

Strategic Planning for the Development of Educational Ecotourism in Educational Institutions in Batu City

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ABSTRACT

The city of Batu is known as one of the main tourist destinations in East Java with abundant natural potential, ranging from agriculture and plantations to beautiful mountain ecosystems that can be developed into ecotourism that emphasizes a balance between economic activities, environmental preservation, and community empowerment. Educational institutions can play a strategic role in the development of ecotourism, both as centers of learning, drivers of entrepreneurship, and facilitators of community empowerment. Through the establishment and development of ecotourism business units, educational institutions can create practice-based learning experiences, while also building the economic independence of the institution. This training aims to provide comprehensive understanding to tourism stakeholders, particularly ecotourism managers, in supporting the sustainability of ecotourism businesses.

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of sustainable development, tourism is increasingly recognized as a sector with great potential to drive economic growth while preserving the environment. One form of tourism that is growing in popularity is ecotourism, which combines travel experiences with learning about nature and local culture. Developing sustainable ecotourism requires good management, including effective and efficient financial management.

The city of Batu is known as one of the main tourist destinations in East Java with abundant natural potential, ranging from agriculture, plantations, to beautiful mountain ecosystems. This potential can be developed through the concept of ecotourism, which emphasizes a balance between economic activities, environmental preservation, and community empowerment. An investigation into the tourism and hospitality sector, where

tourists engage with the sector's capabilities and development amidst the pandemic, revealed a correlation between strategic management and this sector.

Private educational institutions in Batu City have a strategic role in the development of ecotourism, both as learning centers, entrepreneurship drivers, and facilitators of community empowerment. Through the establishment and development of ecotourism business units, educational institutions can create practice-based learning experiences while building the economic independence of the institution. In a creative economy, one strategy that can be adopted is diversification by utilizing synergies between existing business units (Majid et al., 2022). The creative economy is inseparable from the role of community empowerment (Rosyanti & Azhar, 2025).

However, most educational institutions do not yet have the capacity and technical knowledge to manage ecotourism-based business units in a sustainable manner. Therefore, Ecotourism Business Unit Development Training is needed as a first step in building managerial, entrepreneurial, and environmental sustainability competencies in the education sector.

This discussion and training activity is also expected to make a positive contribution to the development of tourism in Indonesia, particularly in the East Java region. With sound financial management, it is hoped that ecotourism businesses can operate sustainably and benefit local communities. In addition, this activity is also expected to strengthen cooperation between academics, practitioners, and the government in the development of sustainable tourism. The development of new tourist destinations can raise awareness among local residents to contribute to the process of developing tourist areas (Raharjo et al., 2022).

Through this activity, the Management Study Program at the Faculty of Economics and Business, UPN Veteran Jawa Timur, is committed to contributing to the development of sustainable tourism in Indonesia. The harmonious integration of the creative economy and tourism has resulted in profitable economic growth and progress in the tourism sector (Azhar et al., 2024). The creative economy relies on ideas and human capital as the main factors of production in economic activities (Evanthi et al., 2023). Thus, it is hoped that tourism can become one of the sectors that can drive economic growth while preserving the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

Considering the potential of ecotourism in Indonesia and the importance of sound financial management in ecotourism development, university found it necessary to organize a socialization and training event on financial administration and educational ecotourism development. This activity aims to provide a comprehensive understanding to tourism stakeholders, particularly ecotourism managers, about the importance of good financial management in supporting the sustainability of ecotourism businesses.

In addition, this activity also aims to increase human resource capacity in the tourism sector, particularly in the areas of financial management and marketing. The training participants will be able to apply the knowledge they have gained in managing their ecotourism businesses. This training present relevant and up-to-date material.

The program was held in November 2024 at the Al Falah Islamic Education Institution (LPI) in Batu City. Participants included teachers from the Al Falah Islamic Education Institution (LPI) in Batu City. Activities include interactive training and workshops, field trips to model ecotourism sites.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outcomes of this training activity include improving participants' competence in understanding the concepts and practices of sustainable ecotourism management, the development of business plans for ecotourism business units in each educational institution, and the formation of a collaborative network between educational institutions, business actors, and local governments in the development of ecotourism in Batu City. Education and outreach initiatives can empower local communities, enabling them to understand and embrace the benefits of sustainable practices (Citalada et al., 2024). Awareness of the importance of protecting the environment is a concern in society. In this case, guidance and development regarding the importance of protecting the environment is carried out for students at school (Rasyid & Warmana, 2024). The evaluation of the activity was conducted through participatory observation during the training to assess the active involvement of participants, as well as an assessment of the results of the ecotourism business plans developed at the end of the activity. Quality management training for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is an important aspect in improving business competitiveness and sustainability (Handayani et al., 2024).



Figure 1. Presentation of training materials



Figure 2. field visit



Figure 3. discussion and strategy development

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This outreach and training activity is expected to make a positive contribution to the development of tourism in Indonesia, particularly in the East Java region. With sound financial management, it is hoped that ecotourism businesses can operate sustainably and benefit local communities. In addition, this activity is also expected to strengthen cooperation between academics, practitioners, and the government in the development of sustainable tourism.

Through these activities, the Management Study Program at the Faculty of Economics and Business, UPN Veteran East Java, is committed to contributing to the development of sustainable tourism in Indonesia. Thus, it is hoped that tourism can become one of the sectors that can drive economic growth while preserving the environment.

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