



DEVELOPMENT OF RIVER TUBING AS A SPECIAL INTEREST TOURISM IN KAWINDA TO'I TOURISM VILLAGE: A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

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Abstrak

Pengembangan river tubing berbasis minat khusus tidak hanya meningkatkan daya tarik destinasi, tetapi juga memberikan dampak positif terhadap perekonomian lokal melalui partisipasi aktif masyarakat dalam pengelolaan wisata tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis potensi dan peluang pengembangan river tubing, dengan fokus pada peran pemuda dalam pengembangan pariwisata dan strategi untuk mendukung keterlibatan mereka dalam mengoptimalkan potensi wisata lokal. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif fenomenologis dengan metode deskriptif analitis, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, focus group discussion (FGD), dan dokumentasi. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari 20 informan yang berasal dari pelaku usaha pariwisata, komunitas pecinta alam, Kelompok Sadar Wisata (Pokdarwis), Karang Taruna, pemuda-pemudi setempat, pengelola Taman Nasional Tambora, dan pemerintah desa Kawinda To'i. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa daya tarik utama river tubing di Desa Kawinda To'i, Kecamatan Tambora, Kabupaten Bima, terletak pada keindahan alam yang mengelilinginya, termasuk jalur yang dikelilingi oleh batu-batu besar, pepohonan rimbun, dan panorama yang sejuk. Aliran sungai yang relatif lancar dan aman, ditambah dengan aksesibilitas yang mudah, menjadi keunggulan utama yang mendukung keberadaan wisata ini. River tubing tidak hanya memberikan pengalaman petualangan yang menyegarkan, tetapi juga berperan signifikan dalam mendukung pertumbuhan ekonomi lokal. Pemuda berperan sebagai inovator dan pelaksana utama dalam pengembangan aktivitas ini, berkontribusi melalui berbagai bentuk partisipasi seperti pemikiran, keterampilan, tenaga, dan harta benda. Pendekatan strategis untuk melibatkan pemuda dalam pengelolaan river tubing meliputi komunikasi interaktif, kerjasama antara pemuda, masyarakat, stakeholder, dan pemerintah desa, pelatihan kemandirian, serta pemberian fasilitas yang memadai. Dukungan pemerintah dan pihak terkait, bersama dengan penerapan prinsip gotong royong, memungkinkan pemuda untuk menjadi motor penggerak dalam pengelolaan pariwisata yang berkelanjutan, menjaga keseimbangan ekosistem, serta meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat. Secara teoretis, pendekatan ini mendukung konsep *community-based tourism* yang menekankan peran penting pemuda sebagai agen perubahan dalam pembangunan pariwisata minat khusus yang berkelanjutan, memperkaya literatur tentang kepemimpinan pemuda dalam pengelolaan destinasi wisata berbasis komunitas.

Keywords: River Tubing, Special Interest Tourism, Tourism Village, Youth

Abstract

The development of interest-based river tubing enhances the destination's appeal and positively impacts the local economy through active community participation in tourism management. This study aims to analyze the potential and opportunities for river tubing development, with a focus on the role of youth in tourism development and strategies to support their involvement in optimizing local tourism potential. Using a phenomenological qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods, data was collected through participatory observation, focus group discussions (FGD), and documentation. The research sample consists of 20 informants from tourism operators, nature enthusiast communities, Tourism Awareness Groups, youth organizations, local youth, Tambora National Park managers, and the Kawinda To'i village government. The findings indicate that the primary attraction of river tubing in Kawinda To'i Village, Tambora District, Bima Regency, lies in its surrounding natural beauty, including the route flanked by large rocks, dense trees, and a refreshing panorama. The relatively smooth and safe river flow, combined with easy accessibility, constitutes the main advantages supporting the existence of this tourist attraction. River tubing provides a refreshing adventure experience and plays a significant role in supporting local economic growth. Youth act as innovators and primary implementers in this activity, contributing through various forms of participation, including ideas, skills, effort, and resources. Strategic approaches to engage youth in river tubing management include interactive communication, cooperation among youth, communities, stakeholders, and village governments, training for self-reliance, and the provision of adequate facilities. Support from the government and relevant parties, along with the implementation of the principle of cooperation, empowers youth to act as driving forces in the sustainable management of tourism, maintaining ecosystem balance, and enhancing community welfare. Theoretically, this approach supports the concept of community-based tourism, emphasizing the vital role of youth as agents of change in the development of sustainable special-interest tourism, thereby enriching the literature on youth leadership in community-based tourism destination management.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism plays a crucial role in supporting local economic growth (Andriani et al., 2022). Efficient development in the tourism sector can generate substantial revenue for a region. Tourist visits, which involve spending on accommodation, dining, transportation, and recreational activities, positively impact local fiscal receipts through taxes and levies. Revenue from this sector also provides an economic boost to local entrepreneurs such as vendors, destination managers, and providers of local goods and services (Jaafar et al., 2015). Thus, the advancement of the tourism sector not only promotes local economic development but also enhances the well-being of communities, particularly in rural areas (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004).

In 2019, the West Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government launched a flagship program featuring 99 tourist villages on the islands of Lombok and Sumbawa to maximize the potential of local natural resources and accelerate the development of the tourism sector and community economic growth

(PemprovNTB, 2024). One of the villages included in this program is Kawinda To'i in the Tambora District of Bima Regency, located north of Mount Tambora. With its stunning landscape, green savannahs, and river flow from the Oi Marai waterfall, the village holds significant potential to be developed as a niche tourism destination, particularly for river tubing activities. This activity offers a unique combination of adventure, natural beauty, and recreation, making it a promising attraction for tourists (Prideaux et al., 2009).

The development of river tubing as an aspect of interest-based tourism enhances the destination's attractiveness. It positively impacts the local economy through active community participation in the organization and management of tourism activities. Additionally, it has the potential to become a village icon (Mahardhika et al., 2023). The sustainability of river tubing tourism can be achieved by prioritizing the unique characteristics of the area to create a distinctive tourism experience and provide inclusive

benefits to both the community and the surrounding environment (Feriadin et al., 2021). The value of locality in tourism attraction management can enhance the quality of uniqueness, distinctiveness, and local character as the primary differentiators of tourist destinations (Feriadin et al., 2024) and become part of human creativity products with economic value.

Despite the significant tourism potential in rural areas, many local communities still struggle to identify and utilize these opportunities as new sources of employment. This challenge arises from a lack of awareness about local potential (Saarinen, 2010), inadequate tourism object development orientation, and insufficient collaboration and sustainable management (Wondirad et al., 2020). Furthermore, Ivasciuc & Ispas (2023) indicate that youth involvement in the tourism sector is limited, due to their low interest in staying and developing themselves in rural areas, as well as a tendency to spend more time on gadgets rather than interacting with the local community (Priatama et al., 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to engage young people in the development and management of tourism as a means to increase the absorption of youth labor in rural regions.

Youth in the context of this research refers to individuals aged 16-30 years (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 40 of 2009 on Youth, 2009), who are considered potential tourism actors with a strategic role in various aspects, including their ability to contribute innovative ideas for tourism growth (Feriadin et al., 2022), shaping the destination image (Busaini et al., 2020), and providing new experiences for tourists. Youth are also typically actively engaged in various leisure activities in outdoor environments, sports, and other social endeavors (Kemenparekraf & ILO, 2012), making them a highly potential group for advancing village tourism. Therefore, youth as tourism development actors must be encouraged and actively involved in every stage of tourism development, from initiative, planning, construction, management, and development to the levels of monitoring and evaluation (Ridlo et al., 2018; Saufi et al., 2014), particularly in the context of River Tubing as a special interest tourism activity. This action is essential as it will increase youth interest and involvement in efforts to develop rural areas.

The explanation above indicates that youth play a crucial role in various contexts. The researcher is interested in conducting a study titled "Development of River Tubing as a Special Interest Tourism in Kawinda To'i Tourism Village: A Youth Perspective" This research offers a different approach to the development of special interest tourism, specifically in the context of River Tubing in Kawinda To'i Tourism Village. In contrast to previous studies that primarily focused on natural and local economic potential, this research specifically highlights the strategic role of youth in tourism development. Through this approach, the study not only seeks to identify the potential and opportunities for River Tubing development but also aims to explore the tangible contributions of youth in advancing the local tourism sector. Thus, this research not only offers new solutions for leveraging tourism potential but also provides a deeper understanding of strategies that can enhance youth involvement in optimizing local tourism opportunities, with the hope of making a significant positive contribution to the welfare of the community in Kawinda To'i Tourism Village. The results of this research are expected to serve as a foundation for the development of more effective policies and programs that harness the potential of River Tubing tourism as an effort to improve the welfare of the community in Kawinda To'i Tourism Village.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a phenomenological qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods, aiming to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects within the context of specialized tourism development, specifically river tubing tourism in Kawinda To'i tourism village, with a focus on the strategic role of youth. According to Moleong (2018), this approach is used to describe and analyze behavior, motivations, and actions in depth through words within a natural context. The research is designed to outline the role of youth in supporting the sustainability of tourism destinations based on relevant theories, with data comprising narratives and observations that depict field phenomena (Taylor et al., 2016).

In this study, the purposive sampling method was applied to obtain accurate and representative data from Kawinda To'i Tourism

Village, involving 20 informants from various backgrounds of experience and involvement in the development of the tourism village. This approach is designed to highlight relevant differences, allowing them to be detailed and generalized within the research context, as stated by Moleong (2018). The research subjects include tourism activists, such as tourism business operators, nature lover communities, tourism awareness groups, Karang Taruna (youth organizations), male and female youths, managers of Tambora National Park, and the Kawinda To'i village government. To maintain respondent confidentiality, each name will be abbreviated, aiming to provide in-depth and contextual information regarding the dynamics and development of the tourism village.

Data collection in this study was carried out using three primary methods: observation, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and documentation. Participatory observation was employed to directly observe village activities, including River Tubing tourism, to gain an in-depth understanding of the research object's situation and conditions. FGDs were conducted with informants to gather relevant perspectives and contextual information. Documentation involved reviewing journals, articles, and news related to the role of youth in tourism, the development of River Tubing tourism, and special interest tourism attractions. The tools used included a laptop, mobile phone, recorder, guiding question instruments, and writing materials for note-taking. The collected data were classified and analyzed using the data analysis method outlined by Miles et al. (2014), which includes data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Potential and Sustainability of River Tubing Tourism in Kawinda To'i Village

The results of this study indicate that Kawinda To'i Tourism Village possesses remarkable natural potential, particularly due to the river flow originating from Oi Marai Waterfall, a major attraction for special interest tourists. According to Informant 01-DR, the Head of Tambora National Park, Oi Marai features a stunning waterfall formation. It is an ideal location for observing Tambora's endemic wildlife, which is frequently found along the trekking routes. The environment around the waterfall remains pristine, with clean water

flow, diverse flora such as klanggo and guava trees, and protected fauna including birds and monitor lizards. Besides being a tourist destination, this area plays a crucial role in flora and fauna conservation, making it an eco-tourism site that supports nature preservation. The presence of the river opens opportunities for various types of tourism, such as river exploration, bird watching, canoeing, photography, and river tubing, which can be developed to attract tourists seeking authentic natural experiences. The management emphasizes the importance of maintaining the authenticity and preservation of the environment around the waterfall to ensure the sustainability of tourism management.

The waterfalls in the Kawinda To'i village area represent an ecosystem rich in biodiversity, characterized by diverse vegetation that includes 106 tree species, 18 epiphyte species, 6 herb species, 39 other plant species, and 49 types of shrubs. The dominance of species such as walikukum, kalanggo, pulai, linggun, and sonoklin imparts a unique forest characteristic to the area. Additionally, this region serves as a habitat for various wildlife, including Timor deer, monitor lizards, skinks, pythons, gray macaques, and honey bees (Informant 03-RA, Manager of Tambora National Park). Furthermore, Informant 04-TA, also from Tambora, notes that the presence of the waterfalls not only enriches biodiversity but also offers opportunities for local communities to utilize herbal plants and other natural resources, such as honey, to support their livelihoods sustainably.

The existing data indicates that the presence of plants, animals, waterfalls, and other natural resources plays a crucial role in the development of nature-based tourism in Desa Kawinda To'i. The natural potential of this village is a primary factor in attracting visitors, providing opportunities to develop nature-based tourism that offers unique experiences and a harmonious connection with nature. Informant 01-DR, Manager of TN Tambora, stated, "The main intention of people coming to Oi Marai is mostly for bathing, and I

believe that Oi Marai is one of the well-managed waterfalls on Sumbawa Island.” Situated along the trekking route of Mount Tambora, Oi Marai waterfall has a high and stable water flow, making it highly suitable for the development of river tubing as a specialized tourist attraction.

The appeal and uniqueness of river tubing in Kawinda To’i Village, Tambora District, Bima Regency, lie in the route traversed, which is surrounded by large rocks and lush trees, as well as the cool natural scenery. The relatively smooth and safe water flow, combined with good accessibility, constitutes the primary advantage of this river. Informant 06-IS, the Chair of the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community, further noted that numerous interesting points along the Oi Marai River offer spectacular views of cliffs and large trees, making it an ideal location for photography and capturing tubing experiences. As a new tourism activity, river tubing not only provides a refreshing wet adventure but also represents the result of nurturing and development efforts by the Tambora National Park Authority in exploring the natural potential of the local community.

The presence of river tubing as a tourist attraction in Tambora District, particularly in Kawinda To’i Village, presents significant opportunities for the development of niche tourism in rural areas. This river exploration activity not only captures the interest of tourists but also stimulates the emergence of other local tourism potentials such as honey production, waterfalls, camping grounds, flying fox, rock climbing, paragliding, off-roading, and jungle trekking, all of which offer adrenaline-pumping experiences. To maximize this potential, tourism managers and the community hope that the government will provide supporting infrastructure such as road access, communication networks, healthcare facilities, and additional amenities like homestays. This is crucial given the distance from the city center, as it would enhance comfort and appeal for both domestic and international tourists, enabling Kawinda To’i to compete on the national tourism stage by offering a comprehensive and memorable travel experience.

The tubing activity in Kawinda To’i Village not only provides an enjoyable recreational experience but also serves as an effective medium for strengthening social bonds among family members, friends, and

colleagues. As a form of water-based outbound activity, tubing is particularly well-suited for group events with colleagues because it requires cooperation and unity to navigate the river’s challenges. The natural beauty surrounding Kawinda To’i, along with its attractive sightseeing spots, offers participants an opportunity to relieve stress and escape from daily routines. According to Informant 07-BU, the Chairman of Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group, “When you’re on the river and holding hands, it’s incredibly fun..! We need to be united to enjoy the swift flow of the water.” This statement illustrates that tubing is not just a physical activity but also an experience that enhances solidarity and a sense of togetherness in a refreshing environment.

The increasing popularity of river tubing at tourist destinations not only serves as an attraction for visitors but also makes a significant contribution to local economic growth. The rise in tourist visits stimulates demand for various services, such as vehicle rentals, accommodation, and food and beverages, thereby fostering the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) around the tourist destination. This, in turn, creates new job opportunities and boosts local income. Consequently, river tubing functions as both a tourist attraction and a catalyst for sustainable rural economic development, making it a crucial element in local economic development strategies.

The river tubing tourism in Oi Marai is designed to enrich the visitor experience while empowering the local community, to generate positive economic impacts and preserve environmental sustainability. This tourism venture has the potential to attract youth and adventure groups, which, in turn, is expected to create new job opportunities and increase the income of the surrounding community. The activity not only provides employment opportunities for local youth as tourism managers but also contributes significantly to the local economy and community well-being. (Information 08-ANG, Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group Member).

The recognition of Tambora and Oi Marai as tourist destinations, along with the

introduction of river tubing activities, has created significant opportunities for enhancing the local economy. River tubing not only attracts tourists but also stimulates the growth of various local enterprises, including eateries, handicrafts, and specialty products such as pangaha bunga, jago sombu, and Tambora coffee. Additionally, some villagers have begun renovating their homes into homestays, starting culinary ventures, and offering equipment rental services for trekking and camping. These initiatives highlight the local community's capacity to adapt and independently manage businesses, ultimately contributing to substantial economic progress in the rural area.

Tambora has now become a bustling district frequently visited by tourists, with Kawinda To'i Village emerging as a primary destination offering an impressive river tubing experience. The local community exhibits high enthusiasm and pride in the surge of visitors, driving them to actively support and develop various activities that contribute to the local economy. Government support is also robust, with direct involvement in facilitating initiatives aimed at enhancing the image of Kawinda To'i Village as an attractive destination for local, domestic, and international tourists. These collaborative efforts not only enrich the tourist experience but also strengthen the village's position as a competitive tourist destination on both national and international levels.

To strengthen the sustainability of natural resource management in the village, a collaboration between the Village Government, the Tambora National Park Authority, the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community, and the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group was implemented to create a more attractive and sustainable tourism experience. This cooperation among stakeholders is a key strategy in leveraging natural tourism potential and developing river tubing as a special interest tourism product. The collaboration not only attracts more tourists but also enhances the capacity of local resources. According to Informant 02-DR, the Village Head, empowering natural resources through collective efforts based on cooperation is crucial for local tourism development. Research by Tschannen (2001) indicates that collaboration strengthens cooperation and a sense of togetherness, while Suprihandari et al., (2022) emphasize that cooperation provides

valuable experiences for the younger generation and instills norms and values that shape youth behavior. Therefore, the concept of special interest tourism in Kawinda To'i Tourism Village requires the active participation of all village stakeholders in managing and developing tourism.

Therefore, this study demonstrates that the natural potential of Kawinda To'i Tourism Village, particularly the Oi Marai Waterfall, attracts special interest tourists and presents significant opportunities for local youth in tourism development. The younger generation plays a crucial role in managing and developing tourist attractions such as river tubing, which offers a unique and authentic experience. Their active participation, especially in collaboration with the government, Tourism Awareness Groups, and the Tambora National Park Authority, is essential for ensuring the sustainability of natural resource management. Youth involvement in these activities not only strengthens social bonds and cooperation but also instills entrepreneurial values that can enhance the economic welfare of the community. Thus, youth act as change agents who advance the village through sustainable tourism innovation.

Potentials and Sustainability of River Tubing Tourism in Kawinda To'i Village	Natural Potential of Kawinda To'i Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of Oi Marai Waterfall • Rich biodiversity (flora and endemic fauna) • Opportunities for other types of tourism (e.g., river exploration, bird watching, nature photography)
	Main Attractions of River Tubing Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River pathways that offer beautiful natural scenery • Stable and safe river currents • Many attractive spots along the riverbanks for photography
	Economic and Social Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating demand for various services • Increasing community income • Serving as a medium to strengthen social connections and community ties
	Sustainability and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining environmental integrity and the authenticity of tourist areas • Enhancing collaboration between local government, TN Tambora, KPA Algura, and Pokdarwis Oi Marai

		• Active participation of youth
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Table 1. Coding Results of the Potentials and Sustainability of River Tubing Tourism in Kawinda To'i Village

Role of Youth in the Development of River Tubing Tourism

The existence of river tubing in Kawinda To'i Village originated from a collaboration between the Tambora National Park Authority and the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community, which recognized the village's natural potential as a tourist attraction. Concerns about the underutilization of this potential sparked creative ideas among Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community members to leverage local natural resources to boost the community's economy, particularly for the youth. Informant 09-RU, a youth organization member, stated that this initiative emerged from the realization that with serious management and innovative ideas, the existing potential could be developed into an appealing niche tourism attraction for visitors.

This initiative began with the concern of the Tambora National Park Authority and the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community regarding the potential of Kawinda To'i Village. Despite having considerable natural and community resources, the village had not been managed effectively. We recognize that if these potentials are managed diligently and packaged with creative ideas, they could offer an appealing experience for visitors to the village. (Informant 10-DU, Manager of Tambora National Park)

The involvement of the Tambora National Park Authority and the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community in empowering the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group in Kawinda To'i Village has had a significant impact on the development of the village's tourism potential. Before the establishment of the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group, the youth in Kawinda To'i Village lacked an organized tourism management group. The initiative by the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community aimed to engage local youth in actively utilizing the village's natural potential, specifically by creating income opportunities through tourism

management. The partnership between the Tambora National Park Authority and the Kawinda To'i Village Government is evident in the management of the Oi Marai Waterfall attraction, which is divided into two areas: the Tambora National Park Authority manages the main waterfall area, while the village government oversees the area from the entrance gate to the fenced boundary. Despite the division of responsibilities, active participation from the community, particularly the youth, remains consistent in maintaining and managing the area. Collaboration and partnerships among all stakeholders, including the concept of river tubing as a niche tourism activity, are crucial for supporting the development of the Oi Marai tourist attraction and maximizing economic benefits for the village community.

In the context of developing river tubing activities, youth play a crucial role as both innovators and primary implementers. Members of the Oi Marai Tourist Awareness Group and the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community, with support from the Tambora National Park Management, are responsible for designing tubing routes that are not only safe but also appealing, and ensuring that the equipment used meets safety standards. The creativity of the youth is also evident in their active participation in organizing various events such as Jejak Petualang, Tekka Tambora, and Kemilauan Tambora, which aim to attract tourists to Tambora. As pioneers in tubing tourism, the youth have built and developed this activity from inception to its current state of sustainability. The collective effort of the younger generation in managing tubing tourism has led to their village being recognized as a tourist destination. Informant 04, a manager, stated that:

To realize the development of this tourist attraction, significant challenges have arisen from the local community, which has not yet fully embraced the presence of tourism activities. Nevertheless, the younger generation continues to work towards developing the area's tourism potential by leveraging natural advantages, such as the Oi Marai River, with its clear, flowing waters that are ideal for tubing activities. This effort began with community-driven river cleanup

and personal financial contributions, demonstrating a collective effort to support and sustain the tubing attraction, which continues to operate and grow to this day. (Informant 11-AK, Member of Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group).

The role of youth in the development of river tubing as a special interest tourism activity in Kawinda To'i Village is realized through various forms of contributions, including material resources, ideas, labor, and skills. The youth play a significant role by providing material support in the form of funds and equipment necessary to enhance the management of the tourism site. Additionally, they contribute intellectually by offering ideas and suggestions during village meetings, which serve as participatory platforms to formulate tourism development strategies. In terms of labor, the youth are actively involved in communal work (*gotong royong*), particularly in constructing and maintaining tourism infrastructure. Furthermore, they serve as the managing group responsible for the operational aspects of the river tubing attraction, utilizing their skills to oversee the activities. In this context, the youth continually strive to develop new tourism attractions as part of a strategy to shift the community's mindset toward recognizing the positive benefits that tourism activities can bring to local welfare.

Youth play a significant role in the development of river tubing as a special interest tourism activity in Desa Kawinda To'i. According to Informant 12-JS, a member of the Karang Taruna (Youth Organization), "Youth participation in tourism development here is quite active; they take initiative without being directed by the Desa Kawinda To'i government." This statement reflects the high enthusiasm of the youth in innovating to introduce the village's tourism to a wider audience. Informant 13-WI, a manager at TN Tambora, added, "The youth want their village to be as well-known as other tourist areas; we provide them with innovations related to tourism management, given that river tubing tourism is newly established." By understanding the appeal of Desa Kawinda To'i, the youth collaborate with Tambora National Park to develop the village's flagship products and engage in tourism branding to boost the village's popularity.

Efforts to build a tourism image in Desa Kawinda To'i highlight the high creativity of the younger generation in packaging and promoting river tubing tourism by leveraging their digital skills to attract tourists. Young people create engaging content, such as videos, photos, and writing posts, which are disseminated across various social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok, targeting the more responsive millennial and Gen Z audiences. Through this strategy, they build a positive brand image for river tubing as a specialized tourism attraction, thereby enhancing the destination's appeal and expanding its market reach. By harnessing this digital potential, it is expected that the intensity of visits, particularly from the younger demographic active on these platforms, will increase significantly, reflecting the current trend where tourism visits are predominantly driven by younger generations.

The energy and ideas brought by the younger generation not only provide a fresh impetus for the development of destinations but also open up opportunities to integrate sustainable tourism practices, positioning youth as a key force in the transformation of the tourism industry in Desa Kawinda To'i. Young people have significant potential to contribute innovative ideas that support tourism growth (Feriadin et al., 2022), play a role in shaping the image of tourism destinations (Busaini et al., 2020), promote the destination, preserve the local environment and culture, and enhance the economic well-being of the village community by creating memorable tourism experiences for visitors.

Therefore, the youth in this village play a crucial role with their initiative and creativity in designing, managing, and promoting river tubing as a special interest tourism activity. The collaboration between the Tambora National Park Authority, the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community, and the Kawinda To'i youth has led to the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group, which is responsible for managing the tourist attraction with active community participation. The youth contribute not only to development and operations but also leverage digital skills to enhance the village's visibility through social media, reaching millennial and Gen Z audiences.

The Role of Youth in the Development of River Tubing Tourism	Development of Tourism Awareness Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of Pokdarwis • Partnerships • Active Participation
	Youth Roles in Tourism Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovators • Events • Promotion
	Youth Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials • Intellectual Input • Labor
	Tourism Image and Digitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Promotion • Branding
	Sustainable Destination Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovations in sustainable tourism practices • Youth as a strength

Table 2. Coding Results of the Role of Youth in the Development of River Tubing Tourism

Strategies for Engaging Youth in Optimizing Local Tourism Potential

The involvement of youth in tourism development in Kawinda To'i Village is crucial due to their potential, creativity, and innovative ideas. "The engagement of youth in the development of the tourism village leads to economic improvement as their ideas and creativity are supported for the benefit of themselves and the broader community" (Informant 14-AF, Member of the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group). Active youth participation can enhance a sense of ownership, responsibility, voluntarism, and empowerment, while also strengthening intellectual capacity, social capital, and skills. Based on this perspective, the development of special interest tourism in the village can be more effective with active involvement from local youth. The approach to engaging the younger generation in the development of river tubing as a special interest tourism activity in Kawinda To'i Tourism Village includes the following strategies:

1) Developing Interactive Communication

Effective communication can foster a sense of pride and motivate youth to contribute maximally to the development of their village. As conveyed by the village head (informant 02-IS), delivering messages appropriately to the youth is a critical factor that needs attention. Good communication not only inspires enthusiasm and participation among young people but also creates a harmonious atmosphere based on mutual trust. The success of this approach is evidenced by the active involvement of youth from the beginning to the end of

various rural tourism activities, reflecting the trust that has been established and comprehensive participation.

Youth are trusted as a bridge for communication and program implementation between the community, stakeholders, and local government, facilitating effective synergy and coordination. With the support and tangible actions from youth within the community, they are positioned to be at the forefront of ongoing collaboration in the development of sustainable special-interest tourism.

"Yes, in my opinion, I continue to encourage young people to take the lead, but I remain in the background. So, let the youth step forward and be at the forefront, while we continue to support and push from behind. Whatever their efforts may be, we will keep monitoring and supporting from behind to ensure the regeneration process" (Informant 15-RAT, Village Staff).

One approach implemented by the Tambora National Park and the Kawinda To'i Village Government involves engaging the younger generation by fostering interactive communication with positive language. As noted by an informant, "What needs to be understood is perhaps in how we convey messages to the youth that should be taken into account" (Informant 20-AD, Village Staff). The use of appropriate language can rekindle the enthusiasm of the youth to participate in the development of Kawinda To'i Village. Polite language helps create a sense of acceptance and mutual trust between the youth and adults. This effort can nurture a sense of pride and the desire among young people to contribute their best to the advancement of Kawinda To'i Tourism Village.

2) Fostering Solid Collaboration Between Youth, the Community, Stakeholders, and Local Government

Collaboration facilitates better coordination, strengthens relationships between parties, and enhances the synergy necessary for sustainable development.

Through strong synergy and efforts to improve human resource capacity, the management of river tubing can be better ensured and support sustainable tourism attractions. As expressed by informant 16-FIK, a member of the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group, "Collaboration will strengthen the development of tourism, especially Special Interest Tourism in Kawinda To'i Village." This statement reflects the belief that collaboration is the key to achieving sustainable village tourism development goals.

The government's strategy to support tourism development involves the active participation of all community elements, particularly the village youth, who play crucial roles in various aspects such as sales, security, and destination management. The close collaboration between the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community and the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group is key to establishing a robust tourism management system. Support from the Tambora National Park is also critical, providing equipment as part of its partnership with the Nature Enthusiasts Community. Existing facilities are optimally utilized with ongoing maintenance and upkeep. The Oi Marai Tourism is expected to serve as a model for the development of other natural tourism destinations, emphasizing a collaborative approach and active local community involvement.

In this study, the focus is on the perspectives of the youth, who are local community members or host community members actively involved in tourism activities. The findings reveal that youth engagement is highly active at every stage of development, from planning to monitoring and improvement. Youth involvement is evident from the initial planning phase of the destination, including their early participation. Some have grown within the environment and culture of tourism itself, some are involved due to their educational background, and others as local explorers or tourists. These experiences have enabled tourism practitioners to better understand their region, specifically Kawinda To'i Tourism Village and, more broadly, Bima. Thus, their involvement is consistently grounded

in local wisdom, reflecting the distinctive characteristics of the Bima community, such as mutual respect and cooperation.

Previously, before its official opening to the public in 2017, Oi Marai Waterfall was still covered by dense shrubbery, and the access road was severely damaged, leading to a less comfortable experience for visitors. Subsequently, the residents, youth, and local government of Kawinda To'i worked collaboratively to clear the undergrowth and improve the access road, making the waterfall accessible to the general public (Informant 17-TUB, Member of the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community).

The tradition of gotong royong (Mbolo weki) within the community of Kawinda To'i Village demonstrates the presence of cooperation and mutual trust among its members. This indicates that the value of togetherness is a potential asset that can be optimized for collective action and collaboration. Sustainable tourism does not exist in isolation but requires a culture of cooperation and collective involvement from all segments of the community (youth, young adults, and adults) to develop tourist destinations. Understanding the importance of collaboration to achieve shared goals makes the youth aware that all involved elements are an integrated whole that should not be fragmented if they aim to build the village. Collaboration can guide and shape the youth's mindset in taking actions, and conversely, the involvement of youth can facilitate the progress of tourism development in the village.

The involvement of youth with experience in the tourism sector can significantly assist local communities by providing intellectual, physical, technological, and artistic resources in planning and implementing village development. This engagement is deemed crucial for advancing Special Interest Tourism in Kawinda To'i Village. The ideas and creativity of youth positively impact both local youth and the broader

community, leading to special support (provision of space) from the village government, Tambora National Park, and the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group. This support enables youth to manage tourism activities in the village and to effectively execute various religious and community events.

3) Providing Independence Training to Youth Groups

The government needs to play an active role in providing training and socialization to tourism practitioners, particularly youth, to ensure they have a deep understanding of sustainable special interest tourism management systems. Youth possess significant potential for planning, service delivery, and innovation, making it crucial to offer them dedicated opportunities in the management and development of village tourism. By providing relevant training, youth can acquire practical knowledge and skills that enhance their creativity and overall community life, thereby supporting local economic growth and sustainable development.

To effectively manage this tourism, the youth must take the lead. For instance, we older individuals find it challenging to continue due to difficulties with English and a lack of understanding of the guiding system. Therefore, it is clear that the younger generation must take over. We have already started involving some young people in managing tourism and enrolling them in additional training programs (Informant 18-AKB, Member of the Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group).

In 2018, the Tambora National Park authorities initiated a training or benchmarking activity in Lombok to study the potential for developing rafting tourism, specifically river tubing. During this opportunity, Tambora National Park identified significant potential in the Oi Marai River as an ideal location for such tourism development. With its swift river current, moderate water depth, and clear waters, the Oi Marai River was deemed

highly suitable for safe and engaging river tubing activities. Consequently, Tambora National Park invited the youth community from the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community to participate in this benchmarking activity, hoping that the knowledge gained could be applied to the development of river tubing tourism in the Oi Marai River area.

Inspired by the training organized by Tambora National Park for local youth, a group of nature enthusiasts, partnering with the park, initiated the development of river tubing tourism along the river flow from Oi Marai Waterfall. This activity involves traversing the river using inner tubes, which are particularly well-suited for the shallow waters characteristic of the region, offering an attractive alternative for nature tourism. Informant 19-JES, a member of the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community, noted that “this area has significant potential to be developed into water tourism, such as river tubing.” The ability of the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community and Oi Marai Tourism Awareness Group to identify opportunities, supported by the Tambora National Park Office, focuses efforts on harnessing the river’s potential as a river tubing attraction. This development is expected to enhance the productivity of the local community and optimize the use of natural and human resources in Kawinda To’i village.

Therefore, the youth community and local entrepreneurs must receive in-depth training or benchmarking studies aimed at enhancing their skills in specific areas, as a form of empowerment for the community, particularly local youth. With strong synergy and efforts to improve human resource capacity, the management of river tubing can ensure its sustainability and support the development of a sustainable special interest tourism attraction.

4) Providing Various Equipment and Facilities to Youth Groups

The government must ensure adequate infrastructure support and strengthen collaboration with various stakeholders, including security, forestry, national parks, and health sectors, to promote tourism development. The

construction of tourism infrastructure requires meticulous coordination among relevant agencies, both in the planning and implementation stages, to ensure the smooth execution and success of tourism projects. With close partnerships, different parties can synergize in formulating and executing regular maintenance and improvement activities.

For instance, the Oi Marai Waterfall Tourist Attraction is equipped with various facilities that enhance visitor comfort and support environmental preservation. At the entrance, there is a gateway that serves as a welcoming symbol, and the Uma Lenge, a traditional Bima house, acts as a cultural icon that adds to the attraction's appeal. To facilitate accessibility, there is a spacious parking area and a network of pathways connecting different areas. Visitors can engage in prayer at the provided mosque and use gazebos for relaxation. Other amenities include sales stalls for souvenirs, as well as restrooms and trash bins to maintain cleanliness. Additionally, adventure activities such as zip-lining and river tubing offer thrilling experiences for tourists who enjoy outdoor activities.

Support from the government and the private sector can ensure that human resource training is carried out effectively so that river tubing not only provides an enjoyable experience for tourists but also operates safely and sustainably. Since 2019, river tubing in Kawinda To'i Village, particularly in Oi Marai, has gained widespread recognition as a promising natural attraction and has attracted the attention of tourists. In addition to being an appealing tourist destination, the village has benefited from various empowerment programs implemented by the Tambora National Park Office, starting with training for the Algura Nature Enthusiasts Community, the Oi Marai Tourist Awareness Group, and the Karang Taruna youth organization, which have become key drivers in the development of the Oi Marai river tubing tourism. Tambora National Park provides training, supplies, equipment, and supporting facilities to the youth community to advance tourism in the Tambora District. Through this initiative,

it is hoped that young people will utilize the skills and resources provided to support the development of sustainable niche tourism and serve as protectors and promoters of the natural environment. With the continued support from Tambora National Park, the youth are now actively involved as mountain tour guides and river tubing guides, offering not only information to visitors but also contributing to the preservation and protection of the natural wealth in the areas surrounding Tambora National Park and Kawinda To'i Village.

Active youth participation can enhance a sense of ownership, responsibility, and empowerment, as well as strengthen intellectual capacity and social capital. Through interactive communication approaches, cross-generational collaboration, training, and the provision of facilities, the youth in Desa Kawinda To'i play a crucial role in advancing river tubing tourism, which directly impacts the development of niche tourism in the region. Support from the government and various stakeholders, coupled with the application of mutual assistance principles, enables the youth to become the driving force in sustainable tourism management, maintain ecosystem balance, and contribute to the broader community welfare.

Strategies for Involving Youth in Optimizing Local Tourism Potential	Building Interactive Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Language • Active Engagement • Communication Synergy
	Establishing Strong Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration • Youth Participation • Support from Local Government and TN Tambora
	Training for Youth Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management System Training • Skill Development • Benchmarking Studies
	Provision of Facilities and Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Support • Tourist Facilities • Support from TN Tambora

Table 3. *Strategies for Involving Youth in Optimizing Local Tourism Potential*

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the sustainability of special interest tourism can be achieved through strong collaboration between

youth communities, stakeholders, and the government to promote sustainable and competitive local tourism development jointly. This development is fully supported by the participation of youth groups, such as the Nature Enthusiasts Group, Karang Taruna, and the Tourism Awareness Group in Kawinda To'i Village, who play a crucial role in the development of local tourism. The study found that the development of Special Interest Tourism in Kawinda To'i is spearheaded by youth groups, who leverage their work experience in the tourism sector to foster an entrepreneurial spirit. This opportunity opens up great potential for young people with specialized skills to further participate, whether in service businesses such as camping equipment rentals, becoming tour leaders or tour guides, or in the culinary and barista sectors. By utilizing their skills, the younger generation contributes to local economic development and improves the quality of tourism services in the region. The youth not only create tourism attractions and accommodations but also play a vital role in raising community awareness of the positive potential of tourism. Initially, the community tended to view tourism negatively; however, through the role of the youth as role models, this perception has shifted, allowing the community to directly enjoy the benefits of tourism activities in their village.

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