

## THE VOLUNTEER TOURISM AS AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL IN BALI, INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

Bali as tourist destination can take the opportunity to develop volunteer tourism. It is necessary to conduct research on volunteer tourism which can be an alternative, a benefit, and support the development of the quality of sustainable tourism in Bali. The research sample was selected based on an accidental sampling technique. This research questionnaire was given to 40 foreign tourists, 70 local people, and 8 volunteer organizers who had conducted volunteer tourism in Bali. Data analysis used in this study a qualitative approach in the form of

Data Collection Procedures which includes observations, interviews, and documents. The results showed that the interest of tourists to carry out social work activities in the community was positive. Likewise, the readiness of the community shows a positive attitude with volunteer tourism programs. Foreign tourists, local people, and volunteer organizers see volunteer tourism as an alternative in developing sustainable tourism in Bali.

**KEYWORDS:** Volunteer tourism, alternative tourism, quality tourism, sustainable tourism.

**JEL Classification:** Q Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics; Environmental and Ecological Economics,

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The growth of world tourism has given birth to various new types of tourism offered by

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tourism industry players based on tourist demand, especially with the birth of tourism products with special interests that are growing rapidly at this time. The birth of special interest tourism, for example in the field of religious tourism, provides a contribution that is not small, especially in the countries of the East Asian region.<sup>[1]</sup> The special interest tourism product that is becoming a trend and growing rapidly is Volunteer Tourism or also often called Volunteer tourism.<sup>[2]</sup>

Activities that refer directly to the mention of Volunteer Tourism began to emerge in the early 1990s and experienced positive developments until the early 2000s period as a form of alternative tourism.<sup>[2]</sup> Volunteer Tourism is in demand by tourists in various age groups, especially young tourists who want to experience a different and memorable experience according to the offers provided by Volunteer Tourism Organizers through various options for those who will travel and want to make their trip have a different feel when visiting a certain destination. tourist destinations.<sup>[4]</sup>

At these time activities related to Volunteer tourism are always associated with various social activities and community activities which are held specifically through intergovernmental cooperation and inter-institutional cooperation and also because of relationships between personal relationships, especially in developing countries or in the region -areas that are experiencing various disasters, both natural and due to human activities. History records that the era of the 1980s was a time when world awareness emerged of the problems faced by countries in Africa in the form of humanitarian disasters, especially famine and war led by Bob Geldof in 1984 with the Live Aid fundraising program and followed by more dramatic steps by Prince Charles and Lady Diana in 1985 through the Live Aid program (which was initiated by Bob Geldof previously) in London and Philadelphia. Tourists from several developed countries show interest in volunteer tourism promising numbers.<sup>[4]</sup>

The large percentage of the number of tourists who carry out volunteer tourism activities shows the volunteer tourism industry has the opportunity to be developed and attracts the interest of tourism industry players who offer the program with the best formula to develop volunteer tourism as a superior product. They want the products and services offered to be really in demand by potential tourists and therefore they always try to understand the behaviour of potential tourists appropriately so that the information on services and products delivered can be responded to properly. To find out the behaviour of these potential tourists (volunteer tourists), tourism actors who offer volunteer tourism as promising alternative

tourism need to take comprehensive approaches so that they can answer the question of why volunteer tourist tourists want and do not want to buy the product services offered, why they are interested. with offers through advertisements offered and why they want to buy the volunteer tourism product and service offers.<sup>[5]</sup>

This volunteer tourism research was conducted in Bali because as a world tourist destination, Bali should be able to take the existing opportunities to develop this Volunteer tourism as an effort to improve the quality of tourism image and develop alternative tourism in overcoming the saturation that may and may occur in the future. Based on these objectives, it is necessary to make research to see how far volunteer tourism can be accepted and developed in Bali.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Volunteer tourism is a form of tourism activity that has just been recognized in Bali, although in reality this form of activity has been carried out individually or in groups but has not been well organized. Each of the organizers said that tourist visits who also carry out voluntary activities are planned and organized individually following the wishes of the sending institution. Volunteer tourism can be a new model that can benefit the community and develop a sustainable tourism industry in Bali. This thinking refers to the perception of tourists, tourism industry stakeholders in seeing the development of volunteer tourism as alternative tourism that can influence tourists to carry out volunteer tourism activities in Bali.

Volunteer tourism is based on a clear and measurable research concept to see how tourists, tourism industry stakeholders, and volunteer tourist receiving institutions in Bali perceive the presence of volunteer tourism as alternative tourism. This is in line with the thinking of Wearing which emphasizes that volunteer tourism indicates the role of an inseparable reciprocal relationship between volunteer tourism managers and volunteer tourists and communities managed through well-organized management.<sup>[6]</sup> Volunteer tourism is alternative tourism that provides opportunities for tourists to carry out activities in various forms directly with the community in tourist destinations that have their uniqueness. As an alternative product, volunteer tourism is a different product from the general understanding of tourism products. In general, the understanding of volunteer tourism as alternative tourism is related to sustainable tourism or green tourism.<sup>[7]</sup>

Alternative tourism also has an understanding of the closeness of tourists with the people in the tourist destinations they visit in the form of direct socialization relationships, especially in

understanding the habits and lifestyles of the people and how tourists understand their habits and lifestyles directly and from there they get new experiences. Handling volunteer tourism activities in supporting the improvement of the quality and development of tourism in a tourist destination, it is necessary to take a holistic approach with stakeholders. The WTO (1993) mentions that there are 3 (three) basic principles of approach behind how tourism development should be sustainable and sustainable (sustainable tourism development), namely (1) Tourism development must pay attention to ecological sustainability in the destination area to be developed by developing sustainable tourism. ecological processes, biological diversity, and biological resources; (2) Ecological sustainability is followed by social and cultural sustainability which must be able to characterize the development process in the tourist destination area which is fully supported through the direct participation of the community in the area so that community life can take place according to the culture and principles of the community itself and its identity can be well awake; (3) In socio-cultural life, the issue of security in the process of meeting local communities with tourists or visitors requires an approach that must be mutually acceptable, strengthen relationships, and indicate that both parties must respect each other so that positive values can be created. In particular, McGehee and Santos find individual participation from volunteer tourism experience offers the potential to enhance network relationships and provide awareness-raising opportunities. Although the experience of volunteer tourism from a tourist perspective has become a topic of interest, little research has been done to elucidate the experiences of community members who host volunteers. Therefore, it is important to encourage additional research to study how volunteer tourism affects tourist attitudes.<sup>[8,9]</sup>

Volunteer tourism is often referred to as an alternative or new form of tourism because volunteer tourism provides tourists with various opportunities that can combine their leisure or leisure activities with services and learning. In addition, volunteer tourism also provides a balance in combining volunteering activities and their interactions with destinations that have their uniqueness such as art & culture, geography, history, adventure, and recreation. Volunteer tourism is not only a form of exchange between tourists and host communities but more than that it is an opportunity for individuals to carry out service activities, to be able to grow maturely, show a sense of humanity, and a harmonious attitude toward society. Volunteer tourism also teaches volunteer tourists to gain an experiential understanding and learning process about the lives of other peoples and their cultures.<sup>[10,11]</sup>

Wearing says volunteering is done with concern for altruism and self-development. This attitude or motivation causes the volunteers to work for a cause they believe in and as a result, volunteers feel they have meaningfully spent their time. Volunteer tourism is a form in which tourists for various reasons carry out volunteer work organized on a vacation to help or contribute their abilities to underprivileged communities in the form of carrying out some restoration activities in the environmental field or conducting research on related aspects with the environment and local communities.<sup>[6]</sup>

Volunteer tourists also combine volunteer tourism activities with traditional tourism. This is also done to help volunteer tourists build individual relationships with local communities to strengthen mutual understanding between them. In this study, the existence of volunteer tourism as a form of alternative tourism can interact with the community in the form of art and culture, geography, history, adventure, recreation. This study wants to see how the relationship between volunteer tourism actors is a symbiosis with the local community by applying the principles of sustainable tourism and the principles of safety and security. This model is expected to be an initial guideline for stakeholders to make volunteer tourism a form of superior alternative tourism program which is formally made part of an official government program to be included in tourism development planning in the future.<sup>[6,10,11,12,13]</sup>

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach from Creswell in the form of Data Collection Procedures which include qualitative observations, qualitative interviews, and qualitative documents. This data collection is also supported through surveys in the form of closed-ended surveys and open-ended interviews. Researchers interviewed several volunteer tourism organizers from Bali and abroad who had conducted volunteer tourism activities in Bali and distributed questionnaires to tourists who were on vacation in Bali and had done volunteer tourism.<sup>[14]</sup>

The data analysis process is carried out through the creation of text and image data by preparing various related data. Creswell describes the process of analysis carried out to understand more deeply the content and meaning of the data and make interpretations of the meaning of the data. Data analysis involves collecting open data, based on asking general questions and developing information provided by respondents. In this approach, the researcher collects qualitative data, analyses it to answer several research objectives. Although analytics differ depending on the type of strategy used, qualitative inquiries often

use common procedures and are conveyed in a step-by-step manner as in data analysis.<sup>[15]</sup>

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### 4.1 Organizing Volunteer tourism in Bali

The implementation of volunteer tourism should be handled by a community institution or through other institutions such as education which will work transparently. For individual parties, cooperation with institutions recommended by the community will generate positive trust from donor agencies and tourists. The management of funds for volunteer tourism activities must also be accountable to the public. This is stated by respondents from abroad who have experience doing this. The respondents also emphasized that the sustainability of the volunteer tourism program must be a sustainable target so that the positive response of the community can be maintained and strengthened.

Volunteer tourism is an activity that has the potential to support sustainable tourism development in Bali, volunteer tourism is well planned to raise the dignity of the quality of the development of the tourism industry in Bali. An in-depth study of carrying capacity in the community and the role of academic institutions should be the main concern that can lead and equip the community to understand the potential of their resources to be developed with tourists. In line with that, both Clayton, Quiko, Varrichio reminded that the volunteer tourism program is not a spontaneous program but a program that is planned especially for tourists who are accustomed to planning their vacations and require prior certainty. For Varrichio and Clayton, the condition of Bali, which is located in the equator, makes it possible to receive volunteer tourism tourists at any time and adjust the form of volunteer tourism activities according to the seasons in Bali.<sup>[16]</sup>

Regarding the current situation related to the Covid-19 pandemic, all respondents understand very well how important it is to implement health protocols in organizing volunteer tourism activities in the community. The guidelines provided by the Ministry of Tourism through Indonesia Care have created new standards for the implementation of volunteer tourism based on the CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, Environmental) Guidelines. The socialization and application of the CHSE guidelines have become a new necessity to create a new era of tourism where the safety and health of all parties are the main things. They understand that these restrictions are indeed heavy but they must be used as an important basis in the development of the industry in this new era.<sup>[17]</sup>

The cooperation of all stakeholders is a force that can generate tourist confidence to come to Bali, therefore volunteer tourism is also an option that can fully support the implementation of CHSE in all-volunteer tourism activities. Almost all respondents also indicated that in the next volunteer tourism activity, the choice of the health sector will be the main focus and goal because the community will be strengthened and feel more confident if tourists can share experiences about Covid-19. Based on the description above, it can be said that volunteer tourism is "a new force of alternative tourism" that can support sustainable tourism development in Bali, therefore stakeholders must be able to work together to give a new meaning to volunteer tourism for Bali tourism and promote it together with all stakeholders in Bali.<sup>[17,18]</sup>

#### **4.2 Volunteer tourism as alternative tourism**

The results of the study see that volunteer tourism has a great opportunity to be used as a potential alternative to be developed in Bali based on the views of tourists, communities, and volunteer tourism organizers about the forms and types of volunteer tourism activities, the experiences of volunteer tourism tourists they will get, the role of volunteer tourism tourists in supporting tourism that can provide benefits for the local community. The diversity of tourism objects and attractions in Bali not only makes volunteer tourism tourists interested in vacationing but also creates interest in participating in various social activities voluntarily. Most of the tourists and local people interviewed said that Bali needs volunteer tourism to provide new experiences, especially for tourists who have come more than once.

Their motivation to come is also a love for Bali tourist destinations which makes them come to visit not only for vacations but also to get new experiences by taking part in doing activities with the community in tourist destinations. With this new experience, the altruistic motivation that has been the basis for their vacation to find new values about the importance of self-awareness in supporting the community in tourist destinations in the form of a vacation that is more useful and valuable not only for volunteer tourism tourists but also for the people in these tourist destinations. The high interest of tourists doing volunteer tourism in Bali is a refutation of the opinion of Wearing (2001) which says volunteer tourism tourists choose countries in South America and Africa as places to carry out volunteer tourism activities. The willingness of volunteer tourism tourists to carry out their activities in all tourist destinations is also in line with the opinion of Clemmons, Callanan, Lamoureux further emphasizes that volunteer tourism activities can be carried out in all tourist

destinations as long as volunteer tourism activities provide a clear variety of benefits for the recipient community. As a potential option, all forms of volunteer tourism activities are best practices and learning for tourists and recipient communities.<sup>[6,10,11,12,13]</sup>

The presence of volunteer tourism not only provides economic benefits for the community and related parties but also provides socio-cultural benefits, especially experiences related to cross-cultural understanding which Wearing,<sup>[7]</sup> says is a form of altruism and self-development for volunteer tourism tourists. The process of reciprocal and inseparable relations between volunteer tourism organizers, tourists, and the community is managed through well-organized management implements of volunteer tourism as an alternative to new forms of tourism.

#### **4.3 Benefits of volunteer tourism for the community**

The results of the study show that both tourists, local communities, and organizers of volunteer tourism activities have the same understanding that the main focus of volunteer tourism activities is on the receiving community. The motivation of volunteer tourism tourists to participate with the community in volunteer tourism activities is based on the goal of providing positive benefits to the receiving community through various forms of volunteer tourism activities based on the real needs of the community,<sup>[7]</sup> The benefits obtained by the recipient community must be based on a wide scope and scale.<sup>[4,5]</sup> The wide scope of volunteer tourism activities provides positive things for the community and the development of the tourism industry in the area.

The results of the study also show a similar view shown by tourists, local communities, and volunteer tourism organizers as revealed by Holmes (2009) that good and well-planned handling of volunteer tourism activities and supported by relevant research results increases a new understanding that volunteer tourism is an activity that has a positive and positive value. benefit the receiving community. Wearing also emphasizes that voluntary activities should be guided by the formation of character based on history, nature, and tradition for the needs of the local community.<sup>[7]</sup> Volunteerism activities must not be contaminated or damage the natural and socio-cultural life of the local community. Volunteer tourism activities have broad multi-dimensional dimensions of a form of travel that combines dedication with new experiences serving the community in the social, cultural, economic, environmental, and infrastructure development fields. In line with Hawkins, the results of the study also show that volunteer tourism activities contribute in various ways to the community in tourist



destinations to improve the image and quality of appearance of tourist attractions in those places. The clarity of the benefits of volunteer tourism activities for the community will determine the overall satisfaction of volunteer tourism.<sup>[19]</sup>

Laura also emphasized that holistic volunteer tourism activities with the local community increasingly show their characteristics as a form of sustainable tourism activity. The survey results also show that the organizers of volunteer tourism must emphasize the benefits for the community as the main focus, therefore an integrated approach, planning, and implementation with stakeholders must be developed as well as possible.<sup>[20]</sup> The desire of the community and organizers who want volunteer tourism activities to be carried out with insufficient time with the hope that benefits and personal relationships can be felt is still a dilemma because volunteer tourism tourists still see vacation time requires longer time than activities when participating in volunteer tourism activities. This is also in line with the results of research conducted by Chacon that the duration of volunteer tourism implementation is strongly related to volunteer tourism tourist satisfaction. Therefore, the approach taken in determining the duration of time and the form and type of activity must pay attention to the principles of mutual benefit and understanding between the community and tourists.<sup>[20]</sup> Meanwhile, Utama et al state that the experience of meeting tourists with the community is a result of interaction through the implementation of activities carried out together. For tourists who have carried out volunteer tourism activities several times in other places, it makes the experience even more meaningful when they are and meet people with different socio- cultural backgrounds. The satisfaction achieved has given power and enthusiasm to continue to be a volunteer tourism traveller.<sup>[22,23]</sup>

In-depth interviews with respondents of volunteer tourism organizers in Bali have not seen that close and therefore the role of academics is needed to strengthen the ability of volunteer tourism organizers in Bali not only in preparing related activities but also in implementing appropriate marketing strategies and techniques. Strengthening the introduction of volunteer tourism products and services must be based on the approach of social utility, communication utility, and vicarious consumption. By applying these three approaches, volunteer tourism tourists feel they will benefit as other volunteer tourism tourists who have already done so in these tourist destinations.<sup>[22,23]</sup>

#### **4.4 Volunteer tourism as a strategy for sustainable tourism development in Bali**

The results of the study show that tourists, local communities, and organizers want volunteer

tourism activities to be able to improve the quality of tourism development in Bali because tourism is the main industry in Bali and is expected to be sustainable. In the perspective interviews of tourists, communities, and volunteer tourism organizers they emphasize that volunteer tourism activities must have a wide range of depths as a potential alternative, volunteer tourism activities are authentic to describe the needs of local communities, tourists feel the natural beauty of the local culture, the communication that exists between the community and the local community. tourists generate confidence for both parties to develop volunteer tourism based on sustainable principles while for tourists the satisfaction obtained can strengthen support for volunteer tourism development in these tourist destinations.<sup>[12,23]</sup>

Tourists and organizers of volunteer tourism also emphasize the importance of a tourist security and safety approach, structuring access to adequate infrastructure, providing tourist objects and attractions based on environmental conservation principles. This view is in line with the principles of sustainable tourism development from the WTO (1993), OECD (2001) which emphasizes the approach to the development of the tourism industry in various forms including volunteer tourism based on the commitment and concern of stakeholders in volunteer tourism activities to minimize problems that arise, especially on issues related to tourism. environment, socio- cultural, economic, climate change, security, health, and others. Volunteer tourism activities in Bali place the utmost attention on the environment, especially waste management. Environmental activities are one of the important assessment benchmarks for volunteer tourism tourists regarding the implementation of volunteer tourism activities. Yoga (2016) reveals that the expectations of volunteer tourism tourists must be in line with expectations so that various kinds of problems that can arise need to be anticipated as early as possible, especially when these tourists have previous experience of conducting volunteer tourism activities in other countries.<sup>[12,24]</sup>

The increasing interest of world tourists in conducting volunteer tourism activities is a challenge for volunteer tourism organizers in Bali, especially at this time the Covid-19 pandemic has caused a crisis in various fields of life including tourism. The restrictions that have occurred have caused tourism actors to take various ways to improve themselves in welcoming a new form of normality, including through the application of health protocols which are currently becoming a new culture. For volunteer tourism organizers, the process of organizing volunteer tourism activities, and all forms of administrative-technical links requires special preparation, starting from tourist arrivals, health protocols, and standards, use

of digital technology, community participation, policies on limiting activities in the wild, cultural activities, the environment and socialization with the community.<sup>[12,23]</sup>

All of these new restrictions are a concern for volunteer tourism organizers because volunteer tourism in the Covid-19 Pandemic era must be able to describe the combination of forms of volunteer tourism program education, contributions from tourists and the community, holiday activities, and community empowerment in new nuances. Volunteer tourism activities in this new era must be able to integrate with quality tourism principles that emphasize safety and security, hygiene, accessibility, transparency, authenticity, harmony (OECD, 2001). Teguh (2020) emphasizes that forms of tourism activities including volunteer tourism should focus on Resilience and Disaster Mitigation; Partnership; Value chain and Tourism Ecosystem; Development of Special Interest Products for domestic tourists, Diaspora, Eco-friendly, volunteer tourism & MICE; Marketing and Promotion of “Indonesia as A Safe and Health Destination & Digital Tourism; Value Added Creation, Tourism Sector Orchestration; Supporting capacity & Sustainable Tourism; Governance and Destination Management System; Development of Upskilling, Reskilling, and Multiskilling to improve Service Quality according to Health and Safety Protocols in the chain and certification for properties/infrastructure/logistics, activities and services.<sup>[25]</sup>

The volunteer tourism program in this new era has attracted the attention of volunteer tourism stakeholders to pay attention to the holistic approach of Safety, Health, Hygiene, Brand, Value, and Capacity Management. Handling volunteer tourism in supporting Quality Tourism in the form of Attraction is based on Physical Distancing and Tourism Attraction Capacity; Airports and airlines require Sanitation Facilities, short transit times, direct flights; Product Preference emphasizes Health, Outdoor Activities, Self-driving, and Private Tours; Accommodation applies Value: Sanitation and Security. All of these approaches require time, process, and cooperation from tourism stakeholders. In line with that, The International Ecotourism Society supports volunteer tourism activities associated with ecotourism activities by issuing the Volunteer Tourism Guidelines Project which emphasizes Uniting Conservation, Communities, and Sustainable Travel. They also emphasized that volunteer tourism activities are “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people”. For Indonesia, which is in the Pacific “ring of fire” circle, natural disasters often occur which require the support of volunteers to help deal with the recovery process due to various disasters.<sup>[17,25]</sup>

## 5. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FURTHER RESEARCH

### 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

Volunteer tourism can not only be an alternative but also a new force in the process of diversifying tourism products for the Bali tourism industry. If handled and promoted holistically by stakeholders, volunteer tourism also has the opportunity to become a superior tourism product to complement various types of tourism products that already exist so far, such as events tourism, culture tourism, ecotourism, and so on. As something new, although the practice has been done for a long time but not organized in an integrated manner, volunteer tourism provides new hope for tourists who vacation in Bali because they have choices as a form of responsibility for supporting tourists for the implementation of sustainable tourism development. The advantages of implementing volunteer tourism as an option in Bali are supported by the location of Bali in the equator so that various forms of volunteer tourism activities can be carried out at any time. Volunteer tourism is "a new force of alternative tourism" that can support sustainable tourism development in Bali, therefore stakeholders must be able to work together to give a new meaning to volunteer tourism for Bali tourism and promote it together with all stakeholders.

Volunteer tourism is a program that provides real benefits to the community, therefore the organizers must have the ability, initiative, and communication skills with tourists and the community. The presence of organizers as motivators and communicators in building relationships between the community and tourists makes tourists have confidence that voluntary social work activities are successful and efficient for the benefit of the community. The benefits obtained by the community are not only in the form of activity but also multi-effect economic benefits when they shop, stay at community homestays, and experience cultural exchanges. In the long term, if the volunteer tourism program is successfully implemented properly and sustainably, the benefits felt by the community will increase, and trust in the tourism industry will also be good. Volunteer tourism activities do not only have an impact on the local community but also the wider community such as tourism industry players through transportation, accommodation, tourist visits, and so on.

Volunteer tourism is a new tourism force that plays an important role in supporting the improvement of the quality of sustainable tourism development not only for the receiving community but also for tourist destinations in the region. The recommended volunteer tourism programs are activities that are close to the needs of the community based on the

principles of local wisdom and community-based tourism. The implementation of volunteer tourism activities carried out with integrated and sustainable planning is a form of real support for tourists and their organizers together with other tourism stakeholders in improving the quality of tourism development in the area. The experience of volunteer tourism organizers, foreign tourists, and local communities shows that volunteer tourism is a potential new form of alternative tourism to improve the quality of tourism development.

## 5.2 Limitation and study forward

The purpose of this research is limited in time and resources so that the study conducted is limited to the implications of this study in the form of exploring the phenomena and perceptions of volunteer tourism tourists by using their various experiences including organizations that have organized volunteer tourism activities. It is hoped that further research can further expand its study by confirming other findings that are more in-depth and useful for studies on volunteer tourism to increase community benefits and the quality of organizing volunteer tourism activities. Although this study has limitations, it is hoped that it can be a starting point for further research. Asking volunteer tourism tourists and also increasing the attention of volunteer tourism organizers shows that volunteer tourism is always improving and becoming a popular choice because it can provide new experiences, satisfaction, and real benefits for people in tourist destinations.

Further research needs to be carried out in more depth for all stakeholders to see wider opportunities for tourists and organizers of volunteer tourism activities. Exploratory studies can be conducted on the motivational diversity of volunteer tourism tourists in responding to the needs of volunteer tourism tourists so that the satisfaction gained through their experiences can better support efforts to make volunteer tourism an alternative that can increase benefits for the community and the quality of organizing volunteer tourism activities. This further research is expected to further clarify the role of volunteer tourism organizers in responding to the needs of volunteer tourism tourists.

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