



Strengthening Workforce Sustainability for Community-Based Coffee Tourism Development in Bali

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ABSTRACT

Community-based coffee tourism has emerged as an innovative approach to promoting sustainable rural development by integrating agricultural heritage, local culture, and tourism experiences. In Bali, coffee tourism provides significant opportunities to diversify rural livelihoods, preserve traditional farming practices, and strengthen community participation. However, the long-term sustainability of this sector depends largely on the resilience and capacity of its workforce. This study examines the key factors influencing workforce sustainability in community-based coffee tourism development in Bali. Employing a qualitative literature review approach, the study synthesizes recent scholarly publications on coffee tourism, agritourism, community-based tourism, workforce sustainability, human resource development, and tourism governance published between 2020 and 2026. The collected literature was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify three interconnected dimensions of workforce sustainability: competency development and human resource capacity, governance coordination and institutional integration, and community empowerment with inclusive development. The findings indicate that workforce sustainability extends beyond technical skill development and requires integrated governance systems, continuous learning opportunities, stakeholder collaboration, and participatory community engagement. Coffee farmers increasingly perform multifunctional roles as producers, tour guides, entrepreneurs, and cultural interpreters, requiring diverse competencies in hospitality, digital marketing, communication, and sustainable tourism management. Furthermore, effective institutional coordination among government agencies, customary village institutions, educational organizations, cooperatives, and tourism stakeholders is essential for aligning workforce development with destination planning. Community empowerment, gender inclusion, youth participation, and digital transformation further enhance workforce resilience and create diversified livelihood opportunities. This study proposes an integrated workforce sustainability framework that combines human capital development, collaborative governance, and inclusive community participation to strengthen the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of Bali's community-based coffee tourism sector while supporting broader rural development and sustainable tourism objectives.

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INTRODUCTION

Community-based coffee tourism has emerged as an increasingly important strategy for promoting sustainable rural development, particularly in regions where agriculture, culture, and tourism intersect. In Bali, coffee tourism represents a unique form of tourism diversification that integrates agricultural production, cultural heritage, and community participation into a single tourism experience. While Bali is internationally recognized for its coastal attractions and cultural tourism, its upland rural areas possess significant tourism potential through coffee plantations, traditional farming landscapes, and indigenous knowledge

systems that have been preserved for generations. The development of coffee tourism provides opportunities to strengthen local economies, enhance agricultural value chains, preserve cultural heritage, and support more equitable distribution of tourism benefits among rural communities. Recent studies have emphasized that rural and community-based tourism can improve local competitiveness while simultaneously enhancing community welfare when supported by strong local institutions and sustainable governance frameworks.¹

The growing demand for experiential and authentic tourism has further accelerated the development of coffee tourism worldwide. Contemporary

tourists increasingly seek meaningful experiences that allow them to engage directly with local communities, learn about agricultural practices, and participate in cultural activities rather than merely consuming tourism products passively. Within this context, coffee tourism offers a combination of educational, cultural, and sensory experiences, including plantation visits, coffee harvesting activities, processing demonstrations, cupping sessions, and interactions with local farmers. Such experiences contribute not only to visitor satisfaction but also to the creation of diversified livelihood opportunities for farmers, local guides, homestay operators, cooperatives, women's groups, and

small-scale entrepreneurs. Research on coffee agro-tourism has demonstrated that the integration of tourism and agricultural activities can generate economic multipliers while supporting environmental conservation and cultural preservation in rural destinations.²

The importance of community participation in tourism development has been widely recognized within the community-based tourism (CBT) literature. Community-based tourism seeks to empower local residents as active stakeholders in planning, managing, and benefiting from tourism activities. Sustainable tourism outcomes are more likely to be achieved when local communities possess adequate capacities, access to decision-making processes, and opportunities to participate in tourism governance.³ In coffee tourism destinations, community involvement is particularly critical because tourism experiences are directly linked to local agricultural knowledge, cultural practices, and everyday rural life. Consequently, the quality and sustainability of tourism experiences depend heavily on the capacity and commitment of local human resources.

Despite the substantial opportunities associated with coffee tourism, workforce sustainability remains a significant challenge in many emerging rural tourism destinations. Tourism is a highly labor-intensive sector that relies heavily on the availability of skilled, motivated, and resilient workers. However, tourism employment is frequently characterized by seasonal demand fluctuations, informal employment arrangements, unstable income, limited career progression, and skills mismatches. These challenges have become more visible in the post-pandemic tourism recovery period, during which many destinations experienced labor shortages, declining workforce retention, and difficulties attracting younger generations to tourism-related occupations. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2024), workforce vulnerabilities represent one of the most persistent barriers to tourism resilience and sustainable development, requiring comprehensive

policy interventions that improve job quality, skills development, and workforce retention.⁴

In addition, contemporary tourism development increasingly requires workers to possess multidimensional competencies that extend beyond traditional hospitality skills. The rapid expansion of digital technologies, online marketing platforms, sustainable tourism standards, and environmental management practices has transformed workforce requirements across the tourism sector. Tourism workers are now expected to demonstrate digital literacy, entrepreneurial capabilities, customer relationship management skills, sustainability awareness, and adaptive learning capacities. Recent studies highlight that investments in human resource development and green human resource management practices are essential for improving employee engagement, environmental responsibility, and long-term organizational performance within tourism destinations.⁵

The issue of workforce sustainability is particularly relevant in community-based coffee tourism because local residents simultaneously perform multiple roles as farmers, entrepreneurs, guides, cultural interpreters, and tourism service providers. Emerging evidence from coffee tourism destinations in Indonesia suggests that human resource challenges often include informal labor arrangements, limited professional training opportunities, inadequate institutional support, and weak integration between tourism and agricultural development policies. Such conditions may create workforce precarity that undermines the long-term sustainability of tourism initiatives despite increasing visitor demand.⁶

In Bali, the sustainability of community-based coffee tourism depends substantially on the capacity of local communities to adapt to changing tourism markets while maintaining the authenticity of their agricultural and cultural resources. Nevertheless, workforce development efforts are often constrained by fragmented governance structures, limited coordination among tourism authorities, agricultural agencies, educational institutions, village governments, and private-sector stakeholders. Training

programs frequently operate as isolated interventions rather than components of integrated workforce development systems. Consequently, improvements in technical skills may not necessarily translate into stable employment opportunities, career advancement, or enhanced livelihood security. Similar challenges have been identified in rural tourism destinations in Bali, where workforce competence development remains uneven and often constrained by limited access to education, training, and institutional support mechanisms.

Furthermore, workforce sustainability should be viewed not merely as a matter of skill acquisition but as a broader component of social sustainability. Sustainable tourism requires the creation of decent work conditions, inclusive employment opportunities, social protection mechanisms, and pathways for long-term career development. Social sustainability indicators such as job security, equitable participation, employee well-being, occupational safety, and community empowerment have become increasingly important dimensions of sustainable tourism assessment.⁷ Strengthening these dimensions is particularly important in rural tourism destinations where tourism serves as a critical source of livelihood diversification and community resilience.

Given these challenges and opportunities, strengthening workforce sustainability has become a strategic priority for ensuring the long-term viability of community-based coffee tourism in Bali. Sustainable workforce development requires an integrated approach that combines competency enhancement, institutional strengthening, collaborative governance, social inclusion, and community empowerment. By developing resilient and adaptive human resources, coffee tourism destinations can improve service quality, enhance visitor experiences, generate more equitable economic benefits, and strengthen community resilience against future economic, environmental, and social uncertainties. Therefore, this article examines the key dimensions influencing workforce sustainability and explores strategic approaches to strengthening

human resource capacity within Bali's community-based coffee tourism sector.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a literature review approach to explore strategies for strengthening workforce sustainability in community-based coffee tourism development in Bali. A qualitative literature review is particularly suitable for examining complex socio-economic and institutional phenomena because it enables researchers to synthesize diverse theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and policy insights from previous studies (Snyder, 2019; Xiao & Watson, 2019). In tourism research, literature-based studies have increasingly been utilized to understand sustainable development challenges, community participation, and human resource issues within emerging tourism destinations.⁸

Data were collected through a systematic review of scholarly publications, including peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, policy reports, and institutional documents published between 2020 and 2026. The review focused on six interrelated themes: coffee tourism, agritourism, workforce sustainability, community-based tourism (CBT), human resource development, and tourism governance. Particular attention was given to studies examining labor conditions, workforce resilience, skills development, community empowerment, stakeholder collaboration, and institutional arrangements in rural tourism destinations. Sources were obtained from major academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar using relevant keywords and combinations of search terms related to coffee tourism and sustainable workforce development.

The selection of literature followed three criteria. First, publications had to be directly relevant to tourism workforce development, community-based tourism, or agritourism. Second, studies needed to provide empirical or conceptual insights into human resource capacity, governance structures, or community participation. Third, preference was given to recent studies published between

2020 and 2026 to ensure that the analysis reflected contemporary discussions on tourism sustainability, post-pandemic recovery, digital transformation, and rural development. This approach is consistent with recent recommendations emphasizing the importance of evidence-based literature synthesis for tourism policy and sustainable destination management.^{9,10}

The collected literature was analysed using thematic analysis, a widely recognized qualitative technique for identifying, organizing, and interpreting recurring patterns within textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The analysis involved several stages. First, the selected literature was reviewed and coded to identify concepts related to workforce sustainability and tourism development. Second, similar codes were grouped into broader categories representing common themes across the literature. Third, these categories were synthesized into three interconnected analytical dimensions: (1) workforce competencies, (2) institutional governance, and (3) community empowerment.

The workforce competencies dimension focused on issues such as skills development, training effectiveness, entrepreneurship, hospitality capabilities, and digital literacy. The institutional governance dimension examined stakeholder collaboration, policy coordination, destination management, and the role of government and community organizations in supporting workforce sustainability. The community empowerment dimension explored local participation, social capital, inclusive development, and benefit-sharing mechanisms within coffee tourism initiatives. These dimensions were selected because recent tourism studies have identified them as critical determinants of sustainable and resilient tourism systems.^{11 12 13} The identified themes were interpreted within the context of Bali's community-based coffee tourism sector. The analysis sought to understand how existing workforce challenges are shaped by interactions between human capital, institutional frameworks, and community participation. Through this interpretive process, the study formulated

recommendations for strengthening workforce sustainability and enhancing the long-term resilience of community-based coffee tourism destinations in Bali.

DISCUSSION

Workforce Sustainability Challenges in Community-Based Coffee Tourism

One of the most significant challenges facing community-based coffee tourism is the persistence of workforce vulnerability, which can undermine the long-term sustainability of tourism initiatives and limit their contribution to rural development. Workforce sustainability refers not only to the availability of labor but also to the capacity of tourism workers to maintain stable employment, acquire relevant skills, adapt to changing market conditions, and achieve long-term economic well-being.¹⁴ In many rural tourism destinations, including coffee-producing regions, employment opportunities are highly dependent on fluctuating visitor demand, resulting in seasonal labor patterns and uncertain income streams. Consequently, tourism workers often experience precarious employment conditions characterized by temporary contracts, irregular working hours, limited social protection, and restricted opportunities for career advancement.⁴

The vulnerability of tourism labor has become increasingly evident following the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed structural weaknesses within tourism-dependent communities worldwide. Recent studies indicate that rural tourism workers frequently face challenges related to employment insecurity, inadequate training opportunities, and limited institutional support, all of which reduce workforce resilience during periods of crisis and market disruption.^{12,15} Although tourism in Bali has experienced significant recovery since the pandemic, many community-based tourism enterprises continue to operate on a small scale and remain susceptible to fluctuations in international and domestic travel demand. This dependence on tourism seasonality can discourage younger generations from pursuing careers within coffee tourism, thereby creating long-term workforce sustainability concerns.

Another critical challenge is the predominance of informal employment structures within community-based tourism systems. In many coffee tourism destinations, local residents participate as family workers, part-time guides, small-scale entrepreneurs, or seasonal employees without formal employment arrangements. While such flexibility allows communities to engage in tourism with relatively low barriers to entry, it often limits access to labor protections, professional development opportunities, and income security.¹⁶ Informality may also reduce incentives for workers to invest in specialized tourism skills, thereby constraining service quality and destination competitiveness.

In Bali's coffee tourism sector, workforce sustainability is further complicated by the multifunctional nature of rural livelihoods. Coffee farmers frequently perform multiple roles simultaneously, acting as agricultural producers, tour guides, hosts, storytellers, entrepreneurs, and cultural ambassadors. This multifunctionality reflects the principles of agritourism and community-based tourism, where visitors increasingly seek authentic and immersive experiences that combine agricultural activities with cultural learning.¹¹ While diversified roles can increase household income and strengthen community participation, they also create significant competency demands that may exceed the capabilities of many rural tourism workers.

The successful delivery of coffee tourism experiences requires an integrated skill set encompassing agricultural knowledge, hospitality management, customer service, intercultural communication, foreign language proficiency, destination interpretation, digital marketing, and entrepreneurial capabilities. However, studies on rural tourism development have consistently identified substantial skills gaps among local tourism actors, particularly in emerging destinations where access to formal tourism education and training remains limited.^{13 17} In Bali, these challenges are particularly relevant because international visitors often expect high-quality service standards, multilingual communication, and digitally accessible tourism products.

Insufficient competencies in these areas may negatively affect visitor satisfaction, reduce repeat visitation, and weaken the competitiveness of community-based coffee tourism enterprises.

Digital transformation presents both opportunities and challenges for workforce sustainability. The increasing reliance on online booking platforms, social media promotion, digital storytelling, and e-commerce requires tourism workers to possess digital literacy and technological competencies. Yet many rural communities continue to face barriers related to digital skills, technological infrastructure, and access to training resources.¹⁸ As tourism marketing increasingly shifts toward digital channels, workers who lack these competencies risk exclusion from emerging market opportunities.

Demographic changes also contribute to workforce sustainability challenges. Across many agricultural regions in Indonesia, younger generations are becoming less interested in farming and agriculture-related occupations due to perceptions of lower income potential and limited career prospects. This trend threatens the intergenerational transfer of coffee production knowledge and may create labor shortages in the future. Research on rural tourism suggests that integrating tourism and agriculture can improve the attractiveness of rural livelihoods for young people; however, this requires clear pathways for skills development, entrepreneurship, and career progression.¹⁹ Without such opportunities, community-based coffee tourism may struggle to retain talented individuals capable of driving innovation and destination development.

Workforce sustainability depends not only on individual competencies but also on the broader institutional environment. Fragmented governance arrangements, limited collaboration among tourism stakeholders, and insufficient coordination between agricultural and tourism agencies can constrain workforce development efforts. Several studies emphasize that sustainable tourism workforce development requires integrated governance frameworks that connect education providers, local governments, community organizations,

tourism associations, and private-sector actors.^{9 20} In the context of Bali, stronger institutional collaboration is essential to ensure that training initiatives, certification programs, business support services, and employment opportunities are aligned with the evolving needs of coffee tourism destinations.

Overall, the sustainability of the workforce in community-based coffee tourism is shaped by a complex interaction of economic, social, educational, technological, and institutional factors. Addressing workforce vulnerability requires a comprehensive approach that extends beyond short-term training programs to include employment security, lifelong learning opportunities, digital capacity building, youth engagement strategies, and collaborative governance mechanisms. Strengthening these dimensions will be critical for enhancing the resilience, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability of community-based coffee tourism development in Bali.

Competency Development and Human Resource Capacity

Human capital development represents one of the most critical foundations for workforce sustainability in community-based coffee tourism. Sustainable tourism development depends not only on the availability of natural and cultural resources but also on the capacity of local communities to effectively manage, interpret, and commercialize these resources through high-quality tourism experiences. Human capital theory suggests that investments in education, training, and skill enhancement improve individual productivity and contribute to broader economic and social development outcomes (Becker, 1993). Within the context of coffee tourism, human resource capacity becomes particularly important because tourism experiences are largely delivered through direct interactions between visitors and local communities. Consequently, the knowledge, skills, and competencies possessed by tourism workers significantly influence visitor satisfaction, destination competitiveness, and long-term sustainability.¹⁴

Community-based coffee tourism requires an integrated set of competencies

that extend beyond traditional agricultural expertise. Farmers and tourism operators must simultaneously possess knowledge of coffee cultivation techniques, harvesting methods, post-harvest processing, quality control, and sustainable farming practices while also demonstrating tourism-related skills such as hospitality management, customer service, destination interpretation, storytelling, intercultural communication, and visitor engagement. Increasingly, tourism actors are also expected to understand digital marketing, social media management, online booking systems, and e-commerce platforms to remain competitive within a rapidly evolving tourism marketplace.¹⁸

The growing demand for experiential and authentic tourism further increases competency requirements. Contemporary tourists are no longer passive consumers of tourism products; they seek meaningful experiences that involve learning, participation, and cultural exchange. In coffee tourism settings, visitors often expect detailed explanations regarding coffee production processes, local traditions, environmental conservation practices, and community livelihoods. Therefore, coffee farmers are increasingly required to act as educators, interpreters, and cultural ambassadors in addition to their traditional agricultural roles. This multifunctional role requires a diverse competency portfolio that is often difficult to acquire in rural communities with limited access to formal tourism education and professional development opportunities.²⁰

Recent tourism studies emphasize that workforce resilience and destination sustainability are strongly influenced by the quality of education and training available to local tourism actors.^{13 17 21} In many emerging tourism destinations, however, skills development remains fragmented and insufficiently aligned with industry needs. Training programs frequently focus on short-term technical skills without addressing broader competencies such as entrepreneurship, innovation, leadership, digital literacy, and adaptive capacity. As a result, tourism workers may acquire specific skills while remaining inadequately prepared to respond to changing market conditions, technological developments,

and emerging visitor expectations.

In Bali's coffee tourism sector, competency gaps are particularly evident in foreign language proficiency, digital communication, hospitality standards, business management, and destination marketing. Although many coffee farmers possess extensive indigenous and experiential knowledge regarding coffee cultivation, they often lack the communication skills necessary to effectively convey this knowledge to international visitors. Research on community-based tourism has consistently demonstrated that language barriers and limited-service capabilities can reduce visitor satisfaction and restrict opportunities for market expansion.⁹ These limitations become increasingly significant as Bali seeks to attract higher-value tourism markets that prioritize educational, cultural, and sustainable travel experiences.

Training initiatives have demonstrated positive impacts on improving knowledge, confidence, service quality, and community participation within tourism destinations. Numerous studies have found that targeted capacity-building programs can enhance entrepreneurship, strengthen local leadership, and improve tourism product quality.^{11 22 23} Nevertheless, evidence also suggests that many training programs operate as isolated interventions without adequate long-term follow-up mechanisms, mentorship support, or integration into broader employment systems. Consequently, enhanced competencies do not always translate into sustainable employment opportunities, increased income, or business growth.

This phenomenon has been described as a "training trap," whereby workforce development initiatives successfully improve skills but fail to generate lasting economic benefits because institutional support structures remain weak.^{24 25 26} Under such conditions, individuals may acquire new competencies but encounter limited opportunities to apply them due to inadequate access to markets, financial resources, professional networks, certification systems, or career pathways. As a result, the return on training investments remains constrained, and workforce sustainability objectives are not

fully achieved.^{27 28 29 30}

The challenge is further compounded by the rapid digital transformation of the tourism sector. The emergence of online travel platforms, digital storytelling, virtual marketing, artificial intelligence-based customer engagement, and social media promotion has fundamentally altered how tourism products are developed and consumed. Workers who lack digital competencies risk exclusion from increasingly technology-driven tourism markets.¹⁸ For coffee tourism enterprises in Bali, digital literacy is becoming a prerequisite for business sustainability, particularly for small-scale community enterprises seeking to access international markets and reduce dependence on intermediaries.

To overcome these challenges, Bali's coffee tourism sector requires the establishment of continuous learning systems rather than isolated training activities. Lifelong learning approaches emphasize ongoing competency development, knowledge sharing, and adaptive learning processes that enable workers to respond effectively to changing environmental, technological, and market conditions.²⁵ Such systems should support not only technical skill development but also entrepreneurship, innovation, leadership, sustainability awareness, and digital transformation capabilities.

Strengthening human resource capacity also requires collaborative partnerships among universities, vocational institutions, agricultural cooperatives, tourism associations, private-sector stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, and local governments. Multi-stakeholder collaboration can create structured pathways for workforce development by aligning educational programs with labor market demands and destination development objectives. Universities can contribute research and knowledge transfer, vocational institutions can provide practical skills training, cooperatives can facilitate market access, and local governments can support policy coordination and resource allocation.^{21 31 32}

Competency development initiatives should prioritize youth engagement and intergenerational knowledge transfer. One of the major challenges facing coffee-

producing regions is the declining interest of younger generations in agricultural occupations. By integrating tourism entrepreneurship, digital innovation, and cultural interpretation into coffee tourism development, rural communities can create more attractive career opportunities for young people while preserving valuable local knowledge and traditions (Lane & Kastenholz, 2022). Such efforts are essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of both the tourism workforce and the coffee farming sector.

Ultimately, strengthening human resource capacity requires a shift from short-term training projects toward comprehensive workforce development strategies that integrate education, mentorship, entrepreneurship support, certification systems, and employment opportunities. By investing in continuous competency development and fostering collaborative learning ecosystems, Bali can enhance the resilience, adaptability, and competitiveness of its community-based coffee tourism workforce. Such investments will contribute not only to improved tourism performance but also to broader goals of rural development, community empowerment, and sustainable tourism governance.

CONCLUSION

Workforce sustainability is a fundamental prerequisite for the long-term success of community-based coffee tourism development in Bali. While coffee tourism offers substantial opportunities for economic diversification, cultural preservation, and rural development, its sustainability depends heavily on the capacity, stability, and resilience of the local workforce.

The findings indicate that workforce sustainability challenges extend beyond simple skill deficiencies. They are shaped by interconnected factors including informal employment conditions, limited competency development pathways, fragmented governance systems, and unequal access to resources and opportunities. Consequently, workforce sustainability must be approached through an integrated framework that combines human capital development, institutional coordination, and community

empowerment.

Strengthening workforce sustainability requires continuous competency development programs that integrate agricultural expertise with tourism service skills. Equally important is the establishment of collaborative governance mechanisms that align tourism, agriculture, education, and village development initiatives. Community participation should remain central to all development efforts to ensure equitable benefit distribution and local ownership of tourism resources.

Ultimately, a sustainable workforce will enable Bali's coffee tourism sector to enhance destination competitiveness, improve community welfare, preserve agricultural heritage, and contribute to the broader goals of sustainable tourism development. By investing in people as the core asset of tourism, community-based coffee tourism can evolve into a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable development model for rural communities across Bali.

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