



# **The Influence of Infrastructure Development, Local Community Engagement, and Digital Promotion on Economic Welfare in Kudus**

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the determinants of regional economic welfare across eight strategic tourism destinations in Kudus Regency, focusing on the interplay between physical infrastructure, local community participation, and digital promotion. Using a quantitative approach, economic welfare is operationally defined through indicators of household income, MSME profits, job opportunities, and productive asset accumulation. Data were collected via stratified random sampling from 100 integrated respondents, including local residents, MSME players, and tourists, to validate economic impact from both supply and demand perspectives. Multiple linear regression analysis conducted through EViews 8 reveals that infrastructure development ( $X_1$ ) yields no significant impact on economic welfare ( $p=0.190$ ), suggesting a saturation point in physical facilities. Conversely, community participation ( $X_2$ ) shows a significant yet negative correlation ( $p=0.011$ ), indicating a "social cost" where administrative engagement hinders household productivity. Digital promotion ( $X_3$ ) emerges as the most dominant determinant ( $p=0.000$ ), effectively bridging the information gap and minimizing economic leakage. Despite a moderate Adjusted R-squared of 0.1596, the model is statistically robust with a simultaneous significance (F-test) of 0.000191. The study concludes that regional economic acceleration in Kudus depends more on digital literacy and professionalized community management than on physical accessibility alone. Consequently, local authorities are recommended to shift policy focus toward integrating public facilities with creative economy hubs to ensure sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

**Key Words** : Tourism Infrastructure, Community Participation, Digital Promotion, Economic Welfare, Kudus Regency.

## Introduction

The tourism sector is a labor-intensive industry that harmoniously integrates cultural elements, natural resources, and economic activity as the primary engine for sustainable regional development. Conceptually, the tourism phenomenon arises from the synergy and dynamic relationships between visitors, service providers (managers), government authorities, and local communities in an effort to attract and serve these tourists (Mus et al., 2025). The tourism sector in Kudus Regency is a strategic pillar that comprehensively integrates religious, historical, and natural resources (Amibiyah et al., 2022). The diversity of key destinations such as the Kudus Tower, Sunan Muria, the Kretek Museum, the Jenang Museum, Rahtawu, Pijar Park, the Logung Dam, and the Patiayam Site demonstrate the city's rich cultural heritage. Tourism activities at these locations not only attract tourists but also drive the local economy. This can strengthen Kudus's position as a center for religious and historical tourism in Central Java, which requires sustainable management (Ratnaningsih et al., 2015). Optimizing the potential of these eight leading destinations is expected to reduce unemployment rates and improve local living standards (Silvia et al., 2022).

Facts on the ground show that tourism in Kudus Regency has experienced a dramatic increase over the past five years, as evidenced by the crowds at key tourist spots. In 2020, the number of visitors was recorded at around 800,000 people, but this figure continues to climb, reaching 1.6 million people in 2023, as natural destinations like Rahtawu and Pijar Park go viral on social media. This positive trend is predicted to continue until 2026, meaning the need for public facilities and public services will increase (Reski, 2024). This increase in tourist numbers has had a significant impact on the local community, with accommodations in the Colo area always full on weekends, and street vendors around the Kudus Tower and even small and medium enterprises (SMEs) selling jenang (traditional food) experiencing increased daily turnover (Kinanti, 2020). This growth demonstrates that tourism has become a source of hope for local residents to improve their standard of living independently (Huda, 2020). The following is the actual data on tourist visits:

**Table 1. Tourist Visit Data for Kudus Regency**

No.	Year				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1.	867.409	953.844	1.732.989	1.619.897	4.213.465

Data Source: Central Java Youth, Sports, and Tourism Office 2023 - <https://surli.cc/qbtgyb>

The fundamental problem that is currently a major obstacle is the emergence of infrastructure disparities between destinations, where road access and supporting facilities in areas such as Rahtawu and Patiayam often lag far behind those in the Menara Kudus area (Alifahrizal et al., 2025). This problem leads to a concentration of tourists in a single central point, preventing the distribution of economic impacts from reaching remote tourist villages evenly (Sudiarta & Suwena, 2020). Road damage and a lack of information signs in the Logung Dam area are real physical obstacles that reduce tourist interest in repeat visits. As a solution, revitalizing functional infrastructure is essential to facilitate the mobility of goods and services around tourist attractions (Handayani et al., 2019). This smooth physical access will ultimately serve as the main entry point for broader community involvement, because without adequate

accessibility support, any economic potential managed by local residents will never be able to reach a wider market (Ananta & Lestar, 2026).

These limited physical facilities indirectly trigger the issue of low local community involvement, ultimately leaving residents as mere spectators amidst the massive influx of tourism (Risandewi, 2017). The main problem lies in the limited space for community participation in strategic policy-making, so that financial benefits are often enjoyed only by a handful of large capital owners (Masfuah & Kurniawan, 2021). The issue of weak empowerment through Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) also results in communities losing motivation to maintain the hospitality and environmental sustainability of destinations (Iqbal, 2022). The solution to overcome this impasse is the implementation of a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) model that gives full authority to residents to independently manage their village's potential (Setiawan, 2022). Once communities have actively engaged collectively in the tourism ecosystem, the next urgent step is to equip them with enhanced digital promotion so that their creative products can be recognized by a wider audience (Atma, 2016).

The need for community independence is closely related to the issue of weak digital promotion, which is currently still carried out conventionally by tourism operators at the village level (Riestiana & Sudrajat, 2025). Most MSMEs in locations such as the Kretek Museum or Pijar Park are still trapped in traditional word-of-mouth marketing, which has very limited reach (Reski, 2024). This problem often causes Kudus's destination competitiveness to be less competitive than neighboring areas that have been more adaptive in utilizing social media to build a tourism image (WIDJIANTO, 2019). Strengthening integrated digital literacy is a solution so that residents can produce creative visual content that can consistently attract millennial tourists. Success in building this digital identity will automatically bridge the creation of new and much more stable income opportunities for local households in tourist areas (Esti & Adi, 2025).

These various obstacles, ranging from infrastructure and social participation to digital strategies, can ultimately lead to a major problem, namely improving the community's economic well-being, which has yet to reach the ideal level (Ananta & Lestar, 2026). The problem of income inequality indicates that tourism in Kudus has not yet fully provided a concrete solution to improving the standard of living for all levels of society. The issue of local inflation in certain religious tourism areas sometimes even burdens residents not directly involved in the tourism economic chain (Botutonuo et al., 2023). This phenomenon can be addressed by creating an inclusive economic ecosystem that guarantees access to capital and markets for every citizen through tourism activities (Pajriah et al., 2025). With increased collective well-being, the community will have strong financial independence to support the sustainability of the regional tourism sector (Dian & Agustina, 2023).

This research offers an integrative approach that focuses not only on physical development aspects such as improving accessibility and tourism facilities, but also on strengthening the digital literacy of local communities (Ananta & Lestar, 2026). The underlying premise is that development success should not be measured solely by its physical splendor, but also by the extent to which the infrastructure is able to function optimally in supporting the community's creative business ecosystem (Risandewi, 2017). Through this framework, the quality of available facilities can be critically evaluated while linking it to the level of community readiness in managing existing tourism assets (Saputra et al., 2023). This strategy ultimately aims to transform the tourism sector so that it truly becomes the primary driving force for local community financial independence (Sidiq & Resnawaty, n.d.). By mapping the

specific needs of each unique destination in Kudus, every policy taken is expected to be more precise and targeted (Kurniawan & Gitayuda, 2023). The link between maximizing regional potential and adopting modern technology is believed to be able to create a strong and sustainable people's economic system in the future (Atma, 2016).

Recognizing the complexity of the issues mentioned above, a crucial research gap exists: the scarcity of studies integrating physical infrastructure variables with digital literacy within a single framework of economic empowerment in Kudus Regency. The novelty of this paper lies in its effort to synergize technical, sociological, and technological approaches to comprehensively analyze community welfare in eight destinations with distinct characteristics (Esti & Adi, 2025). Specifically, this study addresses the gap in how the power of digital promotion can offset infrastructure weaknesses in outlying areas by creating a strong destination image (Astutie, 2018). This distinguishes this research from previous studies, which tended to focus on only one independent variable or one tourist location.

Overall, the discussion of eight tourist attractions in Kudus, from Menara to Patiayam, demonstrates a very close relationship between physical facilities, the role of residents, and digital marketing. The integration of local residents, MSMEs, and tourists provides an appropriate data source for measuring resident welfare, as their perceptions of spending and service quality directly reflect capital turnover and long-term profit prospects for the local community (Arimbawa et al., 2024). The balance of integration across these eight points will determine whether Kudus can become a classy tourist destination that truly impacts the economy of its people. This research aims to provide a strategic roadmap for policymakers to synergize these three aspects to increase regional income (Febriansyah, 2022). Thus, tourism in Kudus Regency will not only become a cultural asset but will truly transform into an economic backbone that improves the welfare of its people (Apriliani et al., 2024).

## Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with a questionnaire distribution method to obtain primary data from respondents in eight tourist attractions in Kudus Regency. According to (Sugiyono, 2013) quantitative research methods can be interpreted as research methods used to research a specific population or sample, data collection using research instruments, quantitative/statistical data analysis with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses. This study focuses on testing the influence of infrastructure, community involvement, and digital promotion as independent variables and local economic welfare as the dependent variable. The Economic Welfare variable is operationally defined through four main indicators: increased household income, growth in MSME profits, expansion of employment opportunities, and accumulation of productive assets of the local community. The sampling technique used is Non-Probability Sampling with a Purposive Sampling approach (Mahfudhotin, n.d.). The number of respondents was set at 100 people, consisting of elements of the local community, MSME actors and tourists who have visited one of the tourist attractions in Kudus Regency. The integration of respondent groups consisting of local residents, MSMEs, and tourists aims to validate the economic impact from the demand side, where tourist spending patterns serve as an objective parameter in measuring the prospects for resident welfare and the sustainability of local businesses. The data analysis method used is a multiple interpretation technique that will be operated using Eviews 8 (Wasilaputri, 2016). Statistical tests such as validity, reliability, and classical assumption tests, including

multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, autocorrelation, normality, and multiple regression, will be conducted to ensure model validity. The regression equation is formulated as follows:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + e$$

Information:

Y = Community Economic Welfare

$\alpha$  = Constant

$\beta_1$ - $\beta_4$  = Regression Coefficient

X1 = Infrastructure Development

X2 = Local Community Involvement

X3 = Digital Promotion

e = error

## Results

### Validity Test

**Table 2. Validity Test Results**

a. Validity Test of Infrastructure Development Variables

Question	Correlation Probability	R Table	Desc.
X1.1	0.743	0.196	Valid
X1.2	0.658	0.196	Valid
X1.3	0.669	0.196	Valid
X1.4	0.775	0.196	Valid
X1.5	0.763	0.196	Valid
X1.6	0.689	0.196	Valid
X1.7	0.729	0.196	Valid
X1.8	0.805	0.196	Valid
X1.9	0.744	0.196	Valid

*Source: Data processed with Eviews 8*

b. Validity Test of Local Community Involvement Variables

Question	Correlation Probability	R Table	Desc.
X2.1	0.702	0.196	Valid
X2.2	0.611	0.196	Valid
X2.3	0.658	0.196	Valid
X2.4	0.618	0.196	Valid
X2.5	0.584	0.196	Valid
X2.6	0.708	0.196	Valid
X2.7	0.489	0.196	Valid
X2.8	0.622	0.196	Valid
X2.9	0.555	0.196	Valid

*Source: Data processed with Eviews 8*

c. Validity Test of Digital Promotion Variables

Question	Correlation Probability	R Table	Desc.
X3.1	0.724	0.196	Valid
X3.2	0.643	0.196	Valid
X3.3	0.623	0.196	Valid
X3.4	0.611	0.196	Valid
X3.5	0.691	0.196	Valid
X3.6	0.397	0.196	Valid
X3.7	0.680	0.196	Valid
X3.8	0.566	0.196	Valid
X3.9	0.626	0.196	Valid

Source: Data processed with Eviews 8

d. Validity Test of Community Economic Variables

Question	Correlation Probability	R Table	Desc.
X3.1	0.645	0.196	Valid
X3.2	0.515	0.196	Valid
X3.3	0.575	0.196	Valid
X3.4	0.639	0.196	Valid
X3.5	0.616	0.196	Valid
X3.6	0.590	0.196	Valid
X3.7	0.581	0.196	Valid
X3.8	0.578	0.196	Valid
X3.9	0.625	0.196	Valid

Source: Data processed with Eviews 8

**Reliability Test**

**Table 3. Reliability Test Results**

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Desc.
X1	0.891	Reliable
X2	0.807	Reliable
X3	0.799	Reliable
Y	0.774	Reliable

Source: Data processed with Eviews 8

The reliability test for each variable in the questionnaire was above the 0.60 significance level. The data below shows that the selected reliability coefficient value exceeds the 0.60 significance level, at 0.94. Therefore, the instrument in this study is considered reliable.

## Classical Assumption Test

### a. Multicollinearity Test

Table 4. Classical Assumption Test Results

Variable	Coefficient Variance	Uncentered VIF	Centered VIF
INFRASTRUKTUR	0.030442	2705.381	1.018596
MASYARAKAT	0.046878	4155.753	1.492311
PROMOSI_DIGITAL	0.015603	1386.266	1.497371
C	91.95686	4902.614	NA

Source: Data processed with Eviews 8

Based on the data table produced in the multicollinearity test, it shows that there are no symptoms because the results for each variable have a VIF value of 1.

### b. Heteroscedastisity Test

Table 5. Heteroscedastisity Test Result

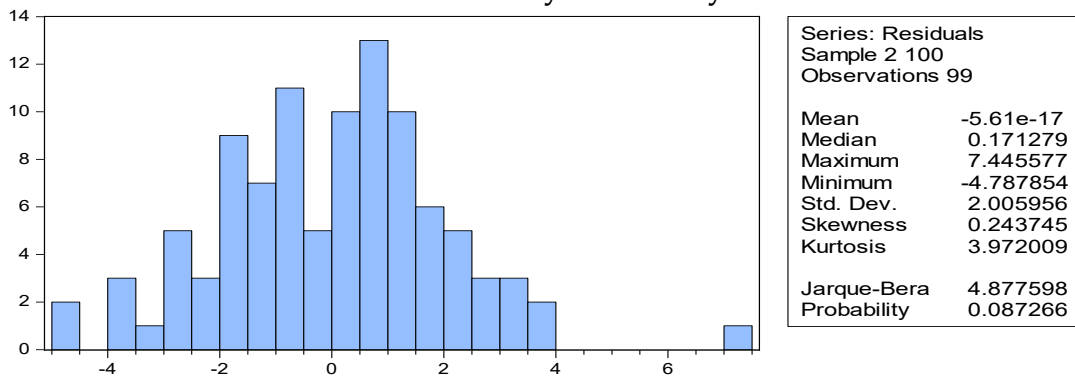
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-25.22822	24.25637	-1.040066	0.3009
INFRASTRUKTUR	0.264224	0.441338	0.598688	0.5508
MASYARAKAT	0.258036	0.547669	0.471153	0.6386
PROMOSI_DIGITAL	0.140273	0.315966	0.443949	0.6581
R-squared	0.015491	Mean dependent var		1.800643
Adjusted R-squared	-0.015275	S.D. dependent var		3.438112
S.E. of regression	3.464271	Akaike info criterion		5.362060
Sum squared resid	1152.113	Schwarz criterion		5.466267
Log likelihood	-264.1030	Hannan-Quinn criter.		5.404234
F-statistic	0.503497	Durbin-Watson stat		1.970917
Prob(F-statistic)	0.680773			

Source: Data processed with Eviews 8

Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity test, the probability value of X1 is 0.55, X2 is 0.63, and X3 is 0.63, where each variable has a value greater than 0.05. Thus, there is no heteroscedasticity in the regression model.

## Normality Test

Table 6. Normality Test Result



Source: Data processed with Eviews 8

The test results above show that the probability value is  $0.08 > 0.05$ . The research results can be presented as having normally distributed residuals.

### Multiple Linear Regression Equation Test

**Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression Equation Test Result**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
INFRASTRUKTUR	-0.230271	0.174477	-1.319778	0.1900
MASYARAKAT	-0.558258	0.216513	-2.578400	0.0114
PROMOSI_DIGITAL	0.570256	0.124913	4.565238	0.0000
C	49.41336	9.589414	5.152907	0.0000
R-squared	0.185082	Mean dependent var		40.52000
Adjusted R-squared	0.159616	S.D. dependent var		1.493961
S.E. of regression	1.369551	Akaike info criterion		3.506021
Sum squared resid	180.0643	Schwarz criterion		3.610228
Log likelihood	-171.3010	Hannan-Quinn criter.		3.548195
F-statistic	7.267747	Durbin-Watson stat		2.195517
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000191			

*Source: Data processed with Eviews 8*

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$$

$$Y = 49,41 + 0,19 + 0,01 + 0.00$$

The explanation is as follows:

- a.  $\alpha = 49.41$ , meaning that the variables Infrastructure, Community Engagement, and Digital Promotion have a constant value or zero, then the value of Economic Welfare Improvement is 49.41. A significance value of 0.0000 indicates that this constant is very significant in the model.
- b. The Infrastructure Development variable has a negative value of -0.230 with a Standard Error of 0.174. The t-statistic value is -1.319 with a p-value of 0.1900. This means that for every 1 increase in the Infrastructure variable, the Economic Welfare Improvement variable is predicted to decrease by 0.23. However, based on the Prob. value of  $0.1900 > 0.05$ , this variable is declared to have no significant partial influence on economic welfare at the research location.
- c. The Community Involvement variable has a negative value of -0.558 with a Standard Error of 0.216. The t-statistic value is -2.578 with a p-value of 0.0114. This means that for every 1 increase in the Community Involvement variable, the Economic Welfare Improvement variable will experience a decrease of 0.55 units. Based on the Prob. value of  $0.0114 < 0.05$ , this variable is declared to have a significant negative effect. This indicates that the current community participation has not been managed productively and therefore has not been able to provide positive economic added value.
- d. The Digital Promotion variable has a positive value of 0.57 with a Standard Error of 0.124. The t-statistic value is 4.565 with a p-value of 0.0000. This means that for every 1 increase in Digital Promotion activity, the Economic Welfare Improvement variable

will increase by 0.57. Based on the Prob. value of 0.0000 < 0.05, this variable is declared to have a very significant effect. Digital promotion is the most dominant and determinant factor in driving the economic growth of the community in the Kudus Regency tourism area.

## T Test

**Table 8. T Test Result**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
INFRASTRUKTUR	-0.230271	0.174477	-1.319778	0.1900
MASYARAKAT	-0.558258	0.216513	-2.578400	0.0114
PROMOSI_DIGITAL	0.570256	0.124913	4.565238	0.0000
C	49.41336	9.589414	5.152907	0.0000

*Source: Data processed with Eviews 8*

- Variable X1 has a coefficient value of -0.230271 with a standard error of 0.174477. The t-statistic value is -1.319778 with a probability (significance) value of 0.1900. Since the value of 0.1900 > 0.05, variable X1 is declared to have no significant effect on economic growth.
- Variable X2 has a coefficient value of -0.558258 with a standard error of 0.216513. The t-statistic value is -2.578400 with a probability (significance) value of 0.0114. Since the value of 0.0114 < 0.05, the variable X2 has a significant negative effect.
- Variable X3 has a coefficient value of 0.570256 with a standard error of 0.124913. The t-statistic value is 4.565238 with a probability (significance) value of 0.0000. Because the value of 0.0000 < 0.05, the variable X3 has a very significant and positive effect.

## F Test

**Table 9. F Test Result**

R-squared	0.185082
Adjusted R-squared	0.159616
S.E. of regression	1.369551
Sum squared resid	180.0643
Log likelihood	-171.3010
F-statistic	7.267747
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000191

*Source: Data processed with Eviews 8*

If the Prob. (F-statistic) value is 0.00 (< 0.05), it can be interpreted that Variable (X) has a significant simultaneous (simultaneous) effect on Variable (Y).

## Test of the Coefficient Determination

**Table 10. Coefficient Determination Test Result**

R-squared	0.185082
Adjusted R-squared	0.159616
S.E. of regression	1.369551
Sum squared resid	180.0643
Log likelihood	-171.3010
F-statistic	7.267747
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000191

*Source: Data processed with Eviews 8*

The Adjusted R-squared value of 0.1596 indicates that 15.96% of the variation in Economic Growth can be explained by the variables of infrastructure development, community involvement, and digital promotion. This value has corrected for the number of independent variables and shows a valid figure. This is supported by the Prob(F-statistic) value of  $0.000191 < 0.05$ , which proves that the model has significant explanatory power together.

## Discussion

### The Impact of Infrastructure Development on Economic Growth

Based on the results of data processing using EViews 8, it was found that the Infrastructure Development variable (X1) has a coefficient value of -0.230 with a significance level (Prob.) of 0.1900. Because the value of  $0.1900 > 0.05$ , the first hypothesis is rejected. Infrastructure does not have a significant effect on economic welfare in eight Kudus tourist destinations. The infrastructure development aspect does not have a real impact on the escalation of the economic welfare of residents around the eight tourist attractions in Kudus Regency. This phenomenon provides an illustration that the massive physical development projects carried out by the relevant authorities have not been successfully transformed into instruments for increasing income or prosperity for local communities in the tourist destination areas.

This negative impact can be explained through the concept of the Social Cost of Participation. In many tourist villages in Kudus, community involvement is often administrative or voluntary, taking up residents' productive time without clear financial compensation. As a result, time that should be used to earn income in other sectors is diverted to tourism activities that do not generate direct profits, thus reducing overall household income (SETYORINI, 2004). The provision of tourism infrastructure that is disconnected from the people's economic ecosystem will only end up as a transit route without being able to create a multiplier effect on the income of the surrounding community

The results of this study align with previous findings by (Susanti & Kurniati, 2025), which found that the existence of transportation infrastructure does not instantly stimulate economic expansion if it is not supported by the readiness of a superior local commodity sector. Within the tourism industry (Yaya mulyana A. Aziz, Loso Judijanto, Anandhiya Intan Prabandari, Tri Wahyu Yuliani, Mansuur S. Pahude, 2026) also reinforces this assumption by stating that the availability of adequate physical infrastructure in one location, but isolation from local distribution networks in another, actually risks triggering economic inequality. This is because economic added value tends to accumulate only among large corporations in urban areas, rather than reaching the community in remote tourist villages.

As a mitigation measure for the low influence of this infrastructure, a new paradigm is needed through the implementation of a "Productive Economic Infrastructure" strategy. The Kudus Regency authorities are recommended to shift from simply paving roads to developing rest area facilities that are systematically integrated with craft and culinary centers of the local population. Furthermore, providing digital infrastructure in the form of a consistent internet connection is essential to facilitate cashless transactions at all tourist destinations. In line with (Alen, 2025) perspective, improving living standards through tourism will only be realized if physical development is accompanied by the provision of commercial space for local residents,

enabling every tourist visit to be converted into inclusive economic activity at all levels of society.

### **The Effect of Local Community Involvement on Economic Improvement**

Based on the results of data analysis using EViews 8, the Community Involvement variable (X2) recorded a negative coefficient of -0.558 and a significance level of 0.0114 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This means that statistically, X<sub>2</sub> has a significant but inverse effect on economic welfare. This phenomenon indicates that every increase in community social participation in Kudus tourist destinations is currently followed by a decrease in real economic welfare indicators at the household level.

This negative impact can be explained through the concept of the Social Cost of Participation. In many tourist villages in Kudus, community involvement is often administrative or voluntary, taking up residents' productive time without clear financial compensation. As a result, time that could be used to earn income in other sectors is diverted to tourism activities that do not generate direct profits, thus reducing overall household income (Tini et al., 2025).

These negative results support the theory of (Lin, 2025) which states that top-down or administrative community participation without a business orientation tends to harm the local economy. Previous research by (Milman et al., 2017) also showed that in destinations with weak management, community involvement often serves only as a legitimacy tool without providing adequate financial feedback. This finding provides an important contribution to the tourism literature in Kudus, which states that social participation without profitability management will only widen the gap in economic well-being. Given that this study sample combines local residents and tourists, a gap in expectations is evident. Tourists view community involvement as part of the service, but for residents, this has not been translated into benefits for MSMEs or stable employment opportunities. The lack of professional management in community participation leads to 'social fatigue' which actually hinders the growth of local residents' economic assets in the eight destinations studied (Tini et al., 2025).

These findings call for a restructuring of the community's involvement in Kudus tourism. Participation should no longer be merely tokenism, but rather should be geared toward economic incentives. Local governments need to design interventions that ensure community involvement in tourism destinations leads to new job creation and increased MSME revenue, so that the relationship between the community and the economy becomes positive and sustainable (Ngazizah, 2023).

### **The Influence of Digital Promotion on Economic Growth**

Based on the data processing results, the Digital Promotion variable (X3) was proven to be the most dominant variable with a positive coefficient of 0.570 and an absolute probability value of 0.0000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). These results confirm that digital promotion is the main driver of improving economic welfare in Kudus Regency. This very high level of significance indicates that the use of information technology has a much stronger impact than physical development or social involvement of the local community.

The influence of digital promotion on economic progress operates through mechanisms of expanding market access and the effectiveness of instant information distribution. In the contemporary era, digital marketing facilitates micro-economic actors in the Kretek Museum or Logung Dam areas to reach cross-regional and even inter-provincial

markets through visual content on social media. This effectively reduces the barriers of space and time, resulting in a significant increase in the number of visits. The massive influx of tourists driven by viral content automatically triggers high demand for local products, which ultimately accelerates the daily profits of small traders and tourism support service providers in the Kudus area (Astinadia, 2025).

The contribution of eight tourist attractions in Kudus to regional revenue has been increasingly optimized thanks to the role of digital technology, which can expose the uniqueness of each destination to a wider audience. The use of hashtags and visual documentation on platforms like Instagram and TikTok has made educational locations like the Jenang Museum or the exotic Rahtawu area widely known without the burden of high conventional advertising costs. This phenomenon opens up opportunities for lower-middle-class communities to market their products independently, thus creating an inclusive digital economic ecosystem. Within this system, financial benefits from the tourism sector can be distributed more proportionally to small business owners around tourist areas (Julieta & Siagian, 2025).

This research finding is supported by findings (Purnama & Hargyatni, 2026) which suggest that social media is a determining instrument in directing consumer behavior and intervening in purchasing decisions in the tourism sector. Furthermore, in line with modern marketing theory, the digitalization of information can drastically reduce promotional operational costs while simultaneously increasing sales conversion rates. This fact proves that for Kudus Regency, digital promotion is not just following trends, but has become the most effective non-physical infrastructure requirement in boosting the economic status of the community in the current creative economy era.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that economic well-being in eight tourist destinations in Kudus Regency is significantly influenced by digital promotion and community participation, but not by infrastructure development. Statistical findings indicate that digital promotion is the most dominant determinant factor capable of converting tourist visit intentions into real profits for local MSMEs. Conversely, physical infrastructure has no significant impact, indicating a saturation of facilities that are not yet integrated with the creative economy value chain of residents. Interestingly, community involvement has a significant negative effect, reflecting the burden of social costs and participation inefficiencies that actually erode household income. Although this model has an Adjusted R-squared value of 15.96%, the highly significant F-test result (0.000191) proves that the model remains scientifically valid in explaining the dynamics of the regional tourism economy. The use of an integrative sample that includes tourists has proven effective in validating expenditure flows as an objective parameter for measuring residents' assets and employment opportunities. Therefore, the Kudus Regency Government needs to reform its community participation policy to be more oriented towards financial incentives rather than merely administrative involvement. Overall, strengthening the digital ecosystem and synchronizing public facilities with residents' economic centers are key to minimizing economic leakage in the future.

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