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Strengthening Integrated Business Management in a Fitness Equipment Microenterprise: Participatory Management Assistance at CV One Collection, Malang

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ABSTRACT:

CV One Collection, operating under the Mascel Boy brand in Malang, manufactures and markets fitness equipment and has developed from an owner-led business into a specialized local producer. The comprehensive field report shows that the enterprise already possesses practical experience in production, customer service, and multichannel marketing, but several management routines remain informal or insufficiently documented. This community engagement article aims to formulate an evidence-based strengthening framework for human resources, finance, operations, and marketing. The activity used a descriptive participatory management-assistance design based on field observation, interviews with the owner and workers, document review, photographic documentation, and joint problem mapping. The revised diagnosis identifies four priorities: clarifying workforce roles and skill coverage; separating and reconciling business and household-related costs; formalizing production scheduling, quality-control, and maintenance routines; and improving the consistency and measurability of digital marketing across social media and marketplaces. Rather than reporting unsupported short-term performance gains, the program translates these priorities into practical tools such as a role-and-skill matrix, simplified financial records, job-order and maintenance controls, and a digital content and inquiry log. The case demonstrates that community service for microenterprises is more credible and useful when managerial recommendations are tied to observable baseline evidence and when future outcomes are defined through measurable indicators.

Keywords: community engagement, fitness equipment, business management, microenterprise, participatory assistance, digital marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Micro and small enterprises frequently combine entrepreneurial flexibility with informal management routines. This flexibility can be an advantage in responding quickly to customer needs, but it may also create dependence on the owner, weak documentation, limited financial visibility, and inconsistent coordination when the business grows. Evidence from small firms in developing economies shows that basic management practices in marketing, stock control, record keeping, and financial planning are closely associated with business performance, making management capability a relevant target for community-based assistance (McKenzie & Woodruff, 2017).

The need for managerial strengthening has become more important as small enterprises adopt digital channels and increasingly complex operating practices. Digital adoption is not simply a matter of opening social-media or marketplace accounts. Organizational factors such as top-management support, human resources, digital culture, and implementation capability shape whether technology generates business value (Faiz et al., 2024). Mladenova (2024) similarly emphasizes the mediating role of management in translating external pressures and internal barriers into effective digital adoption. For microenterprises, this implies that simple managerial discipline often needs to precede or accompany more advanced digitalization.

CV One Collection is a fitness-equipment enterprise in Malang that markets products under the Mascel Boy brand. According to the comprehensive field report, the business began in 2008 with T-shirt sales, expanded into fitness-equipment production around 2014, and used CV One Collection as its business identity from approximately 2017. Its workshop is located in the Plaosan Permai area of Malang. The enterprise manufactures and distributes indoor and outdoor gym equipment and related accessories, serving a niche market that requires fabrication capability, product customization, customer communication, and delivery coordination.

The field report indicates that the business already has several strengths. Production knowledge is concentrated in an experienced owner and a small workforce; the enterprise uses its own brand; marketing reaches customers through word of mouth, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Shopee, and Lazada; and the owner has maintained the enterprise without heavy dependence on external financing. However, the same report reveals managerial gaps. Workforce planning remains highly owner-dependent, employee numbers are reported inconsistently across sections, financial records are still described as traditional and partly mixed with household-related costs, and digital marketing is present but not yet supported by clear performance measurement.

These conditions require a different community-service response from that presented in the original manuscript. The initial draft described six structured training sessions, spreadsheet adoption, measurable reductions in delays, stronger employee commitment, and increased brand awareness. Those claims are not sufficiently documented in the source report. Therefore, the revised article focuses on what can be defended from the available evidence: participatory diagnosis, formulation of practical management tools, and the establishment of indicators for subsequent monitoring. This evidence discipline is important because community engagement should distinguish between an output produced during assistance and an outcome that has actually been measured after implementation.

The objective of the activity is to strengthen the managerial readiness of CV One Collection through an integrated four-function framework: (1) clarifying human-resource roles and skill coverage, (2) improving financial separation and recording discipline, (3) formalizing critical production and maintenance routines, and (4) making digital marketing more systematic and measurable. The contribution of the case lies in showing how a university-supported engagement can translate informal entrepreneurial practices into simple management instruments without imposing systems that are disproportionate to the scale of the enterprise.

Figure 1. Exterior view of CV One Collection workshop or photo of gym equipment in production
Source: Researcher's Documentation in the comprehensive field report.

2. METHODS

The activity used a descriptive participatory management-assistance design. The term participatory management assistance is used deliberately instead of claiming a full Participatory Action Research cycle, because the available documentation records field observation, interviews, managerial analysis, recommendations, and collaborative discussion but does not provide sufficient evidence of repeated action-reflection cycles or validated longitudinal outcome measurement.

The partner was CV One Collection (Mascel Boy), a microenterprise producing and distributing fitness equipment in Malang, East Java. The primary empirical basis of this article was the comprehensive Studi Aplikasi Manajemen field report prepared from direct observation and interviews. Supporting evidence included descriptions of the business history and organization, human-resource practices, financial management, operational activities, marketing channels, strategic analysis, and photographic documentation.

The diagnostic procedure consisted of five stages. First, the team mapped the partner profile and existing business process. Second, field evidence was classified into four management functions: human resources, finance, operations, and marketing. Third, the team separated practices that were already implemented from recommendations that had not yet been verified as adopted. Fourth, priority problems were translated into low-complexity management tools that matched the scale and owner-led character of the enterprise. Fifth, follow-up indicators were defined so that later mentoring can assess whether the proposed tools produce observable outcomes.

Triangulation was performed by comparing statements across sections of the comprehensive report. Where the source contained inconsistent data, the revised article did not select one figure without qualification. For example, the report contains different descriptions of the workforce size, including a statement of seven employees and another description of six production workers plus two administrative workers. Consequently, this article describes the partner as having a small production and administrative workforce and treats the exact number as a verification item for future data collection.

Evaluation was organized using an output-to-outcome principle. Immediate outputs are management instruments that can be directly verified, such as a role matrix, financial-recording format, job-order tracker, preventive-maintenance list, content calendar, or customer-inquiry log. Outcomes are subsequent changes that require comparative data, such as fewer production delays, lower rework, more complete financial records, greater posting consistency, higher qualified inquiries, or increased repeat orders. Because validated before-and-after measurements were not available, this article does not make causal claims about business-performance improvement.

Table 1. Evidence-based management priorities and follow-up indicators

Function	Baseline evidence	Practical assistance output	Follow-up indicators
Human resources	Owner-dependent coordination; need for additional workforce in selected functions; inconsistent employee count in source report.	Role-and-skill matrix; one-page job descriptions; short briefing routine; basic performance feedback.	Role clarity; skill coverage; overtime/peak-load pressure; repeated errors; briefing completion.
Finance	Traditional records; some household and business costs remain mixed; business relies mainly on internal capital.	Separated cash record; cost classification; monthly reconciliation; simple cash-flow and margin review.	Record completeness; reconciled balance; cost classification accuracy; cash reserve; margin visibility.
Operations	Production depends strongly on owner experience and a small workforce; scaling and international orders are constrained by operational complexity.	Job-order tracker; production board; critical SOPs; quality-check list; preventive-maintenance schedule.	On-time completion; rework; downtime; order backlog; delivery accuracy.
Marketing	Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Shopee, Lazada and word of mouth are used, but digital activity is not supported by consistent content planning and analytics.	Content calendar; standardized product visuals; inquiry log; channel/source tracking; simple marketing dashboard.	Posting consistency; response time; qualified inquiries; conversion by channel; repeat order; lead source.

Source: Authors' synthesis based on the comprehensive field report and management diagnosis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human Resource Management: From Owner Dependence to Role and Skill Clarity

The HR diagnosis shows that CV One Collection operates with a compact workforce in which the owner plays a central role in recruitment, direction, supervision, and problem solving. The report also recommends adding employees to accelerate business activities, particularly in functions such as marketing and content creation. This indicates that the central HR issue is not simply the absence of workers, but the concentration of knowledge and coordination in a few individuals.

For a small fabrication business, role clarity is especially important because production quality depends on the coordination of material preparation, welding or fabrication, assembly, finishing, packing, administration, and customer communication. A practical assistance output is therefore a one-page role-and-skill matrix that identifies the tasks each worker can perform independently, the tasks requiring supervision, and the functions that lack backup coverage. Such a tool is more suitable for the partner than a complex HR information system.

The report's inconsistent employee count also illustrates why personnel administration should be formalized. A basic employee list, role description, attendance record, skill matrix, and training history would improve management visibility and make future evaluation more reliable. Research on SMEs indicates that high-involvement HR practices can support employee performance when they are accompanied by participation, clear expectations, and capability development (Cahyadi et al., 2022). More recent SME research also emphasizes the importance of employee dynamic capabilities in achieving digital performance (Wang et al., 2024).

The immediate community-service outcome that can be defended is therefore the formulation of an HR formalization agenda, not a measured increase in commitment or productivity. Future monitoring should record repeated production errors, workload during peak orders, employee skill coverage, and the frequency of short coordination meetings. These indicators will show whether clearer roles actually reduce dependence on the owner and improve workflow resilience.

Financial Management: Separating Costs and Converting Records into Decision Information

The financial section of the comprehensive report presents a mixed picture. On the one hand, the business is described as relying primarily on internal capital and reinvesting business resources, which gives the owner substantial control over financing decisions. On the other hand, the report explicitly notes that financial recording remains traditional and insufficiently detailed and that some 'other costs' are mixed with household expenses because the workshop operates in or near the owner's residence.

This condition can obscure the true operating cost of the enterprise. Shared electricity, water, internet, space, and transportation expenses may appear minor individually but can distort product costing and cash-flow analysis when they are not allocated consistently. The source report proposes arbitrary proportional separation as one possible solution; the revised assistance framework instead recommends documenting actual usage where feasible and applying a transparent, repeatable allocation basis where direct measurement is impractical.

The first financial tool should therefore be a separated daily cash record containing sales receipts, material purchases, wages, delivery costs, workshop utilities, household-shared costs, and owner withdrawals. The second is a simple monthly reconciliation that compares recorded cash movement with bank or cash balances. The third is a product-level costing sheet for major equipment categories so that pricing decisions reflect material, labor, overhead, and delivery requirements rather than only competitor prices.

Management-practice research in small firms consistently identifies record keeping and financial planning as foundational capabilities (McKenzie & Woodruff, 2017). The implication for CV One Collection is that digital accounting software should not be treated as the intervention itself. A spreadsheet or accounting application will only improve decision quality if cost categories are defined consistently and records are reviewed routinely. Therefore, future evaluation should focus on completeness, reconciliation, cost separation, and the ability to estimate margins rather than merely asking whether software has been adopted.

Operations: Formalizing Critical Production Controls without Reducing Flexibility

The partner's operating model is based on specialized fabrication and owner experience. This creates flexibility for customized fitness equipment but also exposes the business to bottlenecks when workload rises, when a particular skill is unavailable, or when the owner must directly resolve multiple issues. The source report itself recommends additional workforce and continuing product innovation, and it notes that overseas demand has not been pursued because currency exchange, shipping costs, and other logistical requirements are perceived as difficult or inefficient.

The operational strengthening agenda should therefore begin with visibility rather than complexity. A job-order tracker can record customer name, product specification, agreed price, deposit, material status, responsible worker, target completion date, quality check, and delivery status. A visible production board can then prioritize urgent jobs and identify stalled orders. Critical SOPs should be limited to activities where inconsistency has a direct cost: order confirmation, fabrication specifications, quality inspection, packing, and delivery handover.

Preventive maintenance is another relevant area because fitness-equipment fabrication depends on tools and machinery whose failure can disrupt production. The article should not claim reduced downtime without data, but it can recommend a maintenance checklist covering inspection frequency, lubrication, safety checks, consumables, and repair history. This approach is consistent with the broader SME resilience literature, which emphasizes practical managerial skills and adaptive capability rather than sophisticated systems alone (Kotsios, 2023).

The proposed indicators are on-time completion, rework, downtime, delivery accuracy, and backlog. These measures can be captured using a simple monthly sheet. If international demand is reconsidered in the future, the same operational discipline will also help the owner evaluate export feasibility through order size, packaging requirements, shipping cost, currency risk, payment method, and after-sales support.

Figure 2. Operational process documentation supporting the proposed job-order and quality-control system.

Source: Researcher's Documentation; process interpretation by the authors.

Marketing: From Multichannel Presence to Consistent Digital Management

The marketing diagnosis requires correction from the original draft. CV One Collection is not absent from digital channels. The field report specifically describes the use of Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, supported by marketplace presence on Shopee and Lazada, while word of mouth remains an important acquisition mechanism. The managerial problem is therefore not channel access, but consistency, positioning, and measurement.

A fitness-equipment producer has a strong opportunity to communicate product value visually. Content can show fabrication quality, equipment dimensions, material thickness, finishing, product demonstrations, installation, maintenance advice, customer testimonials, and before-after facility setups. The report already recognizes the potential role of product demonstrations and testimonials. The revised assistance framework turns these ideas into a content calendar linked to customer questions and product categories rather than posting irregularly.

Digital marketing performance should be monitored through a simple inquiry log that records where each lead originated, what product was requested, response time, quoted value, conversion status, and whether the customer returned. Research on SME digital marketing demonstrates that performance depends on strategic capability and internal execution, not simply the availability of digital platforms (Wu et al., 2024). Likewise, technology adoption in innovative SMEs is shaped by human and managerial factors (Faiz et al., 2024).

For CV One Collection, this means the owner does not immediately need complex advertising automation. A more realistic progression is to standardize product photography, clarify product specifications and value propositions, create a repeatable posting routine, improve response tracking, and identify which channels produce qualified inquiries. Only after this baseline is established should paid advertising or more advanced e-commerce analytics be evaluated.

Cross-Functional Implications and Sustainability of the Assistance

The four management functions are interdependent. A marketing campaign can increase inquiries, but it will create customer dissatisfaction if production capacity and delivery dates are not visible. Additional employees can increase capacity, but they will not necessarily improve performance without role clarity and skill development. Higher sales can increase cash inflow, but they may still weaken liquidity if product costs are poorly classified or owner withdrawals are not separated from business expenditure.

The practical contribution of the engagement is therefore an integrated minimum management system. The recommended package consists of a role-and-skill matrix, daily cash and monthly reconciliation sheet, job-order and maintenance tracker, and content-and-inquiry log. Each instrument is intentionally simple so that the owner can maintain it without creating an administrative burden disproportionate to the enterprise's size.

This approach is compatible with the broader knowledge-transfer role of universities. University-business engagement can add value when academic concepts are translated into context-specific routines that a partner can actually use, rather than when the partner is required to adopt complex systems designed for larger firms (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). The sustainability criterion is therefore regular use and review, not technological sophistication.

The main limitation is the absence of verified baseline-post measurements and the internal inconsistency of several source data points. Accordingly, claims about increased productivity, fewer delays, stronger employee commitment, higher social-media engagement, or business growth should only be made after a defined monitoring period. A future mentoring cycle of at least two to three months should collect the indicators in Table 1 and compare them with an agreed baseline.

Table 2. Recommended documentation package for the next mentoring cycle

Instrument	Minimum fields	Review frequency	Evidence generated
Role-and-skill matrix	Worker, role, primary task, backup skill, training need	Monthly / when staffing changes	Role clarity and skill-coverage record
Financial control sheet	Cash in/out, cost category, owner withdrawal, shared cost allocation, balance	Daily entry; monthly reconciliation	Complete and reconciled financial baseline
Job-order & maintenance tracker	Order, specification, worker, due date, QC, delivery, equipment maintenance	Per order; maintenance weekly/monthly	On-time completion, rework and downtime data
Content & inquiry log	Channel, content topic, posting date, inquiry source, response, quotation, conversion	Weekly review	Posting consistency, lead source and conversion data

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the comprehensive field report.

4. CONCLUSION

The community engagement at CV One Collection shows that the primary managerial challenge of an owner-led fitness-equipment microenterprise is not the absence of business activity, but the need to formalize and connect routines that have developed through experience. The field evidence supports four priorities: greater clarity of workforce roles and skill coverage, stronger separation and reconciliation of financial records, more visible production and maintenance controls, and more systematic management of existing digital marketing channels.

The revised manuscript deliberately removes unverified claims of post-intervention efficiency, motivation, and brand-awareness improvement. Instead, the defensible output is an integrated assistance framework comprising a role-and-skill matrix, simplified financial controls, a job-order and maintenance system, and a digital content and inquiry log. These tools provide a traceable basis for subsequent evaluation.

For the partner, the next step is to implement the tools consistently and review a small set of indicators each month: role coverage, repeated errors, record completeness, cost separation, on-time completion, rework, downtime, qualified inquiries, channel conversion, and repeat orders. For similar microenterprises, the case suggests that university-led community service is most useful when it preserves entrepreneurial flexibility while converting critical tacit routines into simple, repeatable, and measurable management practices.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The findings reported in this article were derived from field observations, interviews, business records made available by the partner, and photographic documentation. Commercially sensitive or personally identifiable information is not included in the manuscript. Non-confidential supporting information may be made available upon reasonable request, subject to the partner's consent.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed to the implementation and preparation of the community service article. Contributions included program planning, field activities, data collection and interpretation, preparation of managerial recommendations, manuscript writing, and critical revision. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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