"Voluntourism inspiring change in service of the common good: The mediating role of volunteer travelers"

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BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES

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VOLUNTOURISM INSPIRING CHANGE IN SERVICE OF THE COMMON GOOD: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF VOLUNTEER TRAVELERS

Abstract

Voluntourism has always been portrayed as a crucial role in developing economies. However, as voluntourism evolves and expands, a question of sustainability arises. The majority of populaces served by short-term volunteer trips are predisposed communities. Thus, this raises ethical questions such as voluntourism as a savior or impediment to communities. This study examines the attractiveness of volunteer tourists in recent years in Cambodia and India and how it contributes to future sustainable tourism research. The paper uses KH Coder to collect primary data for the quantitative analysis of text data. Moreover, the paper applies an exploratory approach using content analysis of participant reviews to identify the critical dimensions of experiences. Based on the analysis of trends in voluntourism and their ecosystem, an approach to the sustainable development strategy of voluntourism actors is proposed. First, voluntourism operators and host organizations, a pivotal element of the development strategy of voluntourism infrastructure, are considered. It was revealed that there is a nexus between the well-being of the community/business opportunities and experienced voluntourists. Consequently, these voluntourism activities may provide intrinsic gains for them and the targeted communities, plus its support toward corporate social responsibility.

INTRODUCTION

Educational research studies highlight that it is indispensable to equip students for the digital economy's disruptive and unpredictable future (van der Walt, 2020; Tsui & Dragicevic, 2018). Furthermore, Munandar et al. (2019) postulated that cultural diversity with correct understanding could reduce the difficulty the local community faces and, in the longer term, bolster their indigenous identity and values. Promoting cross-cultural understanding can be started at the grassroots level amongst young people exposed to cultural exchanges Nevertheless, advocating for students' aspiration to fulfill their overseas encounters is essential to boosting their possible experiences (Norden et al., 2012). Finally, issues arise concerning educators' functions in steering and enabling these conversations and their preparedness in the school's curriculum.

Voluntourism globally has been in preeminence since 2000. This is partly due to rising societal and eco-friendly considerations in developing nations, such as cyclones and seismic activity. Hence, it necessitates the total commitment of time and efforts of the volunteer tourist and financial support. Notwithstanding the economic prosperity that many countries benefited from the tourism industry, developing

countries require additional support, such as improving their community through the construction of schools, providing medical aid and supplies, protecting cultural heritage, education, and training, etc. Unsurprisingly, this gave rise to voluntourism and its popularity in recent years. Voluntourism, sometimes known as "volunteer tourism," is no longer viewed as a new craze of tourism that supports cultural exchange between various nations. Although it may seem like volunteering for development, it enables the economic growth of tourism destinations and is seen as an attractive alternative for student volunteers.

Nevertheless, it is a dichotomy of two intertwined pursuits: part of the act or practice of giving aid to communities in need and intimately experiencing the holidaying culture (Travel Sense Organization, 2016). Indeed, transient involvement in the voluntourism experience holds the potential to enhance the personal development, community awareness, and social interactions of college students. Unfortunately, however, not much research has studied the outcomes of long-term voluntourism expeditions while in college.

It is conceivable that voluntourism positively affects satisfaction and brings tremendous benefits to the targeted communities and the intrepid tourists (Ngah et al., 2021; Clarke & Norman, 2021; Hrycyk et al., 2020). Many higher education institutions worldwide suffer budget reductions and the demands to boost revenues through collaborations with the private sectors. Therefore, the popularity of students wanting to go overseas for experiential learning has been escalating. This experiential learning includes conservationist, community health, deprivation, and social justice initiatives. Graduate students looking for experience in such fields are starting to consider how their experience abroad can be seriously evaluated to facilitate better outcomes. For example, Dibra and Oelfke (2013) coined the term "sustainable tourism" to connect development, experiential learning, and volunteerism in international exchange participation, stimulating students to question and reconcile their overseas stint and the responsive answers to domestically-defined needs. Given its intuitive conclusion, this would mean a critical contemplation of the responsibilities of the NGOs (non-governmental organizations) themselves and the university's role that made the student decide to go to the host country to carry out volunteering work in the marginalized community.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Critics from both academe and the industry purported that volunteer tourism projects, often transitory with no long-term sustainable support, often caused disquiet in the local community (Tourism Concern, 2014). According to Laurie and Smith (2018), one crucial critique surrounding volunteer tourism and viewed as neo-imperialism was untrained and unqualified youths from advanced nations to do charity work. Frequently, volunteers are motivated by egoistic reasons, for example, experiential learning, awareness of foreign lifestyles, leisure sightseeing, and even advancing their CVs (McGloin & Georgeou, 2016). Interestingly, McMorran (2017) contends that the requisite 'skill' by nearly all-volunteer tourism groups is the desire to help others.

Consequently, Meschini et al. (2021) highlight that many volunteer tourism projects, particularly transient, do not have a lasting impact or have

minimal value to the host communities. When the volunteer tourist exits, the locals are left to handle their daily life with no means of continuity, which results in the reliance on association. Other writers advocated that developing talent and training the local community, besides participating in longer-term projects, are imperative to prevent dependence on association (Devereux et al., 2017). Instead, volunteer organizations may provide means and directions to the local vis-à-vis for construction work, providing community improvement and generating meaningful work instead of sending untrained and unqualified youths. Furthermore, the escapade of volunteer tourism gives individuals a compelling social and communal connotation as their participation in the commendable project crossed paths with their experiences. Moreover, with the rising significance of voluntourism triggers one to catalyze it for sustainable development (Lockstone-Binney & Ong, 2021). The study espouses a fusion of struc-

Table 1. Overview of impacts

No.	Positive Impacts (Bargeman et al., 2018)	Negative Impacts (Guttentag, 2009)
1	Raise income, engage domestic economics, and job creation	Neglect of locals' desires
2	Community reinforcement, augmenting education, uplifting, and enhancing the quality of locals' life	A hindering of work progress and the completion of unsatisfactory work
3	Understand everyday problems and lend appreciation of the complexities involved, fostering constructive social development	A decreased labor demand and promotion of dependency
4	Introduce new social and cultural values	Conceptualizations of the 'other' and poverty rationalizations
5	Reduction of workload and alleviate staff shortages	Cultural change: the demonstration effect and short-term mission trips
6	Play the role of a caretaker	Problems that communities face are usually complex, and volunteers just can only help with superficial issues
7	Transfer of skills and knowledge	Volunteers' dearth of abilities and skillset in providing a meaningful contribution to the local community

tured narrative techniques to create a comprehensive conceptual framework of voluntourism from a curated viewpoint, extending cognizance for future research.

From the extant literature, nearly all types of volunteer tourism are analogous to participants traveling abroad for a community development project, using flextime plan and salary to undertake volunteer travels from their daily routine. This study extends research by "targeting (a) domestic form of volunteer tourism" (McGehee, 2014, p. 848). From the perspective of Wearing and McGehee (2013), volunteer tourists embody those tourists who, for numerous motives, offer to accept their vacations that include helping or lessening the physical deprivation of some community groups, the environmental transformation, and research into aspects of society or environment. Indeed, research on volunteer tourism, particularly assessing the broader scope of volunteers undertake; and how these impact the visitor experience, would be interesting. The most significant concerns have been: does volunteer tourism have a practical application for communities and volunteer tourism organizations? For example, creating value and highlighting applicable practices that increase possible advantages while lessening the potentially damaging consequences? Further, is there a tool for examining volunteer tourism? For instance, whether there will be any adverse social impact on the local community like meals, accommodation, transportation, or recreation created by the volunteers. These may be undesirable outcomes from the growing pressure of tourism on environmental and social equity.

Volunteer tourism is perceived as a potential instrument for social and civic advancement and sustainability. In a pan-tourism era, numerous itinerant individuals desire to get work done while on vacation. This, in turn, attracts the interest of other scholars to undertake voluntourism research. Nevertheless, from an administrative perspective, it is fascinating that only a few pragmatic research have been conducted based on their traveling pursuits, which are inexpensive besides being coherent and embracing altruism. For example, based on qualitative studies of managers' attitudes toward volunteer tourism organizations', recent research underscores the influences of volunteer tourism which implies shifting from a directed approach (or instituted from the top) to performing community service to a co-creation activity. Ultimately, conflicts surfaced from the managerial conversations concerning the positive and negative impacts of volunteer tourism (Table 1).

Altruism has been researched in social sciences owing to its importance in understanding social conduct, as opposed to egoism and the predominantly egocentric behavior of modern human, who is preoccupied with own successes and objectives. Reciprocal altruism alludes to beneficial conduct involving two individuals. It is contingent on exchanging information, ensuring collaborators of the other's continued friendly intention, as in the iterated prisoner's dilemma (Layton, 2021). Reciprocity can be linked to social exchange theory. Social exchange theory regards exchange as an interpersonal relationship that can lead to economic and social consequences. Moreover, reciprocal exchanges, in

which actors' offerings are independently exercised, can be exchanged and prompted by performing beneficial acts for another.

Despite the efficacy of social exchange theory as an essential theoretical archetype in organizational behavior, speculative uncertainties in SET remain. As a result, assessments of the model, and its applications, has a propensity to depend on a partly described paradigm. Instead, the study will focus on intangible impediments and draw attention to areas that need additional research. Thus, the emphasis is on four concerns:

a) origins of the conceptual ambiguities;

b) norms and rules of exchange;

c) nature of the resources being exchanged; and

d) social exchange relationships.

There are many approaches to Critical Theory and its definitions. Still, collectively McGehee (2014, p. 852) highlights the "aggressive stance" adopted by the academe and individual tendency of "criticizing rather than critiquing volunteer tourism." More specifically, social movement theory can serve as a framework for discovering the best practices in volunteer tourism, thereby accelerating the development of organizational ecosystem, confidence, self-advocacy experiences, and, eventually, social transformation. In which advocacy accede to an elevated informative and helpful stance to volunteer tourism where the actor's accountability as a change catalyst in developing a relationship with decision-makers and practitioners in the volunteering arena.

International volunteer travel has been growing, mainly due to the development of web-based organizations that offer conservation and community-based ventures worldwide. Consequentially the number of definitive studies on potential negative consequences of volunteer tourism has also increased in tandem. In circumventing the undesirable increase of possible adverse effects, the host organizations can play a vital role in fostering the growth of cross-cultural understanding among would-be volunteer tourists, for example, in the stages before, during, and after their journey.

The fascination with volunteer tourism has been widespread globally, particularly in developed nations, and participants of volunteer tourism yield a significant possibility for research to be actualized into a positive development. Notwithstanding, few studies have looked into the travelers' re-participation intention within a philanthropic context. This study aimed to explore and expand on a conceptual framework that clarifies the volunteer tourists' behavioral motives in the context of a pro-social endeavor. It utilized three theories, the standard activation model, the theory of planned behavior, and the individual values, as a theoretical underpinning that considers the philanthropic and selfish attributes of the travelers' psychological reaction to volunteer tourism (Figure 1).

An individual's attitude can be characterized as a complex construct encompassing rational, emotional, and inclination. It is the most critical predictor of behavior, according to Vecina and Chacón (2017). The perceived behavioral control implies a discrete personal assessment of the convenience (or inconvenience) of presenting the behavior of interest. Conversely, subjective norms suggest an individual's awareness of societal coercion to display (or not to display) the behavior. The hypothesis is that humankind is more inclined to accept the conduct considered desirable by the masses.

Nonetheless, this notion can be perceived from various viewpoints. First, individual norms can be quantified and analyzed from the position of anticipations predetermined by key individuals (such as acquaintances and relatives) regardless one is compelled to take part in the behavior. To understand the extent to which those precursors can sway one's behavior, the intensity of each regularizing belief is biased by one's motive to conform with the particular reference group.

There are important issues that need to be resolved concerning whether voluntourism (partly or in its totality) is indeed in the broader public interest or which interests it serves. The study premise is in an education setting, focusing on small schools in communities, particularly in rural Cambodia and India.
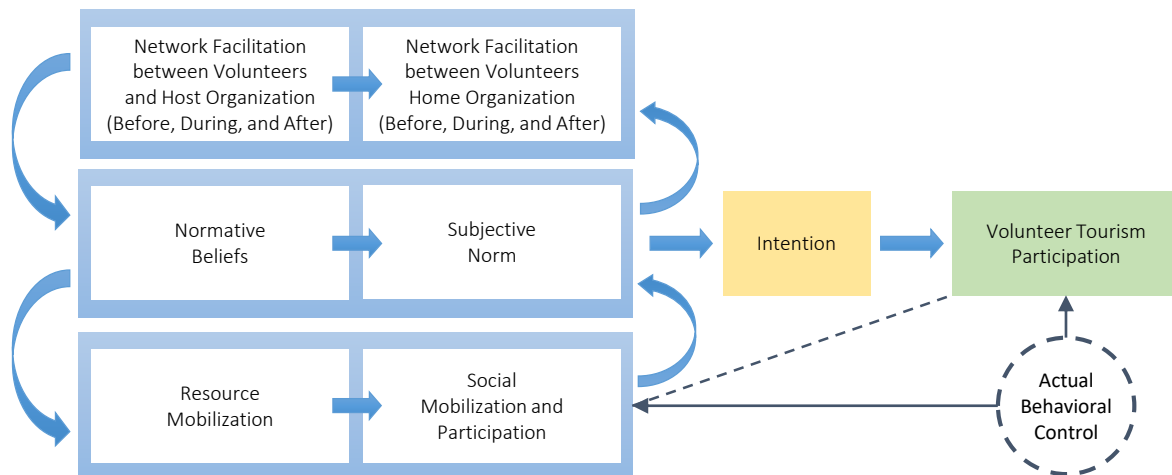
Figure 1. Conceptual framework of volunteer participation

2. METHODS

An exploratory approach is adopted using content analysis of participant reviews to identify the critical dimensions of experiences. Content analysis determines the existence of specific words, themes, or concepts within some given qualitative data to quantify and assess the fact, meanings, and correlations between terms, themes, and concepts. The KH Coder is an open-source tool for the quantitative analysis of text data. A total of 1,280 sets of participant reviews from several educational volunteer projects in India and Cambodia on a leading volunteer organization site were extracted, cleaned up, and imported to KH Coder. In addition, a set of stop words were used to remove the commonly used prepositions, pronouns, and articles.

This study is different from other studies in the following aspects:

1) The data are focused on volunteer tourism in an education setting. The information is from small schools in rural communities in developing countries where it is possible to volunteer in schools without background checks.

2) The study does not have any participant bias. None of the participants were informed about the study. Participant reviews were collected from volunteer tourism organizers' websites, and they can be considered user-generated content.

3) An emphasis is given to experience teaching and learning to examine the significance of volunteer tourism in educational settings.

The hosts and volunteer tourists wrote detailed reviews of their experiences on the volunteer travel company's website. These reviews act as a mediator for future volunteers and future hosts. In this study, the focus is on the reviews done by volunteer tourists. However, the reviews do vary in length, breadth, and depth. For example, Figure 2 shows the frequency count of the most common words in the study. In both data sets, common words such as 'time', 'school', 'kid', 'child', and 'experience' had a high frequency.

Volunteers spent several weeks with the host organization and exchanged their resources for an opportunity and hospitality before writing these reviews. The volunteers' words to describe their experiences can be further analyzed using a co-occurrence network of words.

Figures 3a and 3b show the co-occurrence network of words in the reviews. The bubble size shows the frequency of words, and the length of the line between the bubbles shows the proximity of words. Co-occurrence has been used to develop the thematic analysis of the evaluation. Self-indulgence intentions arose from three themes:

1) school and community;
2) collective and personal experiences (by taking a vacation); and
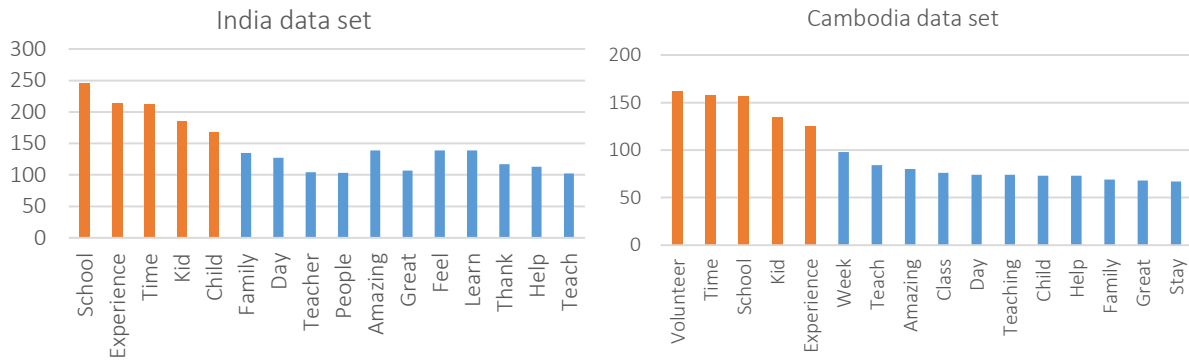3) time and resources.

Figure 2. Frequency count of words with logarithmic trend line

Concerning the first theme on school and community – there are some variances in the network of words associated with keywords, e.g., 'school' and 'family'. For example, in the India data set, keywords 'school' and 'family' were closely linked to words like 'stay' and 'teach', whereas in the Cambodia data set, the keyword 'school' formed a network with words like 'children' and 'teach'. In the Cambodia data set, the word 'family' had co-occurrences with words such as 'home' 'feel'

'welcome'. The schools were independent and managed by families in both data sets. The families act as hosts, providing housing and food to the volunteers. In both data sets, almost all the reviews reference the host family with a tone of appreciation.

Many respondents articulated that they volunteered for the altruistic occurrence for experiential learning. This idea was mentioned in the preliminary literature review. One respondent mentioned she volun-
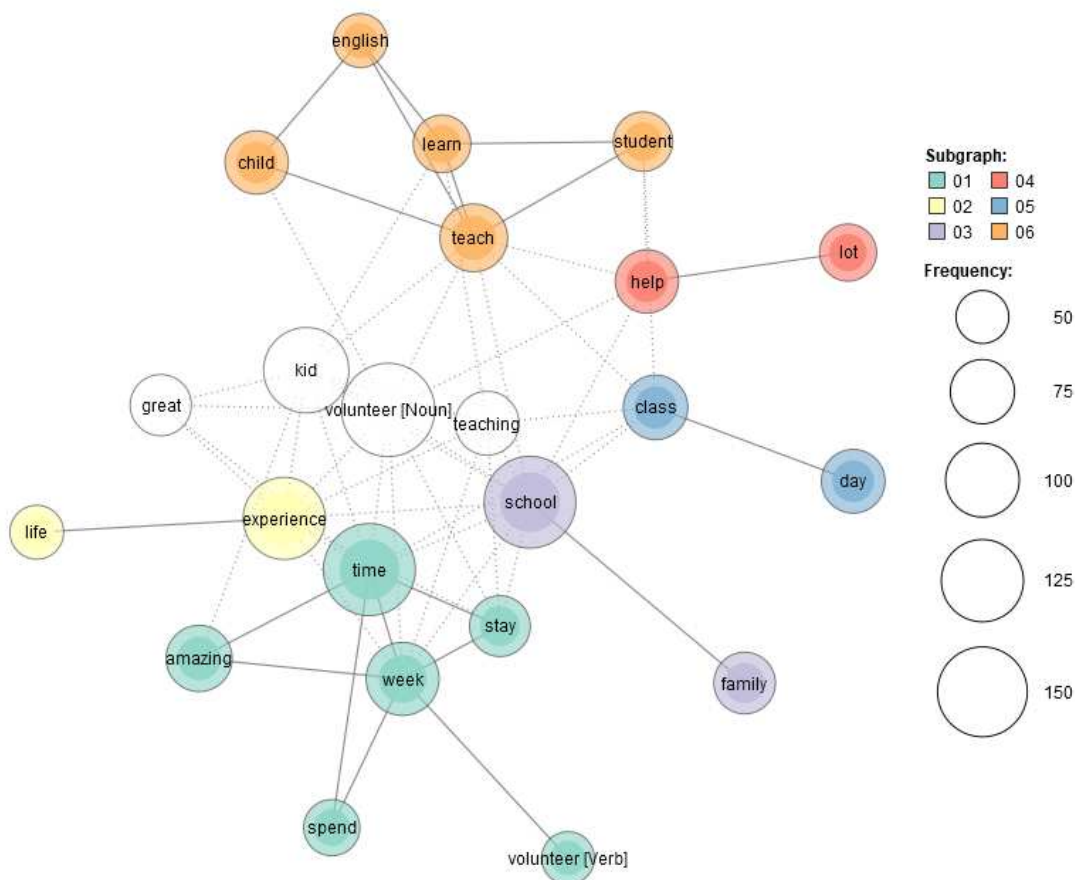

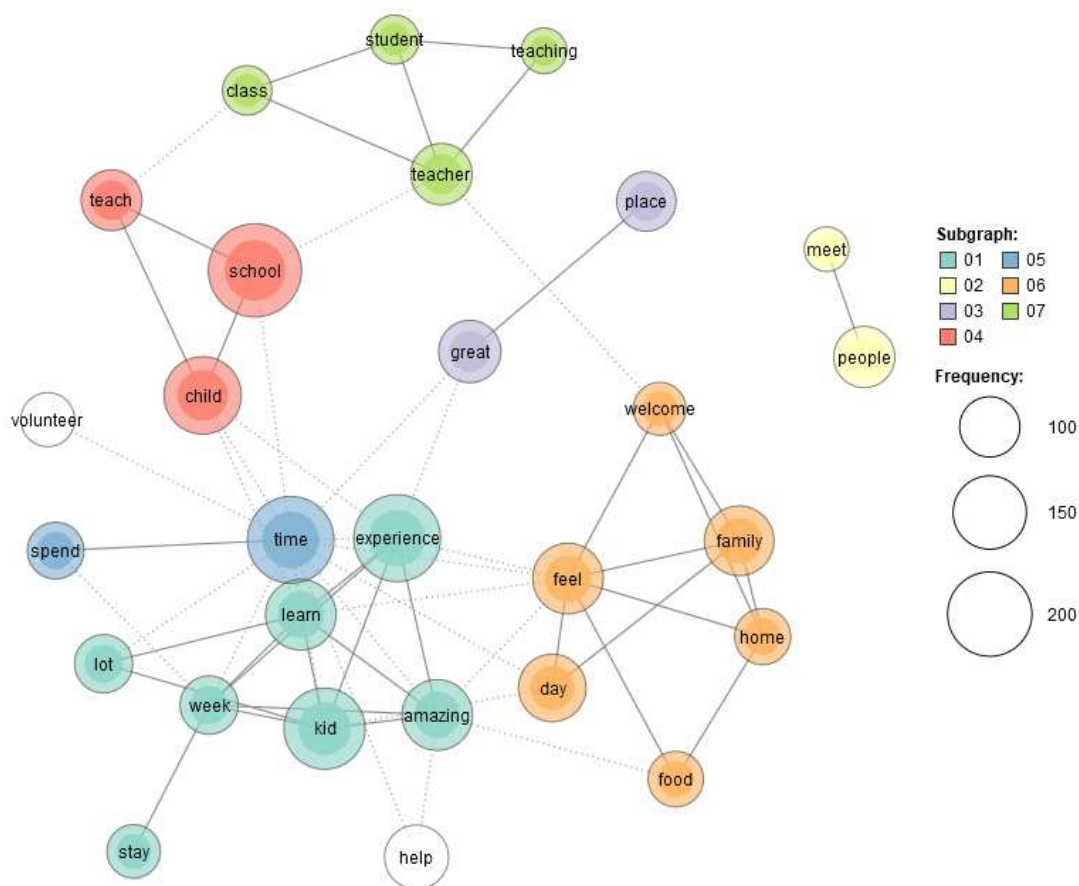**Figure 3a.** Co-occurrence network of words (India data set)

Figure 3b. Co-occurrence network of words (Cambodia data set)

teered because "I am longing for learning new things, and this is the way to do it. The Host has been amazing. The food is unbelievable. You get the best home-cooked vegetarian food when you stay with the Host's family" (Female, Respondent 18). Another respondent commented, "It was an exploratory means for me (being part of the overseas adventure). I was somewhat scared about not having the required English level or other skills to be part of the teacher team, but I finally felt very at ease. The Host is always doing everything to make daily life pleasant at the school and give positive energy" (Male, Respondent 27). One respondent from the Netherlands said she was driven to come forward because "I can acquire knowledge of a new community and their perspective on tourism. I enjoyed staying in the volunteer house above the school during this time. The Host lived right downstairs and was always willing to help with any questions about the school" (Female, Respondent 14).

Regarding collective and personal experiences – there are various categories and ranges of experi-

ences. For example, a lived experience can range from good to bad, exciting to monotonous, pleasure to pain, and land anywhere on a 'wheel of emotions'. Volunteer tourism can be a 'consumption of intimate experiences' (Conran, 2011) or an experience loaded with 'neo-colonial feminist burden' (Bandyopadhyay & Patil, 2017). The co-occurrence network of the word 'experience' correlates with words like 'kids', 'learn', 'amazing', and 'life'. The reviews indicate that the volunteers feel like they are part of an ongoing project and doing their part along the way. Some of the reviews take a tone of recommendations that the project managers and future volunteers could benefit from.

Several respondents revealed they signed up for the voluntourism experience so they could take a holiday. One respondent pointed out he was interested in volunteering because "I received an opportunity from my organization for reimbursement to go on a trip to the rural school in Cambodia. Normally I am stuck in the office. Working with kids is great; they are so fun and endearing. But,

of course, they remain kids, and it takes energy and time to know them to become confident with them and make them progress, but it is worth it" (Female, Respondent 32). An administrative office worker expressed that she came because she needed to reunite with what is essential: "I would highly recommend joining this project. It is a win-win; they learn a lot with us, but I think you know even more. I wish I had bought some reading materials for early readers; maybe next time. I also love the fresh air (and not in the office)" (Female, Respondent 20). Another volunteer reverberated that "the culture and educational system is vastly different from what I had back home and experienced in other countries. It took me a while to become accustomed to the nuances. But what a delightful, captivating experience it was. Here you get an opportunity to teach children instead of simply exercising" (Male, Respondent 34). Similar views were echoed, "In eight weeks, we made pretty much improvement together. The class part was far more chaotic as we taught classes varying in size from overcrowded to mostly empty. Even so, it was an enjoyable time as the younger students are lovely, and they received their first exposure to English with us" (Female, Respondent 17).

In the final theme on time and resources – time is the leading resource that is exchanged in volunteer tourism. Host organizations expect a minimum of three weeks of time commitment from the volunteers. How the time is organized during the project seems to be one of the thorny issues in volunteering projects. Most reviews talk about three to four hours a day of teaching and preparation and an abundance of free time.

3. RESULTS

From a regenerative tourism perspective (Cave & Dredge, 2020), it understands that tourists and objectives are an integral component of a living arrangement rooted in the natural habitat, operating within the boundary of life rules and principles. This metamorphic word is beginning to change the perception of sustainable tourism niches. The notion concedes the interrelation of different natural and social ecosystems and is intended to give back to the community. In post-pandemic tourism, the reality of long-haul travel is increasingly complex and costly. Constraints on domestic and international travel and the absence of global tourism have provided a prospect to re-imagine the future of tourism. Regenerative tourism arguably presents considerably more and pivots beyond sustainable tourism. Since the proliferation of budget air travel and its rising popularity, the world has witnessed mass tourism globally. Still, it sadly resulted in global warming and climate change from a mass tourism perspective. Consequently, niche tourism, for example, eco-tourism, ethical tourism, responsible tourism, social tourism, volunteer tourism, and even community-based tourism, appeared to mitigate a sustainable future of tourism that will contribute to economic growth and global well-being.

The central issue is whether 'Regenerative Tourism' is the future of tourism that jingles well with the post-pandemic era. How will it influence tour operatives and other tourism stakeholders in the long term? What about the future and resilience of local communities? This paper is an invitation for academicians and travel practitioners to consider the anticipated impacts of new tourism on local and international communities, destinations, and practices. From the lens of regenerative tourism regarding tourism activities, it can be construed as a perpetual state of affairs. Despite difficulties or disturbances, it champions tourism as an instrument for social well-being besides preserving cultural heritage or bolstering local arts, crafts, and traditions. Extending such narratives will require active and collective participation between volunteer tourists and the host organizations in tourism, particularly in encouraging cultural vitality.

Initially, a co-word analysis was carried out to determine the cognitive structure of the study and the relationships between essential topics. Finally, co-word analysis visualizes the frequency, density, and relationships between keywords, assisting in comprehending primary research topics, cross-study relationships, and the degree to which important issues are related, resulting in a network of themes and relationships. The most frequent words were examined using concordance analysis to verify themes and relationships further. A coding set was developed to narrow the themes along critical dimensions of experiences. Then the data were further analyzed for keywords related to volunteer, school, experience, time, teaching, and

learning. Subsequently, thematic analysis was performed independently, and the findings were compared and confirmed. Finally, the actual names of respondents and participating organizations were upheld to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

The study revealed a positive bond to a particular place. For example, one respondent claimed that "I am happy to visit a place of your origin. I was teaching at school and view this experience as the most remarkable and important activity ever. My school is situated in a rural area and provides basic settings (as mentioned in the profile). However, I was totally ok with the conditions and would not have changed anything. I, and other volunteers, were given evening classes for youth 7-20 years old. Some of them spoke English very well, but some only started learning English. After and before classes, when we had free time, we were preparing materials and plans for the next lessons, e.g., making some paper-cuts, as well as doing administration and garden errands" (Female, Respondent 12). On the contrary, another respondent was motivated to join this program since he knew this community: "During this program, we were experiencing troubles with communication. For example, they told us about some changes in our schedule or delays not in time. Sometimes we came to the school, which is situated outside the village, and no children were waiting for us. I do not actually know why that happened. Perhaps, my poor English skills were the reasons for these troubles or specifics of local people – communication is not the most important and valuable thing for them. Nevertheless, I have mixed feelings and confidence in my place of stay" (Male, Respondent 33).

Volunteer tourists in both settings developed a solid attachment to the projects. They felt like the exchange of resources are incrementally benefiting the project. The volunteers adapted to the plug-and-play approach and co-create meaningful experiences for the children. Most of the volunteers had no teaching background, but that did not stop them from taking on the role of English language teachers in these rural schools. The volunteers felt their contributions made a considerable difference among children who did not have adequate competencies in the English language. The volunteers also realized that they were learning as they took on the role of teacher for the first time.

The reviews had a high frequency of references to words like 'children', 'learn', teach' along with positive words like 'amazing' and 'great'. This shows that the volunteers claimed to have a positive and rewarding experience with the children. The word 'people' came up in low frequency among the reviews, but the word 'community' and culture was missing from the high-frequency list.

Voluntourism operators and host organizations can significantly identify and organize a geographical matrix of customs and tourism actors linked to innovative tourist attractions and pursuits. Supported and encouraged by host organizations, these identified groups act as oversight for collaboration and alliances, providing necessary impetus, promoting mutual/pooled resources, and becoming self-sustaining and no longer need additional investment to remain economically viable. A strategic aspect of fostering sustainable community development is shared commitment and control of regenerative approaches. Societal groups must be encouraged in such advances, and this collaborative paradigm may be especially appropriate.

The voluntourism programs are not without problems; this may be attributed to several factors. For instance, poor preparation cumulating in volunteer tourist discontent; elevated assumptions of volunteer tourists not understanding pragmatisms, which can lead to a sense of disappointment; an absence of seamless synchronization cumulating to frustration; poor accommodation ensuing in irritation and fatigue; the repercussion of physical harm due to appalling standard of workplace condition; and failure in associating with local social groups which cause resentment towards local hosts, and voluntourism actors.

Further, the two voluntourism operators reviewed in this study made the following suggestions for launching projects effectively and efficiently:

1) To identify and explain cultural differences to minimize cultural shock.

2) To set reliable and transparent safety and security policies and clear expectations.

3) To conduct a comprehensive information session and instructions for volunteer tourists re-

garding their roles and responsibilities in the destination community.

4) To engage with volunteer tourists in active communication at all project stages.

5) To recalibrate in-house processes and procedures, ensuring clarity and liability of parties and range of assistance extended to the beneficiaries.

6) To draw attention to the obligation of the destination community and local hosts regarding the well-being of volunteer tourists.

The significant rise in neoliberalism and the growth of voluntourism trigger voluntourism organizations to market themselves in publicity clips on YouTube or flyers. Their websites are at pains to stage success stories of individuals who have "made a difference." As this "industry" develops, there is an in-built hypothesis that the contributions of the volunteer to the grateful "other" will continue.

The debate on voluntourism outlines voluntourism as "active agents of change," notwithstanding both the belief of demand and the clear preference for societal transformation. The significance is whether the voluntourism projects are effectively orchestrated and completed successfully. It can lead to gratifying encounters for voluntourists and the intrinsic gains for them and the targeted communities. The progressively heightened activities and requirements for voluntourism now emerged as in "voluntourism partnerships" among six major parties:

1) Voluntourism recipients and societal groups.

2) Voluntourism operators, the NGOs that plan and organize voluntourism expeditions, align with its objectives.

3) Exclusive holiday companies, tourism organizers, and internet tour services.

4) Individual and groups of qualified or prospective volunteer tourists.

5) Carriers/budget carriers that offer concessions on the air ticket.

6) Voluntourism hosts, the NGOs, which support volunteer tourists at target locations and the communities.

Every individual in the collaborative relationship has specific tasks and obligations in ensuring voluntourism voyages/ventures are beneficial. Although the collaborations and intricacies of different facets of voluntourism between these collaborators are ever-changing, some everyday observations can be made for compelling and pragmatic projects.

Regardless of how people understand voluntourism, in part, it offers some development opportunities and can support the economic rise space. Indeed, voluntourism can have an essential role in transiting economy. For example, suppose attention is correctly focused on uplifting the community. In that case, this aspect of the economy and education is undoubtedly the way forward, paving for voluntourism actors and NGOs to provide services in emerging nations. From the perspective of the volunteer tourists, it presents big paybacks regarding cooperative and informational exchanges, self-fulfillment, different aspects of conveying their altruism, and the prospect of becoming a part of the global citizenry.

Voluntourism discourse is, above all, seductive in its promises of a feel-good experience that will benefit both the voluntourist and the recipient of his/her altruism.

4. DISCUSSION

The sphere of Volunteer Tourism comes under a new form of the Alternative Capital Model of regenerative tourism (Cave & Dredge, 2020). Volunteers exchange their time and resources for accommodation, food, and meaningful, authentic experiences. This form of alternative capital could add significant value to sustainable development goals if the collaborative networks are further strengthened.

Tracing the exploration of imaginative tourist travel destinations is purposefully planned in villages and the countryside. The ensuing impact of these simulations on the societies reveals that cre-

ative tourism activities are slanted toward regeneration. In similar veins, the notions of sustainable cultural and regenerative tourism have potentially inspired volunteerism as a regenerative component in the commune's developmental practices.

Within the project activities, specific experiments of tourism that provide visitors a chance to engage their creative potentials through active participation and learning experiences with various population/geographic scales demonstrated that innovative developmental plans are regulated through geographical, profit, and social frameworks (Richards, 2020). In rural areas, the attention is on "embedded creative resources and networks," in particular on the "creative skills" and "local forms of creativity" (p. 7). Bakas et al. (2020) highlight that creative tourism and ingenuities in rural and village locales tend to accentuate local cultural peculiarities and the particular features of their place. Moreover, it triggers an instinct to augment local cultural vitality and support cultural sustainability (Cabeça et al., 2018). Unsurprisingly, creative tourism initiatives can inspire fresh opinions and activities. As long as ideal destinations with traveling value can be extended, there is a considerable interest for individuals, social groups, and institutions. They can also offer additional related initiatives, offering different ideas and added value for the business and the community it is entrenched in.

In the aftermath of duplicating "creative strategies" and general monetary influences of homogeneity, many scholars (Richards, 2020; Braun et al., 2013) are exploring ordinary domestic activities to encourage tenable and innovative community progress. A widespread change towards more homegrown developmental models. Further conjectured progress (placemaking) involves people-centered co-building experiences (Richards, 2020; Lucia & Trunfio, 2018). These approaches necessitate "a more relational view of tourism, seeking actors as part of wider networks, and destinations as places" (Richards, 2020, p. 3). From the data set gathered, three key themes resonate concerning their influence on broader community and growth dynamics:

1) Strengthening idiosyncratic basics of homegrown uniqueness.

2) Prompting movements and networks between the locale and the external.

3) Acting as a conduit for local partnership, exchange, and development.

In strengthening idiosyncratic basics of homegrown uniqueness, here, the primary characteristic of creative tourism is the relationship between the volunteers and the location in which it happens. The local community's identity is entwined with its visible and invisible heritage, rituals, and narration. Therefore, the uniqueness and characteristic aspects of the destination attract volunteer tourists. In addition, investing in ethnicity and collective micro creative tourism may offer regenerative alternatives for local customs and attention. Among the 16 threads extracted from the KH Coder, one very active thread with 1,710 postings is devoted to discussing strengthening distinctive elements of local identity. Voluntourism is the consistent amalgamation of personal choice to travel to the desired location with the conventional feature of tourism and adventure. This utilizes individual freedom of time and leisure to move from their comfort level to help others in distress. Consequently, volunteer tourists are tourists who, for many reasons, volunteer in a systematized manner to undertake holidays that entail facilitating or lessening the material deficiency of some societal groups the uplifting the educational level of children.

Prompting movements and networks between the locale and the external; over time, sustaining a society's vitality and home individuality is associated directly with deliberate acts (Assmann, 2019). Remarkably, customs are contingent on communication mode through finding, modifying, augmenting, and rearranging the group's shared culture. Nevertheless, this also suggests that the likelihood of social reminiscence and tradition is constantly ambiguous. It depends on invigorated awareness, interest, recollection, preservation, and debate. In addition to these acts, it is dependent on the unique, structural, and community attention to the vigor and perpetuation of community traditions and other specific characteristics. Amongst the operative approaches identified by host organizations are "Standalone, recurring" and "Cycle of imaginative actions and extra ingenuities under a common theme." They are principally related to strengthen-

ing distinguishing fundamentals of homegrown distinctiveness, with the curriculum archetypal. "Micro festivals that include creative tourism activities" also help achieve this particular aim.

Tourism is a common trade-off between locals and tourists in initiating the collaborative efforts between the locale and the external. These creative tourism programs can be important for cross-cultural understanding, conversation, and discourse. Creative activities promote collective activities that highlight several attitudes associated with visitors' affection for a specific location, prompting the co-operation of knowledge/experience of visitors and the local community. Nurturing collaborations and purposeful exchanges between visitors and residents within creative tourism events can trigger novel effects and viewpoints on resident and foreign culture(s), uncover actors' various slants, and develop shared languages and dispositions that arise within the activity or milieu. On the one hand, volunteers' intentions to contribute to international community development projects may be valuable. On the other hand, more importantly, the local networks and the host organizations play vital responsibilities in how these experiences are adopted domestically. However, creative tourism development models related to (or entrenched inside) micro festivals and

in line with an innovative change in learning can be instrumental in purposefully aligning the locale globally and actively creating these streams.

As a conduit for local partnership, exchange, and development, Chim-Miki and Batista-Canino (2017) describe creative tourism's fundamental diversity and interdisciplinarity shifting to a sharing and collective approach. For example, they work together, develop assets, and contribute knowledge and expertise to volunteer tourists and other local group participants. A volunteerism approach may be purposefully conceived and expanded to jointly build up civic capability beyond nurturing the exchange of residents' experience and skills in fostering a learning organization. This approach is critical in rural areas and isolated locations with an apparent lack of sufficient numbers like in city areas. Such volunteerism programs can offer effective governance, inspire residents, and contribute to more excellent knowledge, skills proficiency, and an equitable and comparative propagation of profits into a community. In addition, the sharing arrangement of local actors, such as hosts, agriculturists, accommodation, food service industry, and transport services, facilitates collective community connections centered on a joint-venture approach linked to the circular economy.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to detect, gather and analyze the attractiveness of voluntourism, especially in recent years. As a result, critical dimensions of voluntourists' experiences were identified. Utilizing a systematic methodology, several issues were observed. First, there is a synchronization of an individual's aspiration with the travel destination, host organizations as ethical reformers of communities and environments. In addition, collaboration with local community partners, NGOs, and charities were found; they are social organizations that operate commercial techniques for community purposes.

From the analysis, voluntourism creates a new tourism experience from "reviver" to becoming "giver" that tourists can spend their time during their travels to uplift a community to learn new skills and knowledge, enabling a nobler cause. This brings about a valuable experience in the heart and soul of the tourist. However, as demonstrated, the central argument about voluntourism as a savior or impediment hangs in the balance. There is an all-embracing worry about whether people should decry citizens of developed countries for wanting a feel-good experience.

To summarize, the Alternative Capital Model of regenerative tourism can contribute to the tourism industry to gain competitive advantages in the market. However, this espousal is neither easy nor straightforward to implement. Still, as a growth strategy, all of these activities need to be included in an integrated and appropriate business model to add significant value to sustainable development goals if the collaborative networks are further strengthened. This gives impetus for further research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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