

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT IN BINDANG PASEAN VILLAGE THROUGH HUMANITIES-BASED EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE

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ABSTRACT

Background

The utilization of information technology in Bindang Village remains low despite the presence of community potential and digital infrastructure.

Purpose

This study aims to enhance digital literacy and optimize the use of digital media to support social and religious activities, thereby strengthening community participation and accelerating inclusive and sustainable village development.

Implementation Method

The methodology employed Participatory Action Research (PAR) involving observation, interviews, village coordination, WhatsApp content planning, socialization, training, and the involvement of students in educational, religious, and social activities over one month.

Result

The implementation of the community service program in Bindang Village successfully empowered the community in the domains of religion, education, and social affairs. Activities such as Al-Qur'an recitations (tadarus), hadroh training, and istighosah ceremonies strengthened faith and community cohesion. In education, students taught and provided private tutoring to improve literacy. Socially, activities including Posyandu (integrated health services), mat weaving, carnivals, and health cadre training were effectively conducted. Digital innovation through the official village WhatsApp channel enhanced information access and community participation. Overall, the program successfully fostered collective awareness and sustainably increased community capacity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the community service activities were conducted effectively and yielded positive impacts on the community.

Keywords

Community, Empowerment, Humanities



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INTRODUCTION

Community empowerment is a process of enhancing the capacity of local communities to control their lives and resources through critical reflection and democratic participation (Stoeffler, 2018). This empowerment framework encompasses five dimensions: self-confidence, inclusivity, organization, collaboration, and influence. In practice, a service design approach was applied in the Wen-Ling community to empower the elderly through meal delivery services, emphasizing the importance of local engagement and shared experiences (Yang & Huang, 2016). Empowerment also serves as a core principle in health promotion to improve health outcomes by exerting control over health determinants (Babatunde et al., 2022). In the context of sustainability, empowerment programs emphasize capacity building, independence, participation, and the integration of local knowledge (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024). However, decentralization efforts such as those in Pakistan have not been fully effective due to the dominance of local elites (Ahmad & Abu Talib, 2015). Empowerment has been shown to improve community welfare, particularly in rural areas (Sarjiyanto et al., 2016), reduce stress among youth (Forenza et al., 2019), and strengthen digital participation in decision-making processes (Boudebouz et al., 2025).

The objectives and benefits of community empowerment for the social environment include enhancing social inclusion and connectivity, especially in socially isolated communities (Mmako et al., 2019). Empowerment programs aim to improve overall community welfare by addressing various social, economic, and environmental factors. One such effort involves creating economic opportunities through the utilization of environmental potentials and fostering entrepreneurship (Subekti et al., 2019). Moreover, empowerment is regarded as a critical prerequisite for sustainable development, ensuring long-term benefits for communities while strengthening social networks as the foundation for resilience and collective action (Avazpour et al., 2025). Additional benefits include the enhancement of social capital, such as trust and collaboration among residents. These programs also encourage active community participation in managing shared resources, such as forests (Pairunan et al., 2021). Empowerment positively impacts health, particularly among the elderly in rural areas (Johnson et al., 2018), and enhances community resilience in facing disasters (Farni et al., 2019).

Bindang Village is located on Jalan Raya Pasean, Pasean District, Pamekasan Regency, East Java Province, with postal code 69321. Administratively, the village lies in the northeastern part of Pamekasan Regency, approximately 40–50 kilometers from the city center. Geographically, it encompasses hilly areas, coastal zones, and agricultural land, providing diverse natural potentials both on land and at sea. Demographically, the majority of Bindang residents are Muslim and maintain a religious social life, deeply rooted in values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and kinship. Religious traditions and a spirit of togetherness remain strong in daily life. The community's education level is relatively good at the primary and secondary levels, although participation in higher education remains limited.

Bindang Village possesses relatively stable digital infrastructure; however, the utilization of information technology remains suboptimal. Social media and digital platforms have yet to be effectively employed for disseminating village information, religious activities, and promoting local potential. This digital literacy gap presents a challenge that needs urgent attention. The considerable potential of the community, including religious leaders, youth, and micro-entrepreneurs, remains underutilized in the context of digitalization. Based on this condition, a Community Service program was designed with a humanities-based approach encompassing education, digital preaching (*dakwah*), and strengthening village information media. The primary goal of this program is to improve the community's digital literacy and optimize the role of technology in social

and religious life. One of the main implementations is the establishment of an official village WhatsApp channel. The program's impact is evident in the increased participation of residents and the growing collective awareness of the importance of digitalization in village development.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The implementation of the community service program in Bindang Village employed a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, wherein students were directly involved in the empowerment process based on active community participation. The stages began with field observations to identify the current use of digital media, particularly WhatsApp, as well as to map local potentials and existing social, religious, and educational issues. Observations were conducted through direct interviews with village officials and residents.

Subsequently, intensive coordination was carried out with the village government to explain the program's objectives and to establish a mutual commitment in managing the program. The next stage involved planning the WhatsApp content, which consisted of religious preaching materials, information about village activities, promotion of local potentials, and education on discipline values. This content was designed to be engaging and communicative, tailored to the characteristics of the community members. Students then created and managed the official village WhatsApp channel as the primary medium for disseminating information and digital preaching.

Following the establishment of the information channel, socialization and training on productive WhatsApp utilization were conducted for residents, particularly targeting youth groups, housewives, and community leaders. The socialization included instructions on creating simple content, disseminating useful information, and building effective village communication. The program was implemented over one month, from July 14 to August 14, 2025, with activities divided across three main sectors: education, religion, and social affairs.

In the educational sector, students taught at early childhood education centers (PAUD), Islamic elementary schools (MI), junior high schools (SMP), and senior high schools (SMA MANARUL HUDA), as well as provided private reading tutoring. Religious activities included Al-Qur'an recitations (tadarus), hadroh training, and istighosah ceremonies held at the village hall. In the social sector, students participated in integrated health service activities (Posyandu), health training, cadre training, carnivals, mat weaving, and the formation of the village WhatsApp channel. All activities were designed to build collective awareness and sustainably enhance community capacity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service program was conducted from July 14 to August 14, 2025. Following field observations, we developed a work program based on the findings and the needs of the residents. The program aims to provide appropriate and relevant solutions to the problems faced by the surrounding community.

Community Empowerment in the Religious Sector

Religion plays a vital role in instilling values and shaping behaviors that support community empowerment. For instance, religious teachings on responsibility, karma, and reward/punishment can encourage environmental conservation and sustainable practices, thereby ensuring that empowerment is sustainable as it is embedded within the community's belief system (Heradiansyah & Rizki, 2021). Additionally, faith-based financial institutions such as Mentari BMT empower Muslim family entrepreneurs through financial assistance, improving their economic conditions and quality of life (Nasor et al., 2019). However, criticism has been raised regarding the

commercialization of religious practices in Neo-Pentecostal churches, which benefit leaders disproportionately, underscoring the need for a reorientation towards genuine empowerment to foster congregational independence (Boshielo, 2023). Faith-based organizations also play an important role in strengthening social cohesion and encouraging volunteerism, especially among women and youth (Daas, 2025).

One of the activities implemented under this program was the collective Al-Qur'an recitation (*tadarus*), held at the Bindang Village Hall, Pasean District. This activity was intended not only to enhance the spiritual quality of the students but also to serve as a means to strengthen communal bonds and deepen faith through collective Qur'anic recitation. Following the *tadarus* sessions, participants shared knowledge and discussed religious values, which are expected to serve as guidelines in their daily lives.



Figure 1. Collective Tadarus Session

Secondly, *hadroh* is a form of Islamic musical art combining praise poetry for Allah SWT and the Prophet Muhammad SAW with the rhythmic beating of the *rebana* drum. Beyond functioning as religious-themed entertainment, *hadroh* holds strategic value as an effective medium for preaching, instilling love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW, strengthening Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*), and fostering a spirit of togetherness within the community. In Bindang Village, Pasean District, the potential for *hadroh* art is considerable; however, training and development activities remain limited. In response, the community service team implemented a *hadroh* training and development program, actively engaging in the regular *hadroh* events held biweekly on Saturday evenings. This initiative aims to empower local potential in religious arts and promote the sustainability of religious traditions within the community.



Figure 2. Hadroh Performance

Thirdly, *istighosah* is a communal prayer activity conducted as a supplication to Allah SWT to seek help in addressing various life challenges, both individual and collective. The *istighosah* program was carried out as part of religious guidance efforts intended to strengthen faith, enhance solemnity in prayer, and cultivate a sense of brotherhood among community members. Furthermore, this activity serves as a medium to draw closer to Allah SWT and seek His assistance in all aspects of life, thereby fostering deeper spiritual awareness among participants and the community at large.



Figure 3. Istighosah at the Village Hall

Community Empowerment in the Educational Sector

The benefits of community empowerment in education include the enhancement of contextual learning and social relevance. Community-based language learning programs, such as those implemented at Princeton University, integrate real-world experiences to increase students' motivation and intercultural competencies through civic engagement and reflection on social justice issues (Blaise, 2023). Furthermore, inclusive leadership focused on equity within educational institutions has been shown to positively impact academic achievement, where active community participation strengthens educational justice and outcomes (Liu, 2025). In the context of indigenous community education, empowerment through education supports cultural resilience and socio-economic development (Rastogi & Gupta, 2025). Partnerships between universities and local communities also provide practical benefits by bridging theory and practice, while enhancing community welfare and student learning outcomes (Phiri, 2024).

The educational activities conducted in this program included the following: First, as students, we taught at the Manarul Huda Islamic Educational Institution, covering levels from RA (early childhood education), MI (Islamic elementary school), SMP (junior high school), to SMA (senior high school) according to a rotating schedule.



Figure 4. Teaching at the Manarul Huda Foundation

Second, a private reading tutoring program was implemented as an effort to assist children who had not yet achieved fluency in reading, particularly at the elementary school level. This activity aimed to improve students' basic literacy skills, foster early learning interest, and provide additional academic support outside regular school hours. Through a personalized and intensive approach, this program is expected to accelerate reading comprehension development and strengthen the academic foundation of the participants.



Figure 5. Private Reading Tutoring Session

Community Empowerment in the Social Sector

Community empowerment in the social sector is a process grounded in critical reflection and democratic participation, enabling marginalized individuals to actively shape their living conditions and access valuable resources (Stoeffler, 2018). Social capital comprising bonding, bridging, and linking elements—plays a vital role in this process by strengthening social harmony, economic capacity, and access to essential services. Effective empowerment models involve multiple stakeholders, including government entities, communities, academics, media, and the private sector (Nalikan et al., 2025). A service design approach aids in identifying gaps and utilizing local knowledge for collaborative engagement, as demonstrated in the Wen-Ling community case study (Yang & Huang, 2016). However, large-scale implementation often encounters structural barriers, such as national regulations and social stigmas (Kerrigan et al., 2015). The activities under the social empowerment domain included the following:

1. Participation in the Opening Ceremony of the *Imtihan* at Az-Zaytun Islamic Educational Institution



Figure 6. Opening Ceremony of *Imtihan* at LPI Az-Zaytun

Participation in the opening of the *Imtihan* at Madrasah Diniyah (MD) level of Az-Zaytun Islamic Educational Institution served as a form of support for religious educational activities. The *Imtihan*, which functions as the final examination for students, is an important

moment for evaluating learning outcomes and fostering student character. As a meaningful contribution, the community service participants took part in the event's opening to encourage and motivate students facing their exams. This involvement not only demonstrated a commitment to education but also strengthened relationships between the university students and local educational institutions.

2. Participation in *Posyandu* (Integrated Health Service Post) Activities

Posyandu is a routine health program in Bindang Village aimed at preventing stunting and educating the public on health matters across all age groups—from infants to the elderly. Through active involvement, community service students contributed to raising awareness about balanced nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and early detection of health risks that affect child development. This program also served to reinforce collaboration between healthcare workers, *Posyandu* cadres, and the community in fostering a supportive family health environment.



Figure 7. *Posyandu* Activity

3. Woven Mat Handicraft Workshop

This activity was designed to empower the local community's potential, particularly in traditional handicrafts. Woven mats not only serve functional daily purposes but also hold economic value as an alternative income source. Through this initiative, students encouraged the preservation of local wisdom and improvement of residents' skills, aiming to enhance household economic independence and promote traditional craft-based entrepreneurship.



Figure 8. Woven Mat Crafting Activity

4. Participation in the Carnival at Az-Zaytun Madrasah Diniyah

The community service team actively participated in the carnival organized by Az-Zaytun Islamic Educational Institution as a way to support creativity and community spirit

among students. As part of an annual series of events, the carnival sought to strengthen social bonds, boost students' self-confidence, and provide a positive, educational outlet for Islamic arts and culture. The student team contributed by assisting with event preparations, including managing the carnival procession, ensuring the event ran smoothly and festively.



Figure 9. Carnival at LPI Az-Zaytun

5. Participation in Social Assistance Distribution

The community service team also supported the village government's social assistance program aimed at improving community welfare. The aid was distributed to underprivileged families, the elderly, and economically disadvantaged individuals. Students played an active role in organizing the distribution process from preparing aid packages to managing the distribution flow. Thanks to effective coordination between village officials, students, and local residents, the program was carried out in an orderly and efficient manner.



Figure 10. Social Assistance Program

6. Training for Posyandu Cadres

This training was implemented to improve the capacity of village health cadres in providing basic services, especially for pregnant women, toddlers, and the elderly. As frontline workers in rural healthcare, cadre skills and knowledge are crucial to the success of public health programs. The training, conducted in collaboration with village authorities and local health center staff, covered health data recording and reporting, child weight and height measurements, vitamin distribution, child development monitoring, and maternal-child health education.



Figure 11. Posyandu Cadre Training

7. Community Health Training Session

This program aimed to enhance community understanding of the benefits, proper usage, and safety of health therapy equipment. It sought to educate the public on how to use therapeutic tools effectively to support their health and prevent injuries from misuse. The training took place at the Village Hall and featured a qualified health therapy practitioner. In addition to theoretical instruction, participants engaged in hands-on practice using the equipment under expert supervision.



Figure 12. Health Training Session

8. Creation of the Official Village WhatsApp Channel



Figure 13. Creation of the Village WhatsApp Channel

As a communication innovation, the creation of the official village WhatsApp channel was designed to improve access to information between the village government and residents. WhatsApp was selected due to its widespread use, accessibility, and practicality for disseminating official announcements. The project began with the creation of the official account, managed directly by village officials. The student team supported technical aspects such as naming the channel, designing the profile picture, organizing content categories, and drafting a clear description to ensure the channel was informative and easily recognizable. It now serves as a hub for sharing village activities, official announcements, public service schedules, and news related to religion, education, and local potential. This initiative is expected to provide the community with fast, accurate, and reliable information.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Community Service Program (*Kuliah Kerja Nyata*) in Bindang Village, Pasean Subdistrict, Pamekasan Regency, held from July 14 to August 14, 2025, carried the theme: "*Empowering WhatsApp Channels as a Medium for Religious Outreach and Village Information to Develop Local Potential.*" The program focused on three main areas: religious, educational, and social, beginning with community observation and needs assessment. In the religious sector, activities such as group Qur'anic recitation (*tadarus*), *hadroh* training, *istighosah* (communal prayer), and participation in the *Madrasah Diniyah* carnival and opening of the *Imtihan* (final examination) successfully enhanced community involvement in spiritual activities and strengthened Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*). In the educational sector, students taught at various educational levels and organized private reading lessons for elementary students struggling with literacy. These efforts led to noticeable improvements in basic literacy skills and students' motivation to learn.

In the social sector, students engaged in various activities including *Posyandu* cadre training, health training sessions, distribution of social assistance, creation of the village WhatsApp information channel, and woven mat craft workshops with local residents. The implementation of the official WhatsApp channel, in particular, produced significant outcomes – residents now have fast and easy access to official village information, event announcements, and public service schedules. Overall, the program had a positive impact on increasing community participation, strengthening local capacity, and fostering collaboration among university students, village authorities, and residents in building a sustainable and community-driven rural development initiative.

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We extend our sincere gratitude to all parties who supported the implementation of the Community Service Program in Bindang Village. Special thanks to the village government, local residents, and educational institutions for their cooperation and openness. This program has had a tangible impact, including improved digital literacy, increased community participation in religious activities, and enhanced social capacity. The development of the official village WhatsApp channel has proven to be an effective innovation in information dissemination. We hope the outcomes of this research will contribute meaningfully to inclusive and sustainable village development.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

- Author 1 : He coordinated with village officials and led the development of religious content for the official WhatsApp channel to strengthen community-based digital dakwah efforts.
- Author 2 : He organized hadroh training sessions and actively supported community events like istighosah, distribution, and the Madrasah Diniyah carnival.
- Author 3 : He taught at multiple education levels and facilitated reading tutorials to improve children's literacy and encourage early interest in learning.
- Author 4 : She coordinated health education initiatives and helped conduct Posyandu activities to raise awareness on balanced nutrition and early childhood development.
- Author 5 : She led skills workshops on traditional mat weaving and assisted mothers and youth in learning how to use WhatsApp for productive communication.
- Author 6 : She created and managed the village's official WhatsApp channel, ensuring effective information flow between local government and residents.

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