

# Developing Skills in Interpretative Guiding at Batuan Village, Gianyar, Bali

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## Abstract

This community service initiative in Batuan Village, Gianyar, exemplifies a collaborative effort between Institut Pariwisata dan Bisnis Internasional (IPB Internasional) and the local community. The well-structured program aimed to empower Batuan Village residents by providing training to become proficient guides, enhancing the tourism experience. Divided into planning, implementation, and evaluation stages, the initiative involved a participatory approach, encouraging active engagement and practical learning. Through thoughtful site selection, material preparation, and live practice sessions, participants gained confidence and skills. The emphasis on impactful interpretation, and incorporating human emotions into narratives, elevated the quality of presentations. The success of the initiative is attributed to the support of IPB Internasional, the student organization, the Village of Batuan, and the enthusiastic local participants, showcasing the positive outcomes achievable through collaborative, community-driven initiatives for sustainable cultural heritage and tourism development.

*Keywords: training, guide, tourist, village*

## Abstrak

Program pelayanan masyarakat di Desa Batuan, Gianyar, mencerminkan upaya kolaboratif antara Institut Pariwisata dan Bisnis Internasional (IPB Internasional) dan masyarakat setempat. Program yang ini bertujuan memberdayakan warga Desa Batuan dengan memberikan pelatihan agar menjadi pemandu yang terampil, meningkatkan pengalaman pariwisata. Dibagi menjadi tahapan perencanaan, implementasi, dan evaluasi, inisiatif ini melibatkan pendekatan partisipatif, mendorong keterlibatan aktif dan pembelajaran praktis. Melalui pemilihan lokasi yang dipikirkan, persiapan materi, dan sesi praktek langsung, peserta memperoleh kepercayaan diri dan keterampilan. Penekanan pada interpretasi yang berdampak, dengan menyertakan emosi manusia dalam narasi, meningkatkan kualitas presentasi. Keberhasilan inisiatif ini dapat diatribusikan kepada dukungan IPB Internasional, organisasi mahasiswa, Pemerintah Desa Batuan, dan partisipan lokal yang antusias, memperlihatkan hasil positif yang dapat dicapai melalui inisiatif berbasis kolaboratif untuk pengembangan keberlanjutan warisan budaya dan pariwisata.

*Kata kunci: pelatihan, pemandu, wisata, desa*

## 1. Introduction

Batuan Village, situated in Gianyar Regency of Bali, Indonesia, is a panoramic destination surrounded by lush greenery and gentle hills. Its location, just a short drive from Ubud, makes it easily accessible for those interested in exploring Bali's cultural heart. With a history dating back centuries, Batuan Village reflects a deep cultural heritage influenced by Hindu traditions and local customs. The village takes pride and makes great efforts to preserve its historical roots, evidenced by its well-maintained architecture and traditional practices that have been passed down through generations. The tourist attraction in Batuan Village includes rice field, cultural sites, handicraft, traditional Balinese house compound, and spiritual tourism attraction (Meirejeki et al., 2018).

At the center of Batuan Village stands the famous Pura Puseh, or Puseh Temple. This sacred temple, decorated with intricate carvings, serves as a religious and cultural hub, hosting ceremonies that foster a sense of community and shared identity among the villagers. This temple has since 1998 begun receiving guests, which led to a series of improvements of the site (Witari & Sariasih, 2020). According to Wijana, (2019) the local community has taken an active participation in managing and developing the site. Besides the temple, one of Batuan's other notable features is its thriving painting art scene. The village is known for its vibrant Batuan paintings, characterized by vivid colors and detailed depictions of scenes from Hindu epics. Visitors can explore local galleries and workshops, witnessing the skill and creativity of artists

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dedicated to preserving this traditional art form. Dance also plays a significant role in Batuan's cultural expression, with traditional Balinese dances like the Barong dance captivating audiences. These performances, accompanied by the rhythmic sounds of gamelan music, offer spectators an insight into the village's artistic spirit, leaving a lasting impression of Batuan's cultural richness.

Despite the cultural, natural, and art richness possessed by Batuan Village, we found that there needs to be an improvement in the villagers' ability to story-tell their village. The aforementioned tourist attractions would not be easily understandable for visitors unless comprehensive and conveying explanations and interpretation are provided by the guide. Therefore, in a thoughtful effort to support the local villagers, a community service initiative has been launched in Batuan Village. The primary focus is to provide training for residents, helping them become skilled guides for the increasing number of visitors to the village. This commendable initiative is a collaborative project organized by Institut Pariwisata dan Bisnis Internasional (the International Institute of Tourism and Business) in October 12<sup>th</sup> 2023. The training program, carefully designed by the institute, aims to enhance participants' understanding of the village's cultural and historical significance. In the program, essential communication and hospitality skills necessary for effective guiding were shared to the participants. The goal is to ensure tourist gain deeper impression and wider understanding upon the village's numerous attractions.

This community service initiative involves dedicated lecturers and students from the Institut Pariwisata dan Bisnis Internasional. The lecturers, with expertise in tourism and cultural heritage, bring valuable insights to the training sessions, ensuring that local guides receive comprehensive instruction. The students actively participate in organizing and facilitating the training events, applying the newly gained knowledge in a practical setting. This hands-on approach not only benefits the local community but also provides valuable learning opportunities for the students involved. Together, they create a supportive and collaborative environment, fostering a shared responsibility for the success of the initiative. The community service initiative contributes to the economic well-being of Batuan Village by creating new opportunities for the local guide to improve their skills. Additionally, it strengthens the connection between the local community and the broader tourism industry. As a result, Batuan Village is better positioned to offer an authentic and enriching experience for visitors, showcasing the village's unique cultural heritage through knowledgeable and passionate local guides.

## 2. Methods

The community service initiative in Batuan Village was run through a systematic three-step process: planning, implementation, and evaluation, organized by IPB Internasional. In the planning phase, the institute conducted a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with the residents of Batuan Village. This open dialogue aimed to identify the specific needs and aspirations of the community regarding the development of tourism in the area. Insights gained from the FGD played a crucial role in shaping the subsequent steps of the community service program.



Figure 1 Flow of stages of service activities

Moving on to the implementation stage, the training sessions were organized to equip local participants with the necessary skills to become proficient guides. During these sessions, speakers from IPB Internasional provided in-depth explanations on how to interpret tourism sites effectively, ensuring that the information presented would captivate and engage visitors. Practical aspects, such as storytelling techniques and highlighting cultural nuances, were emphasized to create a more enriching experience for tourists.

The interactive nature of the training allowed participants to actively engage with the material, fostering a deeper understanding of the significance of various sites within Batuan Village. The speakers not only shared theoretical knowledge but also encouraged a hands-on approach, enabling participants to apply their newly acquired skills in real-world scenarios.

The final step of the community service initiative was the evaluation phase. Here, the effectiveness of the training was assessed through a post-test administered to the participants. This evaluation process served to measure the participants' understanding of the training content and identify areas for improvement. Feedback gathered during this stage was invaluable, guiding future efforts to refine and enhance the training program for sustained community development.

### 3. Result and Discussion

The implementation of the community service initiative in Batuan Village unfolded through a structured training program, fostering active participation and practical learning for the local residents. The training commenced by encouraging participants to identify and list the tourism attractions present in Batuan Village. This initial step aimed to acknowledge the diverse cultural and natural assets within the community.



Figure 2. The speaker giving his explanation

Following this, participants were prompted to choose a specific site that they would like to explain to potential visitors. This personalized approach ensured that each participant could focus on a site of personal interest or significance. Once the sites were chosen, the participants were tasked with documenting key information about their selected site on paper. This exercise not only honed their research skills but also laid the foundation for their subsequent practice sessions.

The training took a hands-on turn as participants were asked to come to the front of the forum and practice explaining their chosen site. This practical element aimed to build their confidence in delivering information to an audience. The interactive format allowed participants to receive constructive feedback from their peers, fostering a collaborative learning environment.



Figure 3. One of the participants practiced giving a guiding interpretation

The speaker then provided valuable insights on creating meaningful interpretations. Participants were encouraged to craft narratives that would linger in the minds of visitors. The speaker emphasized the importance of invoking human emotions, such as happiness, sadness, anger, or envy, to make the interpretation more impactful. This guidance aimed to transform the participants' explanations into memorable experiences for tourists, enhancing the overall quality of tourism in Batuan Village. According to (Ham, 2009) a meaningful interpretation would lead to a comprehensive understanding in the visitors, which in turn could result in them appreciating and even protecting the site.

In response to the speaker's advice, the participants, about 30 in number, were tasked with rewriting their materials, infusing them with newfound knowledge on creating impactful interpretations. This iterative process allowed participants to refine their explanations, incorporating elements that would resonate emotionally with visitors. It also served as a practical application of the principles shared by the speaker. According to (Fitriana & Lestari, 2021), the ability to convey the interpretation is a crucial skill for a tour guide. Similarly, (Hayati & Drihartati, 2021) proposed that a guide must pay attention to how to explain a site, to help visitors understand the history.



Figure 4. All participants take group picture

The final stage of the implementation involved participants once again presenting their materials at the front of the forum. This served as a culmination of the training, allowing participants to showcase their improved interpretation skills. It also provided an opportunity for the community to witness the progress made by the participants and reinforced the collaborative nature of the community service initiative. In a similar community service conducted by Suprastayasa et al., (2022) the participants were also invited to perform to practice what had been taught by the speaker.

Through this step-by-step implementation, the training not only equipped participants with practical skills in interpreting tourism sites but also fostered a sense of ownership and pride in sharing the unique cultural and historical aspects of Batuan Village. The interactive and iterative nature of the training ensured that participants actively engaged with the material, promoting a sustainable and meaningful impact on the community's ability to contribute to the local tourism sector. According to Mahastuti et al., (2019) this interactive kind of collaboration will enhance the quality of tourism management in a cultural and historical site such as the Batuan temple.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the community service initiative in Batuan Village, led by IPB Internasional, has proven to be a successful collaboration, showcasing the positive impact of working together for sustainable development. The well-organized training program, divided into planning, implementation, and evaluation stages, empowered residents with the skills needed to serve as knowledgeable guides, enhancing the tourism experience in their community.

The initiative's success is rooted in its careful approach, starting with understanding the village's needs and followed by a tailored training effort that encouraged active participation and practical learning. From site selection to live practice sessions, the training fostered a sense of confidence and community among the participants.

The focus on creating impactful interpretations, and weaving in human emotions into the narrative, elevated the quality of participants' presentations. This not only contributed to a more engaging tourist experience but also highlighted the unique cultural and historical aspects of Batuan Village. The process of rewriting materials and repeated presentations showed a commitment to ongoing improvement. Ultimately, the community service initiative not only equipped the local community with valuable skills but also strengthened the ties between Batuan Village and the broader tourism industry. It serves as an example of how collaborative, community-driven efforts can play a crucial role in the sustainable development of cultural heritage and tourism.

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