

BLUE RIVER CLEAN ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CARE EDUCATION AS AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN BANABUNGI VILLAGE, PASARWAJO DISTRICT

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Abstract

Kali Biru, located in Banabungi Village, Pasarwajo District, Buton Regency, is one of the popular tourist destinations for domestic tourists, offering natural beauty that remains original and beautiful, as well as high accessibility. Although awareness of the importance of maintaining river cleanliness has increased, suboptimal waste management practices remain a significant challenge. This is due to the lack of intensive education on the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness, especially rivers, as a tourism asset that has great potential in encouraging the economic growth of local communities. Clean-up and education actions about the importance of environmental cleanliness in the Kali Biru area were carried out using direct education methods, distribution of cleaning tools, and environmental cleaning in order to increase public and tourist awareness of the cleanliness of the river environment. The results of the evaluation show that the implementation of education and community empowerment programs in the Kali Biru tourist area is effective in increasing public understanding and affection for the importance of maintaining the cleanliness and preservation of the river environment as a tourist destination. This is expected to encourage sustainable economic growth through the development of responsible tourism

Keywords: *Blue River Banabungi, Environmental Care Education, , Pasarwajo, River Clean Action*

INTRODUCTION

Kumele Lakua, or popularly known as Kali Biru, is one of the other water tourism destinations that are loved to be visited by local people, located in Banabungi Village, Pasarwajo District, Buton Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. The Blue River is geographically adjacent to the main artery of the district, so accessibility to the location is relatively easy. The Kali Biru tourist destination is located very close to Pasarwajo Public Port, which can be reached in approximately 5 minutes. This makes Kali Biru one of the tourist destinations that are popular to be visited by tourists, both from inside and outside Buton Regency, who come to Pasarwajo, Buton Regency. Furthermore, this tourist destination is often used as a stopover for fast boat passengers from the Wanci area who want to continue their journey to Bau-Bau City. In addition, the Blue River is also a popular recreational destination for office employees who hold family gatherings.

The Blue River, as a tourist attraction, is unique because its water source is a combination of seawater and freshwater that is still experiencing tidal fluctuations. The community used to use Kali Biru water for daily purposes such as bathing, washing, toilets, drinking, as well as a component of making building materials. However, over time, the community has stopped using the water from the river for daily needs. At this time, PDAM Laem্পangulu distributes water to people's homes using pipes, which come from mountain freshwater sources that can be consumed. This condition has shifted the function of the Blue River to become a popular tourist destination among the public (Setiady & Afriadi, 2019). The existence of Kali Biru, as a local tourism asset, has made a significant contribution to the economy of the surrounding community. In response, the local government has invested in the construction of tourism-

supporting facilities, such as gajebo and other seating facilities, to improve visitor comfort. In addition, local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) can have the opportunity to develop their businesses by selling traditional regional culinary specialties in the tourist area. This shows the commitment of the local government to develop tourism in a sustainable manner. The natural beauty of the Blue River is threatened by the increasingly worrying waste problem. Careless waste disposal by visitors can have a negative impact on the environment, such as threatening the sustainability of coastal and marine ecosystems. In addition, the economic activities of the local community, especially fishermen and tourism actors, can be significantly disrupted. So, there needs to be a more serious waste management effort. (Husain & Saleh, 2022).

The main problems faced by Kali Biru tourist destinations are the lack of adequate waste management facilities and the lack of sensitivity and concern of the community in disposing of waste in the places that have been provided. As a result, garbage is scattered everywhere, threatening public health and the environment. To overcome this problem, effective and sustainable waste management is the key to preserving the environment, improving public health, and supporting sustainable tourism development. This activity needs to involve various parties, ranging from village and regional governments to communities and business actors. The active participation of the community in waste management in the Kali Biru tourist area can increase environmental awareness, encourage pro-environmental behavior, and contribute to the preservation of the natural environment. On the contrary, low public awareness of the importance of waste management has had a negative impact on the environment, especially in coastal areas. The action of cleaning up tourist areas is a form of real effort made in order to increase the involvement of local residents in solid waste management.

Through this activity, it is hoped that it will be able to change the mindset of local residents, so that they pay more attention to environmental cleanliness and participate in preserving tourist areas. Therefore, this community service activity aims to raise awareness among local residents about the importance of maintaining the cleanliness of tourist areas and cleaning in the Blue River Area to increase tourism potential in the Pasarwajo area, Buton Regency (Nau & Sombo, 2020). Ensure that the literature review is well-organized, flowing smoothly between topics, and logically leading to your research questions or hypotheses. Proper citations and references are essential to uphold academic integrity and provide credit to original authors.

METHOD

The implementation of this service was carried out in the Blue River Area (Kumele Lakua), Banabungi Village, Pasarwajo District, Buton Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. This activity was attended by the community service team of the Buton Institute of Marine Technology, involving students and lecturers of the Buton Institute of Marine Technology, as well as the surrounding community in the Kali Biru area. The methods applied to this activity are divided into three stages, namely the preparation stage, the implementation stage, and the evaluation stage. 1) The preparation stage is carried out by making an activity plan and coordinating with the community around Kali Biru and other related parties. 2) The implementation stage is carried out by providing direct education to the community and students, distributing tools, and cleaning up waste in the Kali Biru area. Education was carried out by lecturers from the Buton Institute of Marine Technology by providing briefings to students and the surrounding community in the Kali Biru area about the importance of maintaining the cleanliness of the Kali Biru. The next stage is to distribute equipment in the form of plastic bags for garbage cans. The last stage is to clean the environment around the Blue River, which is carried out in mutual cooperation with the community around the Blue River, students, and lecturers of the Buton Institute of Marine Technology. 3) The post-implementation stage, namely the stage of evaluating activities and formulating a follow-up plan. The flow of the implementation stages of this service activity can be seen in Figure 1.

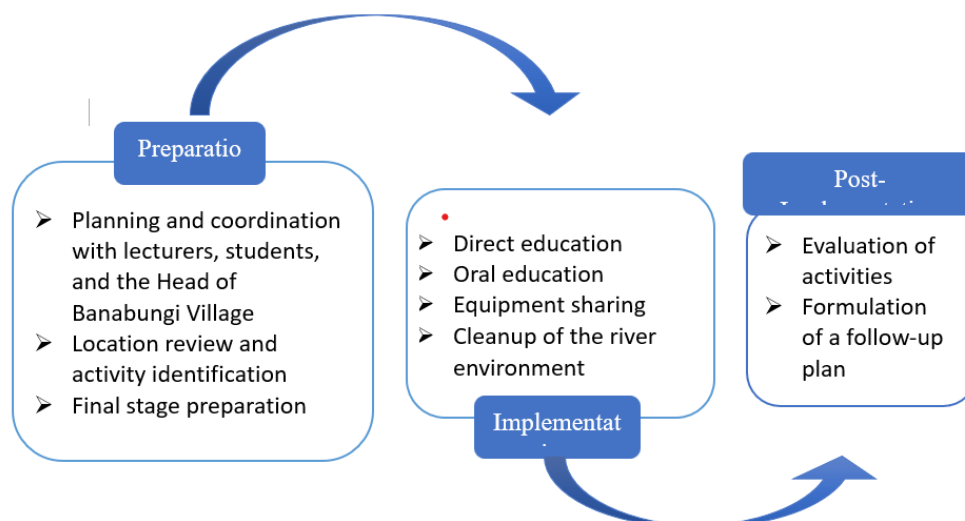


Figure 1. Implementation Stage Flow

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The problem of river pollution due to garbage is a crucial issue that requires serious attention. The river cleaning action is one of the efforts to overcome this problem. River cleanup action activities and environmental care education in the Kali Biru Area, coupled with Basic Diving Practice activities, are an effort to maintain the cleanliness and sustainability of river ecosystems, which have an impact on environmental conservation and pollution reduction. This activity was attended by ITK Button students and the surrounding community to actively participate in protecting the environment, so that it can increase environmental awareness and encourage positive actions in the future. The active participation of the community in river clean-up activities can encourage the formation of sustainable pro-environmental behavior. (Setyowati et al., 2021).

This service activity began by conducting oral and direct education to students and the community around Kali Biru about the importance of maintaining the cleanliness of the river and mutual concern for the river environment to improve the quality of health of the surrounding community and tourists. The cleanliness of the environment affects the level of satisfaction of visitors and the number of tourists who visit next. The river as a tourist destination needs to be kept clean so that more tourists come to visit. The lack of garbage cans provided in Kali Biru is one of the factors that makes visitors and residents not throw garbage in its place. Therefore, in order for them to be able to dispose of garbage in its place, it is necessary to provide adequate garbage disposal facilities. (Abdullah et al., 2023)

The next stage was to clean the Kali Biru Area, which was carried out with the community around Kali Biru, ITK Buton students of the Biotechnology, Capture Fisheries, and Aquaculture Study Program, and ITK Buton Lecturers. The cleaning of the Blue River begins by collecting garbage and then collecting it in plastic bags that have been provided from the east to the west end of the Blue River. The plastic bag containing the garbage is then taken to the nearest garbage can. The waste collected in the form of solid waste is separated by type, namely organic and inorganic waste. Organic waste can be tree twigs, dried leaves, food scraps, or fruit bark. Meanwhile, inorganic waste can be in the form of cans and drink bottles, plastic bags. If managed properly, organic waste will not have a negative impact on the environment. Meanwhile, inorganic waste can cause pollution to the environment if it is poorly managed, which can cause soil, water, and air pollution. Furthermore, by separating the types of waste, waste management will be much more effective, namely being able to reduce the quantity of waste that ends up in landfills, so that the environment can avoid pollution. Organic waste can be utilized as compost, while inorganic waste can be recycled. Once the waste is separated by type, all waste is collected and transported to the nearest landfill ,(Diyanah et al., 2019), (P & Supriharjo , 2013 ,(Azmin et al., 2022).



Figure 2. Banabungi Blue River Clean Action (Source: Researcher Documentation)

After the activity is carried out, an evaluation will be conducted through an opinion poll with community representatives who participated in the river cleanup action. From the results of the poll, several constructive inputs were obtained, namely that similar activities are carried out sustainably in other areas that have the potential to bring in tourists, or other areas with a large amount of waste. In addition, several working groups can be formed, with each group accompanied by a field supervisor, so that the implementation of clean-up activities can run effectively and efficiently.





Figure 3. Post-Activity accompanied by a Field Supervisor (Source: Researcher Documentation)

The local village government (Banabungi Village) has prepared a garbage can, but its use is still not optimal, so garbage can still be found along the Blue River. An interesting fact of this Community Service activity is that no garbage was found on the surface of the river (Kali Biru). This shows that the level of awareness of the surrounding community and visitors to Kali Biru regarding the importance of maintaining the cleanliness of the environment, especially the river, has shown a significant increase. However, educational efforts still need to be improved in an ongoing manner, and waste management around Kali Biru still needs to be optimized to ensure that there is no waste in the Kali Biru area, which also functions as a tourist destination for local people, migrants, or visitors.

CONCLUSION

The Blue River has the potential to be a tourist attraction, which is a profitable place from an economic point of view, with the existence of MSME business actors. Public and visitor concern in maintaining environmental cleanliness, especially rivers, sustainable education, and waste management, still need to be optimized. This community service activity consists of two main activities, namely the action to clean up Kali Biru waste and direct education to the community, especially MSME actors in the Kali Biru Area, about the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness in the Kali Biru tourist destination area. With the river clean-up action and environmental care education that has been carried out in the Blue River Area, Banabungi Village can foster the concern and participation of local residents and visitors in maintaining the cleanliness and preservation of the environment, especially the Blue River Area in Banabungi Village, Pasarwajo.

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