

RECOGNITION OF KAMPUNG TEMATIK ELO PUKEK, PURUS, THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Submitted: June, 17. 2025 Review: June, 18. 2025 Accepted: June, 25. 2025 Published: June, 30. 2025 Keywords: Kampung Tematik, maelo pukek, Social Media, Community Development, Recognition, Participatory Communication	<i>Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek, located along the coastal area of Padang, West Sumatra, is a culturally significant fishing village recognized for its traditional maelo pukek fishing method. Despite official recognition and its potential as a tourism and educational destination, the area remains under-promoted, particularly on digital platforms. This study investigates how social media can be utilized as a strategic communication tool to enhance the recognition and visibility of Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek. The objectives of this research are twofold: (1) to explore effective approaches for promoting the village through social media, and (2) to identify the socio-economic and cultural benefits of increased recognition for the local community. A qualitative research method was employed, involving in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation during the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) community service program. The findings highlight a gap in local digital literacy and community initiative, which limits consistent and impactful content creation on platforms such as Instagram. However, the research also demonstrates that even minimal, well-executed online promotion can positively influence tourism interest and community engagement. Increased recognition through social media has the potential to strengthen local identity, boost economic activity, and preserve traditional knowledge. This study concludes that community-based digital participation is essential for sustainable recognition and development of Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek.</i>
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1. INTRODUCTION

The recognition and development of local communities through tourism and cultural preservation have become increasingly important in today's globalized and digital society. Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek, located in Purus, Padang, West Sumatra, was officially inaugurated as a thematic fishing village by the Indonesian Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries on August 21, 2022. This village, known for its traditional fishing method *maelo pukek*, holds significant cultural and ecological value. However, despite this official recognition, the village has not yet achieved sufficient visibility, especially on digital platforms such as social media, which are essential for modern tourism promotion.

Tourism development in coastal communities is often limited by poor digital literacy, lack of promotional strategy, and insufficient engagement with participatory communication practices. While some local initiatives exist, many are sporadic and not systematically integrated into sustainable tourism development plans. This situation reflects a broader issue in Indonesia where traditional communities struggle to maintain cultural relevance and economic viability in the face of modernization (Minazzi, 2017).

Participatory communication theory, particularly the ideas advanced by Paulo Freire, emphasizes the empowerment of local communities through dialogue, equal participation, and collective action (Freire, 2020)

(Musakophas & Polnigongit, 2017). In this context, recognition is not merely a symbolic act but a transformative process that allows communities to control their narratives and development trajectories. It also ties into broader goals of community empowerment, preservation of cultural identity, and local economic growth through sustainable tourism (Jackline, 2017).

Previous studies have explored how social media can promote tourism (Priskila, 2019) and how participatory communication can enhance development outcomes. However, few have focused specifically on how these tools can be used in synergy to empower traditional fishing communities like Elo Pukek. This study aims to fill that gap by examining how social media can serve as a participatory tool to promote Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek and generate both recognition and development benefits.

The objectives of this research are to (1) propose effective strategies for promoting Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek via social media, and (2) analyse the socio-cultural and economic benefits of increased recognition. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach, combining fieldwork, digital communication, and community participation to co-create recognition for a traditional village. The expected outcomes include increased awareness, community pride, and policy insights for local tourism development.

In conclusion, the issue at the heart of this paper is the under-recognition of Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek despite its cultural uniqueness. By using social media within a participatory communication framework, this study explores a practical and replicable method for empowering local communities to achieve sustainable development and cultural resilience.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to explore how Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek can gain recognition through the strategic use of social media. The research was conducted as part of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) community service program, where the author was directly involved in field activities in Kampung Elo Pukek, Padang, from August to December 2022.

To gather data, the research utilized three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with key informants including community leaders, fishermen, members of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), and staff from the Purus sub-district office. These conversations provided insights into the community's understanding of social media and their perception of recognition and development.

Observation focused on the daily activities of the villagers, particularly related to the traditional *maelo pukek* fishing practice and community interactions with visitors. Documentation included photographs, event notes, and content from the official Instagram account created during the MBKM program, which was analysed to assess content quality and audience engagement.

Data were analysed thematically, with recurring patterns coded and interpreted in relation to the theoretical frameworks for participatory communication and tourism communication. This approach allowed for a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities in promoting Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek through community-driven digital strategies.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Community Engagement and Social Media Usage

The research findings indicate that digital engagement among community members in Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek is still relatively low. While the village received formal recognition in 2022 from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, this recognition has not translated into sustained public awareness or online visibility. Interviews with informants revealed that most of the social media activities were initiated during the MBKM (Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka) community service program. After the students' departure, the Pokdarwis Purus Instagram account became dormant, with minimal updates and low engagement from followers.

This is consistent with the observation that the lack of digital literacy among older generations and the absence of youth involvement (due to urban migration) are major barriers to effective social media utilization. Most if the remaining community members are unfamiliar with creating compelling content, using relevant hashtags, or writing engaging captions that could attract a wider audience. Even though

some villagers occasionally post content on personal Facebook accounts, these posts lack coordination and consistency.

This situation stands in contrast to studies such as Priskila (Priskila, 2019), which highlight the role of digital presence in shaping destination attractiveness. Priskila argues that social media, when managed properly, can act as a powerful promotional tool for rural or underrecognized tourist destinations in Indonesia. In comparison, the findings in Elo Pukek show that tools alone are not enough, there must be sustained local capacity and motivation to use them effectively.

3.2. The Role of Recognition and Its Benefits

The fieldwork showed that formal recognition has symbolic and practical importance. Symbolically, it validates the identity of Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek as a cultural and educational tourism site. Practically, it opens doors for funding, collaboration, and partnerships. However, the recognition granted by authorities and institutions needs to be amplified and sustained through continuous promotion. Without it, the recognition risks becoming static or forgotten.

The study identified three main areas where recognition via social media could have tangible benefits:

1. Economic: Increased tourism leads to higher demand for local goods and services, including seafood, crafts, guided tours, and food stalls. According to one informant, even a modest increase in visitor numbers could boost fishermen's income and support family livelihoods.
2. Sociocultural: Recognition fosters a sense of pride and community identity. The traditional *maelo pukek* fishing technique, once viewed as outdated, is now seen as a cultural asset worth preserving and showcasing.
3. Educational: The community could position itself as an informal learning destination, particularly for students, tourists, and researchers interested in maritime culture and sustainable fishing methods.

These findings reinforce the work of Minazzi (Minazzi, 2017), who noted that digital content shared through platforms like Instagram and YouTube often plays a crucial role in decision-making processes for tourists. However, the Elo Pukek case introduces a new dimension by illustrating community-based recognition where promotion is not only top-down but grassroots-driven, involving local storytellers and visual documentation from within.

3.3. Participatory Communication in Practice

Using Paulo Freire's theory of participatory communication (Freire, 2020), this research interprets the recognition effort as a two-way communication process that involves community members as both senders and receivers of messages. When villagers document their own culture through photos, videos and narratives, they become agents of their own development.

This aligns with Jackline (Jackline, 2017), who argued that participatory communication fosters accountability and ownership, particularly in local development programs. By giving the community control over their digital representation, recognition becomes a form of empowerment, not just external validation.

However, the findings also showed that true participatory communication is not yet fully realized in Elo Pukek. The initiatives started during the MBKM program were not continued by the local Pokdarwis team due to internal limitations, such as lack of time, technical skills or internet access. This gap highlights the need for capacity-building and media training, ideally conducted in collaboration with universities or NGOs.

3.4. Comparative Insight with Other Regions

Comparing this study with other rural tourism cases reveals notable differences. For instance, in the Lok Baintan Floating Market of South Kalimantan (Arisanty et al., 2017), women traders actively use social media to document and promote their activities, resulting in a robust tourism economy centered around their floating market tradition. In contrast, Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek lacks such social media-savvy champions within the community.

Similarly, Hulu (Hulu et al., 2019) in their study of Parangtritis Beach in Yogyakarta found that structured collaboration between local government and communities plays a crucial role in tourism

success. At Elo Pukek, while formal recognition has been granted, the absence of ongoing institutional support limits long-term development.

This paper contributes a unique perspective by demonstrating that recognition alone is insufficient without continuous, community-led digital engagement. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of social media strategy with participatory communication, applied to a traditional fishing village undergoing identity transformation.

3.5. Challenges, Limitations, and Future Directions

Several challenges emerged during the research:

- Human resources: Youth migration has left a gap in the tech-savvy population
- Knowledge gaps: Limited understanding of social media strategies among current residents
- Infrastructure: Internet access is present but underused or not prioritized for promotion
- Motivation: Some community members feel that promotion is not their responsibility, expecting outsiders to take the lead

To overcome these challenges, this study recommends:

- Developing a digital content calendar managed by the Pokdarwis team with assistance from university interns
- Conducting training sessions on mobile photography, storytelling, and social media algorithms
- Partnering with local tourism offices to establish a co-managed promotion strategy
- Encouraging returning youth or alumni from the area to support the community digitally, even from afar

Table I.
Key Differences Between Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek and Similar Case Studies

Feature	Kampung Elo Pukek (Padang)	Lok Baintan Floating Market (South Kalimantan)	Parangtratis Beach (Yogyakarta)
Main attraction	Maelo pukek traditional fishing	Floating market with women-led boat trade	Natural and cultural tourism (beaches, tombs)
Use of social media	Irregular, low capacity	Active, community-managed	Coordinated, supported by local government
Community digital literacy	Low (especially elderly residents)	Moderate to high	Moderate
Institutional support	Recognition, but minimal follow-up	Supported by tourism and education programs	Structured government-community partnership
Community participation in tourism	Emerging, informal	Integrated	Institutionalized

4. CONCLUSIONS

This research set out to investigate how Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek, as a culturally and economically significant fishing village, could harness the potential of social media to strengthen its recognition and promote sustainable development. Through a qualitative approach involving observation, interviews, and document analysis, the study addressed two main objectives: to propose strategies for digital promotion and to evaluate the benefits of increased visibility through online platforms.

The study concludes that the village's recognition, while officially granted, must be continually reinforced through locally driven digital communication. Social media is not merely a tool external visibility but a medium of community empowerment and cultural preservation. The success of such an approach depends on active participation, intergenerational collaboration, and the development of a digital storytelling culture within the community.

The use of participatory communication theory highlighted the importance of positioning local residents not just as beneficiaries but as co-creators of their village's public image. This reinforces the idea that recognition is

not a one-time achievement, but a continuous process embedded in everyday practices of representation and narrative-building.

Suggestions

Based in the findings and limitations encountered, the following recommendations are offered for future application and research:

1. Community-Based Media Literacy Programs: Develop tailored workshops and digital training for residents, especially youth and local tourism committees (e.g. Pokdarwis), to manage social media more effectively.
2. Institutional Collaboration: Establish formal partnerships between Kampung Elo Pukek, universities, and local tourism agencies to ensure sustained support and content creation.
3. Longitudinal Research: Future studies should adopt a longitudinal approach to measure the impact of social media recognition on tourism growth, community income, and cultural preservation over time.
4. Broader Comparative Studies: Expanding research to include similar coastal villages across Indonesia may uncover scalable models for community-based digital promotion and recognition.
5. Technology Inclusion Initiatives: Introduce affordable tools and infrastructure (e.g. shared devices, internet packages, mobile editing apps) to reduce the digital divide among older residents and informal workers.

In closing, this study emphasizes that in the digital age, recognition must go beyond symbolic validation and be enacted through participatory, narrative-driven communication. The future of Kampung Tematik Elo Pukek depends not only on its cultural richness but also on its ability to engage, represent and promote itself in an ever-connected world.

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