



RESILIENCE AS COMMUNAL ECOLOGY: BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL OVERCOMING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS FOR TOUR GUIDES IN YOGYAKARTA

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ABSTRAK

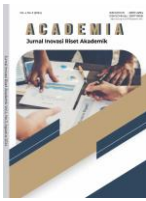
Penelitian ini bertujuan mengeksplorasi peran modal sosial dalam membentuk resiliensi komunal pemandu wisata dalam menghadapi tekanan pekerjaan dan hambatan sistemik di sektor pariwisata. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan paradigma konstruktivis sosial. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur terhadap 10 pemandu wisata profesional di Yogyakarta yang dipilih secara purposive. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan Reflexive Thematic Analysis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa resiliensi tidak hanya terbentuk melalui kapasitas individu, tetapi juga berkembang melalui interaksi sosial, dukungan kolektif, dan jaringan profesional. Bonding social capital berperan dalam memperkuat dukungan emosional, solidaritas, dan mekanisme coping bersama, sedangkan bridging social capital memfasilitasi akses terhadap informasi, sumber daya, serta advokasi melalui asosiasi profesi. Temuan penelitian menghasilkan model Ekologi Komunal yang menjelaskan bahwa resiliensi pemandu wisata berkembang melalui interaksi antara resiliensi psikologis, jaringan sosial, dan pembelajaran kolektif. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian resiliensi pariwisata dengan menempatkan modal sosial sebagai sumber daya utama dalam membangun adaptasi dan keberlanjutan komunitas.

Kata Kunci: *Ketahanan Komunal, Modal Sosial, Hambatan Sistemik, Pemandu Wisata, Strategi Mengatasi Masalah Berbasis Keagamaan, Yogyakarta.*

ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of social capital in shaping communal resilience among tour guides in coping with occupational stress and systemic barriers within the tourism sector. A qualitative approach grounded in a social constructivist paradigm was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews with 10 professional tour guides in Yogyakarta selected through purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis. The findings reveal that resilience is not solely an individual capacity but is developed through social interaction, collective support, and professional networks. Bonding social capital strengthens emotional support, solidarity, and collective coping mechanisms, whereas bridging social capital facilitates access to information, resources, and advocacy through professional associations. The study proposes a Communal Ecology model, demonstrating that resilience emerges through the interaction of psychological resilience, social networks, and collective learning processes. The findings contribute to tourism resilience literature by highlighting social capital as a critical resource for fostering adaptation and sustainability within tourism communities.

Keywords: *Communal Resilience, Social Capital, Systemic Barriers, Tour Guides, Faith-Based Coping, Yogyakarta.*



INTRODUCTION

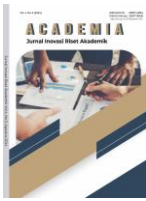
The tourism industry is widely recognized as one of the most vulnerable economic sectors due to its dependence on external conditions such as economic fluctuations, environmental changes, political instability, and global crises. These uncertainties often disrupt tourism activities and create significant challenges for tourism stakeholders in maintaining business continuity and service quality. As a labor-intensive industry, tourism requires workers to continuously adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining professional performance. Consequently, resilience has become an increasingly important issue in tourism studies, particularly in understanding how tourism actors respond to uncertainty and adversity (Islam et al., 2023).

Among tourism stakeholders, tour guides occupy a particularly important position because they serve as frontline representatives who directly interact with visitors and shape tourists' experiences. In performing their professional responsibilities, tour guides are frequently exposed to demanding work conditions, including irregular working hours, emotional labor, customer expectations, and role-related pressures. Such demands may increase work stress and create conflicts between professional and personal responsibilities. Previous research indicates that tourism workers often experience work–family conflict and psychological distress as a consequence of these occupational pressures, highlighting the need to understand the resources that enable them to remain adaptive and productive (Abdou et al., 2024).

One of the most important resources for dealing with adversity is resilience. Resilience refers to the capacity to adapt positively, recover from difficulties, and maintain effective functioning despite experiencing challenging circumstances. Rather than merely representing the ability to “bounce back,” resilience is increasingly viewed as a dynamic process that enables individuals to navigate adversity and continue pursuing desired goals. Within workplace settings, resilience contributes to employees' psychological well-being, adaptability, and long-term effectiveness when facing occupational challenges (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). Furthermore, resilience operates across multiple levels, including individual, team, and organizational contexts, making it an essential component of sustainable performance in complex work environments (Hartmann et al., 2020).

The development of resilience is closely related to how individuals perceive and manage stressful experiences. According to the stress and coping perspective, individuals continuously evaluate environmental demands and mobilize available resources to cope with potential threats and pressures (Folkman, 2020). In tourism settings, stressors often emerge from emotional labor, workload demands, and conflicts between work and family responsibilities. Work–family conflict has been identified as a significant factor influencing employee well-being and organizational outcomes, particularly among tourism and hospitality workers (Abdou et al., 2022). At the same time, psychological resilience has been shown to reduce the negative effects of stress and psychological distress, enabling tourism workers to adapt more effectively to uncertain and demanding work environments (Jiang et al., 2023).

Although resilience is often discussed as an individual capacity, adaptive responses are also shaped by the social environment in which individuals are embedded. Social capital provides access to networks, trust, shared norms, and reciprocal relationships that facilitate cooperation and collective action. Through these social resources, individuals can obtain emotional support, information, and practical assistance that strengthen their ability to cope with challenges. The concept of social capital emphasizes that social relationships themselves



constitute valuable resources that contribute to both individual and collective development (Coleman, 1988). In tourism contexts, social capital has been found to strengthen community resilience by facilitating collaboration, resource sharing, and collective adaptation during periods of crisis and uncertainty (Persada & Aji, 2021).

Recent tourism studies have increasingly highlighted the importance of social capital in strengthening resilience and supporting sustainable adaptation. Strong social networks enable tourism actors to exchange knowledge, mobilize resources, and coordinate collective responses to emerging challenges. In Indonesia, social capital has been recognized as a critical element supporting sustainable tourism development through community participation and collaborative action (Prayitno et al., 2024a). Similarly, social capital contributes to resilience by enhancing both psychological and social resources that enable tourism stakeholders to cope with adversity and uncertainty (Elshaer et al., 2024). Community resilience within tourism destinations is also strengthened through the interaction between social capital and local competencies, which together enhance the capacity of communities to respond effectively to environmental and socio-economic changes (Idajati et al., 2024).

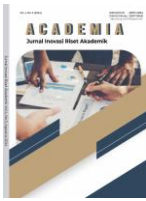
Despite the growing body of literature on resilience and social capital in tourism, existing studies have predominantly focused on individual resilience or organizational adaptation. Limited attention has been given to understanding how social capital contributes to the formation of communal resilience among tour guides, particularly within the Indonesian tourism context. Considering that many challenges faced by tour guides are collective and systemic in nature, a deeper understanding of communal adaptive mechanisms is needed. Therefore, this study aims to explore the role of social capital in shaping communal resilience among tour guides and to examine how collective resources support adaptation in overcoming systemic barriers within the tourism sector.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design within a social constructivist paradigm to explore how social capital contributes to the development of communal resilience among tour guides in overcoming systemic barriers within the tourism sector. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to understand participants' experiences, perceptions, and meanings regarding collective adaptation, coping strategies, and support mechanisms emerging from social interactions. The research focused on resilience as a socially constructed process shaped through relationships, networks, and community participation.

The participants consisted of 10 professional tour guides in Yogyakarta selected through purposive sampling. Participants were required to have at least five years of experience in the tourism industry, be active members of a tour guide association, and possess experience in responding to occupational challenges, tourism crises, or regulatory changes. These criteria ensured that participants had sufficient knowledge and experience to provide rich information regarding the role of social capital and communal resilience within the tourism context.

Data were collected between January and March 2025 through semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interview guide focused on participants' experiences related to occupational stressors, coping strategies, social support, association involvement, and responses to systemic barriers. Each interview lasted approximately 60–90 minutes and was conducted with participants' informed consent. All interviews were audio-recorded,



transcribed verbatim, and anonymized to ensure confidentiality and ethical compliance throughout the research process.

The data were analyzed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analytical process involved familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, development of themes, review and refinement of themes, definition and naming of themes, and production of the final report. To enhance the credibility of the findings, member checking was conducted by verifying preliminary interpretations with participants, while systematic coding and analytical memoing were employed to maintain consistency and transparency throughout the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The study involved 10 professional tour guides in Yogyakarta selected through purposive sampling. Participants had between 5 and 20 years of professional experience and were actively involved in tour guide associations. Their experiences included regulatory negotiations, adaptive training programs, emotional labor management, gender-related challenges, and collective coping practices.

Theme 1: Social Capital as the Foundation of Communal Resilience

The findings indicate that social capital serves as the primary foundation of communal resilience among tour guides in Yogyakarta. Participants emphasized that resilience is not developed solely through individual capacities but is strengthened through social relationships, mutual support, and collective networks. As presented in **Table 1**, two forms of social capital emerged prominently from the data, namely bonding social capital and bridging social capital. These dimensions functioned as important resources that enabled participants to cope with occupational pressures and uncertainties within the tourism sector.

Table 1. Social Capital as the Foundation of Communal Resilience

Subtheme	Key Findings	Representative Quote
Bonding Social Capital	Peer support and faith-based coping functioned as important sources of emotional support and stress reduction.	“We always remind each other that this is a trial. We have God. Faith lightens the stress. We pray together before starting tours. That's our main coping strength.” (Subj. 7)
Bridging Social Capital	Professional associations connected tour guides with information, assistance, and external resources during periods of crisis.	“During the pandemic, the first to help us wasn't the government, but the association. They arranged aid and shared regulatory updates. We knew we weren't alone.” (Subj. 4)

As shown in Table 1, bonding social capital was reflected in the emotional and spiritual support exchanged among tour guides, while bridging social capital was evident through the role of professional associations in facilitating access to information and institutional assistance. Together, these forms of social capital strengthened communal resilience by providing both emotional security and practical resources needed to navigate uncertainty.



Theme 2: Collective Learning and Self-Efficacy Development

Collective learning emerged as another important element of communal resilience. Participants described how interactions with fellow guides enabled the exchange of experiences, practical knowledge, and emotional support. These processes contributed to the development of self-efficacy and strengthened participants’ confidence in managing work-related challenges. The main findings associated with this theme are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Collective Learning and Self-Efficacy Development

Subtheme	Key Findings	Representative Quote
Learning Through Shared Experiences	Experience-sharing strengthened competence, confidence, and collective problem-solving abilities.	“In the past, a major guest complaint would make me panic. Now, I ask my friends, ‘Have you dealt with this?’ We share solutions. It makes me confident that any problem has a fix.” (Subj. 2)
Collective Emotional Regulation	Peer support helped participants manage emotional labor and work-related stress.	“When I’m in a bad mood due to home conflicts, I share with my colleagues. They understand because everyone experiences it.” (Subj. 9)

The findings presented in Table 2 demonstrate that communal resilience is reinforced through continuous learning and collective emotional regulation. Participants relied on shared experiences to improve their professional competence, while emotional support from colleagues helped them cope with stress and maintain psychological well-being. These findings suggest that social networks function as adaptive learning systems that enhance both competence and confidence among tour guides.

Theme 3: Adaptation to Systemic Barriers

The third theme highlights how communal resilience is manifested through collective responses to systemic barriers. Participants reported encountering challenges related to regulations, resource access, and gender-related responsibilities that could not be effectively addressed through individual efforts alone. Consequently, collective action and support networks became essential mechanisms for adaptation. The key findings associated with this theme are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Adaptation to Systemic Barriers

Subtheme	Key Findings	Representative Quote
Regulatory Vulnerabilities and Resource Access	Collective advocacy through associations enabled guides to negotiate with authorities and stakeholders.	“Our association has to lobby continuously. If we acted alone, we wouldn’t be heard.” (Subj. 1)
Gender Barriers and Dual Roles	Female tour guides experienced additional pressures related to dual responsibilities at work and home.	“Female guides must be more resilient because we struggle twice—on the field and at home.” (Subj. 6)



As illustrated in Table 3, communal resilience extends beyond emotional support and learning processes to include collective adaptation to structural challenges. Professional associations played a crucial role in representing members' interests and facilitating access to external resources, while informal support networks assisted participants in managing gender-related pressures and dual-role responsibilities. These findings demonstrate that resilience among tour guides is constructed collectively through social relationships, collaborative action, and shared efforts to overcome systemic barriers.

Discussion

Resilience as Communal Ecology

The findings reveal that resilience among professional tour guides is not solely an individual psychological capacity but a collective process that develops through social interaction, mutual support, and community participation. Participants consistently described how resilience was strengthened through relationships with fellow tour guides, professional associations, and shared experiences accumulated throughout their careers. Rather than confronting occupational challenges independently, participants relied on collective networks to obtain emotional support, practical advice, and encouragement during difficult situations. These social connections enabled them to manage emotional labor, maintain motivation, and respond more effectively to work-related pressures. The findings suggest that resilience is embedded within a broader social environment where adaptation is facilitated through continuous interaction with others. Consequently, resilience among tour guides should be understood as a communal phenomenon that emerges through collective engagement rather than as a purely personal attribute.

This interpretation is consistent with previous tourism resilience studies emphasizing the importance of social environments in strengthening adaptive capacity. Wang et al. (2022) found that resilience is closely associated with the availability of social resources that help individuals cope with uncertainty and psychological pressures. Their study demonstrated that individuals who possess stronger social support networks tend to exhibit greater adaptive capacity when facing challenging circumstances. Similarly, Elshaer (2024) argued that resilience extends beyond individual characteristics and is influenced by broader social and organizational contexts that facilitate adaptation and recovery. Both studies highlight the importance of external support systems in promoting resilience, particularly within tourism-related occupations that are highly exposed to uncertainty and environmental change. The findings of the present study support these arguments by showing that resilience is strengthened through social interactions and collective participation within professional communities.

However, the present study extends existing literature by demonstrating that resilience among tour guides is sustained through what can be described as a communal ecology. Participants did not merely receive support from their social environment; they actively contributed to and benefited from reciprocal relationships that reinforced collective adaptation. Through peer support, shared experiences, and association involvement, resilience became a communal resource that was continuously reproduced and strengthened within the group. This finding suggests that resilience should not be viewed exclusively as an individual outcome but as a dynamic process shaped by social relationships and collective practices. The concept of Communal Ecology therefore provides a broader framework for understanding how tourism workers maintain well-being and adaptability in the face of occupational



stressors and systemic challenges. By emphasizing the collective dimensions of resilience, this study offers a more comprehensive perspective on adaptation within tourism communities.

Social Capital as a Collective Coping Resource

The findings demonstrate that social capital functions as a critical coping resource that enables tour guides to manage occupational stress and uncertainty collectively. Participants frequently described how trust, solidarity, and reciprocal support within their professional community helped them navigate emotional labor, fluctuating work demands, and personal challenges. Emotional support from fellow guides reduced feelings of isolation and provided reassurance during difficult situations. In addition, the exchange of information and practical advice allowed participants to identify effective solutions to work-related problems more quickly. The findings suggest that social capital provides both emotional and instrumental resources that strengthen resilience within the tour guide community. As a result, coping is not solely an individual process but a collective effort supported by social relationships and shared experiences.

These findings are consistent with Prayitno et al. (2024b), who emphasized that social capital plays a central role in strengthening collaboration and collective action within tourism communities. Their study found that trust, participation, and social networks contribute significantly to the sustainability of tourism development by enhancing cooperation among stakeholders. Similarly, Idajati et al. (2024) reported that social capital is an important determinant of community resilience because it facilitates coordination, resource mobilization, and adaptive responses to external challenges. Both studies highlight the value of social relationships in enabling communities to respond effectively to uncertainty and change. The present findings reinforce these arguments by demonstrating that social capital not only supports collective action at the community level but also provides direct benefits to individuals facing occupational pressures. Consequently, strong social networks become an essential resource for maintaining resilience within tourism professions.

An important contribution of this study is the identification of social capital as a collective coping mechanism rather than merely a social asset. The findings indicate that bonding social capital strengthens emotional support and psychological security, while bridging social capital expands access to information, institutional assistance, and professional opportunities. These complementary functions allow tour guides to address both personal stressors and broader occupational challenges. Through continuous interaction within professional networks, participants developed confidence, shared adaptive strategies, and strengthened their capacity to respond to adversity. This process demonstrates that coping is shaped not only by individual resilience but also by the availability and quality of social relationships. Therefore, social capital should be viewed as a fundamental resource that supports both individual well-being and communal resilience within the tourism sector.

Social Capital and Adaptation to Systemic Barriers

Another important finding of this study is that communal resilience enables tour guides to respond not only to personal stressors but also to systemic barriers within the tourism sector. Participants reported challenges related to regulatory changes, limited access to resources, unstable tourism demand, and administrative constraints that often exceeded individual coping capacities. In many situations, personal resilience alone was insufficient to



address these structural issues. Instead, participants relied on professional associations and collective networks to obtain information, coordinate responses, and advocate for their interests. These collective efforts enabled tour guides to adapt more effectively to external pressures while maintaining their professional roles. The findings indicate that resilience is closely connected to the ability of communities to mobilize social resources in response to structural challenges.

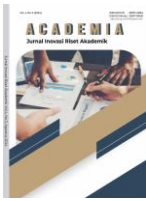
The findings are consistent with Tichaawa and Chamboko-Mpotaringa (2025), who found that tourism workers frequently encounter institutional and structural barriers that hinder professional development and long-term sustainability. Their study emphasized that overcoming such barriers requires collective engagement and support mechanisms rather than individual action alone. Similarly, Idajati and Damanik (2025) demonstrated that social and cultural capital strengthen community resilience by enhancing adaptive capacity and facilitating collective responses to environmental and socio-economic changes. These studies suggest that resilience becomes more effective when supported by strong social networks capable of connecting individuals with external resources and opportunities. The present findings reinforce this perspective by showing that professional associations function as important intermediaries between tour guides and broader institutional systems. Consequently, adaptation to systemic barriers is largely dependent on the strength of collective relationships and collaborative action.

The results also suggest that social capital plays a protective role against the negative consequences of prolonged occupational stress. Participants frequently described how support from colleagues and professional networks reduced uncertainty and increased confidence when dealing with external challenges. Access to reliable information, emotional support, and collective advocacy enabled them to maintain engagement with their profession despite ongoing pressures. This finding is particularly important because persistent stress and uncertainty can contribute to withdrawal behaviors and reduced occupational commitment. Choi (2024) argued that supportive social environments can reduce the negative effects of work-related stress by providing resources that help individuals maintain psychological stability and organizational attachment. Therefore, the ability of tour guides to adapt to systemic barriers should be understood as a collective process in which social capital serves as a bridge between individual resilience and broader institutional adaptation.

Theoretical Contribution: Toward a Communal Ecology Model

The findings indicate that communal resilience among tour guides is formed through the interaction of individual capacities, social relationships, and collective learning processes. Rather than relying solely on personal coping strategies, participants consistently emphasized the importance of peer support, association networks, and shared experiences in managing occupational stress and systemic challenges. These findings suggest that resilience operates as a collective process embedded within community structures and social interactions.

To integrate these findings, a Communal Ecology model is proposed. As presented in Table 4, the model consists of three interconnected dynamics: psychological resilience, network bridging, and systemic learning. Psychological resilience is strengthened through self-efficacy and spiritual values, while bonding social capital provides emotional support that helps mitigate daily occupational stressors. Network bridging is facilitated through association membership, allowing tour guides to access external resources and collectively address regulatory and institutional barriers. Meanwhile, systemic learning emerges through



shared experiences and adaptive learning processes that enhance professional competence and collective adaptability.

Table 4. Proposed Communal Ecology Model of Tour Guide Resilience

Core Dynamics	Primary Resources (Internal)	Adaptive Mechanisms (External)	Function Against Stress
Psychological Resilience	Individual self-efficacy, spiritual values	Bonding social capital	Mitigation of micro-stressors (DRS and emotional labor)
Network Bridging	Association membership	Bridging social capital	Mitigation of macro-stressors (regulatory and systemic barriers)
Systemic Learning	Field experiences and shared knowledge	Adaptive learning systems	Enhancement of mastery and agility resilience

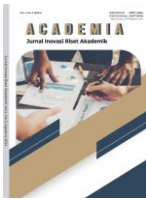
As shown in Table 4, the proposed model illustrates how internal resources are transformed into collective adaptive capacities through social capital and learning mechanisms. The model highlights that communal resilience is not merely reflected in the ability to recover from adversity but also in the collective capacity to learn, collaborate, and respond to systemic challenges. This finding aligns with recent tourism resilience studies emphasizing adaptive transformation and resilience agility as essential components of long-term sustainability in dynamic tourism environments (Kokkranikal et al., 2025; Traskevich & Fontanari, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that resilience among professional tour guides in Yogyakarta is best understood as a form of Communal Ecology, where adaptation emerges through the interaction of social support, collective self-efficacy, and professional networks. The findings show that both bonding social capital and bridging social capital play important roles in helping tour guides cope with emotional labor, dual-role stress, and systemic barriers. Bonding social capital strengthens emotional support and solidarity, whereas bridging social capital facilitates access to information, resources, and collective advocacy through professional associations.

The study contributes theoretically by proposing the Communal Ecology Model, which positions resilience as a collective process rather than solely an individual capability. The findings suggest that resilience is strengthened through social relationships, collective learning, and collaborative adaptation to challenges within the tourism sector.

This study is limited by its small sample size and focus on a single tourism destination. Future research is recommended to quantitatively test the proposed model in different tourism contexts and examine the relationships among social capital, collective self-efficacy, and resilience outcomes. Practically, tour guide associations and tourism authorities should strengthen peer-support systems, knowledge-sharing platforms, and collaborative networks to enhance sustainable resilience within tourism communities.



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