

Community Service Collaboration of Higher Education Institutions: Integrating Technology in Promoting Baduy Luar Ecotourism as an Effort for Local Potential-Based Development

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Abstract

The Baduy Luar community in Lebak Regency, Banten, possesses unique cultural assets and significant potential in handicrafts, agriculture, and culture-based ecotourism. This Community Service Program (PKM) was conducted in Baduy Luar, Lebak Regency, Banten, with the aim of enhancing digital literacy and entrepreneurial capacity among the local community to support the promotion of cultural-based ecotourism. The Baduy Luar community possesses great potential in handicrafts, agriculture, and tourism, yet still faces limitations in digital promotion and tourism management. This program applied a participatory and contextual approach involving 70 participants, including youth, MSME actors, and ecotourism practitioners. The experiential learning method enabled participants to learn through direct practice, covering smartphone use, tourism documentation, and promotion via social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp Business, and Facebook. The results showed significant improvement in the community's skills in utilizing digital technology for ecotourism promotion and cultural documentation. Furthermore, a positive synergy was established between universities and the local community, where academics acted as facilitators of digital knowledge while the community members served as the main actors in implementing digital-based promotion. This program contributed not only to enhancing technical skills but also to preserving cultural identity through digital documentation. In the long term, the program is expected to increase community income, sustain community-based tourism promotion, and strengthen local economic independence aligned with the cultural values of the Baduy Luar.

Keywords: Baduy Luar, Cultural Preservation, Digital Literacy, Digital Marketing, Ecotourism.

1. Introduction

The Baduy Luar community in Lebak Regency, Banten, has great potential in the fields of handicrafts, agricultural products, and culture-based tourism. However, this potential still faces various challenges, including limited entrepreneurship literacy, low digital promotion capabilities, and the risk of cultural erosion due to external influences. The Baduy Luar tourism sector, which has high attractiveness, has not yet been optimally managed with a digital technology approach, so opportunities for local economic development have not been fully utilized.



Previous studies emphasize the importance of digital and entrepreneurship literacy in the development of local-based tourism communities. Rustianah et al. (2024) noted that digital-based marketing training can increase the knowledge and capabilities of small business actors in marketing products online. This is in line with the findings of Azus & Raharjana (2024), who highlighted that tourism management by the Baduy community is not yet independent because it still depends on external parties, while local promotional and institutional capacity has not been maximized.

Furthermore, research by Kusumawidjaya et al. (2023) confirms that the Baduy Luar community has local wisdom practices that can be developed as heritage tourism products, including the holistic concept of ethno wellness. In the cultural context, Suanto (2025) reveals that modernization and technology have influenced changes in the behavior of the Baduy Luar community. Nevertheless, there are collective efforts from indigenous communities and customary institutions to preserve cultural values amid the current of change.

Studies in various other regions also show the success of technology integration in tourism development. Maulana et al. (2025), for example, proved that the use of digital platforms such as Instagram, Google Business, and Traveloka combined with community participation can attract tourists to Sumberbulu Village. Similar findings were revealed by Yusuf et al. (2023) in Lombok, where digital marketing training increased village tourism promotion. Other research, such as that conducted by Saleh & Wandebori (2025), as well as Ghaisani & Afifi (2022), also emphasizes the importance of digital communication strategies, online platform integration, and social media to strengthen the attractiveness of tourist destinations.

In addition, Sukenda et al. (2025) found that collaborative digital marketing strategies are very effective in overcoming the decline in the number of visitors to nature tourism. Pinontoan et al. (2024) also emphasized the importance of using social media, websites, and mobile applications in expanding promotional reach in creative tourism villages. Research by Rettobjaan et al. (2025) in Bali even emphasized that digital literacy combined with cultural content can strengthen local identity while attracting tourists. Similar results were also found by Widyanaputri et al. (2024) in Gianyar and Zakyia & Cindo (2024) in Batam, also Nanang et al. (2023) in Surabaya, which proved that digitalization of promotion can support the economic improvement of tourism village and ecotourism communities. Thus, technology integration in ecotourism promotion becomes an important strategy to encourage development based on local potential while maintaining cultural preservation. Through this Community Service Program (PKM), it is hoped that the Baduy Luar community can increase economic independence through entrepreneurship literacy and digital literacy, while strengthening their cultural identity amid the times.

The objectives of this activity are focused on empowering the Baduy Luar community through digital literacy and sustainable tourism development. The primary aim is to provide basic training in the use of digital technology to youth and ecotourism practitioners in Baduy Luar. Additionally, the activity seeks to improve the community's ability to produce and disseminate digital content regarding the potential of Baduy ecotourism. The program also aims to foster critical awareness in the use of technology that is adaptive to local wisdom, ensuring that technological adoption respects and preserves cultural values. Finally, the activity intends to assist the community in building a participatory and sustainable digital-based tourism promotion and management system that benefits the local population while maintaining their cultural integrity.

2. Methods

This Community Service (PKM) activity is the result of collaboration from several university campuses, namely the Indonesian University of Science, Ma'soem University, and Dr Khez Muttaqien Islamic University. It was carried out on October 4, 2025, using a participatory and contextual approach, in which 70 people from the Baduy Luar community especially youth and tourism practitioners played an active role in the focused short learning process. This approach allows training to remain relevant to local cultural values, aligned with the community's time constraints, and provides practical benefits in a limited time. All training sessions were conducted face-to-face for 1.5 hours in an open hall agreed upon by customary leaders in Kanekes Village, Leuwidamar District, Lebak Regency, Banten. The implementation involved four lecturers from various scientific fields as well as two students as facilitators and field documenters.

The implementation series was arranged in three main stages: preparation, core implementation, and simple evaluation. In the preparation stage, the lecturer team prepared training scenarios, visual aids, and interactive modules, while students helped prepare materials and documentation. Customary leaders were involved from the beginning to agree on the form and content of activities so as not to conflict with local norms. Materials were delivered concisely and interactively through demonstrations, which included an introduction to digital technology (smartphones and cameras), ecotourism promotion with photos and social media, and simulation of uploading digital content.

To make the method more effective, we integrated an experiential learning strategy (learning through direct experience), where participants not only received material theoretically but immediately practiced it through simulations. Based on a study by Gunawan et al. (2023), the application of experiential learning methods in community service programs has been proven to improve participants' independent living skills through direct experience and reflection (participatory observation) at each stage of the activity. In addition, Asikin et al. (2024) used an experiential learning model with four stages including Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation in PKM programs for career exploration, and showed that this model is capable of encouraging understanding and changing participants' attitudes.

Evaluation of the activity's success was carried out through participatory observation and brief interviews after the training session. Evaluation indicators include participants' level of understanding of digital materials, basic skills in promotion through digital media, as well as their motivation and follow-up plan to apply the techniques learned. Photo and video documentation were used as reflection materials and evidence of program success. With this approach, it is hoped that the activity is not merely ceremonial but makes a real contribution to increasing the capacity of the Baduy Luar community to integrate technology in ecotourism promotion.

3. Results and Discussion

The implementation of the PKM program in Baduy Luar produced several important achievements. First, there was an increase in community capacity, where 70 participants consisting of MSME practitioners, ecotourism practitioners, the general public, and youth successfully received digital marketing training. They not only became familiar with using smartphones for tourism documentation but also began to understand promotional strategies through social media. Second, there was a strengthening of ecotourism promotion with the beginning of the use of digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp

Business, and Facebook to introduce the potential of nature tourism and local culture. In addition, this activity also encouraged documentation of the Baduy Luar community's culture in the form of photos, videos, and short narratives which were then uploaded to community social media accounts. Another equally important result is the creation of synergy between universities and indigenous communities, where academics act as facilitators of digital knowledge while the community becomes the main actors in implementing ecotourism promotion.

These results show that the Baduy Luar community has adaptive potential for digital technology as long as the approach used is contextual and respects local cultural values. The application of the experiential learning method in the activity allowed participants to directly practice the skills taught, so their understanding developed more quickly. This is in line with the findings of Rustianah et al. (2024), which stated that entrepreneurship literacy and digital marketing can increase the ability of small business actors to expand markets through online platforms.



Figure 1. Documentation of the Activity

The findings of this activity also support the research of Yusuf et al. (2023) and Maulana et al. (2025), which proved that the use of digital media can increase tourist visits to destinations based on local culture. Furthermore, cultural documentation in digital format has important meaning as a means of preserving local identity. As shown by Rettobjaan et al. (2025) in Bali, culture-based digital communication literacy can strengthen tourism attractiveness while preserving traditional heritage. Thus, this service activity not only focuses on improving technical skills but also opens up space for inclusive and sustainable digital transformation. The expected long-term impacts are increased community income through ecotourism, sustainability of community-based tourism promotion, and the preservation of Baduy Luar cultural identity amid the current of modernization.

However, this activity still has several limitations. First, the implementation time is relatively short (1.5 hours), so the space for deepening the material is still limited. Second, technological infrastructure limitations, such as unstable internet access, become obstacles in the direct practice of uploading digital content. Third, the varied levels of participants' digital literacy require intensive assistance, so more personal follow-up methods are needed. These limitations show the need for sustainable programs with broader support so that the goals of digital empowerment of the Baduy Luar community can be achieved optimally.

4. Conclusion

The Community Service Program (PKM) on technology integration in Baduy Luar ecotourism promotion has made a real contribution to increasing digital literacy and the entrepreneurial capacity of the community. This activity successfully increased the ability of youth, MSME practitioners, and ecotourism practitioners to utilize digital platforms as a means of promotion and cultural documentation. The results achieved show that the Baduy Luar community is adaptive to technology as long as the approach is carried out contextually and continues to respect local cultural values. In addition to having an impact on strengthening ecotourism promotion, this activity also encourages cultural preservation through digital documentation and strengthens synergy between universities and indigenous communities.

For the impact of this activity to be sustainable, further assistance is needed in managing community social media and marketplaces so that the use of digital technology is more focused and consistent. In addition, additional thematic training such as video editing, culture-based digital branding, and e-commerce platform management is important to deepen community skills. Cross-sector collaboration with local governments, tourism offices, and creative industry actors also needs to be strengthened so that the promotion of Baduy Luar ecotourism is increasingly wide-reaching and has a significant impact on improving community welfare. In addition, it is necessary to formulate customary-based digital community policies to ensure that the use of technology remains aligned with the norms and noble values of the Baduy community, so that modernization can go hand in hand with the preservation of local culture.

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