

TRAINING ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM INNOVATION TO SUPPORT THE COMPETITIVENESS OF CULINARY BUSINESSES IN PARIGI, PONDOK AREN

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ABSTRACT

This community service activity aims to enhance the capacity of human resources (HR) among culinary business actors in the Parigi, Pondok Aren area, while at the same time introducing the concept of culinary-based tourism innovation to strengthen business competitiveness. The program includes training in business management, culinary product innovation, digital marketing, as well as strategies for collaboration with nearby tourist destinations. The implementation methods consist of lectures, workshops, case studies, and direct mentoring. The results of the activity show an increase in participants' understanding of business management (a 65% improvement in post-test results) as well as their ability to develop digital-based promotional strategies. This activity concludes that strengthening human resources and utilizing tourism innovation can be key to improving the competitiveness of culinary MSMEs. Follow-up is needed in the form of advanced training and the establishment of networks among business actors to ensure sustainable impact.

Keywords: Culinary Business, Competitiveness, Human Resource Strengthening, Parigi Pondok Aren, Tourism Innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

The culinary industry is a key sector in the creative economy, playing a vital role in increasing tourist visits, extending length of stay, and strengthening destination identity. According to UNWTO (2022), Culinary tourism contributes significantly to the travel experience by creating an emotional connection between tourists and destinations through the taste, aroma, and cultural narratives contained within the food. Culinary is often considered a gateway to local culture, as food reflects the history, traditions, and values of a community (Hashemi et al., 2021; Jolliffe, 2016). Moreover, culinary is not just about fulfilling consumption needs, but an important element that forms a holistic tourism experience (Yayla et al., 2024). An authentic culinary experience can increase tourist satisfaction and encourage revisit intention, while creating positive word-of-mouth promotion (Sthapit et al., 2020). In many destinations, culinary tourism is even the primary motivation for travel, not just a complement to other tourist activities (Stone et al., 2019). Furthermore, culinary arts have the potential to drive the local economy by empowering MSMEs, increasing community incomes, and creating jobs in the service, agricultural, and manufacturing sectors. This potential aligns with sustainable tourism development policies that emphasize the importance of social inclusion and cultural preservation through culinary products based on local wisdom (Kemenparekraf, 2021).

In the Parigi area of Pondok Aren, there are many small- to medium-scale culinary businesses that have significant potential to become tourist attractions. This potential is not only related to the diversity of culinary products offered, but also to its strategic location as part of Jakarta's buffer zone, which has high mobility and a large consumer market (BPS, 2023). However, this potential is often underutilized due to limited product innovation, management strategies, and digital promotions, resulting in low competitiveness with other culinary destinations in Greater Jakarta. Data from the South Tangerang City Cooperatives and SMEs Office shows that the number of MSMEs in 2022 reached approximately 149,644 units spread across seven districts, reflecting the enormous potential of the creative economy sector based on micro and small enterprises. In the food industry sector alone, 2,669 active MSMEs/SMEs were recorded, dominating the contribution of the regional creative economy (Institut Teknologi Indonesia, 2024). The high number of business actors is both an opportunity and a challenge: on the one hand, it provides a variety of culinary products that can be positioned as tourist attractions, but on the other hand, it demands increased human resource capacity, product quality standardization, and the adoption of digital technology in order to survive in the competition (Ramadhan & Wandu, 2023). Recent research also shows that collaboration between culinary MSMEs and tourism destination managers can increase product exposure by up to 40% through cross-promotion and event-based marketing strategies (Sandana et al., 2025). This reinforces the urgency of a program to strengthen human resources and product innovation in Parigi to optimize culinary potential as a tourism pull factor while simultaneously encouraging sustainable local economic growth.

The quality and availability of human resources (HR) remain major obstacles to increasing the competitiveness of the tourism and culinary sectors, particularly regarding service standards, technical skills, and the competency

of the local workforce. These obstacles include a lack of ongoing training, low digital literacy, and limited access to technology and business capital that can support innovation (Kemenparekraf, 2024). This finding is in line with research Mustamin dan Nur (2023) which emphasizes that the unpreparedness of MSMEs in facing digital transformation is one of the causes of the low competitiveness of culinary products in the regional market. Structured human resource development programs have been proven to increase productivity by up to 30% and expand market networks through the adoption of digital promotional technology. Therefore, interventions such as human resource development training and tourism innovation are increasingly urgent in Parigi, Pondok Aren, especially considering that this area is one of the centers of creative economic growth in South Tangerang. The main focus needs to be directed at developing culinary products based on local wisdom that have a story value (culinary storytelling), improving digital capabilities for marketing through social media, and data-driven business management strategies so that culinary actors can adapt to changing consumer preferences (Balatska et al., 2022). This approach is expected to not only increase business competitiveness, but also create a culinary ecosystem that is sustainable, competitive, and able to consistently attract tourists.

2. METHOD

This community service activity uses a participatory approach involving culinary entrepreneurs in the Parigi area of Pondok Aren as the main subjects. The implementation method consists of several stages designed to comprehensively increase the capacity of participants. **The first** stage is a needs assessment through a short survey and interviews to identify key issues faced by entrepreneurs, such as limited product innovation, simple financial management, and digital marketing strategies. **The second** stage involves socializing and delivering materials on the concept of culinary tourism innovation, the importance of culinary storytelling, and strategies to increase business competitiveness through strengthening human resources and the use of digital technology. **The third** stage is practical training (workshop) that includes creating innovative culinary products based on local ingredients, using visual design applications such as Canva to create promotional media, and practicing managing business social media accounts. The workshop is conducted interactively so that participants can try it out directly and receive feedback from the facilitator. The fourth stage is a focus group discussion (FGD) that encourages collaboration among participants, sharing experiences, and developing joint follow-up plans, including opportunities to hold joint culinary events or integrated promotions. The final stage is activity evaluation, which uses pre- and post-tests to measure participants' understanding and a satisfaction questionnaire to assess the effectiveness of the training method. This approach was chosen to ensure that the activity not only transfers knowledge but also encourages participants to internalize new skills and be ready to implement them in their businesses.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION



Figure 1. Workshop Practice at Warkop Apget 2025

Training on strengthening human resources and culinary tourism innovation held in the Parigi area of Pondok Aren was attended by 30 culinary entrepreneurs consisting of stall owners, cafes, home catering businesses, and local snack producers. Based on the pre-test results, the majority of participants (78%) showed a low level of

understanding of digital promotion strategies, such as utilizing social media for marketing, using attractive visual designs, and implementing culinary storytelling concepts. This indicates that most entrepreneurs still rely on traditional word-of-mouth promotion and have not yet maximized the potential of broader and more measurable digital marketing (Hariadi & Habib, 2023). After participating in a series of training sessions covering business management, product innovation, and promotional design practice using the Canva app, the post-test showed significant improvement, with the average participant score increasing by 65%. The most striking improvements were seen in understanding digital promotional strategies (74%) and product innovation planning (68%), while simple financial management improved by 52%. These results demonstrate that the workshop-based training method is effective in transferring skills that can be directly applied in the field, as supported by Wijayanti's (2022) finding that technology-based training can increase participant engagement and knowledge retention. In addition to improved theoretical understanding, participants also demonstrated development in practical skills, particularly in creating promotional content in the form of digital posters, short videos for social media, and content calendars. Some participants even successfully redesigned their business logos during the training session, demonstrating their ability to integrate new skills into their business branding strategies. This aligns with research by Putri et al. (2023) which confirmed that increasing the digital capacity of MSMEs directly contributes to increased business visibility and product sales potential.

In terms of product innovation, approximately 60% of participants successfully created new menu ideas based on local ingredients, such as variations of traditional snacks with modern packaging, contemporary beverage products with cultural narratives, and innovative presentations that are more Instagrammable to attract young tourists. Several participants modified classic recipes like klepon and kue cucur with natural colors from butterfly pea or pandan flowers, creating an aesthetic impression while strengthening local identity. Furthermore, some participants developed menu package concepts themed around local folklore, so that culinary products are not only consumed as food but also become a medium for cultural education for visitors. This innovation demonstrates a shift from simply selling products to creating culinary experiences oriented towards added cultural value, in line with the experience economy trend that emphasizes the importance of consumer emotional engagement (Pine & Gilmore, 2017). These findings align with the findings of Bjork and Kauppinen-Raisanen (2019), who stated that a destination foodscape featuring a combination of flavors, visuals, and cultural stories can enhance destination appeal, extend tourist length of stay, and encourage positive word-of-mouth behavior. Furthermore, research by Lee & Arcodia (2021) shows that tourists who interact with culinary products based on cultural narratives have higher levels of satisfaction and revisit intentions than those who only consume food without cultural context. The implications of these findings are important for the development of culinary tourism in Parigi, Pondok Aren. By highlighting the uniqueness of local ingredients and cultural stories, culinary products can become a leading attraction that distinguishes this area from other culinary destinations in Greater Jakarta. This innovative effort also has the potential to create a distinctive culinary identity for Parigi, which can be promoted through culinary festivals or thematic activities to strengthen the destination's image in the eyes of tourists.

This training also encouraged the formation of a Parigi culinary business network as a strategic step to strengthen the local creative economy ecosystem. Participants agreed to form a WhatsApp-based communication group to share information, coordinate joint events, and develop collaborative strategies with nearby tourist destinations. This network allows for the exchange of knowledge, for example, regarding raw material suppliers, current culinary trends, and opportunities to participate in culinary exhibitions or bazaars at the city level. Furthermore, this network serves as a means to plan collective marketing campaigns, such as promotions themed "Parigi Culinary Tourism," which can be integrated with local tourism agendas and regional event calendars. This strategy is relevant to the findings of Putri et al. (2023), who stated that collaboration between MSMEs can increase product exposure by up to 40% through joint promotions and event-based marketing. Furthermore, research by Nugroho & Irawan (2022) shows that MSME communities that actively network tend to be more adaptive to market changes and have a 1.5 times greater chance of increasing turnover than businesses operating individually. Through this communication network, training participants also plan to develop an annual culinary events calendar and establish a formal forum as partners with the local government, which can strengthen Parigi's position as a creative culinary hub. The implications of this network are not limited to increasing individual competitiveness but also strengthening Parigi's collective culinary identity. Sustainable collaboration has the potential to generate joint innovation, create thematic tourism packages (e.g., food trails or culinary tours), and strengthen the destination's appeal to both domestic and international tourists. Thus, this culinary business network can serve as a crucial foundation for the development of inclusive and sustainable community-based tourism.

Although the training results demonstrated significant competency improvements, several strategic barriers remained. Participants reported limited production facilities, such as industrial-scale cooking equipment, packaging machines, and storage facilities that meet hygiene standards. These limitations make it difficult for them to increase production capacity when demand increases, potentially leading to missed market opportunities. Furthermore, access to capital remains a major challenge, as most participants still rely on personal capital and

lack optimal access to formal financial institutions or MSME financing schemes. This barrier prevents them from investing in product innovation, packaging, and more aggressive marketing strategies. (Benzaghta et al., 2021).

From a digital marketing perspective, some participants experienced difficulty maintaining consistency in managing their social media accounts due to time constraints, lack of advanced digital skills, and a lack of structured content planning. This situation aligns with the findings of the study Bhakti & Pramezwarly (2024) identified digital literacy as a critical factor for the successful transformation of small businesses in the digital economy era. Therefore, further mentoring programs are needed, including digital marketing clinics, content calendar creation, and advanced creative design training, so participants can maintain consistent online visibility. Overall, this activity demonstrates that training-based interventions can significantly improve the competency of culinary entrepreneurs, encompassing managerial aspects, product innovation, and digital marketing. These results align with the findings of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2024), which emphasized that improving human resource quality is a key strategy in accelerating the competitiveness of the culinary tourism sector and encouraging the growth of the regional creative economy. However, to ensure a sustainable impact, multi-stakeholder support is needed, including local governments providing shared kitchens, access to microfinance, and partnerships with digital platforms to expand markets. This collaborative approach is expected to create a culinary business ecosystem that is more resilient and adaptive to changing tourism trends and consumer preferences.

4. CONCLUSION

The training program for strengthening human resources and culinary tourism innovation in the Parigi area of Pondok Aren has had a positive impact on increasing the capacity of local culinary entrepreneurs. Pre- and post-test results showed an average 65% increase in participants' understanding of business management, product innovation, and digital marketing strategies. Participants were also able to generate new product ideas based on local ingredients, create engaging promotional content using Canva, and utilize social media as a more effective marketing tool. In addition to improving individual skills, this activity encouraged the formation of a Parigi culinary business network that serves as a forum for coordination, information sharing, and designing joint promotional strategies. This provides important social capital for building a more solid and competitive creative culinary ecosystem. However, obstacles remain, such as limited production facilities, access to capital, and consistent social media management. Therefore, further support is needed in the form of ongoing training, shared kitchen facilities, access to microfinance, and technical assistance to maintain the achieved competency improvements. Such interventions have proven effective as human resource capacity development strategies and can be replicated in other regions to strengthen the competitiveness of the culinary tourism sector, while simultaneously encouraging sustainable creative economic growth.

Recommendation

Based on the results of the activities and evaluation, several recommendations can be made to ensure the sustainability of the program's impact and future replication:

- 1) **Advanced Training and Ongoing Mentoring**

Further programs are needed, including advanced training in digital promotional design, business financial management, and data-driven marketing strategies. Regular technical mentoring will help participants maintain consistency in managing social media and updating business strategies according to market trends.

- 2) **Facilitate Joint Production Infrastructure**

Local governments and industry partners need to provide shared production facilities (shared kitchens) and industry-standard packaging equipment so that businesses can increase production capacity, maintain quality, and meet food safety standards.

- 3) **Access to Capital and Business Incubation**

Microfinancing schemes or collaborations with financial institutions/fintechs need to be developed to support business expansion. Business incubation programs can help entrepreneurs develop business plans, access capital, and establish strategic partnerships with broader markets.

- 4) **Strengthening Networks and Collective Promotion**

The established network of Parigi culinary businesses needs to be formalized into a community or association, allowing them to collaborate on culinary events, festivals, and cross-promotions with tourist destinations. Collective promotion will increase the visibility of the Parigi region as a leading culinary destination.

5) Integration with the Regional Tourism Agenda

Similar programs need to be integrated with the South Tangerang City tourism event calendar to provide businesses with sustainable promotional momentum. Collaboration with the Tourism Office will also strengthen the position of culinary as a key attraction in destination development.

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