



Developing storytelling for tour guide to build global branding in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
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| <p>Article history Received 2023-08-18 Revised 2024-03-22 Accepted 2024-05-24 Published: 2024-08-03</p> <p>Keywords Storytelling Tour guide Tourist village</p> | <p><i>Trenggalek has more than 30 tourist villages that have been intensively built since 2020, including Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah. This village was chosen as one of the 300 best tourism villages in Anugerah Desa Wisata (ADWI) 2023. This year, one of the tourist villages proposed by the Trenggalek government was Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah. This tourist village has much potential for development, including cultural tourism. Cultural tourism in this tourist village can be developed into storynomics tourism. To develop storynomics tourism in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, the community service team from UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur then initiated and held a program called "Storytelling for Tour Guide" in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, Trenggalek. The program was successfully held on the 25th – 26th of June 2023 at Pendopo Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, attended by around 35 participants. They came from diverse backgrounds, from senior high school to undergraduate level. The success was proven by the participation and involvement of the participants in the discussion sessions and the publications made. In the future, the improvement of the storytelling skills of tour guides can boost the tourism sector in the area.</i></p> |
| <p>Kata Kunci Bercerita Desa wisata Pemandu wisata</p> | <p>Mengembangkan storytelling bagi pemandu wisata untuk membangun branding global di Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah. Trenggalek memiliki lebih dari 30 desa wisata yang gencar dibangun sejak tahun 2020, termasuk Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah. Desa ini terpilih sebagai salah satu dari 300 desa wisata terbaik dalam Anugerah Desa Wisata (ADWI) 2023. Tahun ini, salah satu desa wisata yang diusulkan oleh pemerintah Trenggalek adalah Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah. Desa wisata ini memiliki banyak potensi untuk dikembangkan, termasuk wisata budaya. Wisata budaya di desa wisata ini dapat dikembangkan menjadi wisata storynomics. Untuk mengembangkan wisata storynomics di Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, tim pengabdian masyarakat dari UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur kemudian menggagas dan mengadakan program yang disebut "Storytelling for Tour Guide" di Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, Trenggalek. Program ini sukses diselenggarakan pada tanggal 25 – 26 Juni 2023 di Pendopo Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, diikuti oleh sekitar 35 peserta. Mereka berasal dari berbagai latar belakang, mulai dari jenjang SMA hingga sarjana. Keberhasilan ini dibuktikan dengan keikutsertaan dan keterlibatan peserta dalam sesi diskusi dan publikasi yang dibuat. Ke depannya, peningkatan keterampilan bercerita pemandu wisata dapat mendongkrak sektor pariwisata di daerah tersebut.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Copyright © 2024, Wahyuningtyas, et al This is an open access article under the CC–BY-SA license</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> |

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INTRODUCTION

Trenggalek is one of the regencies in the Southern area of East Java, which is rich in natural potential for a tourist destination, ranging from mountain tourism, hills, plantations, and beaches to arts and cultural tourism, such as dances, traditional ceremonies, and other arts. Recognizing the wealth of natural and cultural tourism potential, the Trenggalek Regency Government has launched a development program for 100 tourist villages or SADEWA. Trenggalek targets to have 100 tourist villages by 2024. A tourism village is a village that presents the characteristics of a village as its attraction (Sudibya, 2018). The characteristics can be found in special culinary souvenirs for typical village residents. Based on this statement, each village with its characteristics can be proposed to become a tourist village, depending on how the local community and government develop the area into an attractive and quality tourist village.

As of 2022, 35 tourist villages have been successfully built in Trenggalek. One of the leading tourist villages in Trenggalek Regency, Pandean Village, located in Dongko District, has even been named one of the best in the 2022 ADWI. In addition, to boost the quality of the tourism village, in November 2022, the Government Trenggalek Regency is again holding a tourism village competition with various categories.

In addition to the various events attended and held by the Trenggalek Regency Government around tourist villages, various pieces of training were also organized by the Trenggalek Regency Government, including English language training for tour guides (English for Tour Guides), photography training for tourism actors, content literacy training, and some other training. Of the several exercises held, the Trenggalek Regency Government, one of the trainings that have not yet been held in English storytelling training, especially for tour guides and other tourism actors in Trenggalek Regency, which includes skills core that tour guides or tour guides must own. (Kovalenko et al., 2024) Many potential tourism objects can be developed through storytelling. Trenggalek is no exception; it has a wealth of natural and cultural tourism potential that can be used as an object in the storytelling technique.

Storytelling is an effective technique used by tour guides because tourists can remember and imagine the visualizations described by tour guides (Kusumah & Andrianto, 2023; Moreira et al., 2024; Risadi, 2021). Storytelling techniques are often used to explain historical or cultural tourist objects (Campos et al., 2023; Ghaderi et al., 2024; Roque, 2022; Stach & Zündorf, 2022). However, not only is tourism about history or culture, but nature tourism can also use storytelling techniques. Storytelling in tourism can increase the attention and interest of tourists toward certain tourist destinations.

The use of storytelling for the attractions of culture is explained by Susianti et al. (2022). Storytelling can also be applied to tourism products through tourist objects, cultural performances, and other promotional tools. Given the importance and usefulness of storytelling, this technique can be developed for media promotion of various other tourism products. So important is the storytelling technique in tourist guiding that Kusumastuti and Purwoko (2023) also raised the storytelling technique in the field of story comics tourism in Banyumas Regency. Meanwhile, according to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, storynomics tourism is a tourism approach that approaches aspects of a living culture's narrative, creative content, and culture. Through this approach, tourists will get information on the intended object and leave a distinct impression or impression for the tourist. This approach can even make related tourists visit the tourist spot again.

Meanwhile, story comic tourism plays a role in introducing tourist attractions through unique and creative content about these tourist attractions (Sukmadewi, 2021). Furthermore, it was explained that storynomics tourism is an effective tourism marketing strategy (Kartika & Riana, 2020). It was also explained that in storynomics tourism, storytelling can come from stories written by experts or even geologists and experts in other fields. It is hoped that tourists get information on the intended object and leave a distinct impression on the tourist. It could even be that this will make related tourists visit the tourist spot again.

Furthermore, it was explained that storynomics tourism is an effective tourism marketing strategy (Kartika & Riana, 2020). It was also explained that in storynomics tourism, storytelling can come from stories written by experts or even geologists and experts in other fields. It could even be that this will make related tourists visit these attractions again.

The problems frequently found in implementing storytelling were the tour guides, especially in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, who needed more storytelling training and workshops. They also rarely use English as they only use bahasa Indonesia and Javanese most of the time. Therefore, this program aims to give storytelling training to the tour guides in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah. Later, in the future, the improvement of tour guides storytelling skills can boost tourism development.

The community service activities reported in this paper are also in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the goals of the SDGs is to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and provide decent work for all (Goal 8) (Frey, 2017; Hess, 2016). The tourism sector plays an important role in driving economic growth by creating job opportunities and encouraging infrastructure development (Kaleeshwari & Sajjan, 2024; Qamari et al., 2023; Tang, 2022; Uula et al., 2024). Through this community service activity, the local tourism sector is expected to be optimized by increasing the capacity of tour guides in developing interesting narratives. By providing storytelling skills training to tour guides, this program not only helps to increase the attractiveness of the tourist village, but also creates new job opportunities, increases local income, and introduces the cultural richness of the Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah.

Communication skills are an important competency that must be honed by tour guides because they are essential in facilitating effective interactions and ensuring a positive experience for tourists. Tour guides must have a variety of communication competencies, including the ability to convey cultural, historical, and geographical information clearly and interestingly, and to mediate communication in multicultural spaces (Mihele & Bolog, 2023; Topler & Lukančič, 2024). Communication skills are not only limited to language proficiency but also involve the ability to use simple and easy-to-understand language (Rini & Firdaus, 2022). Therefore, professional training for tour guides emphasizes the development of these communication skills to ensure that they are well prepared to meet the needs of the dynamic tourism market and provide high-quality services (Kovalenko et al., 2024).

METHOD

The target audience for this storytelling training program is tour guides spread across tourist villages and other tourist objects in Trenggalek Regency. Tour guides participating in this program are expected to become more skilled in storytelling skills so that they can be implemented into their profession as tour guides. The method of implementing this program is as follows.

Preparation and debriefing

At this stage, the community service team consists of 2 English lecturers from 2 universities (1 lecturer from UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur as the team leader and one lecturer from a partner university who acts as a member) and 2 class from class 2021 who were given certain tasks and roles. The lecturers involved in this program were from the English Department. One of the interests of these lecturers is English for Specific Purposes, which is the origin of the English for Tourism field of study, one of which is about storytelling skills. Meanwhile, the two students involved are also taking law studies, where these students have taken courses on village regulatory law related to tourist villages. In addition, the two students involved have also taken and passed Indonesian and English courses very well, where their storytelling skills have been tested in these courses so that the topic of community service is still related to the student's field of study.

Because the service team has obtained an overview of the tour guides' distribution and level of Indonesian and English proficiency, the next stage is coordination with related parties or agencies, namely the Tourism and Culture Office of Trenggalek Regency. The team will also socialize with several representatives from the tour guide and related agencies to find suggestions and input for the smoothness and effectiveness of this storytelling training program. At this stage, data were also collected on the number of tour guides who were able and interested in participating in this program and the materials needed by the tour guides and expected to be taught during the training program. At this stage, the community service team will get an initial description and accurate input from tour guides and related agencies so that the implementation of the next stages can run smoothly.

Implementation

The next stage is implementing a storytelling training program for tour guides in Trenggalek Regency's tourist villages. Assisted and coordinated by the Tourism and Culture Office of Trenggalek Regency, the tour guides will receive storytelling training from 2 lecturers who act as tutors, consisting of 1 chairman and one member of the community service team in June 2023. The training was conducted offline in a tourist village whose location is fairly easy for tour guides from other tourist villages to reach. The storytelling program participants for this tour guide were also equipped with a storytelling technique module. The training lasts around 4 hours and includes material and a question-and-answer session. This program places more emphasis on practice than theory, and participants and tutors can directly discuss the material and practice provided. Students involved will also play a role as tutors who are on duty to help prepare materials and become activity contact persons. Students involved in this program plan to program the MBKM (Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka), a program that enables students to convert their activities outside the campus into their course credits, program in the next semester, and the courses that are planned to be converted according to their activities in this training program are courses in Sociology of Law or Customary Law. In these two courses, students receive material regarding regulations applied in rural areas so that they are still related to the topic of this community training program, which is closely related to life and economic activity in rural areas through tourism.

The role of the Trenggalek Regency Tourism and Culture Office as a partner is as an intermediary. It provides access for the community service team to discuss, interact, and meet directly with the tour guides during preparation, implementation, and evaluation or monitoring. In addition, the relevant agencies will also provide advice and instructions, especially related to field conditions and the ability of tour guides to guide tours.

Evaluation

At the end of this program, an evaluation will be held, where the team, participants, and related agencies will discuss and review the program's implementation, whether it has been running effectively, and what improvements or improvements need to be made. In addition, it is also hoped that the participants and related agencies will provide feedback for developing similar programs in the future so that similar programs can penetrate other strategic areas.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur PIKAT (Utilization of Science and Technology for Community) community service team held a community program in Jajar Gumregah tourism villages. The opening ceremony was held offline on Sunday, June 25, 2023, at Taman Jajar Gumregah, Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village, Gandusari District, Trenggalek Regency (Figure 1). This village is among the 300 Indonesian Tourism Village Awards (ADWI). Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village still maintains and preserves the culture, which is the legacy of their ancestors, such as Tiban, Megengan Show, jamasan, and others. However, this has created special interest for foreign tourists, especially the handicrafts owned by the Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village, one of which is a whetstone. The participants were Trenggalek local tour guides who also came from villages. This program is also supported by the Tourism and Culture Office of Trenggalek Regency, the ranks of the Pokdarwis of the Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village, and tour guides for tourist villages in Trenggalek Regency. The event was opened with remarks from the Head of the Trenggalek Disparbud Tourism Destinations Division, Tony Widianto, S.Hut., MT., M.Sc., and continued with remarks and opening remarks from the Head of Jajar Village, Mr. Imam Mukaryanto Edy alias Pak IME and also remarks and opening remarks from Dwi Wahyuningtyas, S.Pd., MA as the head of the community service team. In his remarks, the Head of the Tourism Destinations Division, The head of Jajar Village, and the head of the community service team expressed their hope that this program could run sustainably, considering how important this program is to support the English language skills of prospective tour guides as an increase in the ability to use English in introducing their culture to foreign tourists. The event then continued with the presentation of the plaque from the head of the community service team to the Head of Jajar Village.

The activity was carried out through a series of opening events held on Sunday, June 25, 2023. The event started at 9 am and closed at 1.30 pm, which was divided into two sessions: Material and Practice. This event is a form of storytelling training for tour guides in the Jajar Gumregah tourist village, Trenggalek Regency. Overall, the event took place smoothly. In addition to being given interactive and informative materials regarding charts for writing correct storytelling texts, participants were invited to practice speaking English by first writing the script on the paper provided. Then, practicing storytelling directly.



(a)

(b)

(c)

Figure 1. Some documentation of community service activities in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah : (a) The UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur PIKAT Team taking a photo with the Head of the Trenggalek Disparbud Tourism Destinations Division, the Jajar Tourism Village Pokdarwis, the Jajar Village Head, and the Candidate Tour Guide Participants; (b) submission of plaques from the UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur service team to the Trenggalek Disparbud, represented by the Head of the Trenggalek Disparbud Tourism Destinations Division; (c) presentation of plaques from the UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur service team to the Head of Jajar Gumregah Village

This event also had an ice-breaking session as a form of appreciation for the community service team for the tour guide candidate participants in the form of games where participants who dare to present their storytelling with confidence and speak English properly and correctly will be given gifts in the form of gifts. The harmony between the community service team and the prospective tour guide participants illustrates the enthusiasm of the tour guide candidate participants in learning storytelling. This makes the community service team enthusiastic about providing Storytelling material and training for prospective tour guides.

Feedback can be provided via the Google form or directly submitted to the community service team. Monitoring during and after the program will be carried out by the community service team and related agencies, so it is hoped that this program will run smoothly and be useful for the parties involved and the wider community. Even though the program has ended, it is hoped that the team will be able to monitor and assist if participants or related agencies need assistance in storytelling. This program can be claimed to be successful if the participants, who are tour guides, experience an increase in storytelling skills. Tour guides can also be more confident in guiding tourists using their storytelling skills. For the long-term target, the number of domestic and foreign tourists visiting Trenggalek, especially the tourist village, will continue to increase along with the increase in the storytelling skills of the tour guides.

From the pre-departure event to the implementation and evaluation, we received support from the UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur and the Trenggalek Regency Tourism and Culture Office as partners in this community service program. In addition to related institutions and agencies, this program also received support from the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) of the Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village, Gandusari, Trenggalek, the Jajar Village government, and, of course, tour guides for tourist villages in Trenggalek Regency. This activity began with the pre-departure program, which was held in June 2023. It was attended by the Head of the Tourism Destinations Division and employees within the scope of the Trenggalek Regency Tourism and Culture Office. After all preparations were completed, starting from determining the location of the training program to preparing program materials, on June 25, 2023, this training activity could take place successfully and smoothly.

Tour guides play a role in improving the tourism sector by acting as a source of information and ambassadors for tourist locations. Tour guides will also contribute to tourist satisfaction which can influence the image of the destination and the possibility of repeat visits (Kamel, 2021; Syakier & Hanafiah, 2022). By providing in-depth information about natural and cultural resources, tour guides will also enhance the visitor experience, thereby extending their stay and having a positive impact on the destination's economy (Bryon, 2012; Melubo & Kisingo, 2022; Nejmeddin, 2020). Continuing education, communication skills, and the willingness of tour guides to adapt to new trends are essential to maintaining their effectiveness and relevance in the tourism sector (Şengöz, 2022; Solomon et al., 2022).

In the community service activities reported in this article, the team has assisted tour guides to improve their storytelling skills. With increased competence, the tourism sector of Jajar Gumregah Village can improve (Ghaderi et al., 2024). The increase in the tourism sector in this village will be positively correlated with the increase in the village economy (Kaleeshwari & Sajjan, 2024; Qamari et al., 2023; Tang, 2022; Uula et al., 2024). In this way, the eighth SDG is expected to be helped to be achieved.

CONCLUSION

The UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur community service program, which is under the PIKAT scheme, entitled "Storytelling Training for Tour Guides to Develop Storynomics Tourism in Tourism Villages of Trenggalek Regency," focuses on storytelling training for tour guides. This program was successfully implemented. The attention from the tour guides of the Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village, Gandusari District, Trenggalek Regency was also extraordinary. This program's outputs, from modules, textbook designs, and publications in mass media, both online and in print, to participation in the 2023 UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur International Seminar of Research Month, can benefit a wide audience, especially tourism workers. It is hoped and suggested that this training program continues. This activity starts a series of Storytelling programs for Tour Guides that focus on storytelling training in Trenggalek Regency. In addition, it is also targeted that in the following year, a similar program can be held with a wider and more varied range of participants and areas of community service. Equally important, it is also necessary to pay attention to regular scheduling for training programs so that all tour guides and community service teams can participate in this activity.

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