Improving Human Resource Quality and Cultural Values to Foster Community Independence in the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism Area, Bener Meriah Regency

Original Article

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the quality of human resources (HR), community culture, and economic independence in the Kopi Gayo Agrotourism area, Bener Meriah Regency, and how these factors contribute to community self-sufficiency. Using a mixed-method approach, the findings showed that the quality of HR in the area remains low, particularly in terms of knowledge, skills, and capabilities in managing coffee agritourism. Most respondents disagreed with the current quality, reflecting a limited understanding of the economic potential of coffee agritourism. The community's strong cultural value of gotong royong (mutual cooperation) has not been fully utilized in agritourism management because of a lack of coordination and collective awareness. Furthermore, the community's independence in facing competition and running agritourism businesses is low, as indicated by a lack of confidence and reluctance to innovate. This study recommends intensive training and continuous mentoring for the community, as well as strengthening local leadership to encourage collaboration. It is also suggested that the government and NGOs play an active role in improving access to information and global markets while also fostering more organized business groups. Enhancing HR quality, utilizing the gotong royong culture, and developing economic independence are key to improving community welfare in the Kopi Gayo Agrotourism area.

Keywords: Human Resource Quality, Community Culture, Economic Independence, Coffee Agritourism.

1. Introduction

Indonesia is one of the world's top coffee producers, yet many local communities remain constrained by economic limitations and a lack of self-reliance. Bener Meriah Regency, situated at the heart of Gayo coffee production, possesses immense potential in the agrotourism sector. Spanning an area of 46,273 hectares and producing over 2,900 tons of coffee annually (BPS Bener Meriah, 2022), the region is uniquely positioned to become a hub for agrotourism-driven economic development. Despite this potential, most coffee farmers in the area continue to face economic hardships, and the community's independence in managing its agrotourism potential remains underdeveloped.

Enhancing human resource (HR) quality and fostering cultural values are two essential strategies for promoting community self-reliance (Hasibuan, 2007; Wijoyo, 2021), particularly in agrotourism-based economies like Gayo coffee. According to the human development theory, improving HR quality involves more than formal education—it includes skill development, knowledge enhancement, and the cultivation of cultural values (Todaro & Smith, 2014). High-quality human resources can optimize natural resource management,

drive innovation, and support the economic sustainability of local communities (Kuehnl et al., 2019).

However, HR quality remains a significant challenge in the Gayo coffee agrotourism area. Many community members lack access to education and training aligned with market demands and struggle to innovate in leveraging local potential. In addition, cultural values such as hard work, responsibility, and initiative require reinforcement to build a self-reliant community. Agrotourism, which emphasizes the sustainable use of local resources, offers a viable pathway for economic development, but it necessitates a community that is independent, creative, and competitive. In this context, HR quality and cultural values are critical drivers of self-reliance and the long-term success of agrotourism in Bener Meriah Regency.

Although previous studies have explored the economic and export potential of Gayo coffee, few have addressed the role of HR quality and cultural values in fostering community self-reliance within an agrotourism framework. For instance, Herviandi et al. (2017) highlight the economic significance of Gayo coffee in international markets, but limited attention has been given to the human and cultural dimensions of its development. Current development efforts in the Gayo coffee region tend to prioritize increasing production without adequately building the capacity of local human resources. Technical training for farmers often focuses on operational skills rather than equipping them with managerial abilities, innovative thinking, or entrepreneurial competencies needed to manage agrotourism-based enterprises. Moreover, community members frequently face barriers such as low competitiveness and a lack of confidence in taking initiative or responsibility for decision-making.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how improving HR quality and cultural values can enhance community self-reliance in the Gayo coffee agrotourism area. By integrating approaches in education, training, and cultural transformation, this research aims to contribute meaningfully to the empowerment of local communities. The findings are expected to have broader applicability, providing insights for other regions with similar community-based agrotourism development characteristics.

The study is organized into several key sections to provide a comprehensive exploration of the topic. First, the literature review synthesizes existing research and theoretical frameworks, highlighting gaps that this study seeks to address. The methodology section outlines the research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques employed to ensure robust and reliable results. The results section presents the data collected during the study, supported by relevant statistical analyses and visual representations. This is followed by a discussion that interprets the findings in light of the reviewed literature, exploring their implications and potential applications. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key findings, reflects on their significance, and offers suggestions for future research, providing a coherent closure to the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Human Resource Theory

Human Resource (HR) theory posits that humans are the primary asset of any organization. Tasks within both public and private institutions depend on high-quality HR to ensure success. The quality of HR determines an organization's ability to compete, as it serves as intellectual capital composed of skills, professionalism, and knowledge possessed by individuals (Sedarmayanti, 2018). HR encompasses policies and practices related to

recruitment, training, and rewarding employees, emphasizing the critical role of HR management in achieving organizational objectives.

Yusuf & Al Arif (2015) categorizes organizational resources into two groups: human and non-human. Human resources refer to individuals engaged in organizational activities, while non-human resources include capital, technology, and materials. Yusuf underscores that HR is the most valuable capital in an organization; without qualified HR, progress is unattainable.

Fombrun (as cited in Sedarmayanti (2018)) highlights the need for HR development to maximize contributions to both organizational and individual growth. Effective HR empowerment leads to intelligent, adaptable organizations capable of competing in increasingly open global markets. Therefore, enhancing HR quality and capacity is essential for organizational and community success.

2.2. Cultural Theory

Culture is a fundamental aspect of society, influencing various social activities and interactions. According to Koentjaraningrat (as cited in Tjahyadi et al. (2019)), culture originates from the Sanskrit word buddhayah, meaning intellect or mind. Understanding the elements that constitute culture is crucial for accurate interpretation and application.

Clifford Geertz (as cited in Tjahyadi et al. (2019)) defines culture as a symbolic system of meanings transmitted through historical communication and daily practices. Similarly, Edward (as cited in Tjahyadi et al. (2019)) views culture as encompassing all aspects of societal life, including knowledge, beliefs, laws, customs, and arts acquired by individuals as community members. Linton (as cited in Tjahyadi et al. (2019)) expands this definition, asserting that culture includes both sophisticated and grassroots ways of life, incorporating material, spiritual, and social elements that bind communities.

2.3. Self-Reliance Theory

Self-reliance refers to an individual's ability to manage and control their thoughts, emotions, and actions independently. Desmita (2009) emphasizes that self-reliance involves decision-making skills, self-confidence, and responsibility for personal actions. Seifert and Hoffnung (as cited in Desmita (2009)) further define self-reliance as the ability to act independently while overcoming feelings of shame or doubt.

Havighurst (as cited in Desmita (2009)) identifies four forms of self-reliance: emotional, economic, intellectual, and social. Emotional self-reliance involves managing emotions effectively, while economic self-reliance relates to fulfilling financial needs independently. Intellectual self-reliance encompasses problem-solving skills, and social self-reliance refers to interacting autonomously without external dependence. Steinberg (as cited in Desmita (2009)) categorizes self-reliance into emotional, behavioral, and value-based dimensions, forming the foundation for mature independence.

2.4. Community Welfare Theory

Community welfare refers to a state where basic needs, such as food, housing, education, and employment, are met. Soetomo (2014) describes welfare as a condition characterized by order, security, justice, and prosperity. Ketjil et al. (2022) elaborate that welfare includes fulfilling basic needs while providing opportunities for self-development through education and employment.

Todaro & Smith (2014) argue that community welfare reflects the outcomes of development efforts aimed at improving the quality of life. This includes equitable distribution of resources, enhanced education, cultural growth, and overall well-being. Thus, community

welfare is a multidimensional concept encompassing both material and social elements necessary for sustainable development.

2.5. Agrotourism Concept

Agrotourism integrates tourism and agriculture, offering visitors the opportunity to experience natural landscapes and agricultural activities, such as coffee plantation tours. Sutjipta (as cited in Ahmadi (2017)) defines agrotourism as an integrated system combining tourism and agricultural development, promoting environmental preservation and improving community welfare.

Ahmadi (2017) highlights that plantation-based agrotourism, such as coffee, rubber, or palm oil production, offers attractions ranging from scenic landscapes to hands-on agricultural experiences. This form of tourism raises public awareness about agriculture's importance while fostering economic growth for local communities. Through agrotourism, local residents can develop agriculture-based businesses, creating opportunities for sustainable economic development.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This approach was chosen to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the improvement of human resource (HR) quality, cultural values, and community self-reliance within the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area in Bener Meriah Regency. By using mixed methods, the study captures both in-depth insights and statistical relationships between variables.

The research population consisted of individuals involved in activities related to the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The sample included 30 informants, consisting of village residents directly engaged in coffee production, local cultural activities, and community leaders with insights into the social and economic dynamics of the region.

Data collection methods incorporated three primary techniques: observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to understand social and cultural interactions, focusing on daily activities related to coffee production. In-depth interviews were held with key informants, such as community leaders and coffee producers, to gather detailed insights on HR quality, cooperative cultural practices, and community self-reliance. Documentation was used to collect secondary data, such as reports and photographs that depicted the community's activities.

The research instruments used in this study included questionnaires, interview guides, and observation sheets. The questionnaire aimed to assess the community's perceptions of HR quality and the improvements necessary for enhancing self-reliance. The interview guide provided a framework for obtaining in-depth information from participants regarding cooperative culture, togetherness, and factors influencing community self-reliance in the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area. Observation sheets were used to record social and cultural activities, as well as community interactions with the environment.

3.2. Data Analysis

The analysis of data involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, where key themes emerging from interviews and observations were identified. The process included data reduction, data presentation, and

conclusion drawing. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to measure community perceptions of HR quality and self-reliance. Statistical analysis also helped examine the relationships between the studied variables.

3.3. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, several verification techniques were employed, including triangulation and prolonged engagement. Triangulation was used to compare data from different sources, methods, and timeframes, ensuring the consistency and credibility of the findings. Prolonged engagement involved extended observation time and continuous interactions with the community, which helped deepen the researchers' understanding of the social context under study. Reliability testing was also conducted to ensure that research instruments provided consistent results under various conditions.

3.4. Research Ethics

The study adhered to strict ethical guidelines at every stage of the research process. Prior to conducting interviews or observations, the researchers obtained permission from the relevant authorities. Participants were fully informed about the research objectives, and their consent was obtained. The study ensured that all participants' confidentiality and anonymity were respected during the presentation of the findings. Ethical considerations were central to the research design, and efforts were made to avoid harm or exploitation of the participants.

3.5. Data Integration

The integration of qualitative and quantitative data allowed for a more holistic understanding of the dynamics within the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area. Quantitative data were used to statistically measure community perceptions and levels of self-reliance, while qualitative data provided deeper insights into the social and cultural contexts influencing these perceptions. The concurrent analysis of both data types allowed for complementary findings, providing a comprehensive understanding and offering more precise recommendations for improving HR quality and community culture in the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Research Results

4.1.1. Improving Human Resource Quality and Community Culture in the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism Area of Bener Meriah Regency

1) Knowledge

Knowledge is a critical factor in enhancing human resource (HR) quality in the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area, Bener Meriah Regency. Interviews with community leaders from Timang Gajah and Bukit villages highlighted the importance of knowledge related to coffee cultivation, processing, and business management in supporting the success of the agrotourism region.

One community leader from Timang Gajah village emphasized, *"With knowledge, the community can develop into competitive human resources to achieve prosperity. Essential knowledge includes the processes of coffee cultivation and care, as well as the stages of production, from harvesting to ready-to-brew coffee."*

This perspective is supported by the findings in Table 1, where a significant number of respondents (16 disagree and 8 strongly disagree) acknowledged the importance of knowledge for the success of the coffee business. However, they expressed concern that their current

knowledge was insufficient for optimal business management. Another leader from Bukit village added, *"Knowledge can be obtained through government job training programs (BLK), learning directly from coffee farmers, or even from accessible social media sources."*

This aligns with the third statement in Table 1, which shows that 11 strongly disagreed and 12 disagreed about the community's utilization of external knowledge sources. Despite recognizing the importance of external knowledge, the community has not fully utilized these resources. Additionally, the second statement about whether the community possesses adequate knowledge of coffee management received 9 strongly disagree and 15 disagree responses, reflecting the perception that their knowledge is insufficient for managing coffee production. This sentiment is further confirmed by interviews with Bukit village leaders, who emphasized the need for more training and mentorship from experienced coffee farmers.

Finally, for the fourth statement about knowledge preventing errors in coffee production, 10 strongly disagreed, and 14 disagreed. This indicates that the community feels inadequately equipped to avoid mistakes that could impact product quality. In the fifth statement, which assessed whether knowledge impacts welfare improvement, 14 strongly disagreed and 12 disagreed, showing that while knowledge is acknowledged as essential, its practical application has not significantly improved the community's welfare.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Knowledge Responses

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
1.	As a community, I realize the importance of adequate knowledge for successfully running a coffee business.	8	16	4	2	0	30
2.	The community possesses appropriate knowledge for coffee management.	9	15	3	2	1	30
3.	To improve coffee management, the community seeks additional internal and external knowledge.	11	12	6	1	0	30
4.	The community's knowledge can prevent errors in coffee production.	10	14	4	2	0	30
5.	The community's knowledge drives welfare improvement.	14	12	2	1	1	30

2) Skill

Skills are essential for improving HR quality in the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area. Adequate skills enable the community to effectively manage businesses, thereby producing high-quality products that meet established standards. Interviews with leaders from Timang Gajah village revealed substantial skill gaps in coffee management.

One community leader explained, *"Education level and experience heavily influence the skills possessed by the community. For instance, they must understand the pre-planting process, such as selecting coffee seeds with strong roots and normal stems. Skills also include planting, garden maintenance, and coffee tree pruning."*

This statement is consistent with the findings in Table 2, where 12 strongly disagreed and 16 disagreed that the community possessed adequate skills for coffee management, indicating that most participants felt their current skills were insufficient to produce high-quality products. Interviews suggested a need for active government involvement in skill development.

One coffee producer mentioned, *"The Bener Meriah government should actively enhance community skills through training programs offered by both the government and private entities. Stakeholders should also guide the community in managing coffee professionally."* This supports the third statement in Table 2, which shows that 9 strongly disagreed and 14 disagreed about the community acquiring additional skills to work more effectively.

Table 2. Recapitulation of Skills Responses

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
1.	The community possesses agile skills in their work field.	9	14	4	3	0	30
2.	The community has sufficient skills for coffee management.	12	16	1	1	0	30
3.	To enhance coffee management, the community has acquired additional skills to complete tasks effectively.	9	14	5	1	1	30
4.	Community skills can minimize errors in coffee production.	10	13	4	2	1	30
5.	Community skills drive welfare improvement.	8	17	4	0	1	30
6.	The community can analyze work-related issues using their skills.	9	12	7	1	1	20

3) Abilities

Abilities, which combine knowledge, skills, and attitudes, are crucial for improving HR quality in the Gayo Coffee Agrotourism area. These abilities enable individuals to optimally perform tasks and are key to enhancing productivity and competitiveness, especially in supporting coffee as the region's flagship product.

Interviews with community leaders from Timang Gajah village emphasized the importance of developing abilities for the success of the coffee business. One community leader noted, *"The community must possess the necessary abilities to develop coffee as a flagship product that supports tourism. This requires a combination of knowledge, skills, and expertise in the field."*

This statement is corroborated by the findings in Table 3, where the first statement regarding whether the community possessed adequate work abilities to efficiently complete tasks shows that 12 respondents strongly disagreed and 10 disagreed. This suggests that the community feels their abilities are insufficient to support both the welfare of the area and the optimal management of coffee agrotourism.

Another challenge noted was the lack of direct guidance on developing abilities. A coffee producer added, *"The government should guide youth, farmers, and farmer groups in developing standardized skills and abilities to compete in the market. This is essential for creating competent HR that will lead to community prosperity."*

In Table 3, the second statement, which evaluates whether the community's ability to understand the coffee production environment can improve business success, shows 13 strongly disagreed and 10 disagreed, indicating a lack of understanding of the dynamics and challenges in coffee production. Similarly, the third statement, which assesses whether the community's abilities support coffee management, shows that 12 strongly disagreed and 11 disagreed, suggesting that the community believes its ability to manage coffee is not sufficiently developed. Finally, the fourth statement, which evaluates whether the

community's abilities can improve coffee production productivity, shows 11 strongly disagreed and 10 disagreed, signaling a belief that their abilities are inadequate to improve productivity and meet production targets.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Abilities Responses

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
1.	The community possesses adequate work abilities to complete tasks and improve the quality of the agrotourism area.	12	10	4	2	2	30
2.	The abilities the community possesses help them understand the coffee production environment and improve business success.	13	10	3	3	1	30
3.	The community in the coffee agrotourism area generally possesses developed abilities in managing coffee.	12	11	5	2	0	30
4.	The community's abilities can enhance productivity and help meet targets in coffee production.	11	10	5	2	2	30

4.1.2. Encouraging Community Independence in the Gayo Coffee Agro-Tourism Area, Bener Meriah District

1) Competitive Drive

Competitive drive is an essential internal motivator that pushes individuals or groups to strive for goals and improve their situation. In the Gayo Coffee Agro-Tourism area, while there is significant potential in the agro-tourism sector, the local community faces challenges in boosting its competitive drive.

One of the primary issues identified is a culture of complacency, where individuals tend to stay within their comfort zones. A female coffee producer from Timang Gajah Village shared, *"Our community still has a culture of laziness... so progress hasn't been achieved because the community's culture hasn't changed yet."*

This sentiment is reflected in the findings in Table 4, particularly in the third statement regarding competitive culture, where 11 respondents strongly disagreed and 12 disagreed, indicating a lack of a strong competitive spirit in enhancing coffee production. This suggests that the community still relies on old habits that hinder progress.

However, the drive to compete often arises in response to economic pressures. A community leader from Bukit Village explained, *"The community wants to break free from economic pressures... they are competing to improve themselves."*

This aligns with the findings in Table 4, where the first statement regarding the community's competitive drive for financial freedom showed 10 respondents strongly disagreed and 13 disagreed. These results suggest that while there is an awareness of the importance of competition in solving economic problems, the drive to compete is not yet strong enough to trigger significant change.

Similarly, in the second statement, which asked whether the community was willing to learn new methods to develop coffee productivity, 12 strongly disagreed and 14 disagreed. This indicates that although there is recognition of the need to learn, the community lacks sufficient motivation to develop more efficient coffee management practices.

In the fourth statement, which assessed whether the community had the competitive drive to overcome obstacles in coffee production, 13 strongly disagreed and 11 disagreed. This suggests that most respondents still struggle to independently compete in managing their coffee businesses, slowing the process of improving productivity and achieving business success.

Finally, in the fifth statement, which evaluated the influence of education and parental upbringing on competitive drive, the results showed that 10 respondents strongly disagreed and 10 disagreed, indicating that education and family factors did not significantly foster competitive drive within the community.

Table 4. Summary of Responses on Competitive Drive

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
1.	The community in the agro-tourism area has a strong competitive drive to gain financial freedom and economic relief.	10	13	5	2	0	30
2.	The community is willing to learn something new in improving coffee productivity.	12	14	2	1	1	30
3.	The community has a good competitive culture to improve coffee production in the agro-tourism area.	11	12	4	2	0	30
4.	The community has a competitive drive to stand on its own in facing obstacles to the success of coffee production management.	13	11	3	2	1	30
5.	Education and parental upbringing have a significant influence on individual competitive drive for a better future.	10	10	6	2	2	30

2) Responsibility

A sense of responsibility is fundamental to fostering community independence, particularly in the Gayo Coffee Agro-Tourism area. Responsibility not only involves fulfilling obligations but also being aware of and accepting the consequences of one's actions. Communities with a strong sense of responsibility are more confident and prepared to face the risks associated with their businesses.

As one community leader from Timang Gajah Village explained, *"To encourage independence, the community needs to develop confidence and optimism. In coffee production, awareness of following the correct procedures and working hard is essential for success."*

This statement aligns with the findings in Table 5, particularly in the first statement, where 10 respondents strongly disagreed and 12 disagreed with the assertion that the community had a very strong sense of responsibility in their work. This suggests that while there is an understanding of the need to take responsibility, the consistent application of this mindset still requires improvement.

Responsibility became more apparent as the community began to experience the tangible results of their hard work. A leader from Bukit Village noted, *"Once the community experiences the fruits of their labor, they begin to realize that responsibility for their actions is important to improve their business, especially in maintaining and increasing coffee productivity."*

This perspective is reflected in Table 5, specifically in the second statement regarding the community's awareness of their responsibility for the success of coffee production. In this

case, 9 respondents strongly disagreed and 13 disagreed. Although most respondents recognized the importance of responsibility, there is still a gap in their understanding of how this sense of responsibility contributes to the success of their coffee business.

Table 5. Summary of Responses on Responsibility

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
1.	The community in the Gayo Coffee Agro-Tourism area has a very good sense of responsibility for their work.	10	12	5	2	1	30
2.	The community understands the importance of responsibility for the success of coffee production.	9	13	3	3	2	30
3.	The community has the responsibility to develop their potential in improving coffee management.	12	10	6	2	0	30
4.	The sense of responsibility in the community can encourage increased well-being.	11	13	3	2	1	30

3) Decision-Making

Decision-making is a key element in promoting community independence, especially in the Gayo Coffee Agro-Tourism area. Effective decision-making involves the ability to identify problems, consider solutions, and select the best course of action.

A community leader from Timang Gajah Village remarked, *"What can drive community independence in decision-making is the ability to think critically and identify problems carefully. Every decision made directly impacts their lives."*

This statement is consistent with the findings in Table 6, particularly in the first statement, where 11 respondents strongly disagreed and 13 disagreed with the claim that the community was highly independent in making decisions objectively. This suggests that although there is an understanding of the importance of decision-making, the community still feels lacking in independence in this area.

Moreover, decision-making often arises from real challenges, such as crop failure. A community leader from Bukit Village noted, *"Independence in decision-making is formed when problems arise, such as crop failures. The community will look for solutions with the help of experts or other motivating parties."*

This perspective is reflected in Table 6, where the second statement, which measures the community's ability to solve problems to improve business success, showed that 12 respondents strongly disagreed and 10 disagreed. This indicates that while the community acknowledges the importance of decision-making in solving business problems, they feel they lack the ability to make effective decisions and solve problems independently.

Table 6. Summary of Responses on Decision-Making and Initiative

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
1.	The community in the Gayo Coffee Agro-Tourism area is highly independent in making objective decisions to resolve problems.	11	13	4	1	1	30
2.	The community's decision-making ability can solve problems to increase business success.	12	10	6	1	1	30

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
3.	The community is willing to accept the risks of decisions made for the future.	10	12	5	2	1	30
4.	The community is highly capable of choosing problem-solving initiatives based on their own considerations in managing coffee.	13	9	6	1	1	30
5.	The community has strong confidence in making decisions without influence from others or their families.	9	12	5	2	2	30
6.	The community is responsible for the consequences of the decisions and initiatives taken.	14	8	5	1	1	30

4) Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is a crucial factor in promoting community independence, particularly in the Gayo Coffee Agro-Tourism area. Individuals with high self-confidence are more likely to face challenges and make informed decisions. Communities with strong self-confidence are also more independent in managing their businesses, including coffee production.

As a community leader from Timang Gajah Village explained, *"The community's self-confidence in managing coffee comes from the knowledge they possess. When the cost of living increases and children's education fees rise, the community is driven to master the knowledge that can enhance their productivity."*

This statement underscores the role of knowledge in building self-confidence. When the community feels skilled and knowledgeable, they become more confident in managing their businesses, such as coffee production.

Similarly, a leader from Bukit Village emphasized the importance of life experience in shaping self-confidence. *"Self-confidence is formed through personal experiences and lessons learned from others' failures. A thorough self-assessment and family support are crucial in this process."* These interviews show that both positive and negative experiences significantly impact the community's self-confidence in managing their businesses.

Table 7. Summary of Responses on Self-Confidence

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
1.	The community has confidence in their ability to improve the quality of coffee production work.	10	10	6	3	1	30
2.	The community has the confidence to solve problems without the help of others.	11	9	7	2	1	30
3.	The community in the coffee agro-tourism area is optimistic about the success of their coffee management.	13	8	6	2	1	30
4.	The community has high confidence in planning coffee production based on the potential they possess.	11	10	5	3	1	30
5.	The community has confidence in developing entrepreneurial creativity in coffee production to achieve business success.	12	11	6	0	1	30

No	Statement	Frequency					Total
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	
6.	The community is very active in attending technical guidance provided by the government to improve self-confidence in managing coffee.	10	13	4	2	1	30

4.2. Discussion

4.2.1. Human Resource Quality

The research findings indicate that the quality of human resources in the Kopi Gayo Agrotourism area remains suboptimal, particularly in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities. A significant portion of respondents (45% strongly disagreeing and 37.7% disagreeing) expressed dissatisfaction with the current quality of human resources, which highlights the lack of necessary knowledge and skills for optimizing welfare through coffee agrotourism management. While the community has basic knowledge of coffee cultivation, it has yet to fully grasp the potential of developing the agrotourism sector to attract tourists and increase income.

Limited training opportunities and insufficient access to information were identified as major barriers to developing human resources (Emmywati et al., 2024). In order to overcome these challenges, more intensive and targeted training programs focused on professional agro-tourism management are essential. Sutrisno (2014) asserts that the quality of human resources is influenced by the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are crucial for providing professional services. These findings are consistent with Pajriah (2018) research, which emphasizes the importance of human resource quality as a key factor in the success of tourism sector development.

4.2.2. Community Independence

The findings suggest that community independence in the Kopi Gayo Agrotourism area remains low, particularly in areas such as competitive drive, responsibility, and self-confidence in improving welfare. Many community members still lack the necessary confidence and work ethics to address challenges in agrotourism management. Independence, in this context, refers to the ability to manage one's own resources without relying on external assistance. However, many individuals continue to rely on traditional methods, demonstrate reluctance to make strategic decisions, and fail to fully capitalize on opportunities that could improve their welfare.

The lack of knowledge about global markets and business strategies further hinders the community's ability to compete at a broader level. This is in line with Erikson's (2017) view that independence is a process through which individuals free themselves and recognize their capacity to face challenges independently.

5. Conclusion

Improving the quality of human resources (HR) and community culture in the Kopi Gayo Agrotourism area of Bener Meriah District faces several challenges. The community's limited knowledge hinders its ability to create economic opportunities. Their skills in coffee management are also underdeveloped, and their ability to meet work competence standards remains low, even among university graduates. From a cultural standpoint, the potential for

mutual cooperation and solidarity has not been fully realized, with fragmentation within groups diminishing the effectiveness of collaboration. The community's passive stance in the face of competition and their lack of self-confidence in entrepreneurship are key barriers to achieving economic independence.

To improve HR quality and community culture in the Kopi Gayo Agrotourism area, it is essential to involve both the government and NGOs in providing continuous assistance, training programs, and access to global markets. The community should be better organized and made more aware of the economic potential of mutual cooperation and solidarity through the formation of formal business groups and the strengthening of local leadership.

Additionally, stakeholders in the agrotourism sector should organize technical training to foster a competitive spirit, responsibility, and self-confidence in the community. These measures would contribute to enhanced productivity and independence in managing Gayo coffee agrotourism, ultimately leading to improved economic welfare for the community.

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