VOLUNTEER TOURISM
Characterisation and debates of a global phenomenon.

MARTA SALVADOR ALMELA

alba sud *
investigación y comunicación para el desarrollo

Marta Salvador Almela

Graduated in Tourism at the University CETT-UB, associated centre to the University of Barcelona. Nowadays she collaborates with Alba Sud, from where she does research and publishes articles available in her blog: Més enllà de fer turisme (Beyond tourism). She is also the author of some scientific articles in indexed journals. Her investigations are focused on the fieldwork of tourism and development, such as volunteer tourism, as well as an interest for the ethical dimensions of tourist practices that take place both in the Global North and Global South.

INDEX

Group of volunteer tourists.
Source: Proyecto Asis, under creative commons licence.

1.
INTRODUCTION

Volunteer tourism, also called voluntourism, is generally considered as a **type of tourism that combines the fact of travelling with doing volunteerism in the country of the destination**. One of the most used definitions in the academic field is from Stephen Wearing (2001): volunteer tourism involves those tourists who, for various reasons, carry out volunteerism in an organised way while they are on vacations and that can include aid or relief of the material poverty of some collectives of a society, restoration of specific environments, and the searching of social and environmental aspects.

In its beginning, volunteer tourism started to be considered as a mean for the tourists to access a more authentic and integrating experience in the host community, as a scarcely contemplated option in the mass conventional tourism (Gofrey et al., 2019). This fact is associated with the transformation of tourist markets towards post-Fordist types of consumerism that have contributed to increasing the interest of a potential market towards these modalities. Post-Fordism responds to an industrial production model based on the increased flexibility of the productive processes' dependent on demand and with an elevated presence of technologies (Ioannides & Debbage, 1998).

Volunteer tourism started to be considered as a mean for the tourists to access a more authentic and integrating experience in the host community.

These changes in the companies' ways of production in a context of increasingly globalised and competitive capitalism end up appearing in the tourist activity too. Therefore, post-Fordist tourism outstands for a decrease in the number of tourists in traditional destinations, which results in the enhancement of new touristic experiences and in a change in the general way of travelling (Hernández, 2016).

As Crossley (2012) confirms, the growth of voluntourism comes from movements of an alternative and sustainable tourism of the seventies and beginning of the eighties. Other authors, such as Mc Gloin and Georgeou (2015), link the increase of popularity of this activity from 1990, in concert with the Sustainable Development Agenda established in the Rio Summit in 1992. Another reason for this increment of voluntourism experiences is related to the proliferation of the gap year towards the '90s. It is the sabbatical year that many young people take before starting their university studies when they travel and do volunteer tourism (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010; Simpson, 2004).

With the rise of consciousness regarding global problems, **the number of volunteers has increased during the last two decades, as well as the number of**

1.
INTRODUCTION

organisations dedicated to coordinate, promote and commercialise programmes to send volunteer people, principally coming from the Global North (mainly United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and other countries from the North of Europe), who travel to poor communities of the Global South (Southern and Southeast of Asia, Africa, Centre and South America). Although it was historically initiated by NGOs and religious groups as a practice linked to solidarity actions in the international field, the evolution and the development model of the current voluntourism has been marked by the implication of profit organisations. Therefore, the proliferation of organisations has led to a commodification of experiences, which have gone from having a use-value for participants and communities to a market exchange value (Tomazos & Cooper, 2012). This fact has generated a vast number of critiques, debates and positionings from organisations with a broad trajectory in this field, which nowadays fight to promote volunteerism as a tool for social, coherent, deep and lasting transformation, and which live with discomfort this commercialised rise of volunteering through tourism.

At the same time, **there has been a growing interest in the analysis of this phenomenon by academics** which have conceptualised and drawn attention to different dynamics of volunteer tourism (Salvador, 2019). However, despite the multiple definitions of the concept, there is still a lack of consensus of the critical components of voluntourism (Gofrey et al., 2019). Meanwhile, it is also argued that volunteer tourism should no longer be seen as a unique form of tourism. However, it can be used as an umbrella containing different niches, such as voluntourism in orphanages, in slumified areas where the community lives in favelas, medical, education, environmental conservation, natural disasters, among others. In this way, micro-niche segmentation would allow for a better understanding of participants through research areas such as motivations, which have been extensively analysed in the scientific literature (Stainton, 2016). More concretely, empirical studies have focused on the three principal stakeholders that interact in volunteer tourism: sending organisations, volunteers and host communities. Therefore, ways of organising and running the phenomenon, motivations, impacts, ethical implications, generated dynamics, as well as a global evaluation of these types of practices have been explored.

Volunteer tourism is a very complex phenomenon that needs to be analysed from a holistic perspective in order to understand all the inherent dynamics and the global structures that come together.

Volunteer tourism is a very complex phenomenon that needs to be analysed from a holistic perspective in order to understand all the inherent dynamics and the global structures that come together. On the one hand, attention needs to be focused on the decolonial perspective that addresses the perception of superiority from the Global North to the Global South and seeks to change that conception. On the other hand, gender studies are positioned as another analysis framework that aims to understand the impacts of patriarchal structures on voluntourism and the inequalities that occur in terms of gender. Therefore, these two perspectives will be further considered in order to understand the context in which this phenomenon takes place.

1.
INTRODUCTION

Lately, voluntourism has begun to be perceived as a new form of colonialism where local desires and needs are considered secondary to the motivations and interests of volunteers, thus generating dynamics of superiority over developing countries (Molz, 2015). Therefore, with the increase of volunteer tourism commodification, doubts have arisen as to whether providing monetary support directly to communities or projects may derive from a relationship with ancient colonial stereotypes (Tomazos & Cooper, 2012). One of the most current debates in academic articles refers to the **postcolonial dynamics** reproduced in a phenomenon that, from its origins, is composed of initiatives created in the Global North for the Global South. In this sense, the classism and racism present in the colonial period persist in contemporary dynamics. As Wearing et al., (2018) state, many aspects of volunteer tourism look like the colonial dynamics, especially in countries or regions with an extensive history of colonialism, such as the Sub-Saharan Africa, where nowadays many development programmes are carried out with tendencies of superiority from the Global North regarding the Global South.

At the same time, the reproduction of colonial dynamics in voluntourism has encouraged the persistence of the imaginary of a victimised South. Therefore, this area is presented as dependent, powerless, miserable and needy, while the idea that the North has the power to act, help, keep and be the benefactor is reinforced (Bandyopadhyay & Patil, 2017). The binarism in this concept presents the countries in the Global South as devastated, tormented and abused, while the Global North countries have the role to be their saviours (Bandyopadhyay, 2019). This same author questions whether volunteer tourism aims to help the Global South to develop as the Global North or to force it to maintain an imagined and projected exoticism.

Volunteers in a project of animal wellbeing.
Source: Proyecto Asis, under creative commons licence.

1.
INTRODUCTION

A commonly used concept to describe the present power dynamic in voluntourism is the **humanitarian gaze**. Tascón (2017) states that humanitarianism has been built as a global discourse based on unequal geopolitical relationships that take place through negative and catastrophic images of the 'other' who suffers. Therefore, the humanitarian gaze positions some to look at the other's problems while they hope that the gaze is not reciprocal and, in case it is returned, it is not in the same way. Thus, the humanitarian gaze preserves the unequal relationship between who looks and who is looked at, placing them in a continuous loop of inequality and reinforcing the concept of otherness, that is, perceiving other people as different from one's own identity. This gaze standardises the representation of the other, conceptualising a heterogeneous group of people as an anonymous mass, with the same characteristics and necessities and, therefore, it creates an unreal vision of the observed phenomenon (Ostrowska, 2019).

> The humanitarian gaze preserves the unequal relationship between who looks and who is looked at, placing them in a continuous loop of inequality and reinforcing the concept of otherness.

In this sense, the humanitarian gaze describes how volunteer tourists imagine their relation of help with unknown people, reproducing discourses that create a binary hierarchy between givers and receivers, as well as establishing who is the authentic benefactor of help (Mostafanezhad, 2013). As this author asserts, the humanitarian gaze also perpetuates the **binary of 'us' and 'them'**, being 'us' the volunteers and 'them' the locals, a power dynamic that suggests that some lives are to be saved, while others are the saviours. In general, with highly commercial volunteer tourism, this gaze can reflect neo-colonial perspectives that show how the host community needs volunteers, which reinforces the differences between 'us' and 'them', rather than the similarities between voluntourists and locals (Gofrey et al., 2019). In this sense, initiatives such as Radi-Aid, have emerged, a poignant humour campaign that aims to provoke a debate on international development communication and the representation of the Global South by the media (Schwarz & Richey, 2019).

The analysis of volunteer tourism is also carried out from the gender perspective, a vision that is gaining interest in the academic field. Through the exploration of the nexus between voluntourism and gender, power relationships and oppressive dynamics can be analysed. Both aspects have introduced the concept of developing countries as strong and powerful, associated with a masculine figure able to resist in a savage environment. In contrast, developing countries are understood as supposedly poor and weak, relating them to feminine figures and reproducing the traditional gender roles (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000). Moreover, Bandyopadhyay and Patil (2017) defend that the fact that white young women mainly carry out voluntourism means a change in the legacy of masculinised historical colonial processes. In this sense, to do volunteering tourism through the prism of sentimentality, primarily through the feminisation of the phenomenon, is a crucial aspect of depoliticising international development agendas so that what is political is replaced by the personal (Mostafanezhad, 2013). On the other hand, this **feminised and weak image of the Global South** is also associated with its infantilisation. This concept is reinforced through the high promotion of programmes aimed at volunteers from the Global North to work with children. In this way, the legacy

of these colonialist and sexist distinctions is reproduced through volunteer tourism and establishes the depoliticised logic of saving and helping others (Bandyopadhyay & Patil, 2017).

Thus, to deeply study the phenomenon of volunteer tourism, the exposed frameworks need to be taken into account. More concretely, the goal of this report is to present a state of the art on voluntourism based on rigorous analysis of the scientific literature studied from the 2000s to 2020. In the context of growing interest in volunteer tourism, this report aims to categorise current knowledge and situate the debates in a transversal way. Below, an in-depth analysis of the **three actors involved in volunteer tourism is detailed: volunteer organisations, volunteer tourists and local communities**.

Although the majority of the English literature uses the term voluntourist, in this report the words volunteer, tourist and participant are used indistinctly as synonyms to design people who take part in a volunteer tourism experience.

Voluntourists in a program of environmental conservation.
Source: Proyecto Asis, under creative commons licence.

2.
SENDING ORGANISATIONS

Sending organisations are a wide variety of entities, local or international, including NGOs, charities, universities, conservation agencies, religious organisations, government bodies, and a growing number of for-profit organisations (Aquino & Andereck, 2018; Park, 2017). Volunteer organisations generally **act as intermediaries between volunteers and local communities, with the primary mission of sending tourists with packages organised from Global North countries to Global South communities**. The type of projects varies depending on each organisation and the geographic, political or social context. Therefore, projects related to environmental conservation, the building of infrastructures, caring of children or people with special needs, education in school (especially English classes), protection of animals, etcetera are developed. The stay of voluntourism also varies depending on each project, with a minimum length of two weeks up to six months or a year, as well as the minimum age to carry out volunteerism, which is established by each organisation. Another variable characteristic of voluntourism packages is the period where the travel is done. However, the majority are during the summer (from June to September), because it is when participants have more availability of time. Moreover, the costs of carrying out volunteer tourism depend on all these variants, as well as the covered expenses by the organisation and the included conditions.

The commercial approach of voluntourism has increased over the last years and, nowadays, there is an **important distinction between non-profit organisations and the ones who take profit from this activity** (Simpson, 2004). As Wearing (2004) states, philosophies and practices of NGOs and non-profit organisations are less commodified because they tend to be driven by the values of preserving natural environments and maintaining the well-being of communities, as opposed to the business approaches of tour operators, who are more likely to focus on making a profit. Historically many NGOs and religious organisations have avoided the connection with the tourism industry for fear of being conceived as aiming at commercial purposes (Smith & Font, 2014). However, with the growing participation of for-profit organisations in the sector, the validity and effectiveness of programmes have been analysed, with doubts about whether the altruistic goals of volunteer tourism can be maintained (Ong, Pearlman & Lockstone-Binney, 2011).

This debate about the commodification of volunteer tourism activities is very present both at an academic level and in the volunteerism networks. In this sense, some organisations have taken measures to differentiate from the others, such as awareness

talks before doing a volunteering experience, more implication in the whole process of volunteerism (from the time the participants are interested until they return from the trip) or even have started to use different terminology to define voluntourism (such as work camps, solidarity stays or volunteer stays) that are included within the marketing of organisations. Thus, volunteer tourism faces tensions, dilemmas and paradoxes, with different stakeholders trying to impose their rigid view on this phenomenon (Wearing, Young & Everingham, 2017).

The pedagogic dimension of volunteer tourism is commonly framed from the perspective of transformative learning, it is, provoking consciousness to international volunteers so that they can change the way of thinking about the world (Prince, 2017). Another objective promoted by sending organisations is **global citizenship**, a concept that includes the interrelation between global consciousness and civic responsibility (Crossley, 2017). This dimension of global citizenship has been deeply explored in the academic field of volunteer tourism (Ong et al., 2017), with particular visions that call into question the long-term positive effects of participating in voluntourism and achieving greater global awareness. The vision and mission statements of volunteer organisations, as well as the explicit principles of their programmes, it is, the planning documents that guide them, are essential elements that can reveal many aspects of the priorities that are taken into account in the design of volunteer tourism programmes (Ong, Pearlman & Lockstone-Binney, 2011).

> The pedagogic dimension of volunteer tourism is provoking consciousness to international volunteers so that they can change the way of thinking about the world.

2.1. Recommendations for action

A considerable part of the scientific literature of volunteer tourism also mentions aspects that sending organisations must take into account when designing and managing their programmes. Firstly, it is proposed **to reinforce the participation and integration of the local community in the functioning of the programmes**, which is often displaced or ignored by volunteer organisations. For this reason, there is a need to potentiate the development of programmes together with the host community, since on numerous occasions projects do not receive their support (Frilund, 2015; Guttentag et al., 2012; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Consequently, this can affect the final work of volunteers and their general experience because conflictive relationships can emerge between hosts and tourists. Therefore, sending organisations must have as a priority the necessities and desires of the local community, which are often considered insignificant or left as a low priority (Guttentag, 2009; Park, 2017; Raymond & Hall, 2008). They have also to improve the identification of host community necessities to respond correctly to the expectations and planned actions (Frilund, 2015; Guttentag et al., 2012; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018).

Finally, it must be contemplated the fact that host communities take control of the volunteerism so that in the future they are the ones who manage the projects and the organisations can move to another community where they can establish a new volunteer program (Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018; Raymond & Hall, 2008). As Tomazos and Cooper (2012) affirm, the attempts to involve locals should be as complete as possible, creating employment and conditions for long-term viability, in such a way as to ensure the continuity of the programmes, even without the contribution of the organisations. An example would be for residents to offer language courses for volunteers, as may be the case for projects in Latin America. This would be a unique opportunity to empower local residents, offer training and develop job skills while providing more significant interaction between the community and volunteers.

Below are recommendations related to the goal of **improving the design of the program to one that is more in line with the characteristics, expectations and skills of tourists**. One of the purposes consists of raising awareness of the differences between volunteers, their motivations and the personal objectives that they want to achieve (Coghlan, 2008). Therefore, it is recommended to create appropriate and realistic expectations for participants about how the destination is, which activities they will carry out, what will they see or feel, among others (Guttentag et al., 2012). On the one hand, in order to avoid potential frustrations but also, on the other hand, to increment their commitment (Aquino & Andereck, 2018) and their feeling of utility (Curtin & Brown, 2018). For volunteers to be well prepared, it is recommended **to provide them with assistance and training** on the mission and objectives before the trip, as well as to make them aware of the necessary interpersonal skills (Gard & Almeida, 2005; Han et al., 2019; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018; Park, 2017). In this way, with journeys of orientation, it is possible to increase their knowledge about the destination and the community whom they will work with; explain what their task will be, resolve doubts, etcetera. Other aspects that can be addressed during these encounters are the psychological and physical challenges (arising from poor sanitation, for example) that volunteers may face when adjusting to local living conditions (Lee & Won, 2017). Besides, at the end of the experience, a full day of joint reflection can be offered for volunteers, organisation and residents, to open up opportunities for self-assessment and evaluation of the volunteer program and better explore the impacts on all the stakeholders involved (Aquino & Andereck, 2018).

Establishing minimum requirements for volunteers regarding the skills needed to carry out tasks in projects is another recommendation (Frilund, 2015; Guttentag, 2009; McGloin & Georgeou, 2015). The majority of organisations do not ask for any requirement of participation, and that can harm the host community since projects can be poorly delivered. It can occur, for example, in the construction of infrastructures or water wells when voluntourists lack the knowledge to build them. However, in addition to establishing minimum requirements, in the case of volunteer tourism with children, it is necessary to match the knowledge, skills and perception of volunteers with the education system or the specific needs of children, as the demands of the destination and what volunteers can offer often does not match (Bargeman, Richards & Govers,

**2.
SENDING
ORGANIZATIONS**

2018; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018). At the same time, as Aquino and Andereck (2018) state, **special attention should be paid to the most vulnerable people in an attempt to reduce the negative impacts** of their emotional well-being and protect them in such a way that volunteers are never left alone or unsupervised with these groups. It is also recommended to improve the development of programmes taking into account the tourists' kind of work to make it beneficial to the community (Raymond & Hall, 2008). Lack of compulsory training can hurt projects, but also the motivation of volunteers, especially when it comes to taking their participation seriously (Tomazos & Cooper, 2012).

Another purpose consists of having more comprehension of the process of development and maturation of participants (Schneller & Coburn, 2018). They are mainly teenagers in the process of change, planning their future studies, and willing to have a significant and educative experience. Therefore, as these same authors assert, designers and drivers of volunteer tourism programmes should better understand the complexities of development and the capacity of teenagers to comprehend the multiplicity of economic, social, cultural and environmental dynamics of communities

Sending organisations must be aware of the stereotypes that tourists have regarding host communities and the romantic vision of poverty.

in developing countries, where the majority of volunteer tourism experiences take place. At the same time, understanding participants can help these organisations to plan their recruitment strategies and to manage the success of their programmes (Lee & Won, 2017). On the other hand, Crossley (2012) highlights that sending organisations must be aware of the stereotypes that tourists have regarding host communities and the **romantic vision of poverty** where they imagine materially deprived societies, but happy with their ways of life, where poverty is offset by emotional, spiritual or community 'wealth'. Finally, it is recommended to use self-efficacy, understood as the knowledge that individuals have about their abilities and confidence to achieve a goal or face a situation, as a predictor of future behavioural intentions of volunteers (Lee & Kim, 2017).

Another question is focused on **improving the management of projects to boost the positive impacts of exchange and cultural appreciation and, at the same time, reducing the negatives**. Firstly, in order to minimise the negative impacts of the sector, it is necessary to have more awareness of them, so that projects are developed and managed to avoid them (Guttentag, 2009). Secondly, to boost the positive impacts, it is recommended for organisations to facilitate the development of networks and interchange opportunities between volunteer tourists and the community (Gard, 2012; Olsen, Vogt & Andereck, 2017; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Schneller & Coburn, 2018). Thirdly, it is proposed to commercialise volunteer tourism programmes to different countries to attract more diverse people and to increase cultural interchange (Raymond & Hall, 2008). This commodification should also be focused on marketing in order to transparently show the reality of a destination (Smith & Font, 2014), creating communication strategies consistent with the goals of volunteering.

Consequently, organisations can improve the image, satisfaction and confidence perceived by travellers and, thus, driving better intentions to engage in volunteer tourism (Han et al., 2019). Finally, sending organisations ought to help to achieve the objective of voluntourism of developing a cultural appreciation and understanding of communities, as well as boosting the transformative and experiential learning (Park, 2017; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Another aspect that should be taken into account is the sensitivity of participants, which implies that organisations encourage volunteers to be culturally sensitive and to learn of their experience, creating comprehension and tolerance towards other people and cultures (Tomazos & Cooper, 2012).

> Sending organisations ought to help to achieve the objective of voluntourism of developing a cultural appreciation and understanding of communities, as well as boosting the transformative and experiential learning.

Sending organisations also play a crucial role when **giving shape and avoiding volunteers feeling vulnerable regarding gender, nationality or race**. Lots of organisations dictate where volunteers can go and with whom, building access to areas, activities and interactions both for men and women volunteers (Kipp, Hawkins & Gray, 2020). Therefore, many times volunteer males feel compelled by organisations to accompany volunteer females and be their protectors, especially during the night hours or in areas considered more dangerous. In this way, the male gender has a specific role that can also be conflicting, as volunteers become aware of the gender inequality in which their peers find themselves.

These same authors state that another aspect about perpetuated gender roles by organisations is **giving instructions about which are the volunteer projects where voluntourists can participate depending on their gender**. Sometimes, this division appears when the activity requires a physical effort, as it is believed that women have less strength than men, a historical inequality that is present in experiences of volunteer tourism (Salazar, 2012). On the other hand, once volunteers participate in the experience, it is observed that **women have more access to private and care workspaces**, such as kitchens and orphanages. In contrast, men have easier access to public spaces, such as streets and markets, reproducing once again the segregated tasks by gender (Kipp, Hawkins & Gray, 2020). Zavitz and Butz (2011) also observe the gender division on care tasks such as cooking. These are spaces with an important racial bias that naturalises that non-white volunteers perform these endeavours. Moreover, the authors add that local men are the supervisors of volunteer work, developing the male task of control.

In this way, voluntary organisations should review the role they play in fostering and perpetuating gender inequalities present in these spaces. Besides, it is necessary to take into account the need **to mainstream the experiences** of people who volunteer in terms of intersectionality, understanding that to the unequal power dynamics concerning gender, oppressions such as race or age, among others are added. Thus, the role of sending organisations in addressing this issue is vital prior to the trip,

2.
SENDING
ORGANIZATIONS

establishing discussions to raise awareness about the inequalities that volunteers may encounter and how to address them; during the journey through constant support and contact in case they need it, and after the experience, in order to remain in the process of constant review.

Voluntourists in a program of scholar education.
Source: Breezy Baldwin, under creative commons licence.

3.
VOLUNTEER TOURISTS

Volunteer tourists are one of the main stakeholders that intervene in this phenomenon, which are characterised for being **inhabitants of the Global North** (mainly from United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and other countries from the North of Europe) **that carry out volunteerism in Global South countries** (Southern and Southeast of Asia, Africa, Centre and South America). The majority are young, between 18 and 30 years old, although there is no age limit. The gender ratio of participants is clearly and disproportionately feminine (Bailey & Fernando, 2011; Brondo, Kent & Hill, 2016; Lee & Kim, 2017; Mostafanezhad, 2013; Ong et al., 2017). It has become an intrinsic characteristic of volunteer tourism and an aspect that has been usually studied from the demographic variable of gender, without deeply analysing the causes, realities and consequences of this fact. Concerning the education and incomes of volunteers, an investigation of Lee and Won (2017) shows that they tend to have high levels of education or with interest for education and, on the other hand, it states that voluntourists have a high level of incomes and can afford the costs of volunteer tourism.

3.1. Motivations to carry out voluntourism

One of the most mentioned and argued topics in the literature of volunteer tourism is the motivation of tourists to carry out volunteerism. The first observation is that there is a considerable diversity of motivations, as each volunteer person comes from a different context, with diverse values and experiences that directly have a repercussion on their motivations. For this reason, it is necessary to differentiate the arguments that take a volunteer to do voluntourism and group them by topics. Firstly, there are **motivations related to altruism**, which is defined as a personal sacrifice in the benefit of others. This fact can be considered as what should be the essence and foremost objective of voluntourism, of helping to solve economic and humanitarian problems in the world. Inside this first topic, there is the motivation of contribution and helping the local population (Coghlan, 2008; Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010; Guiney, 2017; Han et al., 2019; McGloin & Georgeou, 2015; Olsen, Vogt & Andereck, 2017; Schneller & Coburn, 2018; Sin, 2009). This motivation is often called a give-back, thus being a feeling of debt from tourist to the host community they visit.

The second topic refers to **motivations related to personal development**, as lots of tourists carry out voluntourism with a desire for growing and improving their personal

**3.
VOLUNTEER
TOURISTS**

Backpacker. Source: Kun Fotografi, under creative commons licence.

aspects. For this reason, some of them want to obtain new abilities and knowledge (Olsen, Vogt & Andereck, 2017; Roques et al., 2018) through volunteer tourism. Some examples are communication and relationship skills, teamwork, empathy and/or knowledge related to the destination, people who live there and their culture, but also acquire new knowledge linked to the tasks delivered during the volunteerism. Tourists are also motivated to gain personal experience (Han et al., 2019; Roques et al., 2018) due to the fact of living in a new place, with unknown people, in a culture with very different customs and lifestyles, etcetera. Moreover, they want to achieve personal growth and self-reflect (Molz, 2015; Schneider, 2018; Schneller & Coburn, 2018) of what they live, feel or see during this experience, as well as learning more from themselves and gaining self-confidence (Curtin & Brown, 2018). This last motivation is related to doing volunteerism for self-interest and self-gratification (Coghlan, 2008; Guttentag, 2009), translated as the interest and personal gratification of tourists.

Some of the volunteers are motivated to **make a difference in the world** (Guiney, 2017; Molz, 2015), understood as causing some changes or feeling important while carrying out a significant activity. For this reason, they use volunteer tourism as a personal strategy and a lifestyle. Despite this, some authors such as Wearing, Young and Everingham (2017) defend that the 'making a difference' concept should not be contemplated from the 'helping perspective', but through a lens of intercultural understanding and mutuality. Other volunteers see this experience as a challenge and want to put themselves to the test by stepping out of their comfort zone (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017; Sin, 2009), to see if they are able to enjoy it or whether it

is such a big challenge that they cannot achieve it. Another motivation for carrying out volunteer tourism is to promote family union among the members participating in this experience (Molz, 2015).

The third topic is focused on the **motivations related to the desire of breaking with the usual routine of the volunteer**, and five subtopics can be highlighted. Some tourists look for the possibility of escaping from a job or a professional career that frustrated them and decide to carry out volunteerism to deepen in a new sector (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010). Others also seek to have a space to escape from everyday life (Han et al., 2019; Olsen, Vogt & Andereck, 2017; Schneider, 2018) and find that volunteer tourism contemplates the possibility of being there long enough or the necessary time in a totally different context than usual, which allows them to disconnect and have new experiences. The fact of having a new experience (Coghlan, 2008) is

The experience goes beyond the will of escaping and enjoying, as they feel happiness like a combination of significant travels and an optimum functioning as volunteers.

another motivation for volunteers, as it allows them to live different moments, with people that are not part of their usual environment and in new places. Another motivation is choosing volunteer tourism as an option because they do not know what to do in their life (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010). That is what occurs to many students when they finish their mandatory education and not yet know which degree to study and decide to do voluntourism to avoid staying at home without doing nothing (Coghlan, 2008; Han et al., 2019; Sin, 2009) as an exciting, fun and enriching experience. In a research by Curtin and Brown (2018), voluntourists reveal that the experience goes beyond the will of escaping and enjoying, it is, the hedonistic domains, as they feel happiness like a combination of significant travels and an optimum functioning as volunteers.

The fourth topic includes **motivations related to aspects of the professional career of tourists and their professional future**. On the one hand, they want to improve their curriculum, obtaining new abilities and experiences (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010; McGloin & Georgeou, 2015) that serve them to get jobs or to improve in their work. On the other hand, volunteers want to advance in their career path and gain work experience in the international arena, such as cooperation or development (McBride, Lough & Sherraden, 2012).

The fifth thematic classifies the **motivations linked to the fact of meeting people with whom they can establish new relationships**. Firstly, volunteers are motivated to know people that share similar interests and to make new friendships (Schneller & Coburn, 2018). Secondly, they can get in contact with professionals of tourism and/ or communities, establishing networks of contacts for their interests (Olse, Vogt & Andereck, 2017). Thirdly, voluntourists are motivated to develop personal relationships with hosts to make their experience more real and better understand the local context where they carry out volunteerism (Sin, 2009). Therefore, they can experience the authentic culture of the destination that they visit (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017).

3.
VOLUNTEER
TOURISTS

Motivations related to the typology of travel shape the sixth topic. Volunteer tourism is conceived as a more comfortable and cheaper way of travelling, as well as an opportunity for group travelling in an organised way (Olsen, Vogt & Andereck, 2017; Sin, 2009) fact that becomes a motivating factor for tourists. They also find that volunteer tourism offers the opportunity to carry out long-term and more dedicated volunteering than in their own country or community (Schneller & Coburn, 2018). Finally, volunteers are motivated to live a 'vacation' lifestyle that allows them to extend the journey they had begun as backpackers and continue it as volunteer tourists (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010).

In the seventh and last topic of the **motivations are found those related to the destination of the volunteering**. Some volunteers have the desire of travelling to an exotic and unknown place, apart from experiencing this destination during their stay (Coghlan, 2008; Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010; Park, 2017; Roques et al., 2018; Schneider, 2018; Schneller & Coburn, 2018; Sin, 2009). Others have the will to contribute to the reduction of poverty, which is associated with romantic ideas of scenarios in which to interact with locals, observe the foreign culture and beautiful landscapes (Burrai et al., 2015; Guttentag, 2009; Park, 2017; Schneider, 2018). It should be noted that these romantic images are usually created by volunteer tourism organisations themselves or by tourists through preconceived notions of the Global North. Another motivation is to be closer to nature (Coghlan, 2008) or to enjoy the beauty of the landscapes and tranquillity (Curtin & Brown, 2018). This scenario provides an optimal context for adventure, as some volunteer projects are carried out in rural areas or are related to the conservation of the environment and the improvement of sustainable practices. Finally, some tourists are also motivated because they have a personal relationship with the destination of volunteering (Olsen, Vogt & Andereck, 2017).

At the same time, it is necessary to analyse the differences in **motivations and preferences regarding the gender of the volunteer**. However, some researches state that gender is a factor without relevance (Tukamushaba, Xiao & Ladkin, 2017). Firstly, concerning preferences, women are more willing to embark on a journey for reasons related to leisure and enjoyment (Roques, Jacobson & McCleery, 2018). Secondly, they choose a group trip through organised packages, as opposed to male travellers, for security reasons (Kipp, Hawkins & Gray, 2020; Roques, Jacobson & McCleery, 2018). Thirdly, women tend to be more likely to conduct a volunteer tourism experience, as well as to become involved in other volunteering later (Suhud & Willson, 2016). As for the motivations investigated from a gender perspective, women are inclined to focus their work on children in the Global South, who are associated with ideas of innocence and dependence, which are attractive to the conception of women volunteers as lifeguards and caregivers. For this reason, orphanage tourism is a part of volunteer tourism with growing interest, especially by middle-upper and upper-class women (Mostafanezhad, 2013).

CASE STUDY:
Orphanage tourism experience in Ghana

Orphanage tourism is a part of the volunteer tourism industry of great popularity, where the main activity is to care for orphaned children as part of the holidays. Research by Bargeman, Richards and Govers (2016) explores the positive and negative impacts of this type of tourism on an orphanage in Ghana, called Tamale Children's Home, where 25 children between two months and four years old live.

Firstly, some benefits derive from the presence of voluntourists in the orphanage, especially the reduction of lack of staff and the amount of work. Volunteers also buy medicines and materials, take children to the hospital, financially support projects, among others. This fact has a positive impact on improving the health and hygiene standards of Tamale Children's Home. However, as volunteers state, orphanage staff members do not adequately manage donations and sometimes take them away, sell them or store them. One negative consequence is that volunteers are less motivated to make donations if those do not reach the children later.

On the other hand, workers highlight that, for voluntourists, the motivations of travelling and experiencing a new culture are more important than working in the orphanage, and that creates negative feelings between them. At the same time, they meet unqualified tourists, to whom they must continuously repeat instructions, which also causes them frustration and anger. In this way, misunderstandings or confrontations are arising from the various ways of working with children, which suggests that the interaction between different actors does not always lead to success.

Volunteers participating in an activity with children.
Source: Breezy Baldwin, under creative commons licence.

3.2. Positive impacts of the experience

Generally, tourists that travel to carry out volunteer tourism seek to live an enriching and unforgettable experience. Despite this, the effects of this experience can be both positive and negative. Regarding the positive impacts, in the specialised literature, a first topic related to the **personal changes of volunteers that are seen reflected in their personality, behaviour, consciousness, self-knowledge, reflection, etcetera**, can be distinguished. Volunteer tourism represents an opportunity to expose social and environmental inequalities and the current political issues, which allows tourists to gain more consciousness, provoking that they assume the personal as a political and drives them to social change (Gard, 2012; Gard & Almeida, 2005; Schneider, 2018). Another positive effect is the promotion of critical reflections about the phenomenon of voluntourism, their structures and unequal relationships sustained in the context of Global North-South (Coghlan, 2018; Molz, 2015; Schech, 2017).

Volunteer tourism represents an opportunity which allows tourists to gain more consciousness, provoking that they assume the personal as a political and drives them to social change.

During the stay of volunteering, tourists deeply understand the conditions of locals and obtain more remarkable personal growth that is reflected in social awareness, empathy, and so on (Gard & Almeida, 2005; Guttentag, 2009; Han et al., 2019; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Schneider, 2018; Sin, 2009). Moreover, they change their way of being and acting: being more self-critical, evaluating their behaviour in different situations, changing the way they view life or environmental behaviours (Bailey & Fernando, 2011; Crossley, 2012; Gard, 2012; Gard & Almeida, 2005; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018; Schneller & Coburn, 2018; Sin, 2009) and also encouraging them to reflect on their priorities and values (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017). Finally, volunteer tourism affects improving the overall citizenship of volunteers, who gain a greater sense of responsibility, become mature leaders and people willing to help in an unjust world (Gard & Almeida, 2005; Molz, 2015).

The second topic is the **changes associated with bonding, social commitment or how volunteers interact**. The first positive effect is reflected in more participation and support in social movements (Gard & Almeida, 2005; Schneller & Coburn, 2018) related to community problems and environmental causes. From this perspective, voluntourists consider themselves better people when they return home (Curtin & Brown, 2018; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017). Some of them continue taking part in volunteering activities, either in their community or in another country, and supporting the organisations that promote them (Bailey & Fernando, 2011; Gard, 2012; Gard & Almeida, 2005; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018; Schneller & Coburn, 2018). Related to this last effect, some tourists also continue studies linked to the type of volunteering they are doing, such as academic studies in environmental sciences (Schneller & Coburn, 2018).

Volunteer tourism also fosters the **creation of friendly relationships between tourists and the local community** that they visit (Burrai, Font & Cochrane, 2015; Gard & Almeida, 2005; Guiney, 2017; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017; Park, 2017; Raymond & Hall, 2008). At the same time, it also allows creating a community of people with equal values and goals, providing a fertile space for the development of networks and experiences of increasing consciousness (Gard & Almeida, 2005) and opportunities for more cultural interchange (Wearing, Young & Everingham, 2017). Tourists have the possibility of becoming change agents, suggesting that they have the power and the capacity of helping those who need it (Gard, 2012; Gard & Almeida, 2005; McGloin & Georgeou, 2015). Finally, another positive effect is that voluntourism helps to solve current problems in the Third World and promotes a better connection with parents when the volunteer tourism experience is with the family (Molz, 2015).

3.3. Negative impacts of the experience

Regarding negative impacts on volunteers, two types of effects can be distinguished depending on if they occur during or after the volunteer experience and if they are related to the local community or volunteers.

First of all, concerning negative effects that take place during the volunteering and that are related to the local community, there is the fact of **building and maintaining barriers to physically and socially distance themselves from locals**, as well as not striving to explore the indigenous culture (Park, 2017; Schneider, 2018). One of the reasons why there is a lack of interaction between tourists and locals is because of the language barrier, as without understanding the local language it is difficult to understand each other and maintain closer contact (Aquino & Andereck, 2018; Gofrey et al., 2019). Moreover, sometimes volunteers establish the dichotomy between 'us' (tourists) and 'them' (host community) and they deeply notice differences (Molz, 2015; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Simpson, 2004). This fact also helps to reinforce negative stereotypes of locals, seen as inferior or with fewer possibilities (Guttentag, 2009; Molz, 2015; Raymond & Hall, 2008; Schech, 2017; Sin, 2009), defined as another negative effect of volunteer tourism.

During their experience, voluntourists can also develop **occidental paternalism** and promote superiority in front of communities, as they believe to know what is better for them. In this sense, they take roles of experts, what is seen as a representation of the neocolonialist construction of the racially and culturally superior Occident (Park, 2017; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Volunteers also tend to be **dependent on an ideal of 'luck'** to explain the inequalities and differences they encounter during volunteering (Crossley, 2012; Gofrey et al., 2019; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017; Simpson, 2004). It is, observing poverty makes them feel lucky and appreciate what they have or where they were born. Finally, voluntourists excuse material inequality and poverty through the conception of **poor but happy** and do not oppose them (Simpson, 2004). This expression is highly used in the literature of volunteer tourism to refer to the poor communities but happy.

CASE STUDY:
Relationship between voluntourism and locals in Pueblo Blanco, Honduras.

Honduras is one of the countries that has increased in popularity to participate in volunteerism programs. More concretely, the following experience is focused on the involvement of 23 volunteers in the school of Pueblo Blanco, in order to observe which are the relationships produced between them and the local population. Matthew Jerome Schneider (2018), the researcher of this case study, highlights that North-American volunteers show a growing awareness of their skin colour and race, establishing it as a physical marker of their cultural difference and a relatively advanced position. For them, whiteness is conceptualised as a status of privilege, along with their nationality, culture, gender, and class.

At the same time, during the experience of volunteerism, tourists prefer to occupy areas where they do not have to be in contact with the local population, such as NGO campuses, bars, hotels, cafes, among others. Volunteers consider them safe spaces, although sometimes it is the locals themselves who pressure tourists to go there. Attendees are required to demonstrate the necessary cultural capital, prestige, and standard language skills among volunteers in these spaces. This causes them a series of contradictions and a change of perceptions concerning those they had before making the trip.

Volunteer tourists gathered.
Source: Helena Lopes, www.pexels.com.

However, as Crossley (2012) asserts, it can bring contradictions as tourists feel deceived when they do not meet with the imagined poverty product of preconceived ideas, but they see communities living happy and cheerful, which can make them feel alleviated at the same time since they do not have to deal with poverty. In a case study of Gofrey et al., (2019) about an experience of voluntourism in Cusco, it is shown how participants were surprised to have electricity, tap water and Wi-Fi at the host's homes because those were resources that they were not expecting to find in a developing country.

On the other hand, one of the main **inequalities that volunteer women perceive is the concern for their personal security**, associated to the sexual harassment received from local men, especially the catcalling, it is, the **verbal harassment in the street**. This fear is related to an imaginary consisting of a 'hypersexualised machismo culture', where white bodies are considered vulnerable to the threats of non-white bodies and, to a greater extent, in the case of women. Some of these gender stereotypes are reminiscent of colonial discourses, where African men are perceived as 'predators' of white women (Mindry, 2010). In some contexts of volunteer tourism, catcalls and gazes that tourists receive from local men represent the unequal gender relationships. This encounter provokes fear, as women feel that harassment can give rise to assaults, robberies, or other unwanted interactions (MacDonald, 2019), such as proposals to marry local men (Park, 2017). Therefore, volunteer women adopt different strategies of negotiation to face these situations, such as limiting their movements, walking with the headphones in their ears or not being alone, especially at night (MacDonald, 2019). This same author also comments that women experience different emotions, such as anger, frustration and confusion. In this sense, when they understand their social position as white women coming from the Global North, tourists see that the exoticisms of the imagined place where the volunteering is carried out can also be dangerous due to the situations described before (Schneider, 2018).

Depending on the type of volunteering, participants can have the option of staying with host families. More concretely, **women show a greater preference for accommodating in a home family** rather than men. Among the reasons are safety, social interaction, development and community service, cultural immersion and lower economic cost, mentioned in descending order of importance; while men choose this option because of the lower price, cultural immersion, community service and development, social interaction, and finally safety and warmth (Agyeiwaah et al., 2013). Volunteers who stay with the families of the communities where the volunteering takes place are seen and welcomed as family members, not as guests, which leads to naming and considering the adults in their homes as 'mothers' and 'fathers'.

In these encounters with the local community, **host mothers have a role of caring for the voluntourists** such as a work of 'love', a task that implies teaching the volunteer how to do the laundry; cooking; talking to them and, generally, taking care of the participant (MacDonald, 2019). As this same author states, as the attention work is extended to maintaining volunteers secure, host families become the cultural

intermediaries, helping them to move through the communities out of danger. In these cases, host mothers are the ones who express more concern for the security of volunteers. Moreover, staying with a host family means to face the established norms, which can have a different effect on each participant when referring to their protection. As the investigation developed by Kipp, Hawkins and Gray (2020) on security, gender and racialisation affirms, some volunteers are more susceptible to understand these norms as an act of caring, while others face them to the point where it is possible to end the volunteer experience earlier than expected due to these rules, perceived as coercion of their freedom.

The second part is focused on the negative effects that take place after volunteering and are directly linked to the voluntourists. The latter, once they return from the volunteerism experience, are **equally likely not to contribute to their communities of origin** and, therefore, sometimes decide not to participate or support social movements (Ong et al., 2017; Sin, 2009). On the other hand, they express appreciation for their current life, and they feel fortunate without commenting on the existing problems about global inequality or poverty that they have perceived during the experience (Park, 2017). Finally, they do not have the desire of interrupting existing power structures between communities of the North and the South which conform global inequalities and, therefore, voluntourists only want to personally develop (Molz, 2015; Simpson, 2004).

In a study by Aquino and Andereck (2018), it is shown how volunteers have no certainty about their global impacts. Some are unsure of their positive impacts and

There is a lack of awareness and personal work during the volunteering experience.

perceive only minimal negative effects, while others see no negative consequences. This fact shows how there is a lack of awareness and personal work during the volunteering experience, as well as spaces for analysis that must be accompanied by volunteer organisations and the communities. The research also notes that tourists mostly focus on themselves and the impacts they have had on the community individually, rather than considering an overview of how voluntourism has affected, affects and will affect the community.

Some of the negative effects commented previously can be framed in the analysis of some global dynamics, such as the humanitarian gaze that in this case is moved to the **tourist gaze** (Gofrey et al., 2019). This allows exploring how volunteer tourism, with more commercial experiences, builds its gaze upon the local community where volunteers assume a position of domination.

In this sense, the concept of **'white saviour complex'** is used as a category to show the personification of the power dynamics previously explained, that produces inequality between the Global North and the Global South, although it is not a fully conscious behaviour. In volunteer tourism, there are certain opposed concepts such as voluntourist/member of the community, work/leisure, privileged North/unprivileged South, developed/undeveloped, East/West. All these binaries are derived from the

construction of the other, it is, how volunteers see hosts through an imaginary created in the Global North (Wearing et al., 2018). Therefore, the 'white saviour' does not recognise the differentials of power that historically have created these distinctions, resulting in simplistic constructions of inequality (Bandyopadhyay & Patil, 2017).

On the other hand, practices and photographic images in volunteer tourism can also represent similitudes with the humanitarian gaze (Mostafanezhad, 2014). Therefore, through specific ways of how the Global South is photographed, **voluntourists perpetuate certain images, such as vulnerability**, which reinforces the aesthetics of poverty and, therefore, justifies the implication of occidentals in development projects (Sin & He, 2018). Many of the photographs that participants take during their experience are selfies with people they are helping, images that are later distributed through social media such as Facebook (Bandyopadhyay & Patil, 2017), Instagram, Twitter, etcetera. Another platform where selfies are found is Tinder where photographs, mostly taken with children, become an element of attraction (Schwarz & Richey, 2019). Therefore, the act of uploading a photograph in the context of voluntourism shows how participants negotiate between doing good and pretending to do good (Schwarz & Richey, 2019), but also **the unequal relationships between the photograph and the photographed** (Ghaderi & Béal, 2020), where sometimes members of the local communities ask volunteers not to take pictures of them (Park, 2017).

For example, the images of voluntourists, especially white women, holding hands, hugging, laughing and surrounded by children are common representations of the volunteer tourism experience on the Internet (Mostafanezhad, 2013; Sin & He, 2018). The capturing and publication of pictures in social media by volunteer tourists is not a fact that has gone unnoticed. In the past few years, numerous online criticisms have appeared, such as the Instagram account known as Barbie Saviour (Sin & He, 2018). This initiative represents the Barbie doll as a young, white female volunteer that reproduces all the commented dynamics, especially with children, savage animals and the appropriation of traditional dress styles and hairstyles (Schwarz & Richey, 2019). Thus, she imitates a tourist in the role of 'white saviour', given that the popularity of volunteer tourism among women from developed countries is the result of gender, racialised and power dimensions within the industry (Bandyopadhyay & Patil, 2017). However, although the account was created as a critique of this particular profile and behaviour of voluntourists, it is vital to be aware that these simplistic judgments can also maintain racial and gender binaries and can homogenise such a complex phenomenon (Wearing et al., 2018).

The cultural policy of the humanitarian encounter has also been sentimentalised and depoliticised, prioritising personal desires over the consciousness of reproducing neocolonial behaviours.

Furthermore, sometimes sending organisations use celebrities to promote programmes of voluntourism, making them interlocutors and spokespersons for humanitarianism and reconfiguring international development agendas (Mostafanezhad, 2013). The relationship between **the development sector and the celebrity**

3.
VOLUNTEER
TOURISTS

industry has been formalised in such a way that NGOs and other international agencies encourage a famous person to be the representative of their work (Richey, 2016). Most of these celebrities are women who have become a benchmark for young girls and have raised awareness about some of the humanitarian issues currently on the agenda, such as programmes to help communities in the Global South by volunteer tourism. However, the cultural policy of the humanitarian encounter has also been sentimentalised and depoliticised, prioritising personal desires over the consciousness of reproducing neocolonial behaviours (Mostafanezhad, 2013).

Voluntourist taking a photograph to the local community.
Source: Breezy Baldwin, under creative commons licence.

4.
LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Local or host communities are the group of people who live in the Global South and receive help from volunteer people coming from the Global North. Due to their diversity (number of people, gender, age, religion, geographic and physic location, social and historical context, ways of organisation, the economic activity of the area, etcetera.), **it is complex to define the characteristics** of the local community. Despite this, they are generally mentioned as groups of people with necessities and deficiencies that are compensated by volunteers and sending organisations that manage the programmes of voluntourism.

Aquino and Andereck (2018) define marginalised and vulnerable communities as those where residents have limited power and control over their life. In volunteer tourism, communities have the role of hosting projects and voluntourists that arrive to contribute to the improvement in some aspects of their life. However, the local population is not always considered as another stakeholder, but instead stays in the background under imposition and subordination dynamics that take place during these experiences.

4.1.   Positive impacts of the experience

Volunteer tourism, as any other type of tourism, leaves a series of impacts in the community where the volunteerism is carried out. For this reason, the positive and negative effects derived from this practice are differentiated.

Regarding positive impacts, **economic, social and environmental benefits** can be distinguished. Focusing on the first ones, **economic growth in the destination** is detected thanks to voluntourism (Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018) and **an increase of resources**, such as materials for teachers and the construction of new schools from tourist donations (Bargeman, Richards & Govers, 2018).

Secondly, social benefits identified are t**he strengthening of the community** (Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018); the improvement of the education and knowledge, both of children and teachers (Bargeman, Richards & Govers, 2018; Frilund, 2015); the creation of a more caring atmosphere as volunteers pay more personal attention to children at school and this makes them feel like home (Bargeman, Richards & Govers, 2018); a higher sociocultural understanding by the community for their implication in projects (Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018); **the**

local development with, for example, projects that work for rural development in areas where the community now has alternative energy sources and water purification systems (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010); obtaining a space for the emancipation of the premises (Gard, 2012) where the host communities can access autonomy, contrary to the feeling of oppression that takes place in unequal power relations. Finally, the last social benefit is the creation of friendships with volunteers (Burrai, Font & Cochrane, 2015; Gard & Almeida, 2005; Guiney, 2017; Park, 2017; Raymond & Hall, 2008).

Thirdly, there are environmental benefits, as some of the volunteer projects are dedicated to nature conservation such as savannah or marine resources, cleaning up natural spaces, or helping with the nesting and hatching of sea turtles, among others. On the one hand, **more environmental awareness** is achieved as tourists can become the engine of local environmental action, helping to clean beaches or coral reefs of destinations (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010). On the other hand, the conservation and development needs of ecosystems are met, obtaining support for research and improvement of the livelihoods of disadvantaged regions (Roques et al., 2018).

4.2. Negative impacts of the experience

The second part of this section refers to the harmful effects of volunteer tourism on the community, which can be grouped into three different themes. First of all, **unforeseen negative effects resulting from the presence of volunteer tourism** are found. Among them four impacts have been determined: **the reduction of work opportunities** as volunteers supply or carry out tasks free of charge which could be done by the local community in a remunerated way (Bargeman, Richards & Govers, 2018; Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010; Guttentag, 2009; Guttentag et al., 2012; Raymond

Women meeting in an initiative of volunteer tourism.
Source: Flickr, under creative commons licence.

& Hall, 2008); **the creation of dependency** as communities rely on the external resources of assistance and distrust of local suppliers, making them extremely vulnerable because projects can be stopped at any time (Burrai, Font & Cochrane, 2015; Frilund, 2015; Guttentag, 2009; Guttentag et al., 2012; Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018; Ong et al., 2017); **the cultural changes in communities** which have adverse effects on them and are provoked due to the interchange between volunteers and locals (Guttentag, 2009; Guttentag et al., 2012) and, lastly, **the local population and children becoming a marker of the exotic**, the real 'other', which can be treated as an object and consumed by the tourist eye, producing possible harmful power relationships (Crossley, 2012; Guiney & Mostafanezhad, 2015; Frilund, 2015).

The following **negative effects are derived from reactions, feelings or attitude changes of locals**. One of the impacts produced is cultural tensions between voluntourists and locals (Daldeniz & Hampton, 2010; Guttentag, 2009), as the first ones many times act following the habits and norms that they have in their country of origin without taking into account how this can affect the host community. Jealousy feelings can also be generated due to locals (mainly children) trying to imitate foreign consumption patterns, but they find that elements of wealth are beyond their reach (Guttentag, 2009). Finally, there may be **a feeling of inferiority to tourists** due to inequalities of power and knowledge between tourists and hosts, which generates a hierarchy that places volunteers as voluntary donors and locals as recipients of charity (Burrai, Font & Cochrane, 2015; Gard, 2012; Guttentag, 2009; McGloin & Georgeou, 2015; Schneider, 2018; Sin, 2009).

Lastly, **negative effects provoked due to the bad management of projects or a lack of abilities of voluntourists** are classified. Sometimes, the objective of sending organisations projects can be contrary to the desires of local communities (Guttentag et al., 2012). Other times, the social transformation of destinations or the cause for which a project is being developed is less valued, as final and economic outcomes are prioritised (Burrai & Hannam, 2017; Park, 2017; Simpson, 2004). There may also be an impediment or **unsatisfactory performance of the work** because volunteers lack skills and knowledge (Bargeman, Richards & Govers, 2018; Burrai, Font & Cochrane, 2015; Guttentag, 2009; Schwarz, 2017; Simpson, 2004) as can happen in a school where tourists teach English because it is their mother tongue, but have never studied how to teach a language nor have worked on the skills that a teacher must have. Finally, the last negative effect has to do with the excessive use of the natural resources of the destination for the projects due to a commodification of the area or field where these are carried out (Hernandez-Maskivker, Lapointe & Aquino, 2018).

4.
LOCAL
COMMUNITIES

CASE STUDY:
The encounters with poverty in voluntourism experiences

The negative impacts on the local communities are observed from diverse perspectives and case studies. The following is centred in Kenya, where the experiences and subjectivities of 10 voluntourists from the United Kingdom, with ages ranging between 18 and 24 years old, are evaluated. This program, from one up to three months, offered by a commercial provider, includes a mix of projects with local communities and environmental conservation, together with touristic activities such as safaris and beach visits.

Therefore, it shows how volunteer tourists find themselves immersed in bleak images of poor communities because this creates a sense of urgency and need that allows them to take on the role of the volunteer positively. On the other hand, they are surprised and positively disappointed because the locals are not as unhappy as they expected. One of the volunteers thinks that the less one has, the more they appreciate family and friends, and not so much the material things. This is where the idea of 'appreciation' for local communities comes into play. With a conventional tourist attitude, the treatment of people and places in the Third World as an object and the use of photography can produce a barrier between the local population and tourists, promoting harmful power relations. Besides, there is the risk of identifying the practices of the experience with poverty as part of a consumable landscape, also allowing tourists to decipher the landscape as an aesthetic and cultural framework rather than an economic and social one. A possible result of this fact is to idealise and downplay poverty.

Conversation between volunteer tourists.
Source: Breezy Baldwin, under creative commons licence.

5.
CONCLUSIONS

The popularity of volunteer tourism has grown in the last few years, not only due to the proliferation of sending organisations in the Global North dedicated to running programmes of volunteerism in Global South countries, but also because of the interest and repercussion in the media. This rising tendency in the number of voluntourists has also been reflected in the increase of empirical studies about this phenomenon from the beginning of the 21st century, with present growing interest. Therefore, it can be stated that **volunteer tourism is a potentially expanding tourism niche**, which has generated discussions both in the academy and among the organisations themselves. Therefore, in order to understand and analyse this complex phenomenon, it is necessary to conduct holistic and in-depth studies.

At the same time, it is necessary to understand specific structural questions that many times can go unnoticed but help to understand the generated dynamics in the volunteer tourism programmes. On the one hand, there is a strong belief from a numerous group of investigators regarding postcolonial logics that are incorporated in this phenomenon. Therefore, taking into account that the majority of projects are carried out in the Global South, it is criticised how **historical roots of racial inferiority and superiority are perpetuated in voluntourism**. This can also be reflected in the conception of a saviour North and a victimised and miserable South, where the humanitarian gaze contributes to the reproduction of geopolitical discourses of the power relationships that naturalise the political, economic and social inequalities. This gaze also maintains particular imaginaries about the binary of 'us' versus 'them', which reinforces the hierarchies of givers from the North and receivers of the South. On the other hand, lately, the interest to analyse the nexus between volunteer tourism and gender has increased, from where **developing countries are associated with feminine figures (weak and poor)** and developed countries with the strength and power that men have. This way, the infantilisation of the South is perpetuated, a reinforced conception with images of children with an emotional burden that provoke cosmopolitan empathy and become the key components of the humanitarian gaze.

The evolution of volunteer tourism has also generated debates about the commodification of this touristic activity where there is a clear difference between non-profit organisations, such as NGOs, and companies that use voluntourism to make profit. In this sense, volunteer tourism seems to depend, like any other economic activity, on the availability of resources, that in this case are mainly provided by

5.
CONCLUSIONS

participants. This provokes organisations to compete between them to achieve a higher number of volunteers. However, as some non-profit organisations have already done, **there is a desire to differentiate and promote the real objectives of volunteerism**. It must be taken into account that the growth of the sector has caused the homogenisation of sending organisations and, therefore, it is necessary to establish strategies of differentiation to be able to put in value the objectives of the development and the transformative capacity of the volunteers.

Another aspect that must be taken into account is the recommendations for sending organisations that have an essential role in potentiating the positive impacts of this phenomenon. For this reason, the design and the implementation of programmes is a crucial factor of success, both from the perspective of communities and voluntourists. The established purposes have the objective to improve the functioning of programmes and try to match the necessities of locals with the motivations, abilities and knowledge of tourists so that the end result would be profitable for the host community. Bearing in mind the commercial dynamics of volunteer tourism, it is possible to conclude that the design of volunteerism programmes many times only contemplates the interests of sending organisations such as attracting volunteers and obtaining an economic benefit, without considering the needs of the local population, the possible negative impacts in the host community or the knowledge that tourists have about volunteerism.

However, it is not possible to generalise these last aspects of voluntourism, as each organisation works differently and establishes lines of action according to its mission and values. One fact that can help to improve volunteerism projects and that many sending organisations have already incorporated is **training for participants before,**

Volunteer tourists taking a tour led by a local guide.
Source: Flickr, under creative commons licence.

during and after the experience. These encounters between organisations and volunteers and, also with the host community, allow increasing the awareness of ethical actions, dynamics and implications of volunteer tourism. Moreover, some aspects mentioned before such as gender or colonialism are very interesting to tackle in order to avoid sexist and racist attitudes or to establish reporting mechanisms in case of encountering certain aggressions, some of which can even be perpetrated by the organisations.

Regarding volunteer tourists, it should be borne in mind that their image and attitude should not be globalised as no participant is equal to another. This diversity is also reflected in the motivations of voluntourists that vary depending on each person, although it has been possible to establish some categories to classify them. **Most motivations refer to the personal or professional development of the volunteers, the type of trip or destination**, rather than the altruistic aspects of volunteering, which is the most highlighted aspect of this categorisation. These motivations are linked to the growth of post-Fordism tourism, in which the particular and significant experiences for tourists are preferable, that at the same time escape from the tourists and crowded areas. For this reason, volunteer tourism offers them an opportunity to travel under different coordinates and to live a new experience far away from the typical tourist destinations.

Motivations and preferences regarding the gender of volunteers should be stood out too, although there is a gap of specific data and investigations that associate this fact with structural dynamics. However, volunteers, mainly young women, look for a personal experience related to care work and children education in schools and orphanages. This fact is linked to the references and images that they see of celebrities in international cooperation and the roles that they take as 'white saviours', where many times attitudes of superiority are reproduced. It is also essential to stand out differences of preference for service and development of the community and the social interaction, where it is shown **a clear intention of women to be involved in tasks linked to traditional gender roles**. Elseways, their preferences for staying in a host family are closely related to their security and social interaction with the community, while masculine participants are not usually so worried about it. The stark contrast between the security perceived by volunteers shows an apparent influence of a reality in which women seem to have to protect themselves more than men to avoid dangerous situations, such as violence and sexual harassment.

> A very contradictory scenario is evident, without enough consensus to determine the type of effects that voluntourism generates.

Regarding the positive and negative impacts of volunteer tourism on volunteers, it can be stated that there is a great variety of arguments exposed by academics in their articles and case studies. This fact evidences an opposed scenario without enough consensus to determine the type of effects that voluntourism generates. This fact can also be applied to host communities, where the exposed dynamics allow to affirm

5.
CONCLUSIONS

that **there is an elevated controversy of visions in the evaluation of the same touristic model regarding positive and negative effects**. In this sense, it is necessary to comment that it is not possible to evaluate if volunteer tourism has more positive impacts than negative or vice versa, as it is necessary to explore their extent further. It is also challenging to make a balance because there is a massive abundance of both success and failure cases.

Based on the premise that volunteer tourism is a complex and continually evolving phenomenon, it is also necessary to focus on **future research**. This reflects a clear interest on the part of researchers in continuing to analyse, explore and research on volunteer tourism. In this sense, rethinking the concept of volunteer tourist, including the tourist in discussions and actions would be an example, as the tourist evolves over the years and so must the definition. Therefore, this is an interesting aspect to study. Similarly, it would be necessary to specifically explore why there are so many differences in the assessment of the positive and negative impacts of voluntourism, with specific cases, and to determine the long-term effects on communities and participants. Future lines of research should also include a gender perspective when

It is necessary to continue researching in a thoughtful, critical and holistic way.

studying more deeply the transformation of gender relations into volunteer tourism experiences from the point of view of both participants and local communities, taking into account globally existing power structures. Finally, in order to deepen into the existing knowledge about volunteer tourism and filling the gaps in the scientific literature, it is necessary to continue researching in a thoughtful, critical and holistic way.

Despite the different practices and criticisms that volunteer tourism has received in recent years for its growing commodification process, this is clearly a niche market away from traditional mass tourism. There is currently **no clear vision of how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect volunteerism**, given that it is mostly in the summer when most programmes are conducted. On the one hand, international travel will be reduced to the measures enacted in each country, which will decrease the number of volunteer tourists. As the pandemic has disrupted school cycles and vacation periods globally, volunteers encouraged by student mobility programmes will be more affected. On the other hand, some organisations may receive financial support from global economic institutions to run volunteer projects, such as those run by international cooperation agencies that focus on health issues for the most vulnerable countries.

The partial or total reduction in the number of voluntourists can also affect the communities dependent on these programmes and the institutions which make them possible. For this reason, the current context is established as **a conducive scenery to rethinking the role of these organisations and their management of volunteering**, while ensuring that communities run the projects themselves. It is also interesting that the volunteers question their motivations and the need to travel

**5.
CONCLUSIONS**

internationally to develop skills for which they intend to volunteer, taking into account the limitations in mobility. Finally, in the face of this crisis of COVID-19, volunteer tourism can be a model to follow as long as it keeps its commitment to contributing to social welfare (health, food sovereignty, education and community development) while maintaining the main goal is altruism in the face of consumerist and individualistic views of other forms of tourism.

Group of volunteer tourists.
Source: Proyecto Asis, under creative commons licence.

Voluntourist in a program of building and restoration of infrastructures.
Source: Commander, US, under creative commons licence.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Agyeiwaah, E., Akyeampong, O., Amenumey, E., & Boakye, K.A. (2014). Accommodation preference among international volunteer tourists in the Kumasi Metropolis of Ghana. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 10, 7-10.

Aquino, J.F., & Andereck, K. (2018). Volunteer tourists' perceptions of their impacts on marginalized communities. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 26(11), 1967-1983.

Bailey, A., & Fernando, I. (2011). Decoding the voluntourism process: a case study of the pay it forward tour. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 33(4), 406-410.

Bandyopadhyay, R. (2019). Volunteer tourism and "The White Man's Burden": globalization of suffering, white savior complex, religion and modernity. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-17.

Bandyopadhyay, R., & Patil, V. (2017). "The white woman's burden' – the racialized, gendered politics of volunteer tourism. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(4), 644–657.

Bargeman, B., Richards, G., & Govers, E. (2018). Volunteer tourism impacts in Ghana: a practice approach. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 21(13), 1486-1501.

Brondo, K.V., Kent, S., & Hill, A. (2016). Teaching collaborative environmental anthropology: a case study embedding engaged scholarship in critical approaches to voluntourism. *Annals of Anthropological Practice*, 40(2), 193-206.

Burrai, E., & Hannam, K. (2017). Challenging the responsibility of 'responsible volunteer tourism'. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 10(1), 90-95.

Burrai, E., Font, X., & Cochrane, J. (2015). Destination Stakeholders' Perceptions of Volunteer Tourism: An Equity Theory Approach. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 17, 451–459.

Coghlan, A. (2008). Exploring the role of expedition staff in Volunteer tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 10, 283-191.

Crossley, E. (2012). Poor but happy: volunteer tourists' encounters with poverty. *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 14(2), 235-253.

Crossley, E. (2017). Cosmopolitan empathy in volunteer tourism: a psychosocial perspective. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 42(2), 150-163.

Curtin, S., & Brown, L. (2018). Travelling with a purpose: An ethnographic study of the eudemonic experiences of volunteer expedition participants. *Tourist Studies*, 19(2), 192-214.

Daldeniz, B., & Hampton, M.P. (2010). Charity-based voluntourism versus 'lifestyle' voluntourism: evidence from Nicaragua and Malaysia. University of Kent (Working paper), 211.

Frilund, R. (2015). Teasing the boundaries of 'volunteer tourism': local NGOs looking for global workforce. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 21(4), 355-368.

Gard, N. (2012). Oppression, emancipation, and volunteer tourism: research propositions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(1), 84–107.

Gard, N., & Almeida, C. (2005). Social change, discourse and volunteer tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(3), 760–779.

Ghaderi, Z., & Béal, L. (2020). Local impression of tourist photographing: A perspective from Iran. *Tourism Management*, 76.

Godfrey, J., Wearing, S.L., Schulenkorf, N., & Grabowski, S. (2019). The 'volunteer tourist gaze': commercial volunteer tourists' interactions with, and perceptions of, the host community in Cusco, Peru. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1-17.

Guiney, T. (2017). "Hug-an-orphan vacations": "Love" and emotion in orphanage tourism. *The Geographical Journal*, 184(2), 1-11.

Guiney, T., & Mostafanezhad, M. (2015). The political economy of orphanage tourism in Cambodia. *Tourist Studies*, 15(2), 132-155.

Guttentag, D.A. (2009). The possible negative impacts of volunteer tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11, 537-551.

Guttentag, D.A., Butcher, J., & Raymond, E. (2012). Volunteer Tourism: is it benign? A T.V. Singh (ed.), *Critical Debates in Tourism* (p. 151-172). Bristol: Channel View Publications.

Han, H., Meng, B., Chua, B-L., Ryu, H.B., & Kim, W. (2019). International volunteer tourism and youth travelers – an emerging tourism trend. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36(5), 549-562.

Hernández, V. C. (2016). Prefordismo, Fordismo y Postfordismo en el turismo: modelos para el análisis del turismo. *Revista Turydes: Turismo y Desarrollo*, 21.

Hernandez-Maskivker, G., Lapointe, D., & Aquino, R. (2018). The impact of volunteer tourism on local communities: A managerial perspective. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 20(5), 650-659.

Ioannides, D., & Debbage, K.G. (1998). Neo-Fordism and flexible especialization in the travel industry. A D. Ioannides & K.G. Debbage (Eds.), *The economic geography of the tourist industry: a supply-side analysis* (pp. 97-119). Routledge: London.

Kipp, A., Hawkins, R., & Gray, N.J. (2020). Gendered and racialized experiences and subjectivities in volunteer tourism. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 1-21.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC
REFERENCES

Kontogeorgopoulos, N. (2017). Finding oneself while discovering others: An existential perspective on volunteer tourism in Thailand. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 65, 1-12.

Lee, J.S., & Kim, H.L. (2017). Roles of perceived behavioral control and self-efficacy to volunteer tourists' intended participation via theory of planned behavior. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 20(2), 182-190.

Lee, Y-J., & Won, D. (2017). Understanding International Volunteering: Who Is Most Likely to Participate?. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 30(1), 95-110.

MacDonald, K. (2019). Between catcalls and sharing space: Intimacy in volunteer abroad Katie. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 73, 42-49.

McBride, A.M., Lough, B.J., & Sherraden, M. (2012). International Service and the Perceived Impacts on Volunteers. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41(6), 969-990.

McGloin, C., & Georgeau, N. (2015). 'Looks good on your CV': The sociology of voluntourism recruitment in higher education. *Journal of Sociology*, 1-15.

Mindry, D. (2010). Engendering care: HIV, humanitarian assistance in Africa and the reproduction of gender stereotypes. *Culture, Health & Sexuality: An International Journal for Research, Intervention and Care*, 12(5), 555-568.

Molz, J.G. (2015). Making a difference together: discourses of transformation in family voluntourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 24(6), 805-823.

Mostafanezhad, M. (2013). "Getting in Touch with your Inner Angelina": celebrity humanitarianism and the cultural politics of gendered generosity in volunteer tourism. *Third World Quarterly*, 34(3), 485–499.

Mostafanezhad, M. (2014). Volunteer tourism and the popular humanitarian gaze. *Geoforum*, 54, 111-118.

Olsen, L.M., Vogt, C., & Andereck, K. (2017): Sustaining the common good: tourism professional motives to volunteer for the tourism industry. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 43(1), 68-81.

Ong, F., King, B., Lockstone-Binney, L., & Junek, O. (2017). Global global, acting local: volunteer tourists as prospective community builders. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 43(2), 135-146.

Ong, F., Pearlman, M., & Lockstone-Binney, L. (2011). An examination of non-for-profit volunteer tourism sending organisations' guiding considerations that influence volunteer tourism programmes. *World Leisure Journal*, 53(4), 296-311.

Ostrowska, D. (2019). "The migrant gaze" and "the migrant festive chronotope"- programming the refugee crisis at the European human rights and documentary film festivals. The case of the One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival (2016). *Studies in European Cinema*, 16(3), 266-28.

Park, J. H. (2017). Cultural implications of international volunteer tourism: US students' experiences in Cameroon. *Tourism Geographies*, 20(1), 144–162.

Prince, S. (2017). Volunteer tourism and the eco-village: Finding the host in the pedagogic experience. *Hospitality & Society*, 9(1), 71-89.

Pritchard, A., & Morgan, N.J. (2000). Privileging the male gaze. Gendered Tourism Landscapes. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(4), 884-905.

Raymond, E.M., & Hall, C.M. (2008). The Development of Cross-Cultural (Mis)Understanding Through Volunteer Tourism. J*ournal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16(5), 530-543.

Roques, K. G., Jacobson, S. K., & McCleery, R.A. (2018). Assessing contributions of volunteer tourism to ecosystem research and conservation in southern Africa. *Ecosystem Services*, 30, 382–390.

Salazar, R. (2012). Producing affect: Transnational volunteerism in a Malaysian orangutan rehabilitation center. *American Ethnologist*, 39(4), 673-687.

Salvador, M. (2019). Caracterització i debats sobre el turisme de voluntariat (Final Degree Dissertation). CETT-UB, Barcelona.

Schech, S. (2017). International volunteering in a changing aidland. *Geography Compass*, 11(12), 1-13.

Schneider, M.J. (2018). Exotic place, white space: racialized volunteer spaces in Honduras. *Sociological Forum*, 33(3), 690-711.

Schneller, A.J. & Coburn, S. (2018). For-profit environmental voluntourism in Costa Rica: teen volunteer, host community, and environmental outcomes. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 26(5), 832-851.

Schwarz, K.C. (2017). Volunteer tourism and the intratourist gaze. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 43(2), 186-196.

Schwarz, K.C., & Richey, A.R. (2019). Humanitarian humor, digilantism, and the dilemmas of representing volunteer tourism on social media. *New media & society*, 21(9), 1928-1946.

Simpson, K. (2004). 'Doing development': the gap year, volunteer-tourists and a popular practice of development. J*ournal of International Development*, 16, 681-692.

Sin, H.L. (2009). Volunteer tourism – "Involve me and I will learn"?. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 36(3), 480-501.

Sin, H.L., & He, S. (2018). Voluntouring on Facebook and Instagram: Photography and social media in constructing the 'Third World' experience. *Tourist Studies*, 1-23.

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC
REFERENCES**

Smith, V.L., & Font, X. (2014). Volunteer tourism, greenwashing and understanding responsible marketing using market signalling theory. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(6), 942-963.

Stainton, H. (2016). A segmented volunteer tourism industry. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 62, 256-258.

Suhud, U., & Willson, G. (2016). *Giving Over Taking/ Receiving in Volunteer Tourism The impact of motivation, attitude, and subjective norm on stage of readiness and its implication on social marketing*. Conference presented in the Asia Tourism Forum 2016 – The 12th Biennial Conference of Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Asia (ATF-16).

Tascón, S. (2017). 'The humanitarian gaze', human rights films, and glocalised social work. A M. Livholts and L. Bryant (Eds.), *Social Work in a Glocalised World* (pp. 71-86).

Tomazos, K., & Cooper, W. (2012). Volunteer tourism: at the crossroads of commercialisation and service?. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 15(5), 405-423.

Tukamushaba, E.K., Xiao, H., & Ladkin, A. (2017). 'Self-transcendence: an alternative explanation for voluntourism in developing countries'. *International Journal Sustainable Society*, 9(1) 61–75.

Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer tourism. Experiences that make a difference*. Wallingford: CABI.

Wearing, S. (2004). Examining best practice in volunteer tourism. A R. A. Stebbins & M. Graham (Eds.), *Volunteering as leisure/leisure as volunteering: An international assessment* (pp. 209–224). Wallingford: CABI.

Wearing, S., Mostafanezhad, M., Nguyen, N., Nguyen, T.H.T., & McDonald, M. (2018). "Poor children on Tinder" and their Barbie Saviours: towards a feminist political economy of volunteer tourism. *Leisure Studies*, 1–15.

Wearing, S., Young, T., & Everingham, P. (2017). Evaluating volunteer tourism: has it made a difference?. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 42(4), 512-521.

Zavitz, K.J., & Butz, B. (2011). Not That Alternative: Short-term Volunteer Tourism at an Organic Farming Project in Costa Rica. ACME: *An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 10(3), 412-441.