

## Omah Batik: Community Empowerment and Cultural Preservation through Thematic KKN in Jetak Village

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### ABSTRACT

The implementation of the Thematic Community Service Program (KKN) in Jetak Village focused on developing local potential through the *Omah Batik* program. This initiative aimed to empower the community by providing skills training, including eco-print on tote bags, tie-dye techniques, and Tengger Udeng Batik production. The methodology included preparation stages, direct hands-on training, and guidance for residents throughout the batik production process, followed by an exhibition of the works as a medium for promotion and education. These activities not only enhanced practical skills but also raised awareness of the importance of preserving local cultural heritage. The training results were displayed in the Tengger Udeng Batik exhibition at *Omah Batik*, serving as a platform for community recognition as well as promotion of the village's creative products to a wider audience. The impact of the program was observed in several aspects: economically, by opening new market opportunities and supporting the development of local MSMEs; socially, by strengthening community cohesion and self-confidence; and culturally, by reinforcing the unique identity of Jetak Village. Thus, *Omah Batik* functions as an educational center, a cultural preservation hub, and a driver for sustainable creative economic development. The program's continuity is essential to ensure long-term benefits for the residents of Jetak Village.

**Keywords:** *Thematic KKN, Community Empowerment, Creative Economy, Community participation.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Community Service Program (KKN) is one of the real forms of student contribution to society through direct field activities (Ahmad & Islam, 2024; Sodik et al., 2021). Over time, Thematic KKN has become a more focused

strategy as it is tailored to the specific potentials and challenges of the partner village (Widiyanto et al., 2025). Thematic KKN not only emphasizes the transfer of knowledge but also aims to provide practical and sustainable solutions in supporting village development (Muluk et al., 2025). Therefore, the implementation of Thematic KKN in Jetak Village, Sukapura District, Probolinggo Regency, is directed toward exploring local potential, identifying problems, and fostering innovations that are beneficial to the community.

Jetak Village is the smallest administrative area in Sukapura District, covering only 1.62 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 551 people. Despite its small size, Jetak has a distinctive uniqueness, as the majority of its residents belong to the Tengger ethnic group, who continue to uphold Tenggerese Hindu traditions and cultural practices, including the famous Yadnya Kasada ceremony (Berliani et al., 2023). In terms of agriculture, residents generally cultivate high-altitude crops such as leeks (*bawang prei*), potatoes, cabbage, and tamarillo as their main livelihood. The production of tamarillo in Jetak has begun to be explored further, with local initiatives to process it into value-added products like jam and syrup so that it can be marketed as a specialty product. This combination of cultural richness, small-scale farming, and agro-product innovation suggests that Jetak Village holds both cultural tourism and agro-tourism potential, making it a promising site for integrated tourism development.

Nevertheless, several challenges hinder the village's development. One of the main issues is the discontinuation of the strawberry agro-tourism program, which previously served as a local tourism attraction. This activity ceased in 2022 due to both internal and external factors. The internal factor relates to the agro-tourism land, which was owned by PT. Telkom, and its contract was not renewed by the village government. The external factor involves the limited availability of water, which has negatively impacted crop maintenance. In addition, tourism infrastructure remains inadequate, such as the road leading to Bukit Kejalen, which is still a gravel road (*makadam*) and becomes slippery during the rainy season, making it difficult for tourists to access.

On the other hand, Jetak Village holds significant potential for future development. Geographically, the village occupies a highly strategic location

as it lies on the main route to Mount Bromo, one of the leading national and international tourist destinations in East Java (Chandra, 2023). This position offers a distinct advantage for Jetak Village to attract passing tourists while also serving as a gateway for developing alternative tourism destinations (Sukmawan et al., 2025). Furthermore, the strong cultural traditions of the Tengger community, such as the Yadnya Kasada ceremony and other religious rituals, provide a unique attraction not commonly found in neighbouring villages (Rafii et al., 2023). These cultural assets, combined with natural beauty and agricultural products, open opportunities for integrated tourism development. Such potential can also be expanded into educational tourism, for example through Jetak's distinctive batik, as well as creative products like eco-print tote bags and tie-dye crafts. By integrating natural, cultural, and creative educational tourism, Jetak Village could create a diverse and competitive tourism package.

The urgency of implementing a Thematic KKN program in Jetak Village lies in addressing these challenges and maximizing the existing opportunities through a community empowerment approach. In this context, students collaborate with local residents to design and implement programs aimed at enhancing tourism appeal, strengthening cultural identity, and fostering economic growth through local MSMEs. One of the flagship initiatives proposed is the development of educational batik tourism, packaged under the concept of "Omah Batik" (House of Batik). This program not only introduces batik motifs unique to Jetak Village as a representation of cultural identity but also actively involves the community in the processes of production, skill development, and product marketing. As such, "Omah Batik" is expected to emerge as a new village icon that strengthens Jetak's tourism appeal, expands market access for creative products, and provides sustainable economic benefits for the local community.

The implementation of the Thematic Community Service Program (KKN Tematik) in Jetak Village aims to explore and develop local potential, particularly in the fields of tourism, culture, and MSMEs. Students act as facilitators by encouraging community skills through creative economy training, such as batik making, eco-print tote bags, and tie-dye products. In

addition, this program is designed to strengthen the cultural identity of the Tengger community while also creating new economic opportunities for local residents. Thus, the expected benefits are not only short-term improvements in community skills and income but also long-term sustainability and self-reliance in managing local resources.

## METHODS

The Thematic Community Service Program (KKN-T) in Jetak Village was conducted at the Village Hall and surrounding areas from October 10, 2024, to January 7, 2025. The program was divided into several stages to ensure systematic and well-organized implementation. The first stage was preparation and planning, which included a site survey to identify the potential and needs of Jetak Village through direct observation and interviews with residents and village officials (Adinugraha et al., 2024; Naji et al., 2024; Suardana et al., 2022). The students also held internal meetings to design detailed work programs, such as batik training, village gate renovation, and the installation of street signs (Wang, 2019). At this stage, logistical preparation was also carried out, including providing canting tools, dyes, PVC pipes, and other supporting materials, followed by coordination with the village head and related stakeholders to align the program with the community's priorities.

The second stage was socialization and community engagement, aimed at building awareness and encouraging active participation from the villagers. This was done through meetings with the community and village officials, where the work programs were explained in detail. Counselling and discussions were also conducted to emphasize the benefits of each program, for example, how batik training could strengthen the creative economy or how installing street signs could improve village accessibility. In addition, local organizations such as PKK (women's groups), Karang Taruna (youth associations), and village officials were mobilized and organized into working groups to support training sessions and cultural exhibitions.

The first stage was preparation and planning, which included a site survey to identify the potential and needs of Jetak Village through direct observation and

interviews with residents and village officials. This reflects the needs assessment approach, considered a critical foundation for designing relevant community development programs (Permatasari et al., 2021). Students also held internal meetings to design detailed work programs, such as batik training, village gate renovation, and the installation of street signs [9]. At this stage, logistical preparation was also carried out, including providing canting tools, dyes, PVC pipes, and other supporting materials, followed by coordination with the village head and related stakeholders to align the program with the community's priorities.

The final stage was program implementation, which consisted of both main and supporting activities. The primary focus was the development of "Omah Batik," an educational tourism initiative that transformed one of the villagers' houses into a batik learning center. This program included site renovation, the provision of batik-making tools and materials, and training sessions to equip villagers with the skills to become artisans and guides for batik-based educational tourism. In addition, creative training workshops were held on Batik Udeng, Eco-print Tote Bags, and Tie-Dye Tote Bags, engaging PKK and Karang Taruna members in hands-on activities such as collecting leaves and flowers, designing motifs, canting, dyeing, and finishing products. Through these stages, the KKN-T program not only provided practical skills to the community but also fostered collaboration and empowerment, laying the groundwork for sustainable tourism and creative economy development in Jetak Village.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The establishment of *Omah Batik* in Jetak Village is one of the flagship programs in the implementation of the Thematic KKN. This initiative emerged from the need to create a platform that not only functions as a training center but also as a hub for developing creative economies and preserving cultural heritage. Until now, the cultural potential of the Tengger community, particularly in the art of batik, has not been optimally managed and has tended to remain within a limited scope. Through *Omah Batik*, this potential is transformed into a structured program, starting from the introduction of basic batik techniques to

strengthening cultural identity through the distinctive *Udeng* Batik of Tengger. Furthermore, the presence of *Omah Batik* is expected to provide new opportunities for the community, both in terms of skills and economic growth. This space not only allows residents to gain knowledge and hands-on practice but also encourages them to develop their creativity in producing motifs rooted in local wisdom. The resulting batik products carry not only artistic value but also market potential as unique village souvenirs, thus opening opportunities for the formation of new MSMEs. Therefore, *Omah Batik* is not merely a training facility but also a driving force in promoting local potential, strengthening Tengger cultural identity, and creating sustainable tourism attractions with economic value.

The initial stage of the training focused on simple yet engaging activities, namely the making of eco-print tote bags and tie-dye tote bags. This training served as an introduction for the community to the world of creative fabric crafts. The eco-print technique utilizes leaves and flowers available in the surrounding environment, making it easy to apply as well as environmentally friendly. Meanwhile, the tie-dye technique introduces variations in fabric coloring by tying and dipping the fabric into dye to produce diverse and dynamic patterns. These two activities were chosen because they are easy to understand, require minimal capital, and are capable of producing products with considerable aesthetic and economic value. Through this stage, the community began to realize that simple creative skills could become a new source of income if managed properly.



**Fig. 1.** Eco-print and Tie-dye Totebag Making

After completing the introductory stage, the training was directed toward the core activity, namely Batik Udeng Tengger. This activity carries a deeper value, not only in terms of technical skills but also in the preservation of cultural heritage and the strengthening of local identity. The process began with the creation of batik motif sketches, which were largely inspired by local wisdom. The designs drew upon the natural mountain panoramas surrounding the village, cultural symbols unique to the Tengger community, and the philosophies of life embedded in their traditions. These motifs were not merely decorative but embodied stories, values, and meanings that reflect the character of the Tengger people.

Once the sketches were completed, they were transferred onto cloth through the *mencanting* process, in which molten wax is carefully applied using a special tool called a *canting*. This stage required patience, precision, and technical mastery, as even small mistakes could affect the final outcome. Beyond being a practical skill, the act of *mencanting* also became a medium of cultural expression—each line and pattern serving as a representation of the community's worldview. Thus, the Batik Udeng Tengger training was not only a technical exercise but also an immersive cultural experience that encouraged participants to take pride in their heritage while simultaneously gaining valuable creative and entrepreneurial skills.



**Fig. 2.** Batik Udeng Tengger Waxing Process

The next stage was coloring and water glass treatment. Coloring was carried out using specific techniques to ensure that the shades produced matched the character of the motifs that had been designed, while the water glass process served to strengthen the colors, making them more durable. Following this, the batik cloth entered the nglorot process, which involved boiling the fabric to remove the wax so that the original batik patterns appeared clearly. This stage became the most anticipated moment, as it revealed the final result of all the preceding steps.



**Fig. 3.** Batik Udeng Tengger Coloring Process

The entire series of training activities, ranging from eco-print and tie-dye to Tengger Udeng Batik, not only provided practical experience but also offered the community a deeper understanding of the cultural values embedded in each product. The residents of Jetak Village began to realize that batik is not merely patterned fabric but also a medium for preserving traditions and expressing local identity. This program equipped them with applicable skills while fostering a sense of pride in their cultural heritage.

The results of the training were subsequently showcased in an exhibition of Tengger Udeng Batik at *Omah Batik*. The exhibition served as an important platform to display the community's hard work and to introduce Jetak Village batik products to a wider audience. Beyond being an appreciation event, the exhibition also formed part of the village's tourism promotion strategy. Through the exhibition, the community could directly observe that their creations possessed market value and appeal, making them suitable to be marketed as creative products or unique village souvenirs.



**Fig. 4.** Omah Batik Exhibition

The impact of this activity is felt not only economically but also socially and culturally. Economically, the exhibition opened opportunities for new markets, both through direct sales to tourists and collaborations with external partners.

The batik products displayed have the potential to become flagship commodities of the village, supporting the development of local MSMEs. Socially, the exhibition strengthened community cohesion and self-confidence, as residents could directly witness recognition of their work. Culturally, the batik exhibition reinforced Jetak Village's unique identity and broadened the community's understanding of the importance of preserving cultural heritage through creative innovation.

The implementation of Thematic KKN in Jetak Village highlights the importance of a participatory approach in developing local potential, particularly in the fields of culture and the creative economy. Activities such as eco-print, tie-dye, and Tengger Udeng Batik training reflect efforts to integrate cultural preservation with community empowerment through practical skills. This approach aligns with the principles of sustainable tourism development, where local communities are not merely objects of tourism but also key actors in creating economic and social value (Aquino et al., 2018; Nursanty & Wulandari, 2023; Widagdo et al., 2017). Furthermore, introducing traditional batik techniques to the local community strengthens Tengger cultural identity while serving as a strategy to expand market access for the village's creative products. Therefore, the Thematic KKN program in Jetak Village can be considered a best-practice example of community empowerment and culture-based tourism development, which can be further analyzed by referencing literature on community development, creative economy, and cultural preservation..

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Thematic KKN program in Jetak Village, particularly through the establishment of *Omah Batik*, has demonstrated significant contributions to community empowerment, cultural preservation, and local economic development. The series of training activities, from eco-print and tie-dye tote bags to Tengger Udeng Batik, successfully enhanced the skills of the residents while fostering a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage. The batik products created not only have artistic and economic value but also serve as a medium for expressing and preserving Tengger identity.

Moreover, the exhibition of these works provided a platform for recognition, strengthened community cohesion, and opened opportunities for local MSMEs. Through this program, students have played an active role in promoting sustainable creative economic practices and cultural tourism in the village. Therefore, the continuation and expansion of such initiatives are essential to ensure long-term benefits, sustainable development, and the preservation of Jetak Village's unique cultural identity for future generations.

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