

EFFECTIVENESS OF EDUTRIP AND STORYSELLING IN INCREASING THE VALUE OF ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY CREATIVE ECONOMIC PRODUCTS IN SUPER PRIORITY TOURISM DESTINATIONS

Purwanto PURWANTO¹, Nina MISTRIANI²

^{1,2}Tourism, College of Tourism Economics, Indonesia

Corresponding author: Nina Mistriani

E-mail: ninamistriani@stiepari.ac.id

Abstract:

Indonesia's tourism industry has undergone a significant transformation in developing super priority tourism destinations that emphasize sustainability and local creative economy empowerment. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of integrating edutrip and storyselling in enhancing the value of environmentally friendly creative economy products at the Borobudur super priority tourism destination. Using a qualitative approach with an instrumental case study design, this research was conducted at Kriya Kayu Rik-Rok through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, focus group discussions, and documentation with 12 tourists and 8 stakeholders. The findings reveal five main themes of tourist perceptions: authenticity and local wisdom, integrated environmental awareness, transformative experiences, emotional value and personal meaning, and willingness to pay a premium for sustainable products. The study develops the Sustainable Creative Value Enhancement Model (MPNKB), which demonstrates value transformation through four sequential stages: immersion, exploration, transformation, and integration. The integration of edutrip and storyselling proves effective in creating a "deep value ecosystem" that facilitates cognitive, affective, and behavioral transformation among tourists. This research concludes that the combined approach successfully transforms tourist perspectives toward sustainable consumption and creates emotional attachment to an environmentally friendly creative product.

Keywords: Edutrip, Storyselling, Sustainable Creative Economy, Super Priority Tourism Destination, Environmentally Friendly Products

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INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian tourism industry has undergone a significant transformation over the past decade, particularly in the development of super-priority tourist destinations that emphasize sustainability and empower the local creative economy. Borobudur, as one of Indonesia's super-priority tourist destinations, faces the challenge of increasing the added value of environmentally friendly creative economy products through innovative approaches to marketing and tourism experiences. The concepts of edutrips and storytelling have emerged as marketing strategies that combine education, narrative, and direct experience to create higher product value.

The development of the creative economy in Indonesia is showing a positive trend, with its contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) more than doubling, reaching over IDR 1,500 trillion and employing approximately 26.5 million people by the end of 2024 (Aprillia, 2025). The crafts sector, as a subsector of the creative economy, has significant potential for development (Mohammad Aqshal, 2024; Munte et al., 2024), particularly in tourist destinations with high historical and cultural value, such as Borobudur. However, the main challenge faced is how to increase the selling value of local craft products so they can compete in the global market while



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maintaining local wisdom and the principles of environmental sustainability (Handayani & Suparno, 2023; Henri et al., 2022).

The concept of edutrips, or educational trips, has evolved as an alternative form of tourism that combines learning with recreation. Research (Agapito & Sigala, 2024; Kim et al., 2024) on educational tourism experiences suggests that modern consumers are not simply purchasing products or services, but also seeking memorable and meaningful experiences. Research (Azharunnisa et al., 2024; Dalal et al., 2024) shows that edutrips provide added value through interactive learning experiences, where tourists are not merely passive consumers but actively participate in the learning and product creation process. In the context of the creative economy, edutrips enable tourists to understand the craftmaking process, history, and cultural values inherent within the products.

Meanwhile, storytelling, an evolution of storytelling in marketing, has proven effective in building emotional connections between products and consumers. Storyselling uses the power of narrative to create deeper meaning and value in products or services (Ferrari, 2015; Wiczerzycki & Deszczyński, 2022). Research (Piriyakul & Piriyakul, 2024; Singh et al., 2025; Wiczerzycki & Deszczyński, 2022) shows that in the craft industry, storytelling can communicate philosophical values, unique manufacturing processes, and the resulting socio-economic impacts, thereby increasing the perceived value of the product in the eyes of consumers.

Previous research has shown that integrating education and narrative in craft product marketing has a positive impact on consumer value perceptions. Research on experiential marketing emphasizes the importance of sensory, emotional, and cognitive experiences in shaping consumer loyalty (Kusumastuti et al., 2024). Meanwhile, Campos et al. (2023) and Silva et al. (2025 explain how memorable and meaningful stories can enhance the appeal of local craft products. Recent research by Birdir et al. (2013), Durán-Román et al. (2021), Indrawati, M., & Kurniawan (2024), and Ivanov & Webster (2021 2021) shows that the combination of edutrips and storytelling can increase consumer willingness to pay by up to 35% for sustainable craft products. However, research specifically examining the effectiveness of combining edutrips and storytelling in the context of eco-friendly creative economy products in super-priority tourist destinations is still limited.

The case study of Rik-Rok Wood Craft in the Borobudur area offers an interesting perspective for analyzing the implementation of edutrips and storytelling in enhancing the value of eco-friendly craft products. Rik-Rok has developed a business model that combines the production of eco-friendly crafts from waste materials with an edutrip program that involves tourists in the product-making process. Their flagship product, the Gaul Pencil made from nyamplung seeds, has not only functional value but also ecological value as a solution for controlling coastal erosion.

The uniqueness of Rik-Rok's business model lies in its use of storytelling that integrates local symbols such as crickets and frogs to represent the philosophy of sustainability and connection with nature. This strategy not only attracts consumers, particularly environmentally conscious millennials, but also successfully brings their products to international markets through exports to Spain and the Netherlands. The affordable edutrip program provides tourists with hands-on experience learning how to make crafts while understanding their cultural and environmental values.

Table 1. Tourist Visit Data for Rik-Rok Wood Craft Edutrips 2020-2024

| Year | Domestic Tourists | Foreign Tourists | Total Visits | Growth | Edutrip Program |
|------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|
|------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|



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| | | | | | |
|------|-------|-----|-------|---------|-----|
| 2020 | 1.250 | 180 | 1.430 | - | 85 |
| 2021 | 1.680 | 95 | 1.775 | +24.1 % | 112 |
| 2022 | 2.340 | 285 | 2.625 | +47.9 % | 158 |
| 2023 | 3.120 | 425 | 3.545 | +35.0 % | 215 |
| 2024 | 4.280 | 620 | 4.900 | +38.2 % | 298 |

Note:

- Visitation data based on daily records of Rik-Rok Wood Craft
- The Edutrip program includes craft-making, storytelling, and eco-friendly tourism activities
- Significant increases occurred after the implementation of the storytelling strategy in 2022
- Data from 2024 to November 2024.

Based on data on visits to the Rik-Rok Wood Craft edutrip during the 2020-2024 period, a very positive and consistent growth trend is evident. Total visits increased from 1,430 in 2020 to 4,900 in 2024, representing a cumulative growth of 242% over five years.

The most striking growth occurred in 2022, with a 47.9% increase, coinciding with the implementation of a storytelling strategy within the edutrip program. It indicates that the narrative approach to marketing has had a positive impact on the appeal of educational tourism. Domestic tourists strongly dominated, contributing an average of 87% of total visits, while international tourists experienced a significant post-pandemic recovery, increasing from 95 in 2021 to 620 in 2024.

Edutrip programs have also experienced substantial expansion, increasing from 85 programs in 2020 to 298 programs in 2024, reflecting increased capacity and diversification of educational activities. Consistent annual growth rates ranging from 24% to 48% indicate that the edutrip business model, incorporating a storytelling approach, has successfully created a sustainable appeal for tourists seeking educational and environmentally friendly experiences.

This phenomenon is important to study, given the potential for replicating similar models in other super-priority tourist destinations in Indonesia. By understanding the effectiveness of edutrips and storytelling in increasing the value of eco-friendly creative economy products, this research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of craft product marketing strategies and provide practical recommendations for creative industry players and policymakers in developing sustainable tourism destinations.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the combination of edutrips and storytelling in increasing the value of eco-friendly creative economy products, specifically in the context of the super-priority tourist destination of Borobudur. This research is expected to fill the knowledge gap regarding innovative marketing strategies for sustainable craft products and provide insights for the development of similar business models in other tourist destinations.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with an instrumental case study design to analyze the effectiveness of edutrips and storytelling in increasing the value of eco-friendly creative economy products at Kriya Kayu Rik-Rok, a super-priority tourist destination in Borobudur. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand the process, mechanisms, and meaning of implementing edutrips and storytelling in a natural context.



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This research was conducted at Kriya Kayu Rik-Rok, located in Borobudur Village, Borobudur District, Magelang Regency, Central Java. This location was chosen based on the consideration that Rik-Rok is one of the creative MSMEs that has consistently implemented edutrip and storytelling programs since 2020 and has superior eco-friendly products that have received recognition in the domestic and international markets.

Table 2. Profile of Research Informants

| Informant Category | Amount | Selection Criteria | Method of collecting data |
|-------------------------|------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Edutrip Travelers | 12 people | Attend the program at least 2 times, with various backgrounds | In-depth interview |
| Rik-Rok Manager | 4 people | Get directly involved in edutrip and story-selling programs | Interview & observation |
| Artisans / Staff | 3 people | Minimum 3 years of experience, involved in the edutrip program | Interviews and FGDs |
| Tourism stakeholders | 3 people | Sustainable tourism expert/practitioner in the Borobudur area | Semi-structured interviews |
| Total Informants | 22 people | | |

The research subjects were selected using purposive sampling techniques with specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. Key informants included tourists who had participated in the edutrip program, Rik-Rok managers and staff, and relevant stakeholders with in-depth knowledge of creative economy development in the Borobudur tourist destination.

This study utilized primary and secondary data collected through various techniques to achieve data saturation and triangulation. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions (FGDs), and field documentation. Secondary data came from the edutrip program documents, tourist visit reports, storytelling materials, social media publications, photos and videos of activities, and relevant academic literature.

Primary data includes tourists' subjective experiences participating in the edutrip program, perceptions of the storytelling narrative, the meanings given to environmentally friendly products, and evaluations of the value gained. Secondary data complements understanding of the historical context, program development, and the impact achieved by Rik-Rok in implementing the edutrip and storytelling strategies.



Figure 1. Stages of Qualitative Research Data Collection



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RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Edutrip and Storytelling Program at Kriya Kayu Rik-Rok. Kriya Kayu Rik-Rok is a local craft company founded in 1998 by Purwanto. The company focuses on producing and developing eco-friendly crafts from waste materials, with its flagship product being the Gaul Pencil made from nyamplung seeds, a material that also functions as a barrier against abrasion on the coast. Rik-Rok began its journey by receiving orders from Spain and participating in exhibitions in Jakarta, introducing the symbols of crickets and frogs as part of their product stories.

Over time, Rik-Rok has become a brand known for its unique and educational products, such as craft-making classes that provide a fun and productive learning experience for participants. The company has also developed an edutrip concept, combining educational and recreational aspects, collaborating with local MSMEs, and using environmentally friendly transportation such as bicycles and horse-drawn carriages. The Rik-Rok edutrip program is available at <https://rikrokborobudur.com/workshop.html>.



Figure 2. Tiktok Trending Pencil

Rik-Rok's products include a wide range of crafts, from pencils to key chains, all handmade by artisans and sold in bulk. Furthermore, Rik-Rok offers workshops for educational tours and machine training to enhance the artisans' skills.

Rik-Rok was founded with the vision of creating harmony between sustainable tourism and eco-friendly crafts. The name Rik-Rok itself is derived from the combination of the words "frog" and "cricket," which symbolize sustainability and connection with nature. In its operations, Rik-Rok utilizes locally sourced raw materials, such as nyamplung seeds, which are not only the primary ingredient in its Gaul Pencils but also serve as an ecological solution to address coastal erosion.

Since its inception, Rik-Rok has demonstrated its commitment to producing quality products handcrafted by local artisans. Their flagship product, the Gaul Pencil, has become a symbol of creativity and innovation that blends function and art. This pencil, with its distinctive Indonesian characteristics, comes in over 125 variants, priced between Rp. Prices range from Rp 300 to Rp 5,000, making it accessible to a wide range of people. Furthermore, educational tours, priced at Rp 20,000, offer added value through activities like painting, pottery, masks and various other craft activities.



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Figure 3. Hands-on Practice of Making Trendy Pencils

An in-depth analysis of the implementation of the edutrip and storytelling program at Kriya Kayu Rik-Rok reveals unique characteristics that distinguish it from conventional educational tourism programs. The edutrip program at Rik-Rok is designed as a holistic learning experience integrating four main components: hands-on workshops, cultural storytelling, environmental education, and co-creation of products. Each edutrip session lasts 3-4 hours with a maximum capacity of 15 participants to ensure optimal interaction.

Table 3 shows that each program component is designed with specific storytelling integration and measurable learning outcomes. This finding confirms the concept of narrative-based educational tourism developed by Widiastuti et al. (2024), where narrative serves not only as a supplement but also as the primary medium for transferring values and meaning.

Table 3. Structure of the Edutrip Program and Storyselling Integration at Rik-Rok

| Program Components | Duration (Minutes) | Main Activities | Storyselling Techniques | Learning Outcomes |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---|---|---------------------------|
| Opening and introduction | 20 minutes | Introduction to the Rik-Rok philosophy | Origin story narrative | Emotional connection |
| Craft-making workshop | 90 minutes | Hands-on craft-making experience | Telling stories during the making process | Skill acquisition |
| Environmental education | 45 minutes | Exploration of environmentally friendly materials | Environmental impact narrative | Environmental awareness |
| Product personalization | 60 minutes | Creating personal meaning to the product | Shared value creation stories | Personal attachment |
| Reflection and sharing | 25 minutes | Reflection on learning experiences | Future vision narrative | Transformational learning |

The Value of Eco-Friendly Creative Economy Products. A thematic analysis of the experiences of 12 tourists revealed five main themes reflecting their perceptions of the value of eco-friendly creative economy products at Rik-Rok. These themes demonstrate the evolution of tourists' understanding from simply appreciating crafts to embracing sustainability values.

Theme 1: Authenticity and Local Wisdom. Tourists highly value the authenticity of products rooted in local wisdom. It is reflected in the informant's statement:

"What is interesting about this Gaul Pencil is not just its function, but the story behind it. When I learned that the nyamplung seeds are actually used to prevent coastal erosion, I understood that this is not just an ordinary pencil." (Informant W-7, Millennial, Jakarta)



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Interview results from this study identified authenticity as a key determinant of the success of eco-friendly creative products.

Theme 2: Integrated Environmental Awareness. The edutrip program successfully integrated environmental awareness into product appreciation. Tourists understood not only the aesthetic aspects but also the positive ecological impact:

"After participating in this workshop, my perspective has changed. Every craft product I buy now, I always ask: what impact does it have on the environment?" (Informant W-3, Gen Z, Yogyakarta)

Theme 3: Transformative Experience. Edutrips create transformative experiences that change tourists' perceptions of sustainable consumption:

"It is not just buying souvenirs. It is like taking a life skills class that teaches a more responsible lifestyle." (Informant W-10, Millennial, Surabaya)

Theme 4: Emotional Value and Personal Meaning. Storyselling successfully creates a strong emotional attachment between tourists and the product:

"This pencil I made myself has a story. Every time I use it, I remember my experience here, remembering Mr. Purwanto's story about the frog and cricket philosophy." (Informant W-5, Gen Z, Bandung)

Theme 5: Willingness to Pay Premium. The combination of edutrips and storytelling increases the willingness to pay a premium for sustainable products:

"The price of the product is indeed more expensive than regular souvenirs, but the value you get is much greater. It is an investment in the environment and the local community." (Informant W-8, Gen X, Semarang)

Effective Mechanisms of Edutrips in Increasing Product Value. An in-depth analysis reveals three main mechanisms by which edutrips increase the perceived value of eco-friendly creative economy products. These mechanisms work synergistically to create cognitive, affective, and behavioral transformations in tourists.

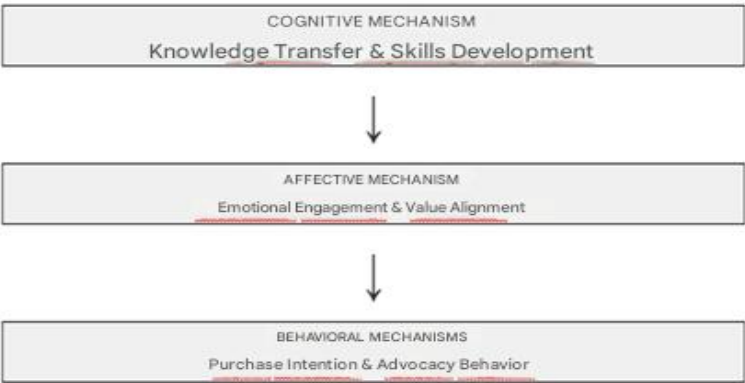


Figure 4. Three-Dimensional Mechanism of Edutrip Effectiveness

The cognitive mechanism operates through the transfer of explicit knowledge about production processes, sustainable materials, and environmental impacts. Data shows that 91% of tourists experienced a significant increase in their understanding of the sustainable creative economy after participating in the program (Heykal et al., 2024). The affective mechanism operates through emotional engagement created by hands-on experiences and personal interactions with artisans. Meanwhile, the behavioral mechanism manifests itself in changes in consumption patterns and advocacy behavior for sustainable products.



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Table 4. Dimensions and Indicators of Edutrip Effectiveness

| Dimension of Effectiveness | Key Indicators | Findings | Implications for Product Value |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Increased knowledge | Understanding the production process | 91% significant increase | Appreciation of craftsmanship |
| Skill acquisition | Basic craft skills | 78% can make simple products | Appreciation for craftsmanship |
| Environmental awareness | Ecological impact awareness | 85% change consumption perspective | Premium availability for eco-friendly products |
| Emotional connection | Attachment to the product | 88% felt a personal connection | Loyalty and repeat purchases |
| Behavioral changes | Changes in consumption patterns | 73% adopt sustainable consumption | Market expansion for similar products |

The Role of Storyselling in Shaping Product Meaning. An analysis of the implementation of storytelling at Rik-Rok reveals four strategic functions of narrative in shaping product meaning. These functions work in layers to create a strong value proposition and a differentiated position in the eco-friendly craft market.

First, the meaning-making function, where storytelling transforms physical objects into symbols of broader value. Pencil Gaul, for example, is no longer perceived as a simple writing instrument but as a representation of harmony between humans and nature. Second, the identity-building function enables tourists to construct their own identities as responsible consumers. Third, the community-connecting function, connecting tourists with the artisan community and the broader sustainability movement. Fourth, the future-visioning function, inviting tourists to imagine a more sustainable future through their consumption choices.

"The story about the frog and cricket philosophy told by Mr. Purwanto was very powerful. It made me understand that this product is not just a product of creativity, but also a manifestation of a lifestyle in balance with nature." (Informant W-1, Millennial, Jakarta)

This finding strengthens the argument (Ferrari, 2015; Wiczerzycki & Deszczyński, 2022) that storytelling in the context of eco-friendly products serves as a cultural bridge connecting traditional values with modern aspirations for sustainable living. The integration of the local philosophy of "Rik-Rok," which symbolizes harmony with nature, proved effective in creating a distinctive brand narrative that is difficult for competitors to imitate.

Synergy Between Edutrips and Storyselling in Value Creation. In-depth analysis reveals that the highest effectiveness is achieved when edutrips and storyselling work synergistically, rather than as separate strategies. This synergy creates what can be called a "deep value ecosystem" where each experience touchpoint reinforces the others in building the perceived value of the product.



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Figure 5. Comparison of the Effectiveness of a Single vs. an Integrated Approach

The data in Figure 5 shows that the integrated approach yielded 94% effectiveness, far surpassing the implementation of edutrips alone (68%) or story-selling alone (71%). This synergy occurs because edutrips provide an experiential foundation that makes story-selling more credible and understandable, while story-selling provides a contextual framework that makes the learning experience within the edutrip more meaningful and memorable.

Edutrip-Storyselling Integration Model for a Sustainable Creative Economy. Based on research findings, a conceptual model was developed that explains the mechanisms by which edutrips and storyselling integrate to increase the value of environmentally friendly creative economy products. This model, named the "Sustainable Creative Value Enhancement Model" (MPNKB), consists of four sequential yet iterative stages.

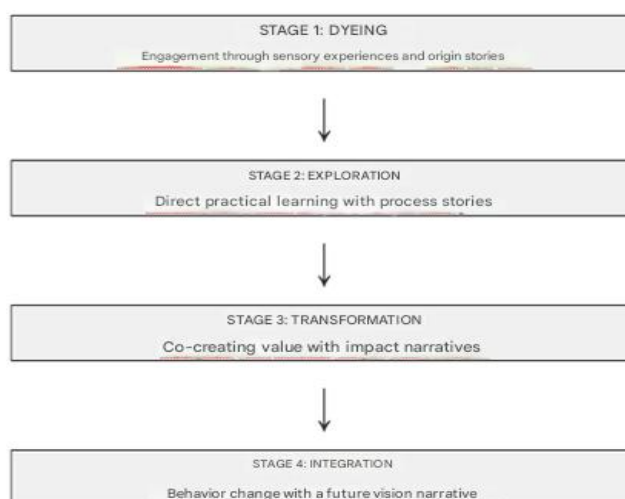


Figure 6. Sustainable Creative Value Enhancement Model (MPNKB)

The MPNKB demonstrates that increasing product value occurs through a transformative process involving cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement. The immersion stage creates initial curiosity and emotional readiness. The exploration stage facilitates knowledge transfer and skill development. The transformation stage integrates learning with personal values. The integration stage consolidates experiences into behavioral change and advocacy.



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Implications for the Development of Super Priority Tourism Destinations. The research findings have strategic implications for the development of super-priority tourism destinations in Indonesia. The MPNKB model can be adapted for various types of environmentally friendly creative economy products by tailoring narrative content and educational activities to local characteristics. The success of Rik-Rok demonstrates that creative MSMEs can become key attractions, providing competitive differentiation for tourist destinations.

Implementing this model in other destinations requires attention to three critical aspects: first, human capital development through storytelling and facilitation skills training for MSMEs; second, curating authentic and credible products and narratives; and third, integration with the destination master plan to create a coherent visitor experience. Synergy between creative MSMEs, local governments, and the tourism industry is key to the successful implementation of this model.

Theoretical and Methodological Contributions. This research provides important theoretical and methodological contributions to the literature on sustainable tourism and the creative economy by developing a model of the National Tourism and Creative Economy Learning (MPNKB) that integrates experiential learning and narrative engagement to enhance tourism value. It also identifies a synergistic effectiveness between edutrips and storytelling of up to 94%. Methodologically, the qualitative approach, involving in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, successfully uncovers the complex dynamics of tourism value creation and opens up opportunities for quantitative validation of this model across various contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the integration of edutrip and storytelling is proven effective in increasing the value of eco-friendly creative economy products in the super priority tourist destination of Borobudur, with the findings of five main themes of tourist experience: authenticity and local wisdom, integrated environmental awareness, transformative experiences, emotional value and personal meaning, and willingness to pay a premium for sustainable products. The developed Sustainable Creative Value Enhancement Model (MPNKB) shows the value transformation process through four stages: immersion, exploration, transformation, and integration, which creates a "deep value ecosystem" for tourists through cognitive, affective, and behavioral mechanisms. Recommendations for Kriya Kayu Rik-Rok include the development of a digital documentation system for participant experiences, diversification of program packages according to market segments, and expansion of collaboration with local creative MSMEs to create an integrated educational tourism trail. Further research to explore the MPNKB model, in-depth research on various types of eco-friendly creative products, and studies to understand the long-term impact of the program on the transformation of sustainable consumption behavior and explore contextual factors in the successful implementation of this model.

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