



Millennial Experience Traveling to Ecotourism

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ABSTRACT: Ecotourism has become an attraction that is increasingly in demand after the Covid-19 pandemic. The current millennial generation has various options for channelling their desire to travel. Ecotourism is one option. It is realized that this non-mainstream tourism genre is much liked by today's young generation who tend to want to go on an adventure looking for new experiences. Millennials are the generation born in 1980-2000, have the power to change trends and lifestyles, are connected to the internet, are all digital, and have a very high appeal to nature. Travel based on flora and fauna conservation, protecting endangered cultures, and education to support the sustainability of the universe, is the choice among millennials. The Turtle Conservation and Education Center (TCEC) has a strategic role as the preferred ecotourism destination for millennial tourists. The research question are (1) what values grow from the experience of traveling to ecotourism destinations? (2) how is the internalization of deep memories through the experience of traveling to ecotourism destinations? The purpose of this study was to determine the value that grows from the experience of traveling to ecotourism destinations. This study used qualitative method, data collected through observations and interviews. The result of this study is that traveling to TCEC raises awareness of the environment among millennials that nature must be treated with full respect, as well as showing respect for residents encountered on trips and enjoying interactions with residents while on tour. A deep impression of tourists is obtained through the experience of interacting with natural elements

Keywords: Ecotourism, Experience, Millennial, TCEC, Traveling



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INTRODUCTION

Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Republic of Indonesia, Sandiaga Uno, stated the future of Indonesia's tourist destinations and attractions leads to the concepts of nature tourism, ecotourism, wellness tourism, and adventure tourism (NEWA). Market segmentation in this tourism genre has a selective character in visits, but has a high level of spending. Ecotourism tourists are more serious and intent on traveling, not reluctant to spend large amounts of money to get an authentic experience of sustainable nature and witness conservation practices in

Indonesia. They will not disturb, let alone damage, the socio-cultural value system and the preservation of nature ([Kim et al., 2019](#); [Nurhayati et al., 2019](#)).

The role of young people is needed to promote Indonesia as a world center for ecotourism ([Kemenparekraf/Baparekraf, 2021](#)). ([Dolnicar et al., 2008](#)) sustainable tourism and ecotourism have been extensively researched for a number of years. Sustainable development is significantly aided by ecotourism, increasing the country's total income and providing more employment opportunities. To achieve the goal of sustainable development, the challenges faced by ecotourism must be overcome by increasing the level of environmental awareness, implementing environmental protection laws, and fighting corruption ([Anup et al., 2015](#); [Brillo, 2021](#)).

([Wiweka et al., 2019](#)) stated that tourism activities in the world and Indonesia in particular, the millennial generation dominates the leisure economy, of which these are a part (Gen Y), the younger generation namely Generation Z. The current generation of travelers has a unique approach to planning trips, relying heavily on technology and digital influencers. It is uncertain whether or not the tourism industry will quickly recover after the pandemic, with many people more focused on recovery than travel. However, millennials may have a different perspective ([Jin et al., 2020](#); [Little & Blau, 2020](#); [Wieckardt et al., 2022](#)).

The prediction of the dominance of the ecotourist tourist segment from millennials attracts attention to identify interest in traveling to ecotourism destinations. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry Republic of Indonesia collaborated with the Ministry of Forestry of Korea (Korea Forest Service) at the 2019 Asia Pacific Forestry Week (APFW) in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in June 2019, involving millennial K-Pop artists and Indonesian public figures in the millennial festival for forests, educational, cultural and scientific exchanges to prepare future forestry and environmental leaders ([Wicaksono, 2019](#)).

The market for ecotourism is expanding at a faster rate than other travel sectors, particularly among millennials. The World Youth Student & Educational Travel Confederation and the World Travel Market predict that the global market for youth and student travelers will reach 300 million arrivals by 2020, with a market value of \$320 billion ([Cini et al., 2015](#)).

According to the 2020 Population Census conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), Generation Z makes up the largest percentage of Indonesia's population with 75.49 million people, which accounts for 27.94% and the millennial generation of 69.38 million people (25.87%). In Indonesia, people who were born between 1981 and 1996 are considered to be millennials, while those born between 1997 and 2012 are classified as Generation Z ([Idris, 2021](#)). The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Republic of Indonesia (2018) uses the millennial generation as references ([Howe & Strauss, 2000](#)) namely those born between 1982-2000. Based on this, the criteria for tourists used in the study were those born between 1982-2000 (Gen Y) and those born between 2000-2012 (Gen Z) ([Jones et al., 2018](#)).

([Anisa, 2018](#)) stated that millennial tourists are one of the market segments that is experiencing rapid growth, related to the increasing population in this millennial era and the increasing tendency to travel in this generation. Coupled with the highly internet-minded lifestyle, millennial tourists

have characteristics that are far different from previous generations. Millennial travelers are also unique in terms of travel behavior, accommodation choices, food and drink, and outdoor activities.

Millennials are interested in exploring because they have their own money, make their own choices, and enjoy spending on leisure. This is shown through the fact that young people's travel generates a significant amount of money and accounts for a large portion of international tourism. Young adults born in the 1980s and 1990s are attracted to ecotourism and rely on recommendations from their peers and social networking platforms for information ([Clark et al., 2019](#)). This was also reinforced in other studies, including ([Kaihatu et al., 2020](#); [D. G. Satrya et al., 2019](#); [I. D. G. Satrya, 2016](#); [I. D. G. Satrya et al., 2017](#)). In particular, the research by ([Kaihatu et al., 2020](#)) tested three factors that were hypothesized to influence the tendency of Indonesia's millennial generation to engage in ecotourism experiences, namely the value of universalism, horizontal collectivism, and user generated content (UGC). Indonesia is generally regarded as a collectivist (as opposed to individualistic) society, but there are different values of horizontal universalism and collectivism. The findings show that the value of universalism is positively related to ecotourism predisposition. UGC has a marginal moderating effect on universalism → ecotourism tendencies. Horizontal collectivism also has a marginal moderating effect on universalism → ecotourism predisposition in soft ecotourism, but has a significant effect in hard ecotourism. Both have a direct effect on ecotourism trends. Ecotourism managers must realize that millennials can be segmented based on horizontal universalism and collectivism values; and that in order to attract those with higher levels on this value dimension, UGC must be continually encouraged.

([Donohoe & Needham, 2006](#)) state, ecotourism includes nature-focused activities, sustainability and conservation efforts, education, fair distribution of benefits, and ethical responsibility and awareness. ([Sharpley, 2006](#)) states, there are three main pillars for developing ecotourism: first, environment: ecotourism is tourism with a small environmental impact that must be regulated in such a way as to contribute to saving the plant and animal life found in their natural habitats.; Second, development/development: ecotourism should promote the participation of the local population and oversee the sustainable growth of tourism in the socio-economic aspect for the benefit of the community; Third, experience: ecotourism should offer chances for tourists to learn and interact meaningfully with the environment and local community. Based on the background that has been described, the following problems can be formulated, firstly, what value grows from the experience of traveling to ecotourism destinations? Second, how is the internalization of deep memories through the experience of traveling to ecotourism destinations?

The explanation for what is called ecotourism ([Blamey & Braithwaite, 2016](#); [Cini et al., 2015](#); [Cochrane, 2006](#); [Passafaro et al., 2015](#)) is that many countries, including Indonesia, offer both 'soft' (soft ecotourism) and 'hard' (hard ecotourism) ecotourism options. The former is more mainstream, designed for the masses requiring relatively little time commitment or excessive effort. They tend to be easily accessible and offer a variety of services such as restrooms, gift shops and more. The latter is more demanding, therefore appealing to those seeking a higher level of commitment and willingness to experience the discomfort/difficulty of appreciating nature's bounty.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. The location of this research is TCEC, Serangan, Denpasar, Bali. This research continues previous research on TCEC, among others, ([Dalem, 2022](#); [Dalem et al., 2021](#); [Harnino et al., 2021](#); [Minaputri, 2014](#)). Data collection techniques were carried out by interviewing and observing informants using a purposive sampling method in which informants were selected based on criteria determined by the researcher. The study utilizes two types of information: primary data and secondary data. Primary data was conducted by interviewing managers and millennial tourists who visited TCEC, as well as observations to obtain the required information. Secondary data is done by obtaining data through various sources of literature.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

United Nation World Tourism Organization emphasizes the importance of the role of biodiversity as one of the biggest assets in the tourism industry. Demographic pressures and human activities have the potential to harm unique species and ecosystems. A 'healthy' tourism industry should be able to protect and conserve this diversity as a selling point and a mainstay that can be maintained in the long term.

Since 1978, every 15 October 1978 is celebrated as Animal Rights Day. This was marked by the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights at the UNESCO headquarters. The contents of the declaration of Animal Rights by UNESCO: first, humans do not have the right to exterminate or inhumanely exploit animals; secondly, it is the duty of humans to use their knowledge for the welfare of animals. Third, no animal is mistreated or subjected to cruelty. Fourth, if an animal must be killed, it must be done immediately and without causing suffering to the animal. Fifth, all wild animals have the right to freedom in their natural environment, whether on land, air or water, and must be allowed to reproduce. Sixth, all working animals have the right to reasonable time limits and work intensity, to receive food and rest. In the context of tourism, animal rights are related to the use of animals as tourist attractions as well as narratives based on facts regarding the fulfillment of animal human rights which are summarized in the five animal freedoms (The Five Freedoms), namely freedom from hunger and thirst, freedom from discomfort, freedom from pain, injury and disease, freedom to behave normally, and freedom from fear and distress.

Four years ago, the millennial spirit of conservation echoed the need to be a common concern for the existence and future of the archipelago's animals, as a part of our biological wealth. Research conducted by the author on the ecotourism model among millennials has relevance to nature conservation. In other words, ecotourism helps conservation activities. Income from tourism is to meet the operational needs of animals, starting from food, medical care and other operations. The main priority of conservation is to maintain the natural situation of animals. This is where the challenge from managers and tourists.

Ecotourism begins with world concern about the destruction of nature and the erosion of local culture. The ecotourism approach requires respect for nature and local culture, with a clear segmentation of visitors, namely eco tourists who are consciously and full of motivation, looking for trips to maintain connectedness with the preservation of nature and customs. For the purposes

of ecotourism trips, tourists must organize and prepare themselves with sincerity, time, money and effort to travel. Activities such as mountain climbing, observations in national parks, visits to natural and cultural conservation areas, including the latest products in the form of tourist villages, are some of the ecotourism activities that this time have the opportunity to grow.

In Bali, for example, efforts to pioneer ecotourism development have begun to be carried out by several parties, including the Pakraman village community, NGOs, or variants of both. The Governor of Bali inaugurated TCEC on January 20, 2006, on Serangan Island in an area of 2.4 hectares. TCEC was created to address the issue of turtle trade and is assisting the Serangan community in finding alternative solutions to avoid this trade. The captive center is useful as an education center, tourist area, conservation, and research center. TCEC is supported by WWF, the Governor of Bali, the Natural Resources Conservation Center, Serangan local community ([T.C.E.C., 2021](#)).

TCEC Serangan was founded in 2006 with the initiation of WWF-Indonesia, the Bali Province BKSDA, PHDI Bali, and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine - Udayana University. TCEC's main task is to save turtles and provide education related to turtle conservation to the whole community. The rescue was carried out due to being hit by a ship, illegal trade, turtles were stranded, and dolphins and whales have also been rescued. The number of rescues in 2015 was 2, in 2016 there were 41, in 2017 there were 18, in 2018 there were 12, in 2019 there were 34, in 2020 there were 60. Relocation of nests in 2015 was 77 nests, in 2016 there were 116 nests, in 2017 there were 170 nests, in 2018 there were 207 nests, in 2019 there were 222 nests.

([Minaputri, 2014](#)) states, TCEC has a high economic value, which is IDR 518,656,568,627. The willingness to pay (WTP) value of domestic tourist respondents is IDR 10,661.76 per visit while the WTP value for foreign tourists respondents is IDR 55,333.33 per visit. The results of the TCEC feasibility analysis during 2008-2013 have not been able to guarantee the sustainability of turtle conservation activities, thus there is a need for improvement in TCEC's financial management. The existence of TCEC must be maintained as a turtle conservation and management in a sustainable manner.

The results of turtle conservation activities, starting from rearing turtles, hatching turtle eggs, relocating eggs, raising hatchlings to releasing hatchlings. The effectiveness given by TCEC to manage and preserve the existence of sea turtles in Indonesia, especially in the Bali region is to raise awareness for the public by not consuming turtle eggs and meat ([Harnino et al., 2021](#)).

([Dalem, 2022](#)) formulates the principles and criteria for turtle-based ecotourism which are in line with the Bali Trihita Karana (THK) philosophy. The FGDs held by TCEC in 2000-2001 showed that the principles and criteria for turtle-based ecotourism are in line with the THK: (1) the principle of sustainability; (2) provide the right interpretation; (3) local community empowerment; (4) respect local culture/religion; (5) comply with laws/regulations; (6) development supported by local communities; (7) provide satisfaction to tourists; (8) responsible marketing; (9) management system in accordance with THK; (10) the principle of self-protection; (11) empowerment of local knowledge and wisdom; and (12) implementation of the CHSE protocol.

On a trip to TCEC, writers obtained information about ecotourism, turtle conservation, turtle protection (take the eggs, store them for 45-65 days, release them after hatching), looking for sea-

weed, and preparing fish for turtle food. The background to the establishment of TCEC was the widespread exploitation of turtles on a large scale in Bali. Turtle meat is consumed and the rest is used for jewellery. Turtle eggs were traded illegally from the 1950s. This causes the turtle population to decline.

Educational activities at TCEC to increase public awareness of preserving sea turtles. TCEC management is carried out through conservation (focusing on activities to protect and preserve sea turtle populations), education (through means of raising public awareness), and tourism (traveling while learning). TCEC is campaigning for "7 Ways You Can Help Sea Turtles every day", namely keeping waterways clean, recycling discarded fishing lines, choosing reusable shopping bags, purchasing sustainable seafood, hike or biking more to use less oil & gas, supporting laws that support sea turtle, share what you know with other. The results of this analysis are based on various opinions of informants regarding the list of questions that have been attached. Where this analysis summarizes the overall core of the answers raised by informants in the outline.

1. What do you know about ecotourism?

Informants argued that ecotourism focussing on environmentally conscious tourism is to prioritize the preservation of nature and sustainability, as well as empower local communities socially and culturally, and education. Where ecotourism aims to implement education about the environment and also actively participate with local communities to improve the local community's economy through tourism which has the concept of protecting the environment, responsible for nature, empowering the community, increasing environmental awareness, and also a type of tourism that supports the preservation of natural areas, provides economic benefits, and maintains the cultural integrity of local communities. It focuses on activities that prioritize nature conservation, cultural and economic empowerment of locals, and education. It is a responsible form of tourism that actively involves local supporters in the process.

Ecotourism is predicted to become a new tourism activity that is increasingly in demand by the public during the pandemic. In addition to ecotourism, tourism activities to improve health and natural tourism in general will also attract many enthusiasts. The pattern of ecotourism trips is indeed possible to do at this time, bearing in mind the character of ecotourism which upholds the preservation of nature as well as local communities and culture, taking into account the capacity of the number of visitors. That is, ecotourism does not rely solely on the number of visits, but emphasizes the depth of meaning and benefits of tourist trips. Often mass tourism damages the preservation of nature and culture, but it is undeniable that large quantities of tourist trips are needed to have a multiplier impact on people's welfare and tax revenues. This time, the pandemic has allowed tourism stakeholders to really improve the quality of tourist destinations, which are not just competing to attract the flow of tourist visits, but also taking into account sustainability, safety and comfort of travel.

2. What do you think about the conservation carried out at TCEC Serangan?

TCEC is a conservation that is already good, both in terms of management, arrangement, and delivery of the materials provided. Where TCEC has played an active role in maintaining the balance of biota, and sea turtles through turtle conservation and educational programs regarding the conservation of turtles themselves. Informants also stated that TCEC is an effort to rebalance

natural resources that are threatened and cannot restore conditions. the population is as before so that the population decreases which in turn causes an ecological imbalance in an ecosystem.

3. What lessons did you get from ecotourism at TCEC Serangan?

Education on the development and care of turtles, which starts from collecting turtle eggs from the beach → hatchlings → adult turtles, turtle migration, the feeding process, methods of captive breeding, maintenance and handling of unhealthy turtles, to the process of releasing them. Where it is very important to maintain balance and increase public awareness.

4. Explain why TCEC Serangan deserves to be categorized as an ecotourism destination.

All informants agreed that TCEC met the requirements to be ecotourism because TCEC gave a good impression, besides being very educative it also provided good and useful facilities and information. And because TCEC already has a conservation tool that is useful for providing education and involving local communities in the process of preserving turtles. In addition, TCEC is a means of learning about ecotourism through turtles which can be used as a place for learning for many people. In addition, informants also stated that TCEC is an effort to rebalance natural re-sources that are threatened and cannot restore the condition of the population to what it was be-fore. previously, so that the population decreased which ultimately led to an ecological imbalance in the ecosystem.

5. Explain whether your expectations of traveling at TCEC Serangan have been fulfilled. If fulfilled why fulfilled or if not fulfilled why not fulfilled?

According to tourists who have visited, they feel that TCEC has met their expectations. All available materials and facilities have had a good impact. However, informants also stated that there was a need to improve facilities to increase visitor comfort and complete direct interaction sessions for visitors.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research are as described below,

1. Traveling to TCEC raises awareness of the environment among millennials that nature must be treated with great respect, and shows respect for the locals they meet on their way and enjoys interacting with the locals while on tour.
2. The in-depth impressions of tourists are obtained through the experience of interacting with natural elements.

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