

Strategy for Strengthening the Beringin Village Community Through the Implementation of the Multidimensional KKN Program

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ABSTRACT

The Community Service Program (KKN) is increasingly positioned as a strategic service-learning model for community empowerment and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the village level. Through a collaborative and sustainable approach, service-learning integrates education, community service, and measurable impacts across social, economic, environmental, and civic dimensions. This study describes the multidimensional implementation of KKN in Beringin Village, which included social education, economic empowerment (dishwashing soap training and the introduction of branding and marketing for MSMEs), environmental programs, strengthening religious moderation and youth engagement, as well as support for digital village data governance and activity documentation. A descriptive-participatory method was applied through observation, focus group discussions, demonstrations, and field documentation. Initial findings indicate improvements in literacy regarding bullying prevention in partner schools, enhanced basic entrepreneurial skills among household and MSME actors, and the adoption of environmentally friendly practices through biopore infiltration holes for organic waste management and water conservation. These findings are consistent with studies published in SINTA journals, which highlight the effectiveness of branding training and biopore adoption. From a governance perspective, the thematic KKN model serves as a platform for student–citizen collaboration and strengthening village networks. This article formulates a replication strategy involving village asset mapping, designing an integrated service-learning curriculum, applying simple and realistic impact measurements, and planning sustainability beyond the KKN period.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Strengthening rural communities is a crucial aspect of sustainable development, considering that villages function as socio-economic units that contribute to achieving national development goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Community Service (KKN) is a form of university-based learning service considered effective for transferring knowledge, building community capacity, and strengthening networks between campuses and villages, provided the program is designed collaboratively and sustainably. Recent research confirms that an integrated service-learning approach can foster behavioral change and local capacity in various dimensions, including education, economics, environment, and community governance (Sun et al., 2023)(Astuti et al., 2025).

In Indonesia, thematic KKN programs often address various multifaceted issues at the village level, ranging from improving literacy and family welfare to strengthening MSMEs and implementing simple environmental initiatives like biopores. Business skills training interventions, including branding and digital marketing training, have been proven to improve the competitiveness of micro-enterprises and the marketing capabilities of small traders, when accompanied by appropriate mentoring and technology adaptation (Musa et al., 2025)(Amali et al., 2025).

Educational and social aspects, such as anti-bullying programs at the elementary school level and adolescent character-building activities, require a participatory approach involving teachers, parents, and students. Evidence from international studies and reviews of school-based interventions shows that structured anti-bullying programs, which incorporate social-emotional education, community involvement, and monitoring, are effective in reducing bullying incidents and improving the school climate. Therefore, anti-bullying counselling conducted within the KKN program needs to be evidence-based and equipped with simple evaluation strategies (Hensums et al., 2023).

Furthermore, strengthening the promotion of religious moderation values in rural communities is a response to the need for inclusive socio-cultural development. Service reports and case studies at the national level indicate that KKN activities integrating religious moderation thru interfaith dialog, inclusive religious competitions, and youth activities can strengthen social cohesion and reduce the potential for social friction at the local level (Himawati et al., 2020)(Ilma et al., 2025).

However, some studies also indicate common weaknesses in the implementation of KKN, namely limitations in sustainable planning, infrequent quantitative impact measurement, and less structured cross-program integration, which limits the potential for effective program replication. Therefore, this research is dedicated to adopting a descriptive-participatory approach to document and analyze the implementation of the multidimensional KKN program in Beringin Village, which includes anti-bullying education, youth seminars, economic empowerment thru dish soap making training and MSME branding training, biopori environmental programs, mutual cooperation, religious moderation, and support in managing village data digitalization. The results of this study are expected to formulate applicable strategies for the replication and sustainability of empowerment-based community service programs (Astuti et al., 2025).

2. METHODS

This community service research was conducted in Beringin Village, Beringin District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, for 30 days in August 2025. The activities were centered at the KKN Command Post and involved various partner locations, such as elementary schools, vocational high schools, residents' homes, and the village head's office. All activities involved 26 KKN students working together with the village government, as well as the active participation of approximately two hundred community members from various backgrounds.

The subjects of the activities include village officials as local policymakers, SD MIN 3 Deli Serdang students as participants in the anti-bullying counselling program, SMK Islamic School Lestari students who were the target of the moderate youth seminar, housewives who participated in dish soap making training, MSME actors involved in product branding and marketing introduction activities, and village residents from all hamlets who participated in biopori, mutual aid, and Indonesian Independence Day celebrations. This diversity of participants provides an overview of the broad reach of the multidimensional KKN program.

The approach used in this study is descriptive-participatory, where students act as both facilitators and observers, enabling them to systematically document the process and impact of the activities. This model was chosen because it aligns with the character of KKN, which emphasizes not only program implementation but also the collaborative process between students and the community. In practice, the activities begin with field observations to map community needs and village potential, followed by socialization and education thru lectures, discussions, and interactive simulations, such as in anti-bullying counselling activities.

Training and demonstration methods were applied to practical activities, such as making dish soap and processing biopore holes. Meanwhile, a mentoring strategy is used for programs that require sustainability, especially for MSME actors who are introduced to the concepts of branding and digital marketing. In socio-cultural activities, such as village mutual aid, religious moderation, and the celebration of Indonesia's Independence Day, a participatory approach is used to foster a sense of belonging and strengthen social cohesion within the community.

Data was collected using participant observation, semi-structured interviews with village officials, teachers, and training participants, documentation in the form of photos and videos of activities, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with residents as a final evaluation. Data analysis was conducted qualitatively using the Miles and Huberman model, which involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing stages. This model is considered suitable because it can interpret complex and multidimensional field data, providing a comprehensive overview of community empowerment strategies thru the implementation of KKN programs.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of KKN in Beringin Village demonstrates the effectiveness of synergy between students and the community in carrying out multidimensional programs covering social, economic, educational, environmental, and governance aspects. This program received a positive response from business owners because it helped them understand the significance of brand identity and digital marketing strategies. Visual media plans, including product photos and videos, are used to support branding on social media and e-commerce platforms. This approach aligns with the findings in Digital Branding of MSMEs thru Visual Communication (2023), which show that visual branding can increase the appeal and market reach for small business owners (Sari et al., 2023).

Furthermore, research such as "Improving MSME Branding Capabilities thru Business Digitalization" (2023) reports that digitalization training is able to enhance MSME competencies in building business identity and expanding marketing access. This reflects objective results—during the community service program in Beringin village, some merchants began creating simple logos and utilizing social media to promote their products (Rizki Agam Syahputra et al., 2023). The integration of visual branding and social media significantly helps increase business visibility and brand awareness, as demonstrated by the MSME program in West Tayan Island, where visual design and social media training fostered awareness of the importance of branding among village entrepreneurs (Putri et al., 2025).

In terms of environmental aspects, the biopori creation program in Beringin Village was successfully implemented together with the community, particularly the families of the mothers and village leaders. The goal is to reduce waterlogging and improve soil structure as a practical solution for managing organic waste. These findings are consistent with several community service studies, such

as those conducted in Purba Tua Village and Lipukasi Village, which show that biopore training successfully significantly reduced organic waste, strengthened soil infiltration, and substantially increased community environmental awareness (Imas Rahmatissa, Windiah Kintani, Andini Safutri, Hendi Periyatna, Nur Amalia Al Choiriyah, Ayu Pratiwi, Marpiadi, Elisa Amanda, Maulidya Juniati, Desi Putri, 2023).

In the social and educational sphere, the anti-bullying outreach activities at SD MIN 3 Deli Serdang reflect the effectiveness of interactive educational approaches at an early age. Although specific references from SINTA are not yet available for anti-bullying, this approach is consistent with global trends that emphasize the importance of character education and mental health in schools. This activity is felt to increase students' awareness of the impact of bullying and create a safer and more inclusive school environment. Socio-cultural activities such as village mutual aid and the 80th anniversary of Indonesian Independence Day have proven effective in strengthening social solidarity and community bonds. Previous service studies have noted that collaborations like this can create a sense of ownership toward local development and facilitate the integration of students into village communities. The religious moderation program is also implemented with a simple dialog approach among children and adolescents in the village. This is important in building an inclusive diversity narrative that supports social cohesion—an effort increasingly recognized as important in many community service studies. Finally, support for village administrative governance thru data digitalization—such as data collection and re-registration at village offices—addresses the need for transparency and efficiency in local government. Digital literacy in village administration is an increasingly important aspect of the transformation of modern village public services.

4. CONCLUSION

The evaluation results of the multidimensional KKN program in Beringin Village show that the integration of various components of education, economy, environment, social, religious moderation, and governance is an effective strategy for increasing community capacity and supporting sustainable village development. The digital branding training program for SMEs has proven to strengthen marketing capabilities thru social media—in line with similar successes in entrepreneurship seminars that emphasize the importance of a digital approach for the sustainability of small businesses. Implementing branding concepts like this increases the visibility of local products while expanding market access for MSME actors.

In the environmental realm, the application of biopores as a method for managing organic waste and conserving water has been successfully implemented thru socialization and hands-on practice. Studies from various regions confirm these benefits—with active community participation reaching over 80%, absorption capacity significantly increased, and environmental awareness demonstrably grew. Focusing on religious moderation and the value of inclusiveness has also proven important in building social cohesion. Research in Kuala Tanjung Village presents evidence that interfaith dialog and tolerance activities facilitated by KKN students strengthen understanding of diversity and build harmony within the local community.

Furthermore, efforts to strengthen the role of students in enhancing socio-economic capacity and local governance received strong support from direct interventions such as soap-based SME training and digital promotion. This reflects a collaborative and applied service-learning approach, rather than just a temporary activity, and aligns with the principle of service-learning being effective in bridging academics and real-world field action.

Overall, the multidimensional community service program in Beringin Village has demonstrated that the integration of programs, branding and digital marketing training for MSMEs, the biopori program for environmental management, religious moderation activities, socio-cultural collaboration (mutual cooperation, Indonesian Independence Day), and character education strengthening (anti-bullying) can synergistically accelerate the growth of village community capacity and bring the achievement of SDGs closer at the local level. Strategic recommendations for the future include:

strengthening collaboration between universities and village governments for program sustainability; incorporating more structured quantitative evaluation indicators; and expanding this model to other villages with local context adaptations. Thus, KKN can be an excellent model for facilitating inclusive and sustainable socio-economic and environmental transformation for rural communities.

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