

Building Superior Tourism Human Resources Through Community Empowerment Based On Local Wisdom

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ABSTRACT

The development of tourism human resources (HR) in community-based tourism destinations still faces challenges, including low management competence, limited continuous training, and suboptimal utilization of local wisdom as an empowerment resource. This study aims to analyze the influence of community empowerment based on local wisdom on the quality of tourism human resources. A quantitative approach with a descriptive-correlational cross-sectional design was employed. The study was conducted in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village, Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province, which has significant potential for Malay cultural tourism rooted in local wisdom. A total of 85 tourism community actors participated in the study using a total sampling technique. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, interviews, and field observations. Data analysis included univariate analysis using frequency distributions and percentages and bivariate analysis using the Chi-Square test to examine the relationship between variables. The results showed that 62.4% of respondents had a high level of empowerment based on local wisdom, while 58.8% had good-quality tourism human resources. The bivariate analysis indicated a significant relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom and tourism human resource quality ($p = 0.001$; $\chi^2 = 14.26$). The study concludes that local wisdom-based community empowerment significantly contributes to improving tourism human resource quality. Sustainable training, institutional strengthening, and collaboration between local governments and communities are recommended.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector has become one of the main drivers of the global economy due to its ability to create jobs, encourage investment, and strengthen the region's competitiveness through product and service innovation. Tourism sustainability is increasingly determined by the ability of business actors, including family businesses and local communities, to adopt innovations oriented to environmental and social sustainability. These innovations not only talk about tourism products, but also about how the community as the main actors are able to adapt to the demands of an increasingly competitive global market. This trend suggests that the success of a region's tourism depends largely on resource readiness at the site level, rather than solely on large infrastructure (Grazia, C. E., et al., 2020).

Along with that, the world tourism trend is also experiencing a shift towards nature and community-based tourism that emphasizes ecological sustainability as well as direct involvement of local communities. This shift in tourist preferences opens up great opportunities for regions with rich nature and culture to develop participatory tourism models. However, these opportunities can only be optimally utilized if the local community has adequate management capacity. Without strengthening this capacity, the potential of natural and cultural tourism is at risk of being managed unsustainably or even taken over by outsiders who pay less attention to the interests of local communities (Patricia, W., et al., 2020).

At the national level, Indonesia is showing a significant recovery in the tourism sector after the pandemic, as seen from the surge in foreign tourist visits in recent periods that even exceeded the government's target. This recovery is a positive indicator for the contribution of the tourism sector to the country's foreign exchange and employment nationally. However, this rapid growth in the number of visits is not automatically accompanied by the readiness of service quality in destinations, especially destinations directly managed by the community. The gap between tourism demand growth and management readiness is what becomes a structural challenge in National Tourism Development (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2025).

The government through the National Medium-Term Development Plan 2020-2024 establishes a destination development strategy that is not only oriented to the number of visits, but also to strengthening the supply side, including tourism institutions and human resources. This strategy explicitly recognizes that the quality of human resources is one of the determinants of destination success in addition to marketing and infrastructure aspects. Strengthening the supply side is considered important so that the increase in tourist visits is directly proportional to the length of stay and tourist spending at the destination. This confirms that the development of tourism human resources is not just a complement, but a core component of the sustainable destination development strategy (Ministry of Tourism and creative economy in RPJMN, 2020-2024).

Strengthening the supply side in practice is still faced with obstacles, one of which is the low standard of professionalism of the tourism workforce which has a direct impact on the quality of services to tourists. Professional certification is seen as one of the important instruments to encourage the standardization of Labor competencies in this sector. However, the scope of the



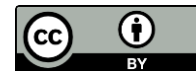
certification is still limited and has not touched most tourism actors based at the community or village level. This condition shows the distance between standardization policies at the national level and the reality of Tourism Management at the community level (Fauziah, N., & Ramli, A., 2023).

Various studies have also shown that the sustainability of tourist visit growth is highly dependent on the synergy between the organization of Tourism Events, the performance of destinations, and the professionalism of human resources who manage them. When one of these elements is weak, such as the quality of human resources, the competitiveness of the destination against other destinations that are better prepared will decrease even though the number of visits has increased. The growth of visits that are not accompanied by risk management readiness is temporary and not sustainable in the long term. Therefore, the strengthening of human resources should be an integral part of any strategy to increase tourist arrivals in the region (Darmawan, R., & Handayani, T., 2022).

At the level of community-based Destination Management, a number of studies show that the success of Tourism Village development is largely determined by the extent to which collaboration between stakeholders, including government, academia, and the community, can run effectively. Collaborative planning that has not been running optimally is often a major obstacle in community empowerment in community-based tourist destinations. This inequality of roles between actors makes local communities not yet the main subject of management, but tend to be the object of programs from outside. These conditions strengthen the urgency of research that focuses on strengthening the position of the community as the main actors of empowerment (Purawinata, & Indratno, 2021).

The synergy between the government, the private sector, the community, academics, and the media is seen as the key so that the development of tourism villages can take place in an integrated manner while maintaining the value of culture and local wisdom. Local wisdom in this context serves not only as a cultural attraction, but also as a value framework that governs how communities interact with their tourist resources in a sustainable way. The active involvement of all stakeholders is a prerequisite so that local wisdom is not eroded by a purely commercial orientation in tourism development. Thus, local wisdom has the potential to become a more contextual basis for empowerment than a uniform empowerment model that is applied without regard to local cultural characteristics (Kirana, & Artisa, 2020).

A number of cases in various regions show how local wisdom has been successfully used as a basis for the development of tourist villages that have an impact on increasing community capacity. One example is the development of tourist villages in South Nias, which shows that strengthening local traditional values can go hand in hand with improving community skills in managing tourist attractions. This kind of Model proves that local wisdom is not an obstacle to tourism modernization, but it can be a differentiating attraction as well as a means of empowerment. The success of this model is an important reference for other regions that have similar cultural wealth but have not optimally utilized it (Telaumbanua, A. Oh My Goodness, A. Y., & Amin, M., 2023).



Further developments also show that empowerment based on local wisdom is now beginning to be combined with the use of digital technology to expand the reach of Tourism Village promotion and management. This combination allows people to not only maintain cultural authenticity, but also increase the competitiveness of destinations in an increasingly digital tourism market. An empowerment approach that integrates local wisdom and digital literacy is considered more relevant to answer the challenges of sustainable tourism in the future. This approach shows that community empowerment based on local wisdom is dynamic and can continue to be developed according to the needs of the Times (Dharmawan, K., Keller, E. N., Srinadi, I. G. A. M., & Wijayakusuma, I. G. N. L., 2025).

In addition, the strengthening of the role of certain community groups, such as women's groups, has also proven to contribute significantly to encouraging a creative economy based on local wisdom in border tourist areas. Inclusive community engagement strengthens ownership of empowerment programs while extending economic impact to more households. This finding confirms that empowerment based on local wisdom will be more effective if it is designed inclusively and not centered on a handful of actors. This kind of inclusive approach is relevant to be replicated in other areas that have diverse social structures of society (Vuspitasari, B. K., Siahaan, S. V. br, Hapsari, V. R., & Bhuana, I. S., 2023).

On the other hand, the needs of human resources in the management of natural and cultural-based tourist areas still require more systematic mapping so that capacity building programs can be targeted. This mapping of human resource needs is important to identify the competency gap between what people have today and what is needed to manage destinations professionally. Without clear mapping, training or empowerment programs risk being irrelevant to the real needs on the ground. This condition reinforces the importance of research that is not only descriptive, but also able to measure the relationship between empowerment efforts and improving the quality of human resources empirically (Umasugi, M., 2023).

Several recent quantitative studies have begun to try to empirically measure the effect of human resource quality on the performance and satisfaction of tourists in certain destinations. These results consistently show that the improvement of human resources competence is positively correlated with the performance of destinations, both in terms of Service and sustainability of tourism businesses. However, most of these studies still focus on industrial-scale destinations or special economic zones, and not many target destinations that are actually managed independently by rural communities. This research locus gap opens space for further study in the context of community-based tourism villages (Marswandi, E. D. P., Ihyani, L., Marlina, F. N., & Suhaeril, S., 2024).

Similar phenomena have also been identified in other coastal and rural areas in Indonesia, including in Riau Province, which has rich Malay cultural tourism potential but has not been accompanied by adequate strengthening of community capacity. Villages with strong local cultural attractions often face the classic constraints of low management skills, lack of ongoing training, and weak institutional awareness of local tourism groups. The development of tourism villages can



actually be an effective strategy to empower communities and encourage local potential if designed with the right and sustainable approach. This condition underlies the importance of measuring the relationship between empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources more measurably in the region (Oktaviani, & Yuliani, 2023).

Most of the previous research on community empowerment based on local wisdom in the context of tourism villages is still dominated by a descriptive qualitative approach that emphasizes the narrative of the process without measuring the relationship between statistical variables. This kind of approach, although contextually rich, has not been able to answer the extent to which the strength of the relationship between the level of empowerment and the level of quality of human resources produced. This methodological void is a strong reason to present quantitative research designs that can measure these relationships more objectively and can be retested. The combination of contextual richness of local wisdom and quantitative measurement accuracy is expected to enrich the research treasure in the field of community-based tourism Human Resource Development (Putra, I. W. A., & Retno, J. S., 2023).

Based on this series of problems, researchers are interested to examine in more depth the relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources in tourism communities in areas that have local cultural wealth but still face management capacity constraints. This interest is driven by the desire to provide empirical evidence that can be the basis for the formulation of more targeted empowerment policies, not just ceremonial programs. This study was also motivated by the lack of similar quantitative studies in areas with Malay cultural characteristics, which have been studied more qualitatively. Through this research, it is hoped that operational recommendations can be generated for local governments, tourism conscious groups, and the community in designing empowerment programs that really have an impact on improving the quality of tourism human resources based on local wisdom.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with descriptive-correlational design through a cross-sectional approach, which aims to describe the characteristics of research variables while analyzing the relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources at one time observation. The research was conducted in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village, Bengkalis regency, Riau province, with the consideration that the region has the potential of Malay cultural tourism that is thick with local wisdom values and has run community-based tourism activities. The study population is the entire community of Tourism actors in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village, with a sample of 85 respondents taken using the total sampling technique, IE all members of the population who meet the criteria used as research respondents. Sample inclusion criteria include people who are permanently domiciled in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village, at least 17 years old, actively involved as tourism actors both as homestay managers, tour guides, craftsmen, traders, and members of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), and willing to be respondents by signing a consent sheet. The exclusion criteria

included people who were not in place or could not be contacted during the three visits to collect data, as well as respondents who resigned in the middle of the research process.

Data collection was carried out through three techniques, namely questionnaires and field observations, in order to obtain comprehensive and complementary data. The main instrument of the study was a structured questionnaire based on community empowerment indicators based on local wisdom and tourism human resources quality indicators, using a Likert scale of 1-4, which has been tested for validity using Pearson Product Moment test and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha test before being used on all respondents. Data analysis consisted of univariate analysis using frequency distribution and percentage to describe the characteristics of respondents and the description of each variable of the study, and bivariate analysis using Chi-Square test to determine the relationship between variables of community empowerment based on local wisdom with the quality of tourism human resources, with the significance level (α) of 0.05. This study pays attention to ethical aspects, where all respondents include an explanation of the purpose of the study, the right to refuse or resign without any consequences, guarantees of confidentiality of the identity and data of respondents (confidentiality), as well as the signing of approval sheets before filling out questionnaires and interviews.

RESULTS

1. Frequency Distribution Characteristics of Research Respondents

Before presenting the results of the analysis of the univariate and bivariate, the following is presented in advance an overview of the characteristics of the study respondents which include gender, age, education level, type of work in the tourism sector, and the length of time involved in tourist activities in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondent Characteristics (n=85)

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Men	47	55,3
	Female	38	44,7
Age	17-30 years old	22	25,9
	31-45 years old	38	44,7
	> 45 years old	25	29,4
Education Level	Bachelor degree	10	11,8
	Menguasai komputer (MS. Office)	21	24,7
	High school / equivalent	41	48,2
	College	13	15,3
Types of Tourist Involvement	Homestay Manager	18	21,2



Characteristics	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Long engaged in tourism	Tour Guide	15	17,6
	Craftsman / MSME	24	28,2
	Traders	16	18,8
	Pokdarwis Members	12	14,1
	< 3 years	19	22,4
	3-5 years	34	40,0
	> 5 years	32	37,6

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents are male (55.3%) with the productive age group of 31-45 years (44.7%) dominating. The education level of the respondents was mostly at the high school/equivalent level (48.2%), indicating that the basic literacy capacity of the community was sufficient to participate in the empowerment program. In terms of involvement, artisans / MSMEs are the largest group (28.2%), followed by homestay managers and traders, which reflects the variety of community roles in the village tourism ecosystem. The majority of respondents (77.6%) have been involved in tourism activities for more than 3 years, indicating a relatively mature level of experience in community-based tourism management.

2. Frequency distribution of Community Empowerment based on Local Wisdom and Quality of Human Resources Tourism

Furthermore, the results of the univariate analysis are presented to describe the frequency distribution and percentage of each research variable, namely the level of community empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources.

Table 2. Variable Frequency Distribution of Research (n=85)

Variable	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Community Empowerment Based on Height Local Wisdom		53	62,4
	Low	32	37,6
Quality of tourism human resources Variable	Good	50	58,8
	Less Good	35	41,2

Table 2 shows that more than half of respondents (62.4%) have a high level of community empowerment based on local wisdom, while 37.6% are still in the low category. In tourism human resource quality variables, as many as 58.8% of respondents were categorized as having good human resource quality, while the other 41.2% were still in the less good category. This picture indicates that although the majority of communities have felt the benefits of empowerment based on local wisdom, there is still a considerable proportion of people who have not been optimal in terms of competence and quality of empowerment, so that continuous program strengthening is still needed.

3. Community Empowerment Relationship Based on Local Wisdom with the Quality of Tourism Human Resources

To determine whether or not there is a relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom with the quality of tourism human resources, bivariate analysis using Chi-Square test with the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The results of the analysis are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Community Empowerment Relationship Based on Local Wisdom with the Quality of Tourism Human Resources (n=85)

Local Wisdom Based Empowerment	Quality of Human Resources Tourism: Good F (%)	Quality of Tourism Human Resources: Not Good F (%)	Total f (%)	χ^2 count	p-value
Height	40 (75,5)	13 (24,5)	53 (100)	14,26	0,001
Low	10 (31,3)	22 (68,7)	32 (100)		

The results of Chi-Square test in Table 3 showed a value of 14.26 with p-value = 0.001 ($p < 0.05$), so it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village. Respondents with a high level of empowerment mostly (75.5%) have a good quality of tourism human resources, while respondents with a low level of empowerment majority (68.7%) have a poor quality of tourism human resources. This finding indicates that the higher the level of community empowerment based on the value of local wisdom, the higher the quality of tourism human resources produced, so that strengthening empowerment programs based on local wisdom can be an effective strategy to improve the quality of tourism human resources at the community level.

DISCUSSION

1. Frequency Distribution of Community Empowerment Based on Local Wisdom and Quality of Human Resources Tourism

The results of the univariate analysis in Table 2 show that most respondents, namely 62.4%, have a high level of community empowerment based on local wisdom, while 37.6% of other respondents are in the low category. This finding illustrates that the empowerment program that has been running in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village is quite beneficial for the majority of tourism players. However, there are still more than a third of respondents who do not feel optimal empowerment, which indicates that the reach of the program has not been fully distributed to all levels of society.



The high proportion of local wisdom-based empowerment in this high category is in line with the theory of Community Empowerment which emphasizes that sustainable tourism development should place local communities in a central role in Destination Management and decision-making. When communities are given real participation spaces, they tend to more easily adopt the values and knowledge of empowerment offered. This central role of the community is also an indicator of the success of the program, since the community is not only the object, but also the main subject in the empowerment process (Scheyvens, R., 2021). The researchers assumed that the high level of empowerment in the majority of respondents in Kampung Bandar could not be separated from the strong social capital and the close kinship of the local Malay community, which made the process of transferring knowledge and the value of local wisdom take place faster than in communities with a more individualistic social structure.

The high Empowerment Achievement of most respondents can also be explained through the concept of sustainable tourism which emphasizes the importance of empowering local communities as the main foundation for Destination Development. Empowerment that is built on a community basis tends to last longer than empowerment that is top-down from outside parties. This is because the community feels an emotional attachment and direct responsibility for the sustainability of the programs they run themselves (Susanto, & Rahmawati, 2021). The researchers' assumption is that this emotional attachment explains why the majority of Kampung Bandar people continue to consistently carry out Malay culture-based tourism activities even without large financial incentives from the local government.

Meanwhile, the proportion of 37.6% of respondents who are still in the low Empowerment category indicates a capacity gap among the tourism community. This gap can reflect differences in access to training, information, and involvement in institutional structures such as tourism awareness groups. A similar phenomenon is also found in research on the relationship between the effectiveness of Corporate Social Responsibility programs and the level of Community Empowerment, which shows that community empowerment is strongly influenced by the intensity and quality of assistance programs received, not just the existence of the program itself (Loany, H. A., & Murdianto, 2021). Researchers suspect that the group of respondents with low empowerment is likely to be people who have recently joined tourism activities or who rarely participate in village training and deliberations, so their access to information and assistance is more limited than other groups.

The value of local wisdom as the basis for empowerment in this study also reinforces the finding that the potential of local culture and tradition can be an attraction as well as a means of tourism development if managed with a participatory approach. The potential of local wisdom owned by a region can be the main capital for the development of supporting tourist attractions if the community is actively involved in the process of identification and preservation. This active involvement makes local wisdom not only an object for tourists to watch, but also a part of the identity and pride of the community itself (Deskarina, R., & Atiqah, A. N., 2020). The researchers assume that the strong Malay culture in Kampung Bandar, such as traditions, culinary, and local

crafts, is the main driving factor for the high level of empowerment in the majority of respondents because these values have long been inherent in people's daily lives.

These results also confirm the findings of the study on the utilization of local wisdom-based ecotourism potential, which shows that regions with a wealth of traditions and local wisdom that are still preserved have a greater chance of developing sustainable empowerment models. The existence of authentic cultural sites, traditions, or practices makes it easier for people to build a distinctive tourist narrative and difficult to imitate by other destinations. This uniqueness in turn encourages community participation because they feel they have something of value to offer to tourists (Kholik, Y., & Sholeh, M., 2021). Researchers assume that the uniqueness of Malay culture in Kampung Bandar also strengthens people's confidence in managing tourism independently, which ultimately contributes to the high proportion of high category empowerment in this study.

In addition to cultural aspects, tourism-based empowerment has also been shown to have an impact on strengthening the capacity of communities to manage destinations in a sustainable manner, as shown in the Community Empowerment program in natural and geological tourist destinations which involves training management skills directly to local communities. This kind of Program is proven to increase the confidence and technical ability of the community in managing tourist attractions independently. This increase in capacity ultimately has an impact on the overall quality of Destination Management (Maryani, N., Paramita, V. S., Prabowo, J., & Adialita, T., 2022). The researchers assume that a similar pattern of assistance is also applied in Kampung Bandar through the active role of Pokdarwis and village officials, so that most people gain knowledge and skills in tourism management gradually and sustainably.

In the second variable, the results of univariate analysis showed that as many as 58.8% of respondents had the quality of tourism human resources in the good category, while 41.2% of other respondents were in the less good category. This finding shows that more than half of the tourism players in Kampung Bandar have sufficient competence in carrying out their roles in the tourism sector. However, the proportion of almost half of respondents who are still in the poor category indicates that efforts to improve the quality of human resources still need to be strengthened on an ongoing basis so that the standard of tourism services becomes more equitable.

The achievement of good tourism human resources quality in the majority of respondents is in line with the view that human resources are the main driver of the successful implementation of quality tourism, where the knowledge and skills of the community largely determine how tourism products and services are perceived by tourists. Without adequate competence, the tourism potential of an area is at risk of not being managed optimally despite its great attractiveness. This competence is the difference between a destination that can last a long time with a destination that is only popular for a moment (Fauziah, N., & Ramli, A., 2023). Researchers assume that the good quality of human resources in the majority of respondents in Kampung Bandar can not be separated from their long experience involved in tourism activities, as reflected in the characteristics of the majority of respondents who have been active for more than three years.



These results are also relevant to studies that show that the sustainability of the growth of tourist visits depends largely on the synergy between the professionalism of human resources and the quality of services provided to tourists. When the quality of human resources is relatively good, tourist destinations tend to be able to maintain the satisfaction and loyalty of tourists in the long run. On the contrary, destinations with low human resources quality are at risk of losing competitiveness even though they have superior natural and cultural potential (Darmawan, R., & Handayani, T., 2022). Researchers suspect that the proportion of 41.2% of respondents with poor human resources quality is most likely from a young age group or a group that has just joined tourist activities, so their experience and technical skills have not been honed to the fullest.

The low quality of human resources in some respondents was also reinforced by research findings that showed that the limited mapping of Human Resource competence needs was one of the main causes of the quality gap in community-based tourist destination management. Without a clear mapping of needs, the training program provided is at risk of not being on target and does not answer real needs in the field. This ultimately causes some people to lag behind in terms of competence compared to other people who get coaching more often (Umasugi, M., 2023). Researchers assume that the training program in Kampung Bandar has been general and has not been fully adapted to the specific needs of each group of Tourism actors, such as homestay managers, guides, and craftsmen, so that the results of competence obtained by the community become uneven.

The good quality of tourism human resources in the majority of respondents can also be explained through the results of research on the influence of the quality of human resources on tourist satisfaction, which confirms that the improvement of human resources competence is positively correlated with the performance of services in tourist destinations. Good competence allows tourism actors to provide more personalized and authentic experiences to tourists, especially in culture-based destinations. This kind of authentic experience becomes an added value that is difficult to imitate by mass tourism destinations (Marswandi, E. D. P., Ihyani, L., Marlina, F. N., & Suhaeril, S., 2024). Researchers assume that the superiority of Malay culture in Kampung Bandar helps the community display a more personalized quality of service to tourists, although technically the formal training they receive is still limited.

On the other hand, findings on Indigenous peoples' behaviour towards local wisdom in resource management indicate that people's knowledge and attitudes towards traditional values shape the way they interact with tourists and manage tourism resources. People who have a strong understanding of local wisdom tend to be more careful and responsible in managing the tourist resources they have. This attitude of responsibility is one of the important indicators in assessing the quality of tourism human resources in community-based destinations (Jasmine, L. F., Saharuddin, Murdianto, & Abdulkadir, M., 2023). Researchers assume that the attitude of responsibility that is embedded from the values of indigenous Malays contribute to the high category of human resources quality in the majority of respondents to this study.

Overall, the results of univariate analysis on both variables showed a unidirectional pattern, namely the majority of respondents were in the High/good category both on the variable of community empowerment based on local wisdom and on the variable of tourism human resources quality. This pattern indicates a conceptual link between the two variables, where the process of effective empowerment tends to go hand in hand with increasing community competence. However, the proportion of respondents in the low/poor category that is still quite large in both variables indicates that the empowerment program in Kampung Bandar is not fully inclusive and evenly distributed to all groups of Tourism actors. Researchers assume that this gap needs to be a major concern for stakeholders, especially in designing empowerment programs that are more structured, sustainable, and reach community groups that have been less actively involved in tourism and training activities.

2. Community Empowerment Relationship Based on Local Wisdom with the Quality of Tourism Human Resources

The results of bivariate analysis using Chi-Square test in Table 3 showed a calculated value of 14.26 with $p\text{-value} = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$), which means there is a statistically significant relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village. Respondents with a high level of empowerment mostly (75.5%) have a good quality of tourism human resources, while respondents with a low level of empowerment majority (68.7%) have a poor quality of tourism human resources. This relationship pattern shows a consistent trend, namely the higher the level of Empowerment Felt by the community, the greater their chances of having good quality tourism human resources. These findings are an important basis for understanding how local wisdom-based empowerment processes contribute to the formation of community competencies in the tourism sector.

This significant relationship between empowerment and Human Resources quality is in line with the theory of Community Empowerment which asserts that the active involvement of local communities in the management and decision-making of tourist destinations is a prerequisite for the formation of sustainable management capacity. When people are given a central role, they not only receive economic benefits, but also experience a learning process that directly improves their knowledge and skills. The learning process is what ultimately forms the competence or quality of human resources better than people who are not actively involved (Scheyvens, R., 2021). Researchers assume that the strong statistical relationship found in this study reflects that empowerment in Kampung Bandar does not run in a top-down direction, but rather involves the community actively in their own tourism management decision-making process.

The strength of this relationship between empowerment and human resource quality can also be explained through the perspective of Social Capital, which places trust, social networks, and norms as important elements that determine the success of community-based tourism. Strong social capital allows people to share knowledge and experience in managing tourist destinations, so that increasing competence depends not only on formal training, but also on the process of social learning



between citizens. Trust, norms, and well-established social networks between tourism players have proven to play an important role in strengthening the collective capacity of the community-based tourism community (Putri, L. D., Prayitno, G., Hidayat, A. R. T., & Siankwilimba, E., 2025). Researchers assume that social closeness and strong kinship ties in the Malay community in Kampung Bandar accelerate the process of knowledge transfer between residents, so that high empowerment is more easily correlated with improving the quality of human resources collectively.

This result also confirms the view that social capital is an important investment for communities in collaborative management of Natural Resources in community-based tourism schemes. Social capital investment built through interaction, cooperation, and trust between citizens will result in collective capacity that is more resilient to the challenges of Destination Management, including in terms of improving human resources competence. When this social capital is weak, empowerment efforts tend not to have a significant impact on the quality of human resources because there is no sustainable strengthening mechanism at the community level (Musavengene, R., & Kloppers, R., 2020). The assumption of the researcher, the high proportion of respondents with empowerment and equally high quality of human resources in this study indicates that social capital in Kampung Bandar has functioned as an effective reinforcement mechanism in converting the empowerment process into real competence improvement.

This relationship between community empowerment and competence is also consistent with findings on the resilience of post-disaster tourism communities, which show that social capital plays an important role in accelerating recovery as well as increasing community capacity in managing tourist destinations. Social resilience formed from the process of sustainable empowerment allows communities to continue to adapt and improve their competencies despite facing various external challenges. This adaptive capacity is what distinguishes community-based tourist destinations that are able to last a long time with those that are easy to stagnate (Partelow, S., 2021). Researchers suspect that the experience of the people of Kampung Bandar in dealing with the dynamics of tourism, including post pandemic, helped strengthen the relationship between empowerment and Human Resources quality found in this study.

The significance of this relationship is also in line with the results of research on community empowerment in village tourism development, which shows that structured and sustainable empowerment programs consistently contribute to improving destination management capacity by local communities. The involvement of village governments and community groups in designing empowerment programs has been proven to accelerate the process of increasing competence compared to incidental programs. This structured approach allows the community to obtain coaching in stages according to their needs (Harahap, M. P., Hamdani, R., & Munthe, H. M., 2023). Researchers assume that the active involvement of Pokdarwis and village governments in Kampung Bandar also become a connecting factor that strengthens the positive relationship between the level of empowerment and the quality of tourism human resources in this study.

The concept of community-based tourism is also relevant to explain this finding, where the success of its application is largely determined by the extent to which four main aspects, namely

economic, social, cultural, and environmental, are managed in an integrated manner by the community itself. The integration of these four aspects requires the community to have adequate competencies, which in turn can only be achieved through a continuous process of empowerment. Effective Community-based tourism requires regeneration of key actors so that management sustainability does not depend on a handful of individuals (Anarini, D. T. P., Parwati, K. S. M., Hendrajana, I. G. M. R., & Amir, F. L. A., 2024). The researchers assume that the significant relationship found in this study also reflects the regeneration of Tourism actors who are quite good in Kampung Bandar, so that the empowerment process is not only felt by the initial generation of Tourism movers, but also by the new community involved.

The results of this bivariate also strengthen theoretical studies on community empowerment and the creative economy, which states that effective empowerment must be able to increase economic capacity as well as human resource capacity simultaneously. Empowerment that is only oriented to economic aspects without increasing competence tends to be unsustainable and vulnerable to market changes. Conversely, empowerment that touches the competency aspect will produce a longer lasting economic impact because the community is able to innovate independently (Habib, M. A. F., 2021). Researchers assume that the empowerment program in Kampung Bandar has touched both aspects simultaneously, so that the relationship between empowerment and Human Resource Quality in this study becomes stronger and more consistent.

Furthermore, the findings on the strength of this relationship are also in line with research on religious tourism areas which shows that the application of community-based tourism significantly increases the economic capacity as well as the management competence of local communities. The increase in competence occurs because the community is directly involved in the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating tourism programs, not just as passive beneficiaries. This kind of comprehensive engagement creates a sense of responsibility that encourages people to continue to improve their abilities independently (Hidayanti, S., & Fitrianto, A. R., 2022). The researchers assume that a similar pattern of overall involvement is also applied in Kampung Bandar, where the community is not only a technical implementer, but also involved in the deliberation of Tourism Village management, so that the relationship between empowerment and human resource quality becomes significant.

These results are also relevant to studies on online and offline social capital development during the transition period, which show that strengthening community social networks contributes to increasing collective capacity to deal with changes, including changes in the tourism sector. Strong social networks facilitate the dissemination of information and good practices among tourism practitioners, so that increased competence does not only occur in specific individuals, but spreads throughout the community. The dissemination of this kind of knowledge is one of the main mechanisms that explains why community-based empowerment can have a wide impact on the quality of human resources collectively (Baharuddin, T., Sairin, S., Nurmandi, A., Qodir, Z., & Jubba, H., 2022). Researchers assume that this kind of knowledge dissemination mechanism also occurs in



Kampung Bandar through regular interactions between tourism actors in daily activities and village forums.

The significance of the relationship in this study is also in line with the findings that the sustainability of the development of community-based tourist destinations, including those based on local wisdom, is determined by the extent to which the community has social capital in the form of trust and strong values of togetherness. This Social Capital serves as the foundation that allows empowerment programs to be effectively translated into a real increase in competence in the field. Without a strong foundation of trust, empowerment programs risk only stopping at the formality level without a significant impact on the quality of Community Human Resources (Fathy, R., 2019 in Advanced Studies; Putri, L. D., et al., 2025). The researcher assumes that the value of togetherness and mutual assistance that are part of Malay local wisdom in Kampung Bandar are the main foundations that explain the strong relationship between empowerment and Human Resources quality in this study.

In terms of the direction of the relationship, it was found that the proportion of respondents with low empowerment and poor quality of human resources (68.7%) is also quite high, which indicates that the weakness of empowerment is consistently implicated in low community competence. This pattern reinforces the assumption that empowerment is not just a complementary program, but a fundamental prerequisite for the formation of tourism human resources quality at the community level. Inequality in these two categories also confirms that uneven empowerment efforts will have a direct impact on competency inequality among tourism communities. This condition is important to be a concern in the formulation of more inclusive empowerment policies in the future.

Theoretically, this finding reinforces the concept of human capital in tourism, where human resource competence is seen as a form of investment that cannot be separated from the process of social empowerment of the community. Investment in non-physical aspects such as knowledge, skills, and local cultural values has proven to be as important as investment in physical aspects such as destination infrastructure. When these two forms of investment go hand in hand, community-based tourist destinations have a greater chance of developing sustainably (Aji, R. R., & Faniza, V., 2022). The researchers assume that the significant relationship found in this study is empirical evidence that non-physical investment in the form of empowerment based on local wisdom in Kampung Bandar has been quite successfully converted into a real improvement in the quality of tourism human resources.

Overall, the results of this bivariate analysis provide empirical evidence that community empowerment based on local wisdom has a significant and consistent relationship with the quality of tourism human resources in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village. These findings strengthen the theoretical framework on the importance of social capital, human capital, and community-based tourism approaches in the development of community-based tourist destinations. The implication of this finding confirms that the strategy of improving the quality of tourism human resources cannot be separated from efforts to strengthen community empowerment rooted in local wisdom

values. The researchers assume that the long-term success of the development of Kampung Bandar Tourism Village as a destination for Malay culture depends on the consistency of empowerment programs that are inclusive, sustainable, and still rooted in local wisdom, so that competency gaps in community groups that are still lagging behind can be gradually minimized.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research that has been described, it can be concluded that the majority of Tourism actors in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village, Bengkalis regency, Riau province, has a high level of empowerment based on local wisdom in the category of 62.4%, and the level of quality of tourism human resources in the good category, which is 58.8%. The results of bivariate analysis using Chi-Square test showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources ($p=0.001$; $2=14,26$), which indicates that the higher the level of community empowerment based on local wisdom values, the better the quality of tourism human resources produced. Thus, it can be concluded that community empowerment based on local wisdom is proven to contribute significantly to improving the quality of tourism human resources in Kampung Bandar Tourism Village. This finding reinforces the importance of local wisdom values, such as mutual cooperation, togetherness, and the peculiarities of Malay culture, as a strategic foundation in building the capacity of tourism communities in a sustainable manner, not just used as a tourist attraction alone.

Based on these conclusions, the operational implications that can be proposed are the need to design sustainable training programs that systematically integrate local wisdom values into Tourism technical competence improvement materials, institutional strengthening of tourism villages through optimizing the role of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) as a driving force for empowerment, as well as building a pattern of closer collaboration between local governments, academics, and the community to ensure the sustainability of community-based tourism Human Resources Development. However, this study has some limitations that need to be considered in interpreting the results as well as in the development of further research. Therefore, further research is recommended to use longitudinal design and expand the scope of the location and the number of samples in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between community empowerment based on local wisdom and the quality of tourism human resources in various cultural contexts in Indonesia.

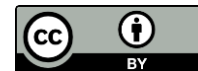
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