

Integrating Digital Marketing Communication and Community Participation for Sustainable Tourism Development: A Case Study of Sumberbulu Tourism Village, Indonesia



Mahesa Maulana ^{a,1,*}, Dian Deliana ^{b,2}, Tiara Indah ^{b,3}

^{a,b,c} Faculty of Communication and Business, University of Muhammadiyah Karanganyar, Jl. Raya Solo-Tawangmangu No.KM 12, Tasikmadu, Karanganyar, Central Java 57761, Indonesia.

¹ mahesa.umuka@gmail.com; ² delianadian@gmail.com; ³ indahtiara2@gmail.com

* corresponding author



ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history Received: October 01, 2024 Revised: March 12, 2025 Accepted: April 1, 2025</p> <p>Keywords Sustainable tourism Community participation Digital marketing Sumberbulu tourism village</p>	<p>This study investigates the role of integrated digital marketing communication in enhancing visitor attraction and promoting sustainability in Sumberbulu Tourism Village, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java. Drawing on a qualitative research design, the study employs literature review, field observations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions with key stakeholders including village managers, local government representatives, and community members. The findings reveal that digital platforms—such as Instagram, Google Business, and Traveloka—are strategically used to promote cultural and ecological attractions. However, the digital marketing strategy faces challenges, including limited infrastructure, human resource capacity, and government support. To address these constraints, collaborative initiatives involving academic institutions and training programs have been implemented to improve digital literacy and promotional capabilities. The study also highlights the critical role of local community participation, particularly in tourism service delivery, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation. Women’s involvement and community-based economic activities further reinforce the village’s sustainability goals. The integration of digital technologies with community engagement and government support reflects the principles of community-based sustainable tourism (CBST). The study contributes to the academic discourse on rural tourism marketing and offers practical insights for policymakers and tourism managers aiming to enhance sustainable destination development. Future research should incorporate comparative studies across regions and include digital content creators and tourists to deepen understanding of participatory digital communication strategies in sustainable tourism.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism development has emerged as a preferred policy approach due to its emphasis on maintaining a balance among economic growth, environmental preservation, and socio-cultural continuity. This approach is reinforced by Law No. 10 of 2009, which promotes the long-term empowerment of both natural and human resources (Fauzi, 2016). In the Indonesian context, the concept of tourism villages represents a strategic initiative aimed at leveraging rural potential—including natural landscapes, cultural richness, and local community life—to generate positive and sustainable economic and environmental outcomes (Ariputri et al., 2023). One such example is the Sumberbulu Tourism Village, located in Mojogedang District, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java, which demonstrates significant potential for development through the application of sustainable tourism principles (Jadesta Kemenparekraf, 2021). Central to the concept of sustainable tourism is the notion that tourism resources must yield continuous economic benefits, ensure environmental sustainability, and preserve socio-cultural values over time (Sustainable Tourism Development: History, Principles, Indicators, 2021; Richardson, 2021).

According to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf), the implementation of sustainable tourism is anchored in four core pillars: sustainable management, sustainable economy, cultural sustainability, and environmental sustainability. These pillars must be integrated into tourism development to ensure its benefits for future generations (Sunarta & Arida, 2017). Achieving this vision requires the incorporation of key principles of tourism development, including stakeholder participation, local ownership, sustainable resource utilization, alignment with community objectives, consideration of carrying capacity, ongoing monitoring and evaluation, institutional accountability, capacity building, and strategic promotion (Wedari, 2022). As a designated member of the top 50 recipients of the 2021 Indonesian Tourism Village Award (ADWI), an initiative led by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Sumberbulu Village demonstrates notable strengths in its tourism packages, community empowerment efforts, and preservation of local wisdom (Pemprov-Jateng, 2023). Nevertheless, despite this recognition, further development remains necessary—particularly in enhancing its natural tourism assets, such as the *sendang* (natural springs) and surrounding agricultural landscapes.

The attractiveness of village-based tourism destinations, including Sumberbulu Village, must be assessed through a systematic mapping process, as stipulated in Article 1 of the Tourism Law No. 10 of 2009. The outcomes of such mapping are essential for identifying tourism potential and for informing tourism planning and development strategies (Wattimena et al., 2023; Pertiwi et al., 2023; Salim et al., 2022). This process also facilitates the identification of the spatial distribution of tourist attractions with high appeal and long-term development prospects (Putra & Fauzy, 2015), as well as the diversity and viability of tourism resources that can be further developed (Sulistiyadi et al., 2021). Sumberbulu Village possesses remarkable tourism potential, characterized by both its natural attractions and distinctive local cultural heritage. However, the village has yet to fully realize its potential in attracting visitors and sustaining tourism development, partly due to the underutilization of digital marketing communication. In the digital era, digital marketing serves as an effective and efficient strategy, capable of reaching broader audiences and enabling interactive engagement between marketers and consumers (Benyamin et al., 2021). When applied effectively, digital marketing communication can play a critical role in ensuring the sustainability of tourism villages as marketable products (Maulana et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the implementation of digital marketing strategies in Sumberbulu Tourism Village remains suboptimal.

The adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the tourism sector has grown significantly and now extends to tourism villages (Budisusila & Handoko, 2023). Research by Putra et al. (2022) in Panglipuran Tourism Village indicates that an increasing number of tourists prefer to access information through digital channels. The integration of digital technology is thus a critical measure for promoting the potential of tourism villages (Fauziah & Nasdian, 2021). In the digital era, which is marked by the widespread accessibility of information technologies, social media plays a pivotal role in marketing tourism to broader audiences due to its cost-effectiveness, extensive reach, and high utility (Ismail et al., 2022; Chamidah et al., 2021). According to Prasetyo et al. (2023), tourism villages can leverage social media platforms as strategic marketing tools to attract a larger number of tourists. Additionally, ICT applications such as dedicated websites can serve as effective channels for disseminating tourism-related information (Ananda, 2021). However, in the case of Sumberbulu Tourism Village, the use of social media, websites, and other digital platforms remains suboptimal. These tools are not yet effectively employed to promote the village, provide compelling and accessible information about its attractions, or facilitate interaction with current and potential visitors (Alimudin & Dharmawati, 2022). Consequently, limited public awareness regarding the existence and uniqueness of Sumberbulu Tourism Village continues to affect visitor numbers (Fauzi, 2016).

Tourism villages represent a strategic approach to developing Indonesia's tourism sector by leveraging the unique potential of rural areas—such as natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and the everyday lives of local communities—with the aim of ensuring long-term sustainability (Akasse & Ramansyah, 2023). Chaffey (2020) underscores the importance of effectively utilizing digital platforms to expand audience reach and strengthen customer relationships. Bargandini and Arsawati (2022) identify key stages to optimize digital platform use, including counseling, discussion, and implementation. The state of the art in optimizing digital marketing communication to enhance tourist attraction and support the sustainability of tourism villages encompasses several critical components. First, creating and maintaining an informative, mobile-friendly, and user-oriented website is fundamental to digital marketing efforts (Maurer, 2021). Additionally, as highlighted by Ziakis and Vlachopoulou (2020), employing Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques—such as the strategic use of keywords—can significantly improve online visibility by increasing rankings in search engine results. Second, strong promotional activities on social media and online advertising platforms are essential to broaden audience reach and facilitate interaction with current and prospective visitors (Salsabela & Mei, 2024; Deb et al., 2024). Third, the creation and distribution of relevant and engaging content are vital for retaining visitor interest, while email marketing serves as a direct communication channel to deliver updates and maintain engagement (Kaur, 2017). This study focuses on the implementation and optimization of digital marketing strategies in Sumberbulu Tourism Village. Although considerable research has been conducted on digital marketing in the tourism sector more broadly, studies specifically addressing its application in rural tourism villages—such as Sumberbulu—remain limited. Accordingly, this research contributes new insights into how digital marketing strategies can support the sustainability of tourism villages, a dimension that has not yet been extensively explored.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach with descriptive data analysis. Qualitative research is characterized by its ability to produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and observable behaviors. It aims to facilitate a deeper understanding of the phenomena experienced by research subjects, including their behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions (Indah & Setianto, 2021).

Data collection was conducted through both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained via field observations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with selected informants. Informant selection employed purposive sampling, which identifies individuals with specific characteristics aligned with the research objectives, thereby ensuring relevance and the ability to address key research questions. The selected informants included representatives from the local Tourism Office, who provided foundational institutional insights, and the management of the Sumberbulu Tourism Village, who offered detailed operational perspectives. Primary data were also gathered through direct observation of digital activities, specifically the use of social media by Sumberbulu Tourism Village.

Secondary data were collected through a literature review, including books, peer-reviewed journals, and official websites relevant to the research topic. The collected data were analyzed in relation to theoretical and conceptual frameworks pertinent to digital marketing and sustainable tourism. Conclusions were drawn based on the integration of findings from primary and secondary data sources, aimed at identifying the extent to which digital marketing communication strategies contribute to increasing visitor engagement and ensuring the sustainability of the Sumberbulu Tourism Village in Karanganyar Regency.

This study aims to enhance understanding of how digital marketing communication strategies can be effectively implemented in sustainable tourism destinations, with a particular focus on Sumberbulu Tourism Village, Pendem, Mojogedang District, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java. More broadly, the insights generated are expected to inform practices in tourism villages across Indonesia. The findings serve as a reference for policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and community-based tourism managers in formulating marketing communication strategies that not only attract tourists but also align with long-term sustainability objectives.

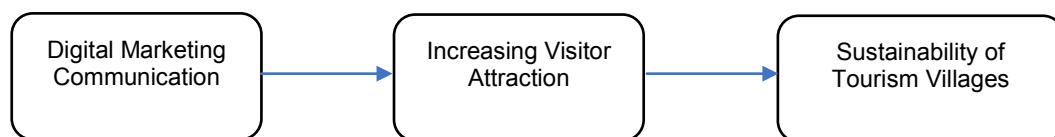


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study
Source: Compiled by the researcher (2024)

This study is grounded in two principal theoretical approaches: integrated digital marketing communications and the theory of tourism village sustainability. Integrated digital marketing communications represent a strategic framework for coordinating various communication channels to ensure message consistency and reinforce brand identity (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Within the context of tourism villages, digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are employed to produce compelling visual and narrative content that reflects the unique character of each village.

Tourism sustainability is conceptualized through three core dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. A tourism village is considered sustainable when tourism activities contribute to the welfare of local communities, safeguard cultural and natural heritage, and deliver equitable economic benefits (Schumacher et al., 2020).

This study develops a conceptual framework based on the premise that digital marketing communications serve not only as tools for promotion but also as mechanisms for constructing the narrative and identity of tourism villages. Under a qualitative paradigm, the relationships among variables are interpreted as dynamic, non-linear, and deeply contextual. Furthermore, this framework emphasizes that integrated digital marketing communications are not solely intended to attract tourists, but also to engage local communities—an essential component for achieving long-term sustainability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The development of tourism villages as a model of sustainable tourism is increasingly acknowledged as an effective means to stimulate local economic growth while preserving environmental and cultural heritage (Rudiany et al., 2023). Sumberbulu Tourism Village, located in Pendem, Mojogedang District, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java, exemplifies this potential, with its natural landscapes and rich local culture serving as its primary attractions. However, challenges persist in optimizing digital marketing communication and ensuring sustainability, often due to limited resources and suboptimal accessibility.

In the context of marketing communication for sustainable tourism destinations, comprehensive strategic planning is essential to success (Sihombing et al., 2024). Effective marketing extends beyond merely attracting tourists; it also entails sustaining the appeal of destinations through environmental stewardship and active local community participation. Consequently, the implementation of sustainable marketing communication strategies—grounded in digital technologies, market-oriented analysis, and community engagement—is critical to the development of Sumberbulu Tourism Village.

This discussion explores the application of sustainable marketing communication strategies in Sumberbulu Tourism Village, with particular attention to the roles of digital technology, community involvement, and the mitigation of sustainability-related challenges. Furthermore, the study examines how the integration of various marketing and management elements can foster the sustainable growth of tourism villages and enhance their appeal to both domestic and international visitors.

A. Implementation of Sustainable Marketing Communication Strategy in Sumberbulu Tourism Village

Sumberbulu Tourism Village has initiated the implementation of sustainable tourism principles as part of its strategy to position itself as an environmentally and socially responsible destination. This approach prioritizes the preservation of natural resources and local cultural heritage as central components of the village's tourism appeal. The village management emphasizes the development of tourism practices that not only generate economic benefits but also ensure the long-term integrity of the local ecosystem for the benefit of future generations.



Fig. 2. Entrance Location of Sumberbulu Tourism Village, Mojogedang Karanganyar
Source: Researcher (2024)

A central component of the sustainable marketing communication strategy in Sumberbulu Tourism Village is the utilization of digital technology to promote the destination. Village managers and local communities employ social media platforms and websites to highlight the village's natural beauty, cultural assets, and community-based tourism initiatives that align with sustainability values. These digital tools enable outreach to tourists who are specifically interested in environmentally conscious travel experiences.

While the digital marketing strategy in Sumberbulu Village has yielded encouraging outcomes, several challenges persist, particularly concerning technological infrastructure, including limited internet access and insufficient technical expertise. To address these constraints, digital literacy training for local community members is essential to enhance their capacity to manage social media platforms and conduct digital promotional campaigns effectively. Such training initiatives have been implemented through partnerships with academic institutions as part of university-led community service programs (Simabur et al., 2023). This involvement represents a significant finding, as the engagement of external stakeholders—including academics and the media—plays a crucial role in the sustained development of the village's digital capabilities (Nopriadi & Nababan, 2024). Furthermore, the active participation of community members across all stages of tourism management is vital to the program's success, fostering a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for the preservation of the local environment and cultural heritage.

The development of local tourism products in Sumberbulu Tourism Village—centered on handicrafts, culinary specialties, and cultural experiences—aligns with the principles of community-based tourism (CBT), which positions local communities at the core of sustainable tourism management. As noted by Setokoe (2021), CBT promotes the creation of tourism products rooted in local culture, thereby preserving community identity while delivering direct economic benefits to residents.

Efforts to improve accessibility by village managers, while maintaining environmental integrity, demonstrate the application of low-impact tourism principles. Setyaningsih et al. (2015) emphasize that environmentally friendly infrastructure in tourist destinations helps sustain the quality of visitor experiences while minimizing ecological degradation.

In a competitive tourism landscape, Sumberbulu Village's strategy of cultural innovation—such as organizing annual festivals—functions as an effective destination branding mechanism. According to Ruiz-Real et al. (2020), unique,

culture-based experiences foster emotional connections with visitors, enhance loyalty, and differentiate the destination from its competitors. Furthermore, the village's commitment to the periodic evaluation of tourism impacts reflects an adaptive approach to destination management. Sawatsuk et al. (2018) highlight that continuous monitoring and evaluation are critical to ensuring the social, economic, and ecological sustainability of community-based tourism initiatives.

Collectively, the digital marketing communication strategy of Sumberbulu Tourism Village not only seeks to enhance tourist appeal but also advances long-term sustainability by integrating cultural innovation, environmentally sensitive access improvements, locality-based branding, and adaptive impact assessment.

Local government support in the provision of sustainable infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and enabling policies constitutes a critical foundation for the success of tourism village marketing communication strategies. Hall (2021) emphasizes that local governments play a pivotal role in fostering an environment conducive to sustainable tourism development through regulations that promote environmental conservation and empower local communities. In the case of Sumberbulu Tourism Village, collaboration with government institutions reinforces the village's legitimacy as a destination committed to sustainability principles.

The implementation of marketing strategies based on market segmentation—particularly targeting tourists with a strong interest in sustainability—reflects the adoption of sustainable marketing principles. According to Font and McCabe (2017), sustainable marketing goes beyond increasing visitor numbers; it strategically directs communication to audiences whose values align with cultural preservation and environmental stewardship. This approach not only enhances the village's attractiveness to value-driven tourists but also contributes to building long-term loyalty and strengthening the image of Sumberbulu as an environmentally responsible tourism destination.

Moreover, the development of partnership networks with travel agencies, digital platforms, and sustainable tourism organizations exemplifies the application of a network marketing strategy in the tourism industry. Research by Haugland et al. (2011) suggests that collaborative networks involving external stakeholders enhance a destination's promotional capacity on a global scale, accelerate the integration of new technologies, and facilitate access to tourism markets that prioritize ecotourism and culture-based experiences.

The commitment of Sumberbulu Tourism Village to integrating digital technology, community participation, and government support reflects the principles of integrated sustainable tourism management. This approach promotes multi-stakeholder collaboration to achieve social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability in destination management (Hall et al., 2015). Moreover, the implementation of a comprehensive marketing mix—comprising product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence—demonstrates the management's awareness of the importance of a holistic strategy in attracting and retaining tourists. Research by Pato and Kastenholz (2017) affirms that the application of an adaptive marketing mix, especially one that incorporates local authenticity, enhances both the attractiveness of the destination and the overall visitor experience.

Promotion, as one of the seven components of the marketing mix, plays a key role in influencing target market responses. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2019), the marketing mix is designed to elicit a desired reaction from the target audience through the strategic alignment of all elements, including the product, which refers to goods or services offered. In the case of Sumberbulu Tourism Village, the core tourism products include educational tour packages such as puppet-making workshops, herbal medicine demonstrations, gamelan training, and batik crafting. The village also provides guesthouse accommodations to support extended visitor stays.

"We focus more on education, so there is education on agriculture, arts, and MSMEs. And the most crowded thing in this source of feathers is live in, this is our main goal so visitors not only travel and then go home, but as much as possible they stay in our village and follow the daily life of the residents," (Christine, 23 July, 2024)

This statement underscores the village's commitment to immersive, educational experiences that foster deeper tourist engagement and support the principles of sustainable, community-based tourism.

Price refers to the cost incurred by consumers for a product or service. In Sumberbulu Tourism Village, package prices are set between IDR 100,000–200,000 for a four-day stay, inclusive of meals, with differentiated rates for children and adults. *Place* pertains to the location and delivery context of the tourism experience. The village offers tourists the opportunity to engage directly in the daily routines of the local community. Among the key local attractions is the *Sendang*, a natural spring that remains preserved in its pristine state, contributing to the village's ecological appeal.

Promotion involves activities aimed at communicating product information to persuade potential consumers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2019). Cuellar-Healy (2013) highlights the critical role of promotion in ensuring that information about a product or service reaches the intended audience. Promotion is therefore fundamentally linked to communication, with some scholars suggesting that "communication" may be a more accurate term to describe this function (Kotler & Armstrong, 2019). The **promotion mix** encompasses various strategies including advertising, sales promotion,

public relations, personal selling, and direct marketing (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018). In the digital era, marketers increasingly integrate online platforms with traditional methods to expand outreach. As noted by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), digital marketing communication effectively combines internet-based tools with conventional channels to achieve strategic marketing goals.

In practice, the management of Sumberbulu Tourism Village employs both traditional and digital promotion methods. Platforms such as Google Business, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and partnerships with travel service providers like Traveloka are used to enhance visibility, with Instagram serving as the primary promotional medium. Nevertheless, limitations in human resources and content production budgets pose challenges, prompting reliance on free digital tools. Despite these constraints, a significant number of visitors report discovering the village through online channels.

*“So far the average [visitor comes] from digital media is because of the contact person in Google Business”
(Titin, 19 July, 2024)*

This highlights the role of digital presence—particularly via accessible and cost-effective platforms—in supporting the village’s promotional efforts and extending its reach to prospective tourists.

According to Kannan (2017), the use of digital technology in marketing offers new opportunities for developing innovative strategies. In this context, the management of Sumberbulu Tourism Village has embraced digital promotion by consistently creating content during visitor activities and documenting cultural events. They also adopt a creative approach by producing contemporary content aimed at capturing the interest of internet users and encouraging visits to the village.

Beyond digital platforms, the management also utilizes mass media channels, collaborating with regional and national outlets such as *Solopos*, Trans TV, CNN Indonesia, Trans7, and *Liputan 6*. Additionally, promotional efforts are supported by the local Tourism Office through broadcasts on RRI Radio. Within the promotional mix, the use of mass media—particularly advertising—enables broader dissemination of information and persuasion, thereby enhancing the village’s visibility and appeal.

Prior to the integration of digital and mass media, the management relied on traditional promotional strategies, such as conducting door-to-door visits to schools and delivering presentations on available tour packages. This approach falls under the category of personal selling within the promotional mix. As noted by Kotler and Keller (2016), personal selling enables organizations to engage directly with potential customers, communicate product information, facilitate transactions, and collect consumer insights that can inform future strategies.

In implementing digital marketing communication, the management also places emphasis on the “people” element of the marketing mix. Young, creative individuals are recruited to manage the village’s social media accounts and official website. The appointed team is professional and experienced, with a clear focus on delivering high-quality service both online and in-person. To further enhance promotional and service capabilities, the management actively participates in training programs organized by the local Tourism Office and other supporting institutions.

At present, Sumberbulu Tourism Village has not yet established partnerships with social media influencers or broader local community networks to expand digital engagement. However, efforts are being made to improve service efficiency and effectiveness through features such as online booking systems, comprehensive visitor information, responsive customer service, and the adoption of digital tools including online payment systems and social media platforms for streamlined communication.

In implementing digital marketing communication, the management of Sumberbulu Tourism Village recognizes the importance of showcasing *physical evidence*—a key component of the marketing mix—by enhancing the quality and visual appeal of the village’s infrastructure. This includes consistently publishing photographic and video content that highlights the village’s tangible assets. The uploaded materials feature various public facilities, homestays, cultural spaces such as the gamelan studio, outbound activity areas, natural spring water sources, locally produced MSME products, and the scenic rice field landscapes.

B. Digital Technology in the Promotion of Sustainable Tourism Destinations

Digital technology has emerged as a critical instrument in supporting the promotion of sustainable tourism across various destinations, including Sumberbulu Tourism Village. Through the utilization of digital platforms such as social media and official websites, Sumberbulu is able to reach a broader global audience and convey messages related to sustainability with greater efficacy. These platforms facilitate the promotion of environmentally conscious tourism experiences and local cultural heritage without reliance on traditional promotional methods, which are often more costly and less efficient.



Fig. 2. Instagram Social Media of @Sumberbulu_Village
Source: Researcher documentation (2024)

Social media plays a central role in attracting environmentally conscious tourists. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are used to showcase the village's natural landscapes, cultural richness, and sustainable tourism practices. By sharing authentic visual content—images, videos, and stories—Sumberbulu constructs its identity as a responsible tourism destination. Additionally, these platforms enable direct interaction with tourists, fostering personal engagement and enhancing interest in visiting. Feedback obtained from followers also informs the refinement of promotional strategies to better align with market preferences.

In parallel, the Sumberbulu Tourism Village website functions as a structured and comprehensive information hub. It offers detailed insights into available facilities, tourist attractions, and travel packages, while also highlighting the village's commitment to sustainability. Visitors can access reliable information prior to their arrival, and the website serves as both a promotional and educational medium—communicating efforts related to environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and community participation in sustainable practices.

One of the core advantages of digital technology lies in its capacity for real-time impact measurement. Analytical tools embedded in digital platforms enable tourism managers to monitor tourist behavior and preferences, including website traffic patterns, campaign engagement levels, and demographic insights. These data points inform strategic decisions, allowing for the optimization of marketing communication initiatives to enhance effectiveness and targeting precision. In addition, the involvement of influencers and content creators is integrated into the village's digital strategy to extend promotional outreach. Influencers, with their dedicated audiences, can significantly enhance visibility and position Sumberbulu as an environmentally friendly and culturally authentic destination.

Despite these advantages, Sumberbulu continues to face accessibility challenges, particularly concerning digital literacy and internet infrastructure within the local community. To address this, the village management has recognized the need for capacity building through digital training programs, enabling community members to actively engage in digital tourism promotion. Furthermore, digital marketing contributes to environmental management by educating visitors on responsible tourism behaviors, such as minimizing plastic use and participating in local conservation efforts. These initiatives align closely with the village's overarching vision of sustainable tourism development.

Beyond education, digital technologies support personalized and targeted marketing. Social media analytics and algorithm-driven targeting allow campaign content to be tailored to specific tourist segments. For instance, individuals interested in ecotourism can be directed to content highlighting natural scenery and environmental preservation initiatives. Moreover, data generated from digital campaigns enables tourism managers to evaluate performance, assess impact, and reallocate resources to the most effective strategies.

Looking ahead, emerging technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) offer further potential to innovate promotional efforts. These immersive tools can provide prospective visitors with engaging digital experiences of the village, fostering interest and awareness even before a physical visit takes place. They also serve to introduce sustainability concepts in an interactive and memorable way.

In conclusion, the integration of digital technology into the promotion of sustainable tourism in Sumberbulu Tourism Village has had a demonstrably positive impact. Through the strategic use of social media, websites, and data analytics, the village is able to communicate sustainability values more efficiently and personally. Digital tools not only support promotional goals but also contribute meaningfully to tourist education and the management of tourism's environmental footprint.

C. Local Community Participation in the Success of Sustainable Tourism Village Management

Local community participation is a critical element in the effective management of sustainable tourism, including in Sumberbulu Tourism Village. Active involvement of residents not only reinforces environmental sustainability but also ensures that tourism development aligns with local interests and values. Through direct participation, the community serves as a key actor in preserving the village's natural and cultural assets—both of which form the core of its tourism appeal.



Fig. 4. Participation of the Sumberbulu Community in the Management of Tourist Attractions
Source: Researcher documentation (2024)

In Sumberbulu, the local community is engaged across all stages of tourism management, from planning to implementation. Residents contribute to the preservation of natural landscapes, cultural traditions, and the delivery of sustainable tourism services. This inclusive model provides economic opportunities while safeguarding the village's ecological and cultural heritage. Notably, collaboration in natural resource management reflects the community's application of indigenous knowledge in conservation initiatives, such as maintaining the cleanliness of tourism areas. This involvement not only sustains the destination's attractiveness but also helps protect it for future generations.

Community participation is further evident in the provision of tourism services, including homestays, culinary offerings, and guided tours—all operated by local residents. These activities generate supplementary income and promote environmentally friendly practices among visitors, fostering a meaningful connection between tourists and the host community. In addition, local deliberative forums enable residents to participate in decision-making processes related to tourism planning and governance. This inclusive structure enhances transparency and supports the development of equitable and sustainable tourism policies.

Capacity-building efforts also play a vital role. Community members in Sumberbulu have benefited from training in areas such as waste management, local product development, and the delivery of eco-conscious services. These programs strengthen the community's ability to manage tourism professionally while reinforcing collective ownership over local resources. Such empowerment is crucial for the long-term sustainability of the tourism village, as it cultivates a shared sense of responsibility and stewardship.

Nevertheless, challenges remain—particularly regarding awareness and understanding of sustainable tourism principles. Some residents may lack a full appreciation of tourism's potential impacts on the environment and cultural integrity. To address this, ongoing education and training initiatives are essential. Moreover, collaboration between the community and local government is indispensable. Supportive policies, infrastructure development, and facilitative governance can significantly enhance community capacity for tourism management. When aligned, such partnerships can position Sumberbulu as a model for sustainable tourism development.

The role of women in the village's tourism economy is also increasingly prominent. Women participate in various tourism-related enterprises, including handicraft production, culinary ventures, and homestay operations. Their engagement not only contributes to household income but also plays a pivotal role in preserving cultural practices and environmental values.



Fig. 5. Women's Involvement in the Management of Sumberbulu Tourism Village
Source: Researcher documentation (2024)

The success of sustainable tourism in Sumberbulu reflects the principles of community-based sustainable tourism (CBST), in which the community is positioned not merely as a beneficiary but as a central agent in planning, implementing, and maintaining tourism activities (Panwanitdumrong & Chen, 2021). Community engagement in conservation programs—such as tree planting and waste reduction—demonstrates the internalization of sustainability values in daily life. This is consistent with Scheyvens and Biddulph (2017), who argue that tourism sustainability depends not only on regulatory frameworks but also on the empowerment and collective awareness of local residents.

Participation in environmental conservation activities is rooted in normative values, local identity, and a shared sense of responsibility for natural resources (Moayerian et al., 2022). Moreover, such engagement fosters a “sense of place”—an emotional and cultural attachment to one’s environment—which, according to Daryanto and Song (2021), significantly enhances pro-environmental behaviors and participation in sustainable tourism governance.

Thus, community involvement in environmental and tourism management in Sumberbulu is more than a technical contribution; it embodies the integration of social, cultural, and ecological values. This convergence is fundamental to the sustainability of community-based tourism and the preservation of local wisdom.

In conclusion, the active participation of the local community forms the cornerstone of Sumberbulu Tourism Village’s success as a sustainable tourism destination. Through comprehensive involvement in planning, implementation, service provision, and conservation, the community ensures that economic, social, and environmental benefits are equitably distributed. With sustained community support and collaboration, Sumberbulu Village can continue to grow its tourism potential without compromising the integrity of its natural and cultural assets.

CONCLUSION

This study of Sumberbulu Tourism Village demonstrates that the implementation of sustainable digital marketing communication strategies relies on the synergistic integration of community participation, digital technologies, and policy frameworks that support environmental conservation and cultural preservation. Active involvement of the local community in tourism management has been shown to enhance the effectiveness of marketing efforts, optimize the utilization of local assets, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of natural resources. The success of sustainable tourism management is fundamentally dependent on collaboration among community members, tourism managers, and governmental stakeholders.

This research contributes to a deeper understanding of digital marketing communication in tourism villages by employing a qualitative approach that captures the lived experiences of tourism managers—insights that are often overlooked in quantitative studies. Nevertheless, the study has several limitations. It does not capture the diversity of tourism villages in terms of geographic distribution, digital infrastructure, and cultural context, and it does not incorporate the perspectives of tourists, who are key users and disseminators of digital content.

Future research is encouraged to: (1) include a broader range of tourism villages across different regions to examine variations in digital communication strategies; (2) integrate the perspectives of tourists and local digital content creators in the co-design of communication strategies; and (3) investigate the role of tourist-generated content in shaping destination image and supporting the sustainability of tourism villages.

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