

## STAKEHOLDERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN RINJANI-LOMBOK GEOPARK: THE EVIDENCE FROM MOUNT RINJANI NATIONAL PARK

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### Abstract

Based on stakeholder and social exchange theory, this study examined a model of the relationship between stakeholder awareness, perception of impact (environmental, economic, and socio-cultural), and attitude toward ecotourism development in Mount Rinjani National Park (MRNP). The model was tested using a sample of 157 stakeholders. Data were collected by surveying and analyzing using the partial least squares. The results showed that only perception of the economic impacts of ecotourism partially mediated the relationship between awareness and attitude toward ecotourism development. From the perspective of stakeholder theory, the perceived impacts are heterogeneous. These differences will determine their attitude toward the level of support and participation. From the perspective of social exchange theory, the study showed that attitude toward ecotourism development is directly influenced by awareness of ecotourism and the perception of economic impact. The stakeholders on MRNP have a more compromising attitude toward ecotourism development to the socio-cultural and environmental impacts.

**Keywords:** Awareness, perception, attitude, ecotourism development.

### Introduction

After a long thrive, finally Rinjani-Lombok Geopark (RLG), West Nusa Tenggara (WNT), was designated as one of the world's geopark in the meeting of the Unesco executive board, Thursday (12/4/2018), in Paris, France. Quoted from a printed press release, the general manager of RLG, Chairul Mahsul, said that with the upscaled status, RLG would undergo some changes such as more intensive international promotion (Adiakurnia, 2018).

RLG is included in the National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN) and National Tourism Development Area (KPPN) in WNT. The forest at Mount Rinjani extends approximately 125,000 hectares consisting of some types of forests in which 41,330 hectares (32.86%) are conserved forests managed by the Mount Rinjani National Park (MRNP) (BTNGR, 2020). As an ecotourism destination, it has 90 licensed tracking organizers (TO) both individuals and enterprises; 449 tour guides; and 1,157 porters. The Head of MRNP, Sudiyono, claimed that at least there are 1,696

people are directly involved (Tim-Media-Center, 2023).

National Park (NP) is an important nature-based tourist destination (ecotourism) (Nugroho & Numata, 2022). Some studies on NP have shown the presence of negative issues that inhibit NP development (Myers & Muhajir, 2015; Yusran *et al.* 2017; Nurrochmat *et al.* 2017). In general, the negative issues lead to conflicts between conservation, on the one hand, and public livelihood on the other hand. Ecotourism is an integral part of sustainable tourism that balances the conflicting values of environmental conservation, economic development, and social-cultural conservation in the regional community (Yoon & Lee, 2021).

The sustainable tourism concept introduced by United Nation World Tourism Organization is based on three theoretical pillars that represent the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural impacts of tourism (UNWTO, 2023). This concept is equivalent to that of the triple bottom line (TBL) applied in firms. TBL is directly related to the concept and objective of sustainable development and is a relatively new

measure of enterprise performance. TBL requires that in addition to the shareholders, firm benefits should also go to all stakeholders, including local community groups where the business is operated (Stoddard, Pollard, & Evans, 2012).

Fishbein and Ajzen suggested that attitude plays an important role in connecting one's mind and act (Rasoolimanesh & Seyfi, 2021). Still, in the same article, it is stated that the success or failure of tourism development depends very much on the local people's perception of the impact of tourism development and local people's attitude to support tourism.

Our review of tourism development reveals such a discrepancy. First, most previous studies in tourism development (e.g., Almeida-García, Peláez-Fernández, Balbuena-Vázquez, & Cortés-Macias, 2016; Eslami, Khalifah, Mardani, Streimikiene, & Han, 2019; Gursoy, Ouyang, Nunkoo, & Wei, 2019; Qin, Shen, Ye, & Zhou, 2021) focused on local people. Although many studies have evaluated local people's attitudes toward tourism development, only a few studies have evaluated stakeholder attitudes toward tourism development. Second, among the studies that evaluate the attitude of the limited number of stakeholders' attitudes, there are some differences in the determination of the stakeholders to be included in the study, besides the local people. Legislators are identified as the stakeholders (McGehee, Meng, & Tepanon, 2006); Entrepreneurs are identified as the stakeholder (Akbaba, 2012); while visitors are identified as the stakeholders (Poria, Reichel, & Cohen, 2013). Third, most previous studies have focused on mass tourism. Only a few focus on alternative tourism called ecotourism.

This study attempts to bridge the gap. First, besides the local people, this study extends the category of stakeholders by involving visitors, government employees, and non-government organizations (NGOs) as the stakeholder. Second, in this study, we focus on alternative tourism called ecotourism. Ecotourism is a kind of tourism beyond consumption purposes; it is suitable for explorers and learners; it focuses on natural, neglected, and wild places (Lenao & Basupi, 2016; Tabaeian, Yazdi, Mokhtari, & Khoshfetrat, 2022). Third, just like most previous studies, this study uses SET. However, because this study includes the stakeholders that influence or are influenced by ecotourism development, we add the stakeholder theory as the framework.

The secondary data reveals that the management of NP has issued some policies for ecotourism development. However, the lack of support from the stakeholders has resulted in the ineffective execution of

the policies due to the limited data and information on the stakeholders' perception of the impact.

The study is guided by the question of the variables that serve as the antecedents of the attitude of the stakeholders to support ecotourism development. The finding of this study contributes to the literature on ecotourism by highlighting the perception of the stakeholders about the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental perspectives of ecotourism in MRNP. Besides that, this study offers a deeper comprehension of the perception of the stakeholder in their support of ecotourism development. Although previous studies have revealed that perception is the key antecedent of attitude supportive of the development of ecotourism, the role of mediation has not been optimally explored. Finally, this study can serve as a reference for the central government (RLG, MRNP) and local government (the Culture and Tourism Board - WNT) about the behavior of the stakeholders in the development of ecotourism.

Taking the village of Senaru as the location of the study, the objective of this study is to develop and test a model of stakeholder awareness, perception of ecotourism impact, and attitude toward ecotourism development in MRNP. More specifically, this study analyzes: (a) whether stakeholder awareness of ecotourism has an influence on their perception of ecotourism impact; (b) whether stakeholder perception of the ecotourism impact has an influence on stakeholder attitude toward ecotourism development; and (c) whether stakeholder perception of ecotourism impact mediates the influence between stakeholder awareness for ecotourism and stakeholder attitude toward ecotourism development.

### *The Stakeholder and Social Exchange Theories*

A stakeholder is defined as a group or individual that may affect and/or be affected by the organization's purpose (Freeman in Wang, Dou, & Jia, 2016). The theory was introduced to respond to the criticism of the stockholder theory. A stockholder is defined as a person who has a share in a firm and therefore earns the firm's profit share and has a vote in how the firm should be organized and operated. In the stockholder theory, companies are primarily obliged to maximize the value of the owner; on the contrary, in the stakeholder theory, corporate responsibility is extended to include the groups or individuals that influence or are influenced by the firm objective. The concept of stakeholders was initially introduced at Stanford Research Institute as a way of information organization that is getting more important in strategic planning. Initially,

it was intended to develop more effective business strategies and policies (Freeman, Phillips, & Sisodia, 2020; Dimitrovski, Lemmetyinen, Nieminen, & Pohjola, 2021).

The social exchange theory (SET) is an approach to the interdependency theory. In other words, this theory involves the interaction of multiple persons. When the interaction of some persons occurs, they will influence each other. According to the concept that "all connections have to give and take," SET assumes that all social life may be viewed as an exchange of material and immaterial benefits and resources between actors (Coulson, MacLaren, McKenzie, & O'Gorman, 2014). Such elements as economy, socio-culture, and environment that result from an exchange would influence the perception of the local people (as part of stakeholders) about community-based tourism (Lee & Jan, 2019). The way they perceive the elements will influence how they will react to tourism (Nunkoo, 2016).

### *Awareness, Perception, and Attitude*

Perception is a process in which an individual regulates and interprets their sensory impression to give meaning to their environment (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Still, in the same book, perception is crucial because human behavior is determined more by how people perceive reality than by reality itself.

Attitude is either a positive or a negative evaluative reaction to a particular thing or person (sometimes it derives from one's belief, and appears in one's feelings or behavior (Myers & Twenge, 2018). Other researchers define differently, Severin and Tankard Jr. (2013) defined that (1) attitude is a "perception" about something; (2) attitude is a sustainable tendency, learned to have a consistent behavior toward a group of objects; (3) attitude is an everlasting positive or negative evaluation system, emotional feelings, and pro and contra likelihood of action to a particular social object.

The development of tourism will result in economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits. In this case, some stakeholders will be more benefited than others (Lee, 2013). For example, the arrangement of vending and parking sites, the requirement of certification for tour guides, and the limitation of the visitors to conserve the tourism area. Understanding the perspective of stakeholders can facilitate the issuance of policies that minimize the negative impact and maximize the benefits. Understanding the stakeholders' perspective will lead to community development that finally results in larger support for tourism

development (Prayag, Hosany, Nunkoo, & Alders, 2013).

SET has been applied in different fields to describe local people's attitudes toward tourism development. Local people will predict the benefits that they will earn and the cost that they will bear. Their attitude will be determined by the result of their evaluation. They will get involved in the exchange only if the benefits that they will get are higher than the costs that they will bear. Therefore, it is assumed that the more positive their perception of the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impact of tourism, the more likely that they support the planned tourism development (Gursoy, Chi, & Dyer, 2010). People's attitude has been widely studied in the literature. The results show that local people's support for tourism development is influenced by the perceived impact of tourism from three basic kinds of benefits and costs: economy, socio-culture, and environment (Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997; Chen & Chen, 2010). Therefore, the perception of tourism impact is an important consideration for the success of sustainable tourism development (Cañizares, Canalejo, & Tabales, 2016). Based on the conceptual and empirical discussion in the literature, the following three hypotheses are proposed:

- H<sub>1</sub>*: Stakeholder perception of the economic impact of ecotourism has a positive influence on stakeholder attitudes toward ecotourism development.
- H<sub>2</sub>*: Stakeholder perception of the socio-cultural impact of ecotourism will have a positive influence on stakeholder attitudes toward ecotourism development.
- H<sub>3</sub>*: Stakeholder perception of the environmental impact of ecotourism has a positive influence on stakeholder attitudes toward ecotourism development.

Awareness is defined as knowledge of the existence of something (van Niekerk & Saayman, 2013). "Marketing is a customer focus that permeates organizational functions and processes and is geared towards making promises through value proposition, enabling the fulfillment of individual expectations created by such promises and fulfilling such expectations through support to customers' value-generating processes, thereby supporting value creation in the firm's as well as its customers' and other stakeholders' processes" (Grönroos, 2006). In line with the definitions, the involvement of stakeholders in all categories is significant and successful, they will have to understand the concept and issues (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004). With the same perception, the stakeholders can

decide with full awareness; and have awareness for ecotourism development in their community. Even when the stakeholders do not have any 'power' to directly influence ecotourism development, their level of understanding will result in benefits for their social and cultural interaction.

This discussion shows that stakeholder awareness of ecotourism tends to influence stakeholder perception of ecotourism's impact. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H<sub>4</sub>*: Stakeholder awareness of ecotourism has a positive influence on stakeholder perception of the economic impact of ecotourism.
- H<sub>5</sub>*: Stakeholder awareness of ecotourism has a positive influence on stakeholder perception of the socio-cultural impact of ecotourism.
- H<sub>6</sub>*: Stakeholder awareness of ecotourism has a positive influence on stakeholder perception of the environmental impact of ecotourism.
- H<sub>7</sub>*: Stakeholder awareness of ecotourism has a positive influence on stakeholder attitudes toward ecotourism development.

**Mediating Effect of Perception**

Understanding "how" and "why" an independent variable predicts or affects the dependent variable is made easier by the mediation process (Wu & Zumbo, 2008). The point of mediation analysis is that it assumes the sequence of influence in which the antecedent variable influences mediating variable, which further influences the dependent variable. In this

way, "mediation is a way in which a researcher can explain the process or mechanism in which one variable influences another" (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007). Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

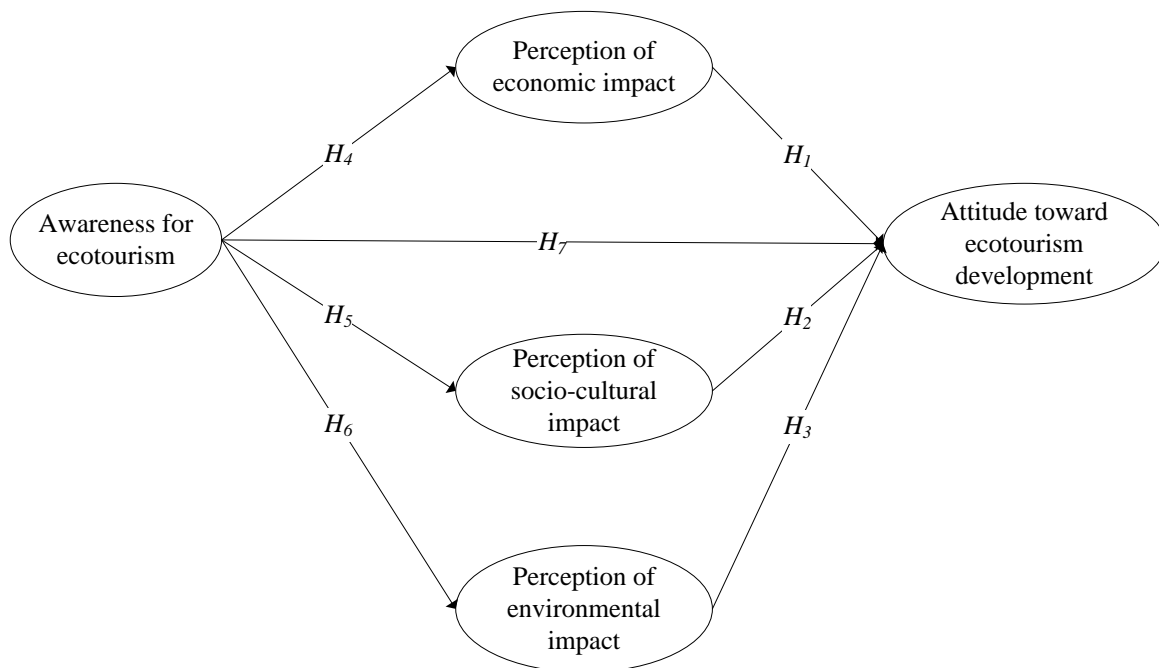
- H<sub>8</sub>*: Stakeholder perception of economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of ecotourism mediates the influence between stakeholder awareness of ecotourism and stakeholder attitude toward ecotourism development.

Graphically, the conceptual model of this study can be seen in Figure 1.

**Research Methods**

*Study Area*

One of the areas of Rinjani-Lombok Geopark is Mount Rinjani. Mount Rinjani is a national park established by the Decree of the Dutch Indian Governor No. 15 Staatblaaf of 77 dated 12 March 1941. Fifty-six years later, based on the Decree of the Forestry Ministry of 280/Kpts-II/1997, Mount Rinjani is determined to be a national park. The establishment of the national park is based on some considerations. Two of them are (1) Rinjani has a very beautiful natural view and uniquely potential culture for ecotourism; and (2) Rinjani can improve ecosystem balancing, science and knowledge, education, culture, and ecotourism, which in turn will improve the local development.



**Figure 1. Conceptual model**

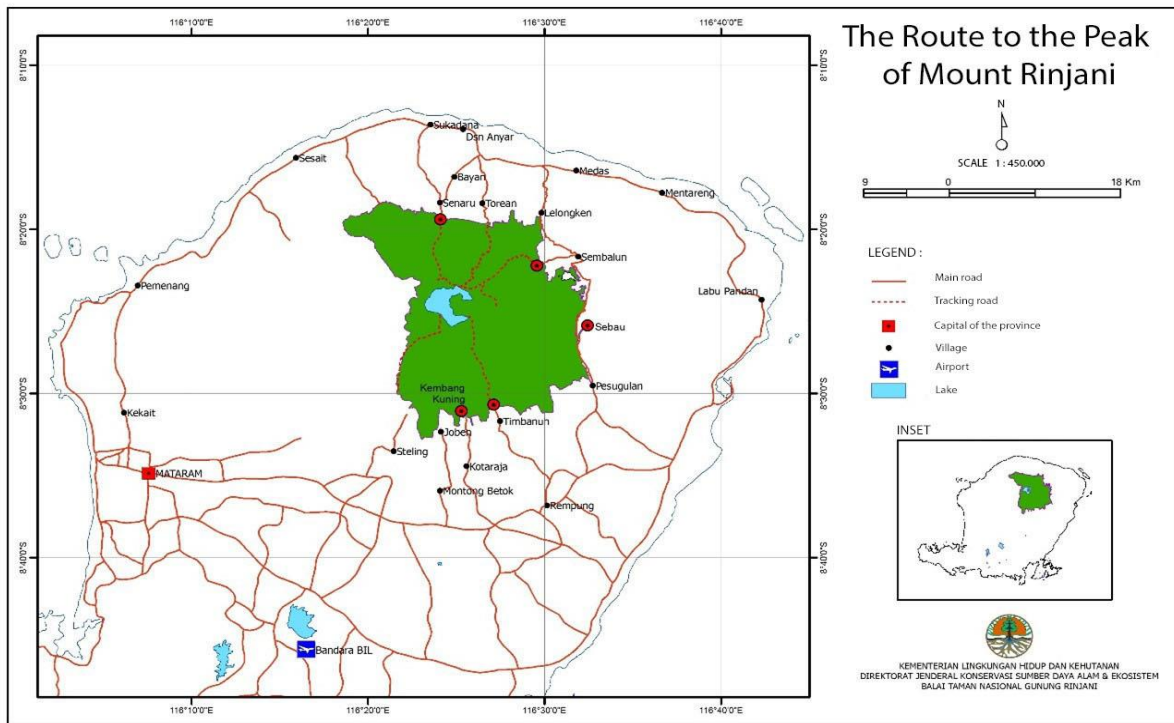
Data were collected using on-site surveys. The study was conducted in Senaru village, Bayan Sub-district, Lombok Utara District (see Figure 2). It was chosen because of some reasons. (1) it is one of the villages through which people climb Mount Rinjani (in addition to Senaru, the three other official trekking to Mount Rinjani are Sembalun, Aikberik and Timbanuh). (2) it is the path most frequently passed by tourists who climb Mount Rinjani. (3) it has ecotourism objects such as Sendang Gile, Tiu Kelep, the ancient mosque of Bayan, and the traditional house of Karang Bajo.

Senaru village extends to an area of 41.62 square kilometers with a population of 6689 (BPS, 2018).

The livelihood of the majority of Senaru people is farming in the field with an extent between 0.5 ha and 1.5 ha. In addition to becoming farmers, the people of Senaru work as traders, porters, tour-guide, and others. The majority of the people are Muslims. The ratio of the native inhabitants and the immigrants is 60:40.

**Sample**

Purposive sampling was used to get the study's sample. Non-probabilistic sampling that complies with specific criteria is known as purposive sampling (Cooper & Schindler, 2013). The criteria for respondent selection are (1) adult age; (2) literacy; and (3) willingness to participate in the study.



(A)



(B)



(C)

**Figure 2. (A) Map of the study site, (B) porter, and (C) camping around Segara Anak Lake**  
Source: BTNGR (2020).

To determine the size of the sample Roscoe in Sekaran and Bougie (2016) mentioned that in a multivariate analysis, the sample size has to be 10 times larger than the number of the variables that will be analyzed. Meanwhile, Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2018) mentioned that a representative number of samples in multivariate analysis is five times larger than the number of question items in the questionnaires, or approximately 100–200 samples. Based on what has been mentioned, we target 200 respondents as the sample.

### *Measurement*

This study used structured questions in the questionnaires. The questionnaires consisted of 2 (two) main parts: (1) ask about the awareness of tourism, perception of tourism impacts, and attitude toward tourism development; and (2) ask about the profile of the respondents. The items of questions were modified from previous studies conducted by Byrd, Cárdenas, and Greenwood (2008), Byrd, Bosley, and Dronberger (2009), and Kuvan and Akan (2012).

### *Data Analysis*

There are two approaches in SEM, the covariant base (CB-SEM) and the variant base (PLS-SEM). Understanding the difference between the two approaches is an important factor when deciding which of the two approaches has to be used in the research (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). Hair, Matthews, Matthews, and Sarstedt (2017) stated that CB-SEM is used to confirm an established theory (for example, explanation). On the other hand, PLS is used to explore a predictive theory.

Descriptive analysis and component-based structural equation model/partial least square (PLS) were employed for data analysis. To confirm the construct validity of the questionnaires (instrument of study) factor analysis was employed; to confirm the reliability of the instrument of study, composite reliability analysis was employed; and to identify the predictive linear influence among the variables PLS was employed. In PLS, an optimal linear influence among latent variables is calculated and interpreted as the best predictive influence, despite the inherent disadvantages (Ghozali, 2008).

Other advantages of the use of PLS are: (1) it does not require a large size sample (Sarstedt, Hair, Ringle, Thiele, & Gudergan, 2016; Rigdon,

Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2017; Kock & Hadaya, 2018; Ali, Rasoolimanesh, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Ryu, 2018); (2) it does not require multivariate normality data (Vargas-Sánchez, Oom do Valle, da Costa Mendes, & Silva, 2015; Ali *et al.* 2018); and (3) that it can solve multicollinearity (Firinguetti, Kibria, & Araya, 2017).

## **Results and Discussion**

### *Study Instrument Testing (Measurement Model)*

The study used self-administered questionnaires. Zikmund and Babin (2016) suggested that self-administered questionnaires are challenging for researchers because respondents' answers depend on the clarity of the words instead of the interviewer's capability. Therefore, when the questionnaires have been developed, the initial step will be to perform a pilot test. A pilot test for the questionnaires is performed to (1) identify if ambiguous words exist; (2) identify if the instruction is understandable; (3) identify if respondents find it difficult to answer; and (4) identify the duration needed by the respondents to fill up. The pilot test is done on a small number of respondents (10 respondents).

After some revision has been made in line with the results of the pilot test, the questionnaires are duplicated and distributed to the respondents. As recommended by Anderson and Gerbing in Paul, Modi, and Patel (2016), before the SEM testing, construct validity (convergent and discriminant) and reliability has to be tested.

The convergent validity meets the criteria when (1) the factor loading has a value larger than 0.7 and is significant, and (2) the value of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) has to be larger than 0.5; the discriminant validity, the value of AVE has to be larger than the value of the squared correlation between the construct pairs (Hair *et al.* 2018). Reliability is tested by calculating the value of composite reliability. Abdillah and Hartono (2015) suggested that the cut-off point value of 0.7 for composite reliability.

Table 1 shows that all variables have met the construct validity since they have met the convergent validity test with the AVE value larger than 0.5; and the discriminant validity, that each indicator in a latent variable has a difference from other indicators in other latent variables (indicated by the larger loading score in own construction). The reliability also shows that all variables have met the construct reliability (indicated by the composite reliability value of each variable larger than 0.7).

**Table 1**  
**Results of the Measurement Model**

Constructs	Item Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability
<b>Awareness for tourism.</b>		0.73	0.84
• I consider that Rinjani-Lombok Geopark is one of the tourist (ecotourism) destinations on Lombok Island.	0.74		
• I am pleased with the tourism(ecotourism) development in Rinjani-Lombok Geopark.	0.83		
<b>Perception of economic impact.</b>		0.77	0.87
• Tourism (ecotourism) opens work opportunities in Senaru.	0.88		
• Tourism (ecotourism) activities improve life standards in Senaru.	0.73		
<b>Perception of socio-cultural impact.</b>		0.67	0.88
• Tourism (ecotourism) encourages creative cultural activities such as crafts and arts in the society of Senaru.	0.76		
• Tourism (ecotourism) improves cross-cultural understanding in Senaru.	0.87		
<b>Perception of environmental impact.</b>		0.79	0.80
• Tourism (ecotourism) activities have resulted in real pollution to the air, water, and soil in Senaru.	0.71		
• Tourism (ecotourism) has decreased the extent of agricultural land in Senaru.	0.88		
<b>Attitude toward tourism development.</b>		0.87	0.93
My attitude to the statement:			
• In general, tourism (ecotourism) is beneficial for the surrounding areas where tourism activities take place.	0.90		
• In general, tourism (ecotourism) is beneficial for people around the areas of tourism activities.	0.87		

**Table 2**  
**Findings from the Hypothesized Model Using PLS**

Hypotheses	Path Coefficient	t-value	Supported?
<i>H</i> <sub>1</sub> Perception of economic impacts → Attitude toward ecotourism development.	0.26	2.35**	Yes
<i>H</i> <sub>2</sub> Perception of socio-cultural impact → Attitude toward ecotourism development.	0.16	1.79	No
<i>H</i> <sub>3</sub> Perception of environmental impact→ Attitude toward ecotourism development.	-0.01	0.07	No
<i>H</i> <sub>4</sub> Awareness of ecotourism → Attitude toward ecotourism development.	0.26	2.49**	Yes
<i>H</i> <sub>5</sub> Awareness of ecotourism → Perception of environmental impact.	-0.02	0.17	No
<i>H</i> <sub>6</sub> Awareness of ecotourism → Perception of socio-cultural impact.	0.21	1.75	No
<i>H</i> <sub>7</sub> Awareness of ecotourism → Perception of economic impact.	0.40	3.82**	Yes

**Profile of Respondents**

Of the 200 questionnaires distributed, 157 (response rate = 79%) were eligible for further analysis. The remaining questionnaires could not be analyzed because: (1) several questionnaires were missing, and (2) failed to complete the question item related to the variable to be studied. The respondents consisted of local people (55.41%), visitors (8.28%), government employees (14.02%), entrepreneurs (20.38%), and NGOs (1.91%). The majority of the respondents were male (64.97%). Based on education, 29.30% graduated from senior high school, 26.01% graduated from elementary school, 22.29% held a bachelor's degree, 8.28% graduated from junior high

school, 5.73 held a diploma of the academy, 3.18 earned a post-graduate degree, and 5.10% did not answer. Based on age, 39.49% of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years, 33.49% between 20 and 30 years, 17.83% between 41 and 50 years, 3.82% younger than 20 years, 3.19 older than 50 years, and 2.55% did not answer. Meanwhile, based on income, half of the respondents earned higher than the regional minimum wage (UMR) (55.41%).

**Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing**

A structural model is evaluated by seeing the value of the standardized path coefficient and level significance (*t-value*) of the model. Table 2 shows the

standardized path coefficient, *t-value*, and remarks if the hypothesis is supported or rejected. Of the seven hypotheses tested, three hypotheses are supported. They are (1) path coefficient ( $\beta = 0.26$ ), is significant (*t-value* > 1.96), supporting  $H_1$ ; (2) path coefficient ( $\beta = 0.26$ ), is significant (*t-value* > 1.96), supporting  $H_4$ ; (3) path coefficient ( $\beta = 0.40$ ), is significant (*t-value* > 1.96), supporting  $H_7$ .

**Mediation Test Using PLS**

Table 2 shows that the path between the awareness for ecotourism variable, economic impact variable, and attitude toward ecotourism development variable is significant. Therefore, mediation was only tested for the three variables.

Mediation in this study was tested with the classic method suggested by Baron and Kenny in Su, Swanson, and Chen (2016). In their article, they stated that four conditions have to be met. They are (1) direct and significant influence between the independent variable and dependent variable; (2) direct and significant influence between the independent variable and mediating variable; (3) significant influence between mediating variable and dependent variable when the independent variable and mediation variable is the predictor of the dependent variable; and (4) significant influence between the independent variable and dependent variable when mediating variable is added. The value of the influence will have to be lower than the first condition (number 1). The fully mediated condition occurs when the path coefficient for the independent variable in condition 1 is significant and the same coefficient in condition 4 is not significant. If the condition is not met, condition 1 and condition 4 have a significant influence, which is named partially mediated.

Table 3 shows a significant influence between awareness of ecotourism and attitude toward ecotourism development in step 1. In step 2, there is a significant influence between economic impact and

attitude toward ecotourism development. In steps 3 and 4, awareness of ecotourism and economic impact has a significant influence on attitude, where there is a decline of *t-value* between awareness of ecotourism and attitude toward ecotourism development when the perception of economic impact variable is included. In other words, stakeholder perception of economic impact is partially mediated between awareness of ecotourism and attitude toward ecotourism development.

**Discussion**

The area of Rinjani-Lombok Geopark extends approximately 2800 square kilometers or approximately 52% of the total extent of Lombok Island (Nurhanifa, Konety, & Affandi, 2020). In the area, there are some areas under the management of BTNR. The extent of BTNR is 41,330 hectare. This extent consists of the main zone (46.89%), utilization zone (19.09%), special zone (0.36%), rehabilitation zone (2.03%), religion zone (0.22%), forest zone (25.37%), and traditional zone (5.78%). Of the zones, only the utilization zone can be used for ecotourism.

Visitors who climb the Rinjani Peak are advised to contact BTNR for online booking. The documents required are a citizen ID card (for Indonesian Citizens) or Passport/ KITAS (for foreign citizens), medical certificate, and rapid test (during the pandemic of Covid 19). After the online reservation is confirmed, visitors will contact the trekking organizer, guide, or porter (See Table 4 for the route to the peak of Rinjani, the Senaru official trekking). It is advised not to track Mount Rinjani alone. The allowed number of visits to Mount Rinjani ranges from two to five days. The guide or porter will prepare the necessities, such as tents, mats, stoves, food and drinks, and other related supplies. In general, foods and drinks are available at micro-small-medium enterprises in the villages along the trek line.

**Table 3**  
**Mediation Test Using PLS**

Hypothesis	Mediation Test	
	Beta	<i>t-value</i>
$H_8$ Mediation test: Step 1- Independent variable to outcome variable. Awareness for ecotourism- Attitude toward ecotourism development.	0.43	5.74**
$H_8$ Mediation test: Step 2 - Independent variable to the mediator. Perception of economic impact - Attitude toward ecotourism development.	0.42	4.38**
$H_8$ Mediation test: Steps 3 and 4 - Independent variable and mediator to outcome variable. Awareness for ecotourism - Attitude toward ecotourism development.	0.33	3.87**
Perception of economic impact - Attitude toward ecotourism development.	0.27	2.45**



**Table 4**  
**The Route to the Peak of Rinjani, the Senaru Official Trekking**

Hiking Trails	Elevation (Above the Sea Level/ m)
Senaru (SNR) Gate – Post 1 SNR	601–915
Post 1 SNR – Post 2 SNR	915–1500
Post 2 SNR – Post 3 SNR	1500–2000
Post 3 SNR – Plawangan SNR	2000–2639
Plawangan SNR – Segara Anak	2639–2008
Segara Anak – Plawangan	2008–2639
Plawangan – the peak of Rinjani	2639–3726
The peak of Rinjani – Plawangan	3726–2639
Plawangan – Post 3 Sembalun (SBL)	2639–1800
Post 3 SBL – Post 2 SBL	1800–1500
Post 2 SBL – Post 1 SBL	1500–1300
Post 1 SBL – SBL Gate	1300–1156

Of the seven hypotheses proposed,  $H_2$ ,  $H_3$ ,  $H_5$ , and  $H_6$  are not supported by the data. It indicates that stakeholders have a more compromising perception of the socio-cultural and environmental impacts of ecotourism activity. This finding is in line with the study conducted in developing countries (Stylidis & Terzidou, 2014) or in areas that have low economic levels so that the people are more likely to overestimate their perception of an economic impact than the perception of other impacts (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011).

In the stakeholder theory, the perceived impacts are heterogeneous. These differences will determine their attitude toward the level of support and participation. Our results have confirmed the determination. The insignificant social-cultural impact may be due to the less intense interaction between the visitors and the local people. Visitors are directly more connected to porters or guides, which may last for several days depending on the trekking package). This finding is in line with the study conducted by Shi, Gursoy, and Chen (2019). They holistically measured the distinguished dimensions of homestay occupancy. This study found that the space, social interaction, and knowledge shared contribute positively to the visitor's authentic ecotourism experience.

The insignificant environmental impact may be because the visitors have adequate knowledge about the environment. Besides that, visitors that climb Mount Rinjani are generally motivated to have ecotourism. This is in line with the study conducted by (Pham & Khanh, 2021) in Vietnam, where environmental concern, future perspective (defined as the individual's perspective about the importance of the future), and destination image (understood as the individual's perception of the ecotourism destination)

affect the intention to enjoy ecotourism. Likewise, the study conducted by Hultman, Kazeminiya, and Ghasemi (2015) in Sweden (western context) and Taiwan (eastern context), reported that environmental belief significantly affects the visitors' intention to visit ecotourism destinations.

$H_1$ ,  $H_4$ , and  $H_7$  are supported by data. This indicates the existence of stakeholder homogeneity in perceiving the economic impact on the intention to support ecotourism development. This is in line with the study conducted by den Braber, Evans, and Oldekop (2018). Using the quasi-experiment design, they analyzed the role of ecotourism in reducing the poverty. Likewise is the study conducted by Yergeau, Boccanfuso, and Goyette (2017). Using the data from Nepal, they found that conservation combined with ecotourism has a positive association with local welfare.

West and Turner (2017) stated that SET has the assumption that can be differentiated based on the basic characteristics of humans and the basic characters of a relationship. Based on human basic characteristics, SET assumes that: (1) humans seek rewards and avoid cost; (2) humans are rational creatures; and (3) the evaluation standard, in determining the reward and cost, depends on time and varies among the people. Meanwhile, based on the basic characteristics of a relationship, SET assumes that: (1) a relationship always has a mutual interdependence, and (2) the life of a relationship is a process. In tourism, this theory concludes that an individual will evaluate the costs and benefits of tourism impact that they expect as the return for their involvement. When an individual perceives that the benefits are higher than the costs, they will have a positive attitude toward tourism development to development (Ap, 1992; Diedrich & García-Buades, 2009).

Four elements in SET are the reward, cost, outcome, and comparison level (Nunkoo, 2016). In brief, the reward is a positive element; cost is a negative element; the outcome is the resultant of reward and cost. Meanwhile, the comparison level can be divided into two dimensions. They are  $CL_{exp}$ : a comparison of current relationships and the past relation; and  $CL_{alt}$ : a comparison of current relations and other relations at the same time.

Based on the elements, there are six types of relations in SET as presented in Table 5.

Table 5 shows that awareness of ecotourism influences the perception of economic impact (positive) and later influences attitude toward ecotourism development, which is considered by respondents as  $Outcome > CL_{exp} > CL_{alt}$  (the outcome is considered satisfactory, stable, and dependent).

**Table 5**  
**Six Satisfaction Situations within the Social Exchange Theory**

The Relative Value of Outcome, $CL_{exp}$ , and $CL_{alt}$	State of the Relationship
Outcome > $CL_{exp}$ > $CL_{alt}$	Satisfying, stable, dependent.
Outcome > $CL_{alt}$ > $CL_{exp}$	Satisfying, stable, non-dependent.
$CL_{alt}$ > $CL_{exp}$ > Outcome	Not satisfying, break the relationship, happy elsewhere.
$CL_{alt}$ > Outcome > $CL_{exp}$	Satisfying, unstable, happier elsewhere.
$CL_{exp}$ > $CL_{alt}$ > Outcome	Not satisfying, break the relationship, continue unhappy.
$CL_{exp}$ > Outcome > $CL_{alt}$	Highly unsatisfying, cannot break away, dependent and unhappy.

Full mediation occurs when the independent variable does not affect the dependent variable when the mediation variable remains constant. The influence of partial mediation occurs when an independent variable has a decreasing influence, but is still significant, on the dependent variable when the mediating variable remains constant. The results of the analysis suggest that the mediation is partial. This shows that attitude toward ecotourism development is directly influenced by the awareness of ecotourism, and indirectly by awareness of ecotourism through the perception of economic impact. In other words, attitude toward ecotourism development is directly influenced by awareness of ecotourism and the perception of economic impact.

### Conclusion and Implications

The purpose of this study is to develop and test a model of stakeholder attitude toward ecotourism development in MRNP. From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that stakeholder awareness of tourism directly influences stakeholder attitudes toward tourism development. Stakeholder awareness of tourism indirectly influences stakeholder attitude toward tourism development mediated by stakeholder perception of economic impact. In other words, both awareness of tourism and perception of economic impact directly influence attitudes toward tourism development.

The implication of this study is that in terms of providing ecotourism products and services, managers should fully surrender to stakeholders. What is meant by products here are goods consumed by visitors during the climb; while what is meant by service here is the service that the visitor receives when he is climbing. To be clear, food and drink, tent equipment for sleeping at the climbing location, cooking utensils, guides, and porters are handed over to stakeholders. Likewise, the vehicle parking, halt posts, pre- and post-climb transit, and evacuation team (for mitigative purposes) should be managed by the stakeholders, although they are provided by the management.

In collaboration with other institutions, the management will provide information. For example, daily updated information about climate and Rinjani activity (because the volcano is still active). In addition, it is important that the management develop a standard operating procedure for climbing and periodic training for guides and porters.

Several studies about local people's attitudes toward tourism development divide the perception of tourism impact into positive and negative impacts. Further studies have to divide the perception of tourism impact into positive and negative. The respondents of this study are assumed equal and united. Future research will have to segment respondents based on their level of involvement in tourism activities. Another limitation of this study is that the study was conducted in only one location (Senaru village). Therefore, the results are not generalizable to other locations. Further studies should be conducted in the villages near NP to ensure, generalization.

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