

# THE ROLE OF UMKM IN INCREASING TOURIST VISITS AT THE SITU CIPONDOH TOURISM DESTINATION, TANGERANG CITY, BANTEN PROVINCE, INDONESIA

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in increasing tourist visits to the Situ Cipondoh destination, Tangerang City, Banten Province, Indonesia. Even though Situ Cipondoh has great tourism potential, tourist visits must be more optimal. This research fills the knowledge gap by analyzing the roles and strategies that MSMEs can use to support tourism development in Situ Cipondoh. A qualitative approach was used in this research, involving interviews, direct observation, and analysis of related documents. The research results show that MSMEs are essential in improving infrastructure, facilities, promotion, and tourism services around Situ Cipondoh. The active participation of MSMEs in infrastructure development has increased the accessibility and quality of the tourist environment. Also, through creative promotions and collaboration with travel agents, MSMEs have increased tourist awareness and interest in Situ Cipondoh. This research also highlights the importance of empowering MSMEs to develop sustainable tourism. By strengthening sustainable business models and building awareness about sustainable tourism practices, MSMEs can become agents of change that support environmental sustainability and social welfare. Local governments and related stakeholders need to implement policies and programs that support the development of MSMEs in the tourism sector. MSMEs can be the main driving force for tourism transformation, creating positive economic and social impacts for local communities and enriching the experience of visiting tourists.

**Keywords:** Role of MSMEs, Infrastructure Development, Promotion, Empowerment, Welfare

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## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the economic sectors that stands out in improving the local economy (Hariyani, 2018). Apart from making a significant contribution to Gross Domestic Income (GDP), the tourism industry also has great potential to create diverse job opportunities and support the growth of other sectors (Ernawati, 2019). Tourism plays a vital role in Indonesia as one of the driving forces of the economy with bright prospects amidst global challenges, as has been proven during the COVID-19 pandemic (Megawati et al., 2023). Despite various obstacles, the tourism industry continues to adapt and show resilience, making it one of the strategic sectors in national economic recovery efforts (Suhel & Bashir, 2018).

The city of Tangerang, located in Banten Province, Indonesia, is known for its rapidly developing industry and business and has attractive tourism potential (Nurbaeti et al., 2021). One of the prominent destinations is Situ Cipondoh Tourism. Situ Cipondoh offers enchanting natural beauty and a diversity of tourist activities that visitors from various circles can enjoy (Ratnaningtyas et al., 2022). However, despite its great potential, tourist visits to Situ Cipondoh still need to be improved. Several factors may contribute, including ineffective promotion, inadequate infrastructure, and inadequate supporting facilities (Ratnaningtyas et al., 2022). Limited accessibility and lack of coordination between stakeholders can also hinder tourism development at Situ Cipondoh ((Ratnaningtyas et al., 2023)).

Coordinated efforts are needed between the government, the tourism industry, and the local community to increase tourist visits to Situ Cipondoh. Strategic steps such as increasing promotion through various media, improving infrastructure and facilities, and training to improve the quality of tourism services can help improve this situation (Ratnaningtyas et al., 2023). Collaboration with the private sector to develop attractive tour packages can also be practical. Taking these steps is hoped to increase the attractiveness of Situ Cipondoh as a beautiful tourist destination for local and foreign tourists. This will not only provide economic benefits for Tangerang City and its surroundings but will also help preserve the natural and cultural beauty of the area (Heny, 2022).

This new research aims to identify the role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in increasing tourist visits to the Situ Cipondoh destination, Tangerang City, Banten Province, Indonesia. This research will focus on how local MSMEs can contribute concretely to improving tourism infrastructure, facilities, and services, which will increase the attractiveness of Situ Cipondoh for tourists. The research gap is the need for more in-depth research regarding the contribution of MSMEs to tourism development in the Situ Cipondoh destination. Although there is research on the tourism potential in Situ Cipondoh, there needs to be

research that specifically highlights the role of MSMEs in increasing tourist visits and concrete efforts that MSMEs can make to support tourism development in this destination. Therefore, this research will fill this knowledge gap by analyzing the role and contribution of MSMEs and the strategies they can use to increase tourist visits to Situ Cipondoh.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The Role of MSMEs in Tourism**

With unique and local products and services, MSMEs have great potential to become the main driver in the tourism industry. MSMEs can provide different and authentic experiences to tourists through the uniqueness and authenticity of the products offered (Aprilani et al., 2023). This unique experience is an essential factor influencing tourists' interest in visiting specific destinations (Budilaksono et al., 2022). As awareness of the importance of local experiences in travel increases, MSMEs have an excellent opportunity to develop and contribute significantly to the local economy, not only do they provide authentic experiences, but MSMEs also play a role in preserving local culture and heritage, by maintaining and developing products originating from local culture, MSMEs preserve a region's unique identity (Andari et al., 2023). This is attractive to tourists looking for a different experience and essential in maintaining the continuity of local culture and heritage from the influence of globalization, which often encourages regional characteristics (Andjanie et al., 2023). MSMEs must remain focused on the uniqueness and authenticity of their products and services, by maintaining local identity in their products, MSMEs can stand out amidst increasingly fierce global competition (Fajri et al., 2023). Partnerships between MSMEs and the tourism industry can also strengthen them by supporting each other in promoting and developing tourism destinations. In this way, MSMEs become integral to the tourist experience and the primary motor in local economic growth and cultural preservation (Wardhani et al., 2023).

### **Factors that Influence Tourist Visits**

Several factors influence a tourist's decision to choose a destination. Accessibility is one of the main factors influencing their choice, destinations that are easily accessible with convenient transportation tend to be more desirable, as they reduce travel difficulties and allow tourists to enjoy their time better (Yen et al., 2021). The quality of products and services also plays a vital role in attracting tourists, destinations that offer a satisfying experience, from accommodation to tourist attractions, will generally be more popular (Mihai et al., 2023). Factors such as cleanliness, intimidation, and food quality can also influence tourists towards the destination, price and diversity of experiences are also important considerations for most tourists (Mangali & Ortaleza, 2021). Affordable prices with offers that match the value provided will be the main attraction. In addition, destinations that offer a variety of experiences, from natural adventures to cultural activities, can attract tourists with different preferences and interests. By considering all these factors, travelers can make more informed decisions tailored to their wants and needs (Bursa et al., 2022).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research will use a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of MSMEs in increasing tourist visits to Situ Cipondoh. A qualitative approach will allow researchers to explore in detail the perspectives, experiences, and contributions of MSMEs in tourism. This research will use a descriptive research design focusing on analyzing the role and contribution of MSMEs in tourism development at Situ Cipondoh. The research sample consisted of MSME managers operating around Situ Cipondoh and other stakeholders involved in the local tourism industry, such as local government, non-governmental organizations, and tourists. Data will be collected through (1) Interviews with MSME owners and managers, as well as other stakeholders, to gain insight into the role, contribution, and challenges faced by MSMEs in increasing tourist visits; (2) Direct observation at Situ Cipondoh to observe MSME activities and the condition of tourism infrastructure; (3) Analysis of related documents, such as regional government reports, tourism promotion documents, and previous studies on tourism in the area. The qualitative data collected will be analyzed thematically by identifying patterns, primary findings, and relationships between various factors that influence the role of MSMEs in increasing tourist visits.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Improved Infrastructure and Facilities**

Local MSMEs have a significant role in developing infrastructure and facilities around Situ Cipondoh. They are part of the local economy and agents of change in improving the surrounding environment. One concrete example is the contribution of several MSMEs engaged in the construction sector. They actively construct various facilities, such as roads, sidewalks, and parking lots. This action aims to increase accessibility to tourist destinations like Situ Cipondoh. Through the active participation of MSMEs in development projects, the quality of infrastructure around Situ Cipondoh continues to improve. With better roads and improved

sidewalks, visitors can easily access and enjoy the beauty of Situ Cipondoh. Apart from that, the construction of adequate parking spaces also reduces congestion and improves the visiting experience for tourists.

Empowering MSMEs in infrastructure development has a positive economic and social impact. By involving MSMEs in these projects, they get the opportunity to improve their skills and capacity and increase their income and business growth. Apart from that, infrastructure development carried out by local MSMEs also creates new jobs for the surrounding community, improving local economic prosperity. Not only focusing on physical development, MSMEs also contribute to improving other aspects of the environment around Situ Cipondoh. For example, some MSMEs may be involved in environmental projects, such as planting green trees, waste management, or environmental cleanup campaigns. This action shows the social responsibility of MSMEs in maintaining environmental sustainability and improving the quality of life of local communities.

The active participation of MSMEs in improving infrastructure also strengthens relations between small business actors and local governments. Through good collaboration, they can achieve common goals to improve the welfare and sustainability of the environment around Situ Cipondoh. Government involvement in supporting local MSMEs is also an essential factor in the success of these projects. By continuing to involve MSMEs in developing infrastructure and facilities, the potential for developing the area around Situ Cipondoh becomes greater. MSMEs have strong local knowledge and connections with local communities, which allows them to plan and implement projects that suit community needs and desires. This creates a more inclusive and sustainable environment for all parties involved. As a result of the contribution of MSMEs to infrastructure development, Situ Cipondoh can become a more attractive and sustainable tourist destination. With improved facilities and a better-maintained environment, tourist visits can increase, positively impact the local economy, and promote natural beauty and local culture. Therefore, it is essential to continue supporting and strengthening the role of MSMEs in developing and preserving the environment around Situ Cipondoh.

### **Promotion and Marketing**

MSMEs are essential in promoting and marketing Situ Cipondoh through various means. One of the strategies they implement is through social media. By utilizing platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, MSMEs can reach a broader audience and spread information about the beauty and potential of Situ Cipondoh as an attractive tourist destination. They use exciting images, short videos, and interesting stories to attract the attention of social media users and introduce Situ Cipondoh as a place worth visiting. Apart from that, MSMEs are also collaborating with local travel agents to expand Situ Cipondoh's promotional reach. Through this collaboration, they can organize attractive tour packages and provide a practical experience for tourists. Local travel agents assist in marketing these tour packages to potential tourists through various channels, including their websites, brochures, and direct promotions.

Participation in tourism promotion events is also an effective strategy MSMEs use to introduce Situ Cipondoh to the broader community. They participate in events such as tourism exhibitions, cultural festivals, and tourism industry meetings. By presenting an attractive promotional stand and providing complete information about Situ Cipondoh, MSMEs can attract the attention of event visitors and expand the reach of their promotions. The existence of MSMEs as an integral part of the local community is an added value in Situ Cipondoh's promotional and marketing efforts. They have better access to regional markets and strong relationships with local stakeholders such as local governments, indigenous communities, and non-governmental organizations. By utilizing this network, MSMEs can effectively disseminate information about Situ Cipondoh to local communities and increase their awareness of the potential for tourism in their area.

MSMEs also act as informal tourism ambassadors who promote Situ Cipondoh to their acquaintances, friends, and family outside the area. Through daily social interactions, they can share their positive experiences about Situ Cipondoh and encourage others to visit it. In this way, MSMEs contribute to expanding the promotional reach of Situ Cipondoh outside their local area. Not only do MSMEs focus on promotions, but they also provide a satisfying experience to tourists who visit Situ Cipondoh. They provide quality local services and products, ranging from accommodation, culinary delights, and handicrafts to unique tourist activities. By providing positive experiences to tourists, MSMEs can build Situ Cipondoh's reputation as a friendly and fun tourist destination.

MSMEs are also involved in environmental conservation and tourism activities around Situ Cipondoh. They know the importance of preserving the environment and local culture as valuable assets supporting the tourism industry. By protecting the environment and culture, MSMEs can ensure that Situ Cipondoh remains attractive to tourists in the long term. Through this collaborative effort, MSMEs help promote and market Situ Cipondoh as a tourist destination and contribute to local economic development and environmental conservation. By continuing to work together and innovate, MSMEs can play a more significant role in developing sustainable tourism in Situ Cipondoh and the surrounding area.

### **Empowerment of MSMEs**

This research highlights the critical role Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play in driving tourism development. In this context, it is essential to understand that MSMEs act as providers of goods and services for tourists and as one of the main pillars of the local economy. Empowering MSMEs is vital to increasing tourist attraction and economic benefits for local communities. By prioritizing the role of MSMEs, this research shows that investment in regional business development significantly impacts the growth of the tourism sector. When MSMEs are strengthened, not only does the number of tourist visits increase, but there is also an increase in income distribution and the welfare of local communities. This emphasizes that sustainable tourism development must be based on the principle of local economic empowerment.

Apart from that, empowering MSMEs can optimize the creative economy potential in the tourism sector. MSMEs often become a forum for local innovation and unique products that satisfy tourists. Tourism can gain a sustainable competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive global market by providing the proper support to MSMEs. The importance of strengthening MSMEs in tourism can also be seen from its social impact. MSMEs are the economic backbone for many local communities, providing employment and maintaining social networks within communities. Thus, empowering MSMEs is not only about economic growth but also about strengthening social standing and social welfare at the local level.

In integrating MSMEs into the tourism industry, it is essential to consider factors such as market accessibility, skills training, and infrastructure support. In this case, comprehensive support will help MSMEs develop sustainably and optimize their contribution to tourism and the local economy. This shows that a holistic approach is needed in designing policies and programs to encourage the empowerment of MSMEs in the tourism sector. In addition, the emphasis on the role of MSMEs in tourism allows economic diversification at the local level. Instead of relying entirely on the tourism sector, empowering MSMEs helps create a more resilient and diverse economic ecosystem. This can protect against market fluctuations and create long-term economic desirability for local communities.

Through this research, it also becomes clear that empowering MSMEs is not an independent goal but is an integral part of an inclusive and sustainable tourism development strategy. By encouraging the involvement of MSMEs in added tourism value, we can ensure that economic growth is economically sustainable, socially, and environmentally. Finally, it is essential to recognize that empowering MSMEs in tourism only sometimes runs smoothly and requires ongoing support from the government, private sector, and local communities. Joint efforts from various stakeholders are needed to create a favorable environment for the growth of MSMEs in the tourism sector and to ensure maximum benefits for all parties involved.

### **Sustainable Business Model Development**

Tourism development is becoming increasingly important, especially with the significant contribution of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). This research highlights the role of MSMEs in driving tourism growth and encouraging sustainable business models. One crucial aspect emphasized is the need to pay attention to tourism activities' environmental, social, and economic impacts. By considering sustainable business models, tourism can positively provide long-term benefits for the environment and local communities. It is essential to understand that sustainable tourism not only focuses on economic growth but also responsibility for environmental sustainability and social welfare. MSMEs have a crucial role in realizing this vision of sustainable tourism because they are often an integral part of the local tourism ecosystem. Therefore, strengthening sustainable MSME business models is a relevant strategy for stopping tourism. Sustainable business models for MSMEs in the tourism sector can include: (1) Using local and environmentally friendly raw materials; (2) Employing local workers; (3) Collaborating with local communities to ensure equitable economic benefits.

Through this approach, MSMEs act as drivers of the local economy and agents of change that support environmental sustainability and social welfare. This research also highlights the importance of building awareness and education about sustainable tourism practices among stakeholders, including MSME owners and tourists. With a better understanding of the impacts of tourism activities, stakeholders will be better able to take steps that support tourism, both from an environmental and social perspective.

However, the challenges in implementing sustainable business models for MSMEs in the tourism sector must be addressed. One challenge is the availability of resources and capacity needed to adopt sustainable business practices. Therefore, support from the government, non-governmental organizations, and other institutions in funding, training, and technical guidance is crucial in strengthening the capacity of MSMEs. It is essential to recognize that change towards sustainable tourism takes time. However, the transformation towards more sustainable tourism can be realized with a joint commitment from all relevant parties, including MSMEs, government, and society. In this way, tourism will not only be a source of economic income but will also play a role in preserving the environment and improving social welfare in the long term.

## CONCLUSION

MSMEs play a very vital role in encouraging the growth of tourist visits. Their success in providing a variety of local products and services enhances the tourist experience and the region's cultural and culinary richness. However, cooperation from various parties is essential to enable MSMEs to reach their full potential. Support from the government, non-governmental organizations, and even tourists themselves is needed to create a favorable environment for MSME growth and innovation. The critical role of MSMEs in tourism development in Tangerang City, Banten Province, Indonesia, demands concrete steps from the local government and related stakeholders. Implementing policies and programs supporting the development of MSMEs in the tourism sector must be a top priority in the regional development agenda. In this way, MSMEs can become one of the main driving forces in transformational tourism, creating positive economic and social impacts for local communities and enriching the experience of visiting tourists.

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