where community organisations, village institutions, and external stakeholders contributed to tourism-related activities. The sixth stage comprised monitoring and evaluation. Programme information was collected according to predetermined indicators and targets, analysed, reported, and used to formulate recommendations. Information on programme development and achievements was openly communicated through periodic reporting. The possibility of returning to earlier stages suggests that monitoring and evaluation served as a learning mechanism rather than merely a final administrative assessment.

Taken together, the six stages demonstrate that empowerment in Pujon Kidul was built around the community's ability to recognise its own needs and gain access to economic resources. This is consistent with the empowerment perspective proposed by [3], in which power refers to the capacity of individuals and communities to pursue shared social and economic objectives, whereas disadvantage reflects conditions that constrain collective development. Empowerment, therefore, requires strengthening community capacity while reducing conditions that sustain powerlessness [34].

The empowerment model was guided by participatory, sustainable, people-centred, equality-based, self-reliance, and empowering principles [35], [36]. These principles were manifested through involvement in planning and decision-making, as well as through capacity-building activities. Women's participation, particularly through the Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK) group and productive local activities, also indicates that women were development actors rather than merely recipients of economic programmes [37].

The empirical process can also be interpreted through the four empowerment perspectives presented by [34], as illustrated in Figure 4.

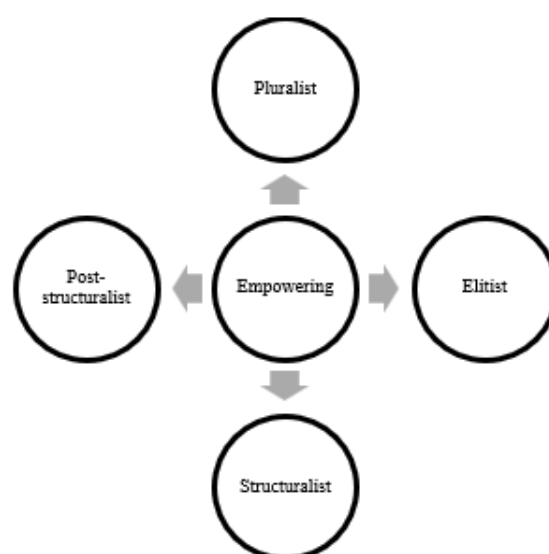


Figure 4. Empowerment Perspectives

Source: Adapted from [34].

The pluralist perspective is reflected in efforts to strengthen the capacities of individuals and community groups so that they can gain opportunities and participate more effectively [34]. The elitist perspective is visible in the strategic role of village officials, community leaders, and religious leaders in mobilising support. The structuralist perspective is evident in efforts to overcome rural development constraints through support from the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration (Kemendes PDTT), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and the Malang Regency Government. Meanwhile, the post-structuralist perspective is reflected in life-skills training, capacity building for tourism managers, collaboration with universities and national banks, strengthening PKK programmes, digitalisation of tourism products, cooperation with online transportation operators, creative-economy development, and competency certification for tour guides. Specific tourism management and capacity development practices are consistent with the strategic orientation discussed in [38].

The transformation of community capacity can be further interpreted through the empowerment framework proposed by Cook and Macaulay [39], which emphasises authority, confidence and competence, trust, opportunities, responsibility, and support as enabling conditions for empowerment. Adult learning is generally oriented towards tasks and practical problems, and individuals organise previous experiences as part of the learning process [40]–[41]. In the context of Café Sawah, the relationship between empowerment inputs and their observed outcomes is summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Empowerment Inputs and Outcomes Based on Cook and Macaulay’s Framework

Input		Outcome	
Empowerment input	Manifestation in Pujon Kidul	Empowerment outcome	Manifestation in Pujon Kidul
Authority	Community members gained recognised authority to initiate change and participate in managing tourism-village assets.	Self-respect	Community members developed greater awareness of their capacity to face challenges and participate alongside other communities.
Confidence and competence	Community confidence and competence were developed through the management of Café Sawah under BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera.		
Trust	Community trust grew as tourism innovations were progressively developed and managed within the village.	Self-confidence	Community members became more confident in their capacity to respond to conditions that had previously constrained local development.
Opportunities	Tourism development created opportunities to showcase the village’s potential to wider regional and national audiences.		
Responsibility	Community actors took on the responsibility of continuing to improve and evaluate village initiatives.	Self-reliance	The community developed greater capacity to manage local initiatives and reduce dependence on external actors.
Support	Continuous support was provided by government actors, residents, community leaders, farmers, livestock breeders, and youth groups.		

Table 3 demonstrates how empowerment inputs—authority, confidence and competence, trust, opportunities, responsibility, and support—were associated with outcomes related to self-respect, self-confidence, and self-reliance. These outcomes are interpreted as manifestations of increased community agency rather than as independently measured psychological variables. The community gained greater authority to participate in managing tourism assets, developed confidence and competence through Café Sawah and BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera, and strengthened its capacity to evaluate and sustain village initiatives. Empowerment, therefore, involved changes in both access to economic opportunities and the community's capacity to act collectively.

External and internal supporting factors reinforced the process. Externally, the village benefited from broader institutional systems and intermediary actors that connected Pujon Kidul with government agencies, financial institutions, educational institutions, and other development partners. Internally, village leadership played a central coordinating role. The Village Head facilitated the mobilisation of PKK, Pokdarwis Capung Alas, youth organisations, home industries, art studios, Gapoktan, environmental cadres, Forest Village Community Institutions (LMDH), community protection groups (Linmas), and educational actors.

A second internal factor was the institutional capacity of BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera. Its organisational structure enabled management to monitor financial resources, operational expenditure, and business revenues against established targets. Open and transparent tourism management contributed to community trust. BUMDes therefore provided an institutional bridge between community participation and the economic management of village assets.

The third internal factor was human resource development through training. Training activities were integrated into the operational needs of tourism management and intended to increase community participation [42]. From a human capital perspective, investment in education and training can improve productivity and income-generating capacity [43]. In Pujon Kidul, capacity building linked empowerment to emerging opportunities in tourism services and village enterprises.

The broader contribution of empowerment can be understood across economic, sociocultural, environmental, and educational and recreational dimensions [19]. Economically, community-based tourism strengthened cooperation and supported a locally oriented economy. Socioculturally, tourism connected agriculture and community resources with new economic functions. Environmentally, tourism growth introduced challenges related to waste, congestion, and land-use change, indicating that innovation must remain attentive to environmental sustainability and natural resource conservation [17], [19]. From an educational and recreational perspective, rural tourism offered an alternative model of village development based on local knowledge and resources.

The increasing role of information and communication technology also creates opportunities to strengthen the sustainability of village enterprises [44]. As illustrated in Figure 5, sustainable village business development requires integrating tourism, natural resource management, and community participation [17].

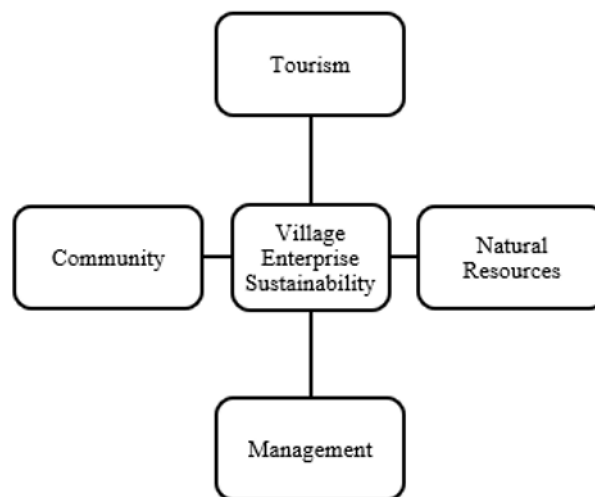


Figure 5. Knowledge Structure for Village Enterprise Sustainability
Source: Adapted from [17].

In Pujon Kidul, Figure 5 provides a conceptual interpretation of the empirical findings rather than a separate description of the empowerment process. The sustainability of Café Sawah and related village businesses depends on local institutions' ability to manage financial and information systems, maintain active participation, utilise local resources, and foster further innovation. Community empowerment in Pujon Kidul is therefore best understood as an iterative and institutionally supported process that transforms participation into collective agency and access to economic resources. This process provides the institutional and human-capital foundation for the income-generating activities examined in the following section.

3.3. Income-Generating Activities

The findings demonstrate that the community empowerment process developed through Café Sawah expanded income-generating activities in Pujon Kidul by diversifying employment, strengthening village enterprises, and creating new markets for local goods and services. Prior to tourism development, livelihood opportunities were predominantly in agriculture and livestock. Tourism created additional forms of work and business related to services, accommodation, food and beverages, local products, and village-managed enterprises. The economic contribution of Café Sawah should therefore not be understood solely in terms of tourism site revenue; its significance lies in the expansion of economic activities connected to the wider village economy.

Empirical evidence indicates several important economic outcomes. According to the Chair of the Youth Organisation, tourism development created employment opportunities for approximately 200 individuals who had previously been unemployed. Village documentary data indicated that 30% of workers recruited at Café Sawah were from households classified as poor households (RTM). The village financial report recorded a contribution of IDR 162,500,000 per year to the village's own-source revenue (PAD). Tourism development was also associated with improvements in the cleanliness and physical appearance of the village environment. Employment creation, inclusion of workers from

poor households, and contribution to village revenue provide more specific indicators of socioeconomic change than a general claim that community welfare simply increased.

The figure of 200 individuals should be distinguished from the approximately 85 young people identified by the Village Head in Subsection 3.1. The figure of 85 specifically refers to young people absorbed into employment following the development of tourism units. In contrast, the figure of 200 refers to the broader number of individuals reported by the Chair of the Youth Organisation to have obtained employment opportunities through tourism development. Presenting the figures according to their respective informant sources avoids treating them as competing estimates and shows that employment effects were reported from different institutional perspectives.

Tourism-related work also reportedly provided monthly earnings of approximately IDR 1.5 million for participating community members. This figure is treated here as reported earnings rather than as a statutory minimum wage or as evidence of increased household income across the entire village. Its relevance lies in showing that newly created tourism occupations could provide a local source of earnings and reduce the need for some young residents to leave the village in search of work.

The expansion of income-generating activities was supported by the diversification of business units managed by BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera. These units included community savings, micro-business credit services, water metering, integrated waste management, Café Sawah, educational tourism, agriculture, and guesthouse services. The documentary information indicated the presence of guesthouse accommodation at Pujon Kidul Tourism Village. According to the BUMDes Manager, the business activities managed by BUMDes generated approximately IDR 1.7 billion per year. This figure refers to BUMDes income generated through managed business activities and should not be interpreted as an estimate of increased household income for all residents.

These findings show that the empowerment model extended beyond Café Sawah. Café Sawah served as a focal point for tourism innovation, while BUMDes provided an institutional framework for developing and managing a broader portfolio of village businesses. Savings and micro-credit supported financial activities; water and waste management addressed village services; agriculture and educational tourism connected local resources to tourism demand; and guest houses expanded accommodation. The resulting structure reflects rural economic diversification, in which tourism stimulated interconnected income-generating activities rather than replacing agriculture as the village's economic base.

The availability of new work within the village was reportedly associated with a reduced need for some young residents to seek employment outside Pujon Kidul. The evidence does not provide a longitudinal migration series, poverty rate, or household-income panel; therefore, claims concerning declining migration, poverty reduction, or improved welfare should be interpreted cautiously. Nevertheless, the absorption of unemployed residents, inclusion of RTM workers, diversification of employment, and expansion of village enterprises indicate broader access to economic resources. Interpreted through the concept of rural income-generating activities [10], these findings show how locally organised tourism can connect wage employment, entrepreneurship, and productive village activities with a more diversified rural economy.

The expansion of tourism-related income-generating activities in Pujon Kidul can also be examined through four interrelated destination components: attraction, accessibility, amenity, and ancillary services. In this study, these components are used as analytical categories to explain how tourism resources, supporting facilities, access, and institutional services connect visitor activities with local economic opportunities. Agricultural landscapes and local cultural resources functioned as attractions, while accommodation, food and beverage services, local products, and supporting facilities created opportunities for residents and MSMEs.

The amenity component was particularly relevant to diversification. Guest houses, food and beverage outlets, local-product marketing, and other visitor-supporting facilities expanded the services available to visitors and created additional spaces for locally managed economic activities. Amenities may include accommodation, food services, financial facilities, entertainment, and souvenir outlets [45]. In Pujon Kidul, local products gained market opportunities through tourism, reinforcing the role of locally produced goods as tradable commodities and representations of local identity [46].

Ancillary services were reflected in the roles of village institutions, local government, tourism managers, Pokdarwis, and other supporting organisations in planning, management, promotion, and coordination. Their role was important because income-generating activities depended not only on individual entrepreneurship but also on institutional arrangements capable of organising tourism services and connecting local businesses with visitors. Financial and cultural literacy further supported participation in the tourism economy [33].

The village's agricultural landscape, panoramic environment, and cultural activities formed the primary attractions supporting Café Sawah and the wider tourism village. Rather than separating tourism from existing resources, Pujon Kidul incorporated agricultural landscapes and local cultural potential into the visitor experience. This increased the economic functionality of resources previously used mainly for primary production and connected agricultural products, village landscapes, and community creativity to wider tourism markets.

Accessibility remains an important challenge. The topography of Pujon District and the route to Pujon Kidul include hills, bends, and relatively narrow access roads. Existing roads are better suited to two-wheeled vehicles and smaller four-wheeled vehicles. Managers have established different entrance and exit routes to reduce congestion, but this is a short-term response. Wider road access or additional land for road expansion would be required as longer-term infrastructure solutions. The sustainability of income-generating activities is therefore also influenced by the destination's physical capacity to accommodate visitor growth.

Taken together, these analytical categories show that the economic transformation of Pujon Kidul emerged from interactions among local attractions, supporting facilities, institutional services, and accessibility. Employment as waiters, guides, trainers, assistants, parking attendants, vendors, and cashiers represented only one dimension of the transformation. Residents could also participate through accommodation, agricultural products, processed food and beverages, MSMEs, and other tourism-supporting activities.

Income-generating opportunities consequently expanded across a wider range of occupations and enterprises.

The sustainability of these activities depended on community capacity building. Training, mentoring, coaching, and business assistance strengthened adult community members' ability to participate in new economic activities. In Pujon Kidul, capacity-building activities were connected to the practical requirements of tourism management and local enterprise development, positioning community members as active participants rather than passive recipients of knowledge. This orientation is consistent with an adult-learning approach that connects learning with participants' needs and practical experience [47].

The empowerment process in Pujon Kidul also reflects principles of adult learning. Andragogy emphasises self-directed learning and the role of prior experience in adult education [47]. In the Pujon Kidul case, training, mentoring, group discussion, simulation, and practical involvement enabled residents to connect their prior knowledge and life experiences with new tourism-related tasks. Adult learning is particularly effective when learning activities are connected to learners' needs, motivations, and social contexts [48]. Capacity building, therefore, supported participation in a more diversified village economy.

This learning process also had a reflective dimension. The transformation of Pujon Kidul required community members to reconsider existing economic conditions, recognise the potential of local resources, and develop new ways of participating in village development. Such learning is connected to critical understanding and reflection on lived experience [49]. Through critical reflection, adults may revise their perspectives and develop a deeper understanding of the conditions affecting their lives [50]. In this study, training and experience enabled residents to adapt existing knowledge and skills to economic opportunities generated through tourism.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Café Sawah contributed to the transformation of income-generating activities by linking community empowerment, institutional management, local resource utilisation, economic diversification, and adult capacity building. The empirical contribution of this study is not a claim that tourism automatically eliminates poverty or increases the income of every household in Pujon Kidul. Rather, community empowerment expanded access to employment and productive activities, included workers from poor households, strengthened BUMDes-managed enterprises, contributed to the village's own-source revenue, and created a broader ecosystem for local businesses and tourism-supporting services. Café Sawah thus functions as a community-based innovation model in which empowerment creates the institutional and human capacity required to transform local resources into diversified income-generating opportunities.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Café Sawah functions as a community-based innovation model that integrates local resources, village institutions, and community participation to expand income-generating activities in Pujon Kidul. Emerging from collective community initiatives and supported by the village government, BUMDes Sumber Sejahtera, and external stakeholders, the innovation transformed an agriculture-dependent village economy

into a more diversified rural economy connected to tourism, local enterprises, and creative economic activities.

The empowerment process was implemented through six iterative stages—preparation, needs assessment, programme planning, finalisation of the action plan, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation—based on collaborative and participatory principles. Formal village governance mechanisms, including Musrenbang and village regulations, strengthened community involvement in decision-making and resource management. The findings show that empowerment extended beyond employment creation by increasing the community's capacity to identify local needs, manage village assets, and access economic opportunities.

The economic transformation was reflected in expanded employment and business activities. Tourism development reportedly created employment opportunities for approximately 200 individuals, with 30% of Café Sawah workers recruited from poor households (RTM). The initiative contributed IDR 162.5 million annually to the village's own-source revenue, while BUMDes-managed business units generated approximately IDR 1.7 billion annually. These findings indicate expanded access to productive activities and local markets rather than demonstrating the elimination of poverty or uniform income growth across all households. The study therefore contributes to the literature by showing how community-generated tourism innovation can connect participatory empowerment, BUMDes management, local resource utilisation, and economic diversification.

The sustainability of this model requires continuous community participation, capacity building, stakeholder collaboration, product diversification, and environmentally responsible resource management. Future research should employ longitudinal household-income, employment, poverty, and visitor data to assess the longer-term socioeconomic effects of community-based tourism innovation.

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