



Skills And Knowledge Enhancement Training For Tourism Industry Students At Smkn 1 Bintan Utara

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Abstract

This community service program focuses on enhancing the practical skills and tourism-related knowledge of students at SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, addressing the growing demand for skilled workers in the rapidly developing tourism sector in Bintan. The training emphasizes aligning students' competencies with hospitality industry standards, such as superior customer service, front office management, and the integration of digital technology. By combining theoretical lectures, simulations, and hands-on practice, the program bridges the gap between classroom learning and workplace demands, offering students real-world experiences. Participants engaged in practical scenarios to master essential skills in customer service and digital technology application within the tourism industry. The program outcomes revealed significant improvements in students' understanding, confidence, and readiness to enter the workforce. This initiative highlights the pivotal role of vocational education in producing industry-ready graduates capable of competing in both local and international tourism markets. By aligning training with industry needs, the program contributes to the development of the local tourism economy and enhances workforce competitiveness.

Keywords: *Tourism Industry, Vocational Education, Hospitality Skills, Workforce Readiness*

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, including in Indonesia. According to data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf), the tourism sector contributes 5.7% of the total national GDP and absorbs more than 13 million workers by 2022. This contribution does not only boost the national economy, but also opens up great opportunities for the younger generation to make a career in this field. One of the key factors that determine the competitiveness of the workforce in the tourism sector is the skills and knowledge that are in accordance with the evolving industry standards.

SMK as a vocational education institution has a strategic role in producing graduates who are ready to work and able to meet industry needs. However, the challenge faced by SMKs, including SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, is the lack of practical skills and up-to-date knowledge relevant to the current tourism industry. Many students do not fully understand international service standards, hospitality management, and the use of digital technology which is increasingly important in modern tourism operations.

Bintan, as one of the major tourist destinations in Indonesia, offers great opportunities for SMK graduates to contribute to the industry. Although SMKN 1 Bintan Utara has a tourism major, there is still a gap between students' abilities and the demands of the industry (Direktorat





Pembinaan SMK, 2018). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Riau Islands Province, the number of tourist visits to Bintan has increased rapidly in recent years (Statistik, 2024), which creates a need for a skilled workforce in hospitality, event management, and tourist destination management.

Recognizing this, training that focuses on developing practical skills (Supardi, Lubis, Fatimah, & Muhammad Haikal, 2024) and knowledge in the field of tourism is indispensable. This training is expected to address some of the key challenges that SMK students face. Many students do not have practical skills in tourism, such as excellent service (hospitality) (Lubis, Supardi, Fatimah, & Wibowo, 2024), manajemen front office, and event management, resulting in their lack of readiness to enter the workforce immediately after graduation.

In addition, students need to be equipped with the ability to use digital technology, which has become the backbone of the tourism industry, from online booking to digital-based destination management. In today's digital era, technology plays an important role in the tourism industry. According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) report, digital transformation will be one of the key factors in the success of the global tourism industry in the next decade.

In addition, competition in the tourism industry is getting tougher, and workers who have international service standards are more easily accepted in the global job market. For this reason, training that introduces international service standards, including English language proficiency (Supardi, Lubis, Wibowo, & Zaharafatimah, 2023) and other foreign languages, is essential to improve the competitiveness of SMK students.

This Community Service Program (PKM) aims to address these challenges by providing training to students of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara in the form of skills and knowledge development required by the modern tourism industry. The training will cover various aspects that are important in the tourism industry, such as hospitality service, front office management, etc (Putri, Wibowo, & Lubis, 2024), event and destination management, and digital technology. Thus, students will be better prepared to face the challenges of the world of work and be able to compete in the regional and global job market.

This training is expected to not only improve student competencies, but also strengthen the relationship between education and industry. UNESCO in the report "Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for the Future of Work" emphasizes that vocational education that is adaptive to industrial development will be key in preparing a workforce that is relevant to future needs. This program is also expected to create a strong synergy between schools and industries in producing a competent and ready-to-use workforce.

With this training, it is expected that students of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara will not only be job-





ready, but also able to play a role as agents of change who contribute to improving the quality of tourism services (Lubis, Supardi, Fatimah, & Rajin, 2024) in Bintan, Riau Islands, and Indonesia in general. This program is a strategic step in supporting the creation of a superior workforce in the tourism sector, which in turn will have a positive impact on the development of the industry and the regional economy.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The main partner in the implementation of this Community Service program is SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, a vocational high school that has a tourism department. This school has become one of the educational institutions committed to preparing students to enter the world of work, especially in the tourism sector. Some important things related to partners in this PKM include:



Figure 1. Front View of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara

Source: (Tim IT Diskominfo Kabupaten Bintan, 2022)

SMKN 1 Bintan Utara We face challenges in providing practical training that is relevant to the development of the tourism industry, especially in the face of the demands of the digital age and international service standards. Students need skills that are more focused on hands-on





practice to be ready to compete in the world of work. As a partner in Community Service (PKM) activities, SMKN 1 Bintan Utara The school provides training participants, namely students majoring in tourism, as well as supporting facilities such as classrooms and laboratories. The school also plays an active role in determining urgent training needs and assisting in the implementation of activities. SMKN 1 Bintan Utara is committed to supporting this PKM activity because of its relevance to the development of student skills, especially in the field of excellent service and tourism technology, so that it is expected to increase the competitiveness of its graduates in the world of work. Through this strategic partnership, it is hoped that a solution can be found to address the gap between educational theory and the evolving needs of the industry.

This PKM activity offers various solutions to overcome the problems faced by SMKN 1 Bintan Utara in developing students' skills in tourism. Some of the solutions provided include practical training relevant to the tourism industry, such as excellent service, front office management, and tourism technology, to help students gain applicable skills that are ready to be used in the world of work. In addition, the training includes an introduction to the latest technologies used in digital marketing, online reservation systems, and event management, to equip students with the knowledge to adapt to the development of technology-based industries. With training that focuses on practical skills and industry standards, the program also aims to improve the quality of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara graduates to be better prepared for the world of work. The training is expected to not only increase students' confidence in communicating and serving travelers, but also help them prepare for the world of work, especially for final year students who will soon graduate.

With the implementation of the solutions offered, this PKM activity is expected to not only provide a sustainable positive impact for students and SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, but also strengthen the synergy between the world of education and the tourism industry in the Bintan region. The students who receive practical training and focus on tourism industry skills will have better competence in facing the demands of the job market, so that the graduates of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara will be superior and ready to compete professionally. In addition, through introducing the latest technology and enhancing excellent service skills, the school can support Bintan's tourism sector in providing a competent workforce that meets industry standards. This is expected to help improve the quality of tourism services in the area, support local economic development, and attract more tourists. Thus, this PKM activity not only provides direct benefits to the students and the school, but also contributes to the overall development of the tourism industry in Bintan, bringing positive impacts to the surrounding community and the regional economy in the long run.





METHODOLOGY

This Community Service (PKM) activity was carried out on October 19, 2024, starting at 08.00 WIB until 16.00 WIB, with a break in the middle of the event. The training was held at SMKN 1 Bintan Utara, Riau Islands Province, in classrooms and tourism laboratories provided by the partner school. These facilities were chosen to support the practical learning activities required during the training.

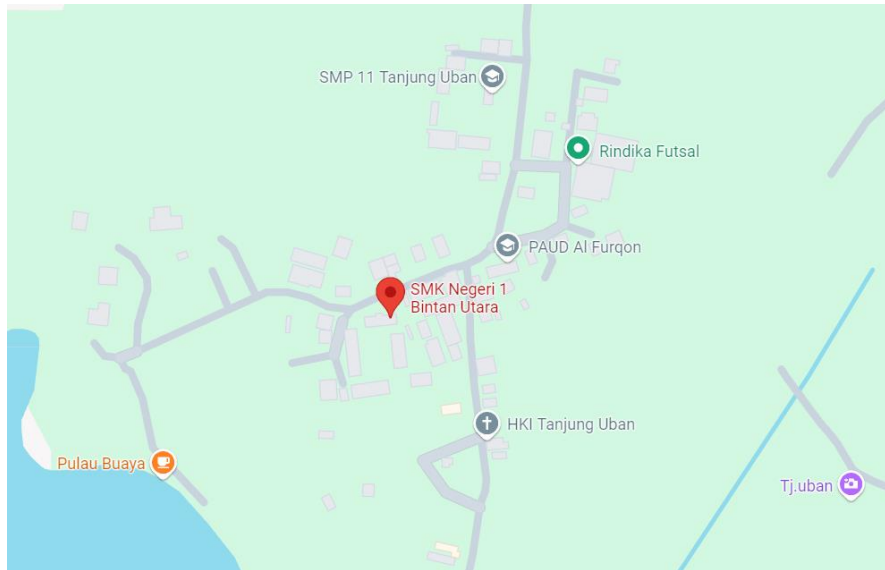


Figure 2. SMKN 1 Bintan Utara Map

Source: (Google, 2019)

In the implementation of this PKM activity, the method used combines theory and practice to ensure effective transfer of knowledge and skills to the students of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara. First, lecture and discussion sessions will provide a theoretical foundation on the tourism industry, service excellence, and the role of technology in tourism management, delivered by experienced resource persons. This session is followed by a discussion to explore the challenges faced by students and how to overcome them.

Next, simulations and case studies will be conducted, where students are divided into groups and run real scenarios such as front office services, interaction with tourists, and event management. In these groups, students are exposed to case studies to hone their problem solving and decision-making skills. After that, hands-on training will be conducted by introducing tourism software and online reservation systems, which will help students master the technology commonly used in the tourism industry.

In addition, the role playing method allows students to practice communication and customer service skills by playing the roles of customers and service personnel. This exercise helps students increase their confidence in dealing with real situations in the field. After each





session, there will be an evaluation and feedback, where students can express their views. of the training received, while the resource persons provided constructive suggestions for further improvement.

Through this combination of lectures, simulations, hands-on exercises, and role playing methods, the training is expected to provide a comprehensive experience for students of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara in preparing them to face the needs of the tourism industry with adequate skills.

SUSTAINABLE RESULT AND POTENSIAL

Result

The results of the PKM activity on Skills and Knowledge Development Training for Students in the Tourism Industry at SMKN 1 Bintan Utara showed a significant positive impact in equipping students with relevant basic skills to work in the tourism sector. The students showed high enthusiasm throughout the activity, from lecture sessions to group discussions, which discussed the importance of service standards in the tourism industry. Many participants felt that the training materials gave them a new understanding of work ethics, professionalism standards, and work culture in the hospitality world. Through this training, the participants were able to understand that professionalism can be obtained through a combination of training (Syaharani, Fatimah, & Lubis, 2024), understanding of hospitality science (Lubis, Supardi, Fatimah, & Wibowo, 2024), and internship experience in related industries (Andriyatno, Lubis, & Fatimah, 2023). In addition, training sessions on simple technologies, such as hotel reservation management and digital marketing, provided important insights for students to understand the role of technology in improving the quality of tourism services.

Evaluation showed a significant improvement in students' understanding of the materials taught, especially in basic hospitality skills and intercultural communication. Students feel more confident in applying this new knowledge, especially in dealing with guests with diverse cultural backgrounds, which is a critical need in the tourism industry in tourist areas such as Bintan, where the role of front office communication is crucial (Wulanda, Wibowo, Lubis, & Fatimah, 2023) and improving service quality greatly affects guest satisfaction (Sipahutar, Fatimah, & Lubis, 2024) (Jeniffer, Fatimah, & Lubis, 2024). Feedback provided by teachers and students also showed that the interactive teaching methods succeeded in making the material easier to understand and relevant to current industry conditions.

Although the training went well, some obstacles were encountered, such as limited tools and materials that caused practical sessions using advanced technology to not be optimally implemented. The limited implementation time was also a challenge, as the dense material could





only be delivered in a short time. However, despite the obstacles, the results of this training still fulfill its main objective, which is to provide practical skills for students of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara to be better prepared to compete in the world of work. Overall, the implementation of this PKM succeeded in creating a stronger skills foundation for the students and encouraged the school to consider further training in the future to deepen their practical skills in tourism.

This community service activity (PKM) was carried out with the main objective of improving the practical skills and knowledge of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara students to be better prepared to face challenges in the ever-evolving tourism industry. Through a series of training involving material sessions and interactive discussions, this activity is designed to provide in-depth insights into the world of hospitality and the role of technology in improving the quality of tourism services. With the support of competent resource persons, participants are expected to be more prepared and confident in facing an increasingly competitive world of work.

Preparation for PKM activities began with the making of banners, campus brochures, and merchandise for participants. Banners and brochures are designed to convey complete information about this activity, such as objectives, schedules, and important topics that will be discussed. Merchandise such as key chains and drink holders were also prepared as mementos for participants while strengthening the identity of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara in this activity. In addition, the servant first applied for official permission from the principal to ensure full support from the school. This support is important for the smooth running of the event, including the provision of facilities needed, such as classrooms.



Figure 3. Permission Process with the School

Source: Writer, 2024

As the opening of the event, Pengabdian Mrs. Arina Luthfini Lubis gave a speech and motivation to the participants. In addition, she also acted as a moderator to ensure the course of





the event according to the schedule and help participants understand the material presented by the speakers. In the material session, Mr. Supardi as a researcher explained the importance of PKM as a bridge between the world of education and industry. He discussed the benefits of PKM in developing practical skills that are relevant to industry needs, so that students can understand their role and the positive impact they can bring to society.



Figure 4. Implementation of PKM at SMKN 1 Bintan Utara

Source: Writer, 2024

Furthermore, Zahara Fatimah provided insight into the link between tourism and accounting. She discussed the importance of financial management and accounting in the tourism industry, especially in terms of budget management in hospitality businesses and travel agencies. This understanding is expected to open students' views that accounting skills are very relevant in the tourism sector and can open up broad career opportunities, both as professional accountants and as entrepreneurs.

To deepen students understanding of the hospitality world, guest speaker Mr. Andri Wibowo discussed the development of the tourism industry as well as future customer service trends. He highlighted the importance of technology skills, personalized service, and adaptability to changing traveler preferences. This session helped students understand the industry's expectations of future hospitality workers, and gave them guidance on how to prepare themselves to be competitive.

In the documentation section, student Jenni Novianti was in charge of recording the entire series of events, from lecture sessions to discussions and simulations. This documentation is not only useful for keeping memories, but also for making implementation reports as evaluation material. The results of documentation such as photos and videos can be used as a medium for





promoting this PKM activity in various channels, including social media, and as a report to sponsors and related educational institutions.



Figure 5. Group Photo with All PKM Participants

Source: Writer, 2024

Overall, this PKM activity ran smoothly and provided valuable experience for students and other participants. Through various sessions delivered by servants and guest speakers, participants gained applicable knowledge relevant to the tourism industry. They also understood how to utilize the skills gained to achieve success in the world of work. This activity is expected to have a long-term impact in developing the skills and readiness of SMKN 1 Bintan Utara students to contribute to the tourism sector.

Sustainable Potential

The potential for sustainability of the PKM activity of Skills and Knowledge Development Training for Students in the Tourism Industry at SMKN 1 Bintan Utara has several aspects that support the continuity and development of this program in the future. One of them is the improvement of student skills that can continue to grow. This PKM activity has equipped students with basic skills relevant to the needs of the tourism industry, and this training can be updated over time with more sophisticated materials according to industry developments, such as the latest technology in tourist destination management, digital marketing, and AI-based reservation systems. Sustainability of the training can be achieved by continuously adjusting the curriculum to the development of market needs and existing technologies.

In addition, the expansion of collaboration with the tourism industry is an important aspect in ensuring the sustainability of this program. Closer cooperation between the school and the





industry, such as hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, and other tourism organizations, can open up internship or job opportunities for students after graduation. With sustainable partnerships, the training program will continue to adapt to the needs of the world of work, as well as provide greater career opportunities for students in the tourism sector.

The program can also be developed into advanced training or certification that provides professional recognition of students' competence in the tourism industry. After basic training, students can move on to advanced programs that focus on specific skills, such as hotel management or tourism application programming. The provision of these certifications not only strengthens students' position in the job market, but can also be a sustainable source of income for the school.

To ensure long-term sustainability, these training activities can also be integrated into the school curriculum as part of compulsory or elective learning in the tourism skill area. With this integration, the PKM training is no longer just a temporary program, but becomes part of a continuous education process that is continuously updated. An annual evaluation of the program can also be conducted to maintain the quality and relevance of the training.

Increased student and alumni involvement also plays a role in the sustainability of the program. A network of alumni who are active in the workforce can provide feedback, mentoring, and even connect schools with industry. Support from this alumni network can help the training program remain relevant and open up opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience in the tourism sector.

Funding support from the government or private sector is also important for the sustainability of this program. Some companies in the tourism industry may be interested in supporting these training activities as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR). In addition, support from the local government in an effort to improve the skills of the young workforce in the tourism sector can be a major driving factor for the sustainability of this program.

Continuous innovation in learning methods is also key to keeping the program relevant and growing. The use of e-learning or blended learning technology allows students to access training materials anytime and anywhere. This innovation not only increases the flexibility of the training but also allows the program to reach more students, including those in remote areas or with limited access.

Overall, the sustainability of this PKM activity can be achieved through close collaboration with industry, development of relevant materials, and integration of the program in the school curriculum. With a sustainable approach, this activity can provide long-term benefits for students, schools, and the tourism industry in the area.





CONCLUSION

The following are the conclusions of the Community Service activities:

1. Achievement of Activity Objectives: PKM activities succeeded in improving students' skills and knowledge in the tourism industry, especially in the field of hospitality.
2. Implementation of Training Sessions: Students participated in lectures, group discussions, and simulations that provided insights into customer service and challenges in the hospitality world.
3. Role of Resource Persons: The resource person provided insight into the challenges and future development of the hospitality sector.
4. School and Service Provider Support: Support from the school and the role of servants ensured the smooth running of the activities and good documentation.
5. Obstacles Faced: Limited tools and limited time did not hinder the smooth running of the activity and its impact on participants.
6. Positive Impact for Students: Students gain strong basic skills in hospitality and tourism, preparing them for the world of work or entrepreneurship.
7. Potential for Future Development: PKM activities can be developed into part of a curriculum or advanced training program to deepen skills relevant to the tourism industry.

SUGGESTION

Here are suggestions for improving similar activities:

1. Providing more complete facilities and equipment: Providing more complete facilities and equipment, especially technology used in the tourism industry.
2. Increased Activity Duration: Extend the activity duration so that participants can explore the material and do more practice.
3. Strengthening Collaboration with the Tourism Industry: Establishing closer collaboration with the tourism industry for internship programs or industrial visits.
4. Preparing Advanced Training Programs: Planning advanced training programs such as skills certification in hospitality or digital marketing.
5. Industry-Based Curriculum Development: Integrate training into industry-based school curricula for relevant skills.
6. Improve Event Documentation and Promotion: Improve the quality of event documentation and promotion to publicize activities and attract the attention of sponsors.
7. More In-Depth Evaluation and Feedback: Carry out more in-depth evaluation with structured feedback to improve future activities.

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