

# The Role of Youth in Enhancing Community Economic Welfare through the Development of Tourism Villages (A Study at the Pleseran Camp Earth Tourism in Nglurah Village, Tawangmangu, Karanganyar Regency)

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## Abstract

*Youth constitute an integral segment of society, inherently intertwined with its social fabric and challenges. Particularly in Nglurah Village, Tawangmangu District, their pivotal role in fostering community human resource development is indispensable. Their active engagement serves as a cornerstone for the village's advancement. This study aims to elucidate three key facets: firstly, the youth's contribution to enhancing the local economy; secondly, the repercussions of their involvement, especially in the context of the tourism village; and thirdly, the factors, both facilitating and impeding, their endeavors in developing the Pleseran Camping Grounds. Employing a descriptive qualitative methodology, data was gathered through interviews, observations, and document analysis, encompassing primary and secondary sources. Findings reveal that the youth's concerted efforts have significantly bolstered the economic landscape, notably within the BUPER tourist destinations, rendering them a sustainable revenue stream. Their proactive role has catalyzed positive economic transformations, underscoring their potential as economic agents. Supporting factors such as enthusiasm, addressing unemployment, community dynamics, and the allure of the Nglurah Tawangmangu Tourism Village, have propelled their initiatives. Conversely, challenges persist, notably the underutilization of youth potential and insufficient support from various stakeholders, hindering their full impact. This research underscores the pivotal role of youth in local economic development while identifying avenues for enhancing their contributions and addressing existing barriers..*

**Keywords:** The Role of Youth, Economy, Tourism Village

## Introduction

The role of youth is often associated with the progress of a nation, and in Indonesia, the involvement of youth in national life and nation-building is undeniable. This has been evident since the history of Indonesia's struggle for independence. The Declaration of Youth Quality is proof of the vital role of Indonesian youth in the country's struggle. One key position of the younger generation as successors is to think collectively and participate in the development of unique and diverse creativity that is more beneficial. For example, adding local materials, crafts, and other elements to enhance creativity. Thus, while creativity is unique, its impact can be substantial not only on the lifestyle and social patterns, culture, and politics of a society but also on the economic growth of a country.

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This is reflected in the Government Decision of the Republic of Indonesia No. 50/2011 concerning the Master Plan for National Tourism Development 2010-2025, which states, "Empowering the community is an effort to increase awareness, skills, access, and the role of the community, both individually and collectively, to improve the quality of life, independence, and welfare through tourism. The younger generation must also be involved in the development of tourism as part of the local community" (Swasono, 2013).

Central Java Province, one of the tourist destinations in Karanganyar Regency, is the Bumi Perkemahan Pleseran Village in Nglurah Tawangmangu, managed by Perhutani, the Forest Management Unit (KPH). Surakarta has an interesting pilot tourism area that is being developed as a tourist destination - the Bumi Perkemahan (Buper) Pleseran Forest Tourism. This tourism initiative is a collaboration between Perhutani, the Wono Lestari Forest Village Community Institution (LMDH), and the Buper Pleseran Manager in the Forest Block 52, Pemangkuan Hutan Resort.

According to Koentjaraningrat (1997), youth is a phase in the life cycle of a human that can either lead to growth or change. It can be concluded that youth is a dynamic new generation with a growing personality within a community. The significant position and the struggles of youth in Indonesia are well-documented in the nation's history.

Economic improvement involves raising the standard of living and other aspects, intensifying the creation, and so on. One of the goals of developing a region is to increase its economic level. Economic improvement is not only oriented towards the growth and development of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) but also considers the rate of population growth and development, as mentioned by Boediono in Tarigan.

Rural tourism is a type of tourism that emphasizes the overall atmosphere of authenticity in such villages, including beautiful rural landscapes, culinary experiences, souvenirs, homestays, etc. Rural tourism can be easily described as an activity that attracts tourists to visit a village to see and experience its authenticity based on its uniqueness and potential.

Natural tourist attractions are a manifestation of Allah SWT's love for humanity in creating the beauty of nature to soothe the world. Natural tourist attractions are attractive because of their beauty, artistic nature, strength, rarity, usefulness, etc. In addition, the Director of Nature Protection and Conservation (1979) believes that a tourist destination is the aspect of development and utilization of an area and all its contents, including the preservation and control of the tourist area.

The expected benefits of this research are:

1. Understanding the role of youth in improving the local economy, especially in Bumi Perkemahan Pleseran Village.
2. Providing in-depth insights for future researchers.
3. Serving as a reference for future researchers conducting studies on similar themes.

The investigation will concentrate exclusively on the locale of Nglurah Tawangmangu Village, delving into the particularities surrounding the engagement of youth in fostering economic development via the avenue of tourism within said locality.

## Method

Quantitative approach emphasizes data analysis processed numerically using statistical methods. Essentially, quantitative approach is employed in inferential research

related to hypothesis testing and the implementation of conclusions from results with the probability of Type I errors. In qualitative approach, there is a greater emphasis on analyzing deductive and inductive thinking processes, as well as the analysis of the dynamics of relationships among observed phenomena using scientific logic.

1. Overview of the Tawangmangu Area

According to the Central Statistics Agency of Karanganyar, Tawangmangu District is the easternmost district of Karanganyar Regency. It shares a direct border with East Java Province and is adjacent to Magetan Regency. Tawangmangu is considered the most fertile district in Karanganyar because of its location on the slopes of Mount Lawu, making its soil fertile. As a result, Tawangmangu exports foodstuffs to surrounding areas.

2. General Description of Nglurah Area

Nglurah Village is a subdistrict in Tawangmangu District, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java Province. The location of Nglurah on the slopes of Mount Lawu makes the area cool. Nglurah is approximately 2.5 km east of the center of Tawangmangu. The main income of Nglurah residents comes from the agriculture and plantation sectors, including vegetables such as carrots, cabbage, mustard greens, corn, and cassava. Additionally, the area is known as a center for ornamental plants in Tawangmangu. Most Nglurah residents grow ornamental plants for sale, using the income to meet their daily needs. Commonly planted plants include roses, various anthuriums, and other plant varieties.

3. General Overview of Pleseran

The Plesera tourist destination was initiated by local youth around the Plesera area. Initially, it was just an empty land on Perhutani land. The construction began in 2015 with the collaboration of youth from the village of Nglurah. Mr. Sugeng served as the mentor for the Nglurah Village Youth. The establishment of this tourist destination is a form of awareness among young people about the positive impact of tourism for them. The Plesera tourist attraction initially was a sloping land of about 200-300 meters. The youth cleared the land to create photo spots and camping areas.

Table 1. Research Findings

No	Focus	Findings
1.	"How does the youth contribute to enhancing the community's economy through the eco-tourism village of Bumi Perkemahan Pleseran in Nglurah Tawangmangu, Karanganyar Regency?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The active role of youth organizations (karang taruna) in enhancing the economy.</li> <li>• Youth participation in social interactions.</li> <li>• The position of young people in the management process.</li> <li>• Successfully creating job opportunities and cultivating a business-oriented mindset among community members, resulting in a promising new venture.</li> </ul>

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| <p>2. What are the impacts experienced by the youth with the existence of the eco-tourism village, Bumi Perkemahan Pleseran, in Nglurah Tawangmangu, Karanganyar Regency?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reducing the unemployment rate in Nglura village.</li><li>● Transforming the mindset of the youth to effectively utilize this recreational tourist attraction with creative ideas.</li><li>● Shifting the perspective of young individuals who were previously indifferent to the environment, now actively developing the existing natural resources.</li></ul> |
| <p>3. What are the supporting and inhibiting factors for the youth in developing the Eco-Tourism Village, Bumi Perkemahan Pleseran, in Nglurah Tawangmangu?</p>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Supporting Factors (Financial incentives, unemployment factor)</li><li>● Obstructing Factors (Many youths in the learning age, insufficient preparation, shyness, lack of confidence)</li><li>● Solution (Needs further refinement)</li></ul>  |
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## Result And Discussion

### Enhancing Economic Growth through Youth Engagement in Pleseran Tourism Destinations

Youth from Nglurah Tawangmangu Village, Karanganyar Regency, engaged in the youth organization (karangtaruna), actively contribute to improving the economy of Nglurah Village by introducing a new tourist attraction, in addition to the local residents selling ornamental plants. This involvement has been in place since the establishment of the Pleseran Campground tourism object. Initially, youth leaders (karangtaruna) participated in the development of the Pleseran Campground tourism object and played an active role in its establishment. The youth leaders were part of the management structure responsible for the development of the Pleseran Campground tourism object, including mentors from the youth organization and other community leaders.

In this context, youth (karangtaruna) can turn their activities into a source of income and also manage the Pleseran Campground tourism object. The youth (karangtaruna) are also involved in the creation of an information center to receive feedback from visitors for evaluation purposes. They contribute to preserving the natural beauty of the forest and the lake in the Pleseran Campground by taking care of pine trees, maintaining cleanliness to reduce litter, providing environmental cleanliness facilities such as trash bins, and encouraging vendors to be friendly to visitors.

These activities align with previous research on the role of human resources in facing the era of globalization. Wahyu Tri Trisani (2014) emphasizes the need for human resources to cope with challenges and contribute to the environment, especially in the workplace. Therefore, continuous efforts to develop potential and enhance competencies are crucial for supporting productivity and achieving progress. Improving the quality of professional competency through education, training, and development programs is essential for adapting to technological advancements and promoting innovation. Thus, human resources become valuable assets contributing to productivity rather than being a burden.

The government policy highlights the importance of individual roles in long-term development, focusing on economic and human resource development simultaneously.

Developing human resources requires training to enhance skills and workforce productivity within companies. Regardless of regional advancements and infrastructure, without competent human resources, it is challenging for a region to progress. This equation positions young people as primary actors. By developing tourism that emphasizes local natural resources and preserved local wisdom, positive effects on the growth of the local creative economy and the lower-class economy can be achieved.

Based on interviews and research findings, the youth's role is significant in improving the economy of the Pleseran Campground tourism area in Tawangmangu, Karanganyar, from its establishment. The opening of the Pleseran Campground tourism destination and the creation of new job opportunities contribute to changing the community's mindset towards entrepreneurship.

### **Impact on Youth with the Existence of the Pleseran Campground Tourism Village in Nglurah, Tawangmangu, Karanganyar**

In achieving Indonesia's tourism development goals, continuous strategies and policies are required. The impact on youth with the existence of Pleseran Campground in Tawangmangu includes economic changes and improved social status. Previously unemployed and without income, the youth now engage in activities and generate income from utilizing the tourism potential. The creation of new job opportunities through the opening of the Pleseran Campground tourism destination has not only transformed the lives of the youth but also increased the enthusiasm of the local population. Many residents have opened small businesses, such as food stalls, around the Pleseran tourism area.

Research by Ferry Siswadh and Yelnim on Optimizing the Role of Youth in the Development of Creative Industries in the Tourism Industry emphasizes that highlighting natural resources and preserving local wisdom in tourism development will have a positive impact on the growth of the creative industry, benefiting the local and lower-middle-class communities. In conclusion, the youth's obtained impact with the existence of the Pleseran Campground Tourism Village is significant, changing economic and social status from unemployment to active participation and income generation.

### **Exploring the Facilitating and Constraining Elements for Adolescent Engagement in the Development of the Pleseran Campground Tourism Village in Nglurah, Tawangmangu.**

#### **a. Supporting Factors**

Several factors support the development of the Pleseran Campground tourism village, enabling youth and the community to optimize the village's potential. Based on the research in Nglurah Tawangmangu, significant supporting factors include:

1. **Enthusiasm:** The high enthusiasm serves as motivation for youth in the Pleseran Campground tourism village to engage in learning and development activities.
2. **Human Resources:** Unemployed graduates seeking opportunities in the tourism industry contribute to the management and implementation of programs in the Pleseran Campground tourism village.

3. **Community Participation:** The involvement of the local community plays a crucial role in supporting the smooth and successful implementation of various tourism activities in the village.
  4. **Attraction of Pleseran Campground Tourism:** The natural beauty, including scenic landscapes and cultural performances, attracts tourists to the Pleseran Campground, boosting the local economy.
- b. **Inhibiting Factors**
- Despite the supporting factors, certain factors hinder the development of the Pleseran Campground tourism village:
1. **Suboptimal Role of Youth:** Limited knowledge and skills hinder the youth's ability to contribute to the development of the tourism village. Lack of confidence and shyness results in a less creative and less impactful contribution.
  2. **Difficulty in Determining Youth Responsibilities:** The lack of support from various parties and tourism-aware groups within the village government hampers the active involvement of youth. Older members of the community dominate in promoting the benefits of tourism development, making it challenging for the Pleseran Campground village to gain importance and recognition.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the description in the previous chapter, the researcher arrives at the following conclusions:

- a. Youth participation as catalysts in the ecotourism village development process involves actively contributing to building existing natural resources. In this process, the role of youth extends to developing natural resources, wherein they also create initiatives to enhance the community's economic well-being.
- b. Youth participation in implementation and execution involves engaging in various ecotourism village activities, such as sports packages like outbound activities, flying fox games, bonfire events, and artistic performances.
- c. Youth participation in enjoying the benefits of these activities is essential. Youth contribute by applying their acquired skills to improve their quality of life. In this regard, youth perceive tangible financial benefits, such as earning service fees that can be utilized individually or deposited into the youth fund. Moreover, this active involvement benefits the community by creating business opportunities.
- d. In the effort to develop Pleseran Ecotourism Village, various supporting and inhibiting factors come into play. The enabling variables encompass the following: 1) Zeal, 2) Unemployment quotient, 3) Communal aspect, 4) Charms inherent to the Kebonagung Ecotourism Village. Conversely, the constraining variables comprise: 1) Suboptimal engagement of the younger demographic, and 2) Insufficient backing from diverse stakeholders.

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For the youth of Pleseran Tourism Village, it can enhance their courage and self-confidence in realizing the potential and capabilities to develop the tourism village into a better place.

- a. For the youth of Pleseran Tourism Village, it can improve collaboration with the community to optimize the tourism attractions in the Pleseran Camping Ground Tourism Village.
- b. It is hoped that the organizers can conduct training programs to empower the youth as the next generation, fostering confidence and creativity.
- c. The organizers and youth of Pleseran Tourism Village are encouraged to collaboratively discuss the tourism village work program and efforts for the development of Pleseran Camping Ground Tourism Village.
- d. The government is expected to fully support the activities of the Tourism Village, both morally and materially.

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