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Vanaprastha Tourism: A New Foundation for Enhancing Bali's Cultural Tourism Resiliency

I Gede Wiwin Suyasa¹, Ray Octafian², Sugiarto³, Sony Heru Priyanto⁴

Abstract

In the ever-evolving landscape of global tourism, destinations rich in cultural heritage face the dual challenges of maintaining their unique cultural identities while ensuring economic viability. Bali, known for its holistic traditions, spirituality, and natural beauty, epitomises this balance. Cultural tourism is crucial in preserving and promoting a region's unique heritage, ensuring the sustainability of cultural practices and traditions amidst various challenges. Resilience in cultural tourism empowers communities to protect their heritage from dilution or commodification, ensuring tourism development does not compromise cultural authenticity. However, scholars highlight the pervasive influence of commercialisation in recent tourism practices, which has subtly infiltrated Bali's tourism industry, leading to a shift from rich cultural heritage towards profit-driven ventures. Consequently, Bali's cultural tourism is starting to lose its prominence and relevance. This study aimed to explore and propose a sustainable and holistic form of tourism that can enhance the resilience of Bali's cultural tourism by examining the concept of Vanaprastha Tourism and its relevance to tourism and assessing the potential benefits of implementing Vanaprastha tourism in Bali. The research findings highlight the potential benefits of Vanaprastha tourism, including environmental conservation, cultural preservation, economic diversification, community empowerment, and enhanced well-being for both the host and visitors. The study highlights the importance of blending local wisdom, immersing in the culture, and practising sustainable methods in tourism, as shown by the Vanaprastha Tourism concept. This approach builds a new foundation, strengthens Bali's cultural tourism, and preserves its vibrant and authentic nature. Ultimately, it helps to support the island's economy, society, and environment in the long term.

Keywords: Vanaprastha Tourism, Cultural Resilience, Sustainable Tourism, Bali Cultural Tourism

¹ Corresponding author, Affiliation: Ambarukmo Tourism Institute, Indonesia, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-0624-7273>
Email: wiwin.visionplanner@gmail.com,

² Affiliation: Ambarukmo Tourism Institute, Indonesia, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9117-8618>, Email: octafianray@gmail.com

³ Affiliation: Ambarukmo Tourism Institute, Indonesia, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0094-2810>, Email: profsugiarto@stipram.ac.id

⁴ Affiliation: Ambarukmo Tourism Institute, Indonesia, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5016-1748>, Email: sonacid@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Bali, the "Island of the Gods," is a premier tourist destination globally recognised for its vibrant cultural offerings (Antara & Sri Sumarniasih, 2017). Bali has consistently been awarded and recognised as a top travel destination, with accolades such as being named the World's Best Destination by Travel + Leisure magazine in 2017 and receiving numerous other prestigious awards (Dewi et al., 2019). This reputation is largely due to the island's unique blend of Hindu-influenced art, architecture, and rituals that have captivated visitors for decades (Suharta et al., 2017) (Astuti, 2018).

Tourism has long been a cornerstone of Bali's economy, attracting millions of visitors annually (Antara & Sri Sumarniasih, 2017). Although this influx of tourism has undoubtedly benefited Bali's economic development, there are growing concerns about the potential negative impacts on the local culture and environment (Lemy et al., 2019). The rapid growth of tourism has brought about significant challenges, including environmental degradation, cultural erosion, and economic disparities that have threatened the well-being of local communities. Furthermore, concerns have emerged regarding its cultural heritage's potential dilution or commercialisation (Arida, n.d). Furthermore, Mass tourism in Bali has also significantly challenged the island's cultural resilience (Antara & Sri Sumarniasih, 2017). Cultural resilience refers to the ability of a community to maintain its cultural identity and traditions in the face of external pressures or changes Smyntyna (2016) In the tourism and hospitality context, cultural resilience is related to the preservation of a destination's cultural authenticity and distinctiveness while adapting to the evolving needs and expectations of the tourism industry (Cajee, 2014) (Kasmin et al., 2023).

To address these concerns, a new approach to tourism development is needed - an additional pillar that places Balinese culture at the forefront and empowers local communities to strengthen the cultural tourism landscape. This paper introduces "Vanaprastha Tourism," a framework rooted in the traditional Balinese philosophy of Vanaprastha, which is generally understood as the third stage of the Catur Ashrama or four disciplines that relate directly to life phases and spiritual development (Subrata, 2019). It involves withdrawing from a worldly life to pursue inner journeys toward essential awareness, reducing material desires, and learning from nature and being close to it to maintain overall emotional stability and discern information that leads to a holistic, healthy life (Santiawan, 2021).

The Vanaprastha tourism concept results from the conceptual synthesis of Vanaprastha, eco-tourism, forest bathing (sinrin-yoku), and wellness with a tourism framework (Suyasa et al., 2023a). This approach aims to establish a more resilient foundation for Bali's cultural tourism by integrating traditional Balinese values, environmental preservation, and community empowerment. The core principles of Vanaprastha Tourism are visits to natural and forested areas to enhance self-awareness and health through cultural exercises while supporting environmental sustainability and positively impacting the local economy.

Problem Statement

Bali is facing increasing challenges in keeping its tourism industry authentic and sustainable. Traditional tourism models often fail to preserve the island's unique culture, protect the environment, and ensure economic stability. Therefore, Bali needs a new pillar to support its cultural resiliency within its tourism framework and activities.

Research Aim and Objectives

This study aims to explore and illustrate the benefits of Vanaprastha Tourism for Bali, leading to a theoretical proposal highlighting the impacts of Vanaprastha Tourism on Bali's cultural resiliency, environmental sustainability, and community development.

2. Methodology

This study adopts a narrative literature review to explore the benefits of Vanaprastha Tourism for Bali, allowing us to craft a well-rounded theoretical proposal that illustrates how Vanaprastha Tourism can positively impact Bali's culture, economy, and environment.

3. Cultural Resilience

The concept of cultural resilience has roots in early anthropological research emphasising the dynamic nature of civilisations. Anthropologists like Franz Boas and Bronislaw Malinowski (in Eriksen & Nielsen, 2013) highlighted that cultures continuously evolve in response to internal and external factors. This perspective laid the groundwork for understanding how societies can adapt and evolve while retaining their fundamental attributes.

Ecological anthropology significantly contributes to the theoretical development of cultural resilience by examining the interplay between cultural behaviours, beliefs, and environmental conditions. Rappaport's (2001) research on the role of rituals in maintaining ecological balance within the Tsembaga Maring community in New Guinea illustrates how cultural practices can enhance community resilience by ensuring sustainable environmental engagement (Rappaport & Messer, 2001; Pesonen, 2022). Social theory, particularly Pierre Bourdieu's work on habitus and social reproduction, also explains how cultural practices are perpetuated through social institutions and individual behaviours, adapting to changing conditions (Bourdieu, 2018).

Challenges to Cultural Resilience

In the modern era, cultural resilience faces significant threats from globalisation, environmental degradation, and sociopolitical conflicts. Globalisation poses a risk by promoting cultural homogenisation and the dominance of global cultural forms (Streeten, P. 1998). The pervasive influence of Western culture, driven by global media, consumerism, and technology, can erode indigenous cultural practices and values (Cleveland, M.2018).

However, globalisation also offers opportunities for cultural exchange and integration. The primary challenge lies in managing globalisation's pressures while preserving cultural identity and authenticity.

Environmental degradation and climate change threaten the ecological foundations of many cultures, particularly those closely linked to specific landscapes and natural resources. These changes can disrupt traditional livelihoods and cultural practices. Indigenous cultures are especially vulnerable to environmental changes. Incorporating and documenting Indigenous knowledge in climate adaptation strategies is crucial for enhancing cultural resilience in such contexts (Panter-Brick, 2015).

Tourism Development in Bali

Bali's charm has captivated visitors for centuries. In 1579, Dutch explorers led by Cornelis de Houtman first visited the island during their spice expedition, marvelling at its natural beauty and rich culture (Antara, M., & Sumarniasih, M S. 2017a). Modern tourism began in the 1920s when European writers, artists, and scientists travelled to Bali, facilitated by the Netherlands Trading Company Ships (K.P.M.). These early tourists were inspired by Bali's stunning landscapes and vibrant traditions, helping to establish its reputation as a cultural and natural paradise. Today, Bali continues to enchant millions of visitors from around the world (Antara, M., & Sumarniasih, M S. 2017). Over the decades, Bali's tourism industry has evolved, with significant developments such as the establishment of the Official Tourist Bureau in 1914, the inauguration of Ngurah Rai International Airport in 1963, and the prioritisation of tourism development during Indonesia's First Five-Year Development Plan (1969-1974). By the 1990s, tourism had surpassed agriculture as Bali's leading economic sector (Pickel-Chevalier, S. 2017). However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a sharp decline in tourist numbers, prompting the government to designate special economic zones to revitalise tourism (Yuniarto, 2023).

Bali's tourism branding focuses on cultural tourism, as emphasised by regional regulations prioritising cultural preservation. For instance, Provincial Regulation No. 3 of 1991 highlights the importance of promoting regional culture as a cornerstone for tourism development (Bali Provincial Government, 1991). The Provincial Regulation of Bali No. 2 of 2012 and No. 5 of 2020 emphasise the significance of setting tourism standards based on the concept of Tri Hita Karana, which involves maintaining harmony with others, the environment, and nature to enhance the quality, sustainability, and competitiveness of Balinese cultural tourism (Bali Provincial Government, 2012., 2020). Hence, cultural tourism is vital for preserving and promoting a region's unique heritage.

Importance of Resilience in Bali's Cultural Tourism

Resilience in cultural tourism ensures the sustainability and longevity of cultural practices and traditions despite various challenges (Bujdosó et al., 2015; D'Auria, 2009). Resilience enables communities to adapt to changes while maintaining cultural integrity (Paulina et al., 2021, 2023). It empowers local communities to protect their cultural heritage from dilution or commodification, ensuring that tourism development does not compromise cultural authenticity (Paulina et al., 2023).

Errors in destination branding can lead to the erosion of local identity. Han's (2022) social identity theory highlights that individuals engage in activities aligned with identities they consider

significant. Correlating Deffner's (2022) insights with Han's theory shows that branding efforts must foster commitment and pride among investors and visitors to the local community. Otherwise, the destination's unique cultural essence may be lost, resulting in fierce competition and generic branding undermining its long-term viability (Williams et al., 2004; Tortora, 2014).

Current State of Tourism in Bali

The current state of tourism in Bali reveals a troubling trend where commercialisation overshadows the island's cultural heritage. Practices like selling tickets to temples prioritise profit over cultural preservation, diminishing genuine cultural experiences for tourists (Subadra & Hughes, 2021). Efforts to attract investors and increase visitor numbers should focus more on connecting tourists with the local community and authentic cultural experiences (Tang & Xu, 2023). While various forms of tourism can benefit Bali economically, they must be carefully managed to avoid diverting attention from the island's unique cultural heritage (Kurniasari et al., 2021).

Promising Approaches for Enhancing Cultural Tourism

One promising approach to strengthening Bali's cultural tourism is adopting Vanaprastha Tourism, rooted in Balinese philosophy. This approach encourages a mindful journey of detachment from material pursuits and a deeper connection with the natural environment and cultural practices (Rudiarta et al., 2022; Suyasa et al., 2023). It is proposed that by prioritising cultural authenticity and integrating local wisdom, Bali can reclaim its status as a premier cultural tourism destination, fostering a deeper appreciation among investors and visitors for the island's rich cultural tapestry beyond mere economic gain.

The Importance of Resilience in Bali Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism plays a pivotal role in preserving and promoting a region's unique heritage. The significance of resilience in cultural tourism cannot be overstated, as it ensures the sustainability and longevity of cultural practices and traditions in the face of various challenges (Bujdosó et al., 2015; D'Auria, 2009b). In this context, resilience refers to the ability of a community or destination to adapt to changes and maintain its cultural integrity despite external pressures (Paulina, Lo & Sugiarto, 2021; Paulina, Lo, et al., 2023a). Cultural tourism can foster resilience and provide a stable economic foundation for local communities. It can help them empower themselves to protect their cultural heritage from being diluted or commodified, ensuring that tourism development does not come at the expense of cultural authenticity (Paulina, Lo, et al., 2023).

Errors in branding a tourist destination can be catastrophic, leading to the erosion of the local community's identity. Han's (2022) social identity theory underscores that individuals engage in activities aligned with identities they deem highly significant when presented with specific opportunities. Social identity is inherently fluid, shaped by the prevailing social environment. Correlating Deffner's (2022) insights with Han's (2022) theory reveals the profound consequences of missteps in destination branding. When branding efforts fail to foster commitment and pride among investors and visitors for the local community, it triggers a shift in the locals' social identity. This identity shift aligns with the preferences of external investors and visitors, losing the destination's unique cultural essence (Deffner et al, 2022).

The fallout is severe: the original, carefully crafted branding disintegrates, plunging the destination into fierce and unwinnable competition (Karikari, S., & Khan, O.J. 2022). The destination loses its distinctive appeal, succumbing to generic branding that mirrors the whims of outsiders. This undermines the destination's uniqueness and jeopardises its long-term viability and competitiveness in the tourism market (Williams et al., 2004). The critical lesson is clear: authentic and respectful branding is essential to preserving any tourist destination's unique identity and sustainable appeal (Tortora, 2014).

Current State of Tourism in Bali

The current state of tourism in Bali reveals a troubling trend where the island's cultural heritage is overshadowed by commercialisation (Wall, 1996). Practices like selling tickets to temples, once rare, are now common, prioritising profit over preserving Bali's rich cultural identity (Subadra & Hughes, 2021). This shift undermines the island's cultural authenticity and diminishes genuine cultural experiences for tourists.

Efforts to attract investors and increase visitor numbers need to pay greater attention to connecting tourists with the local community. Tourists often visit commodified attractions, ignoring the authentic cultural experiences that define Bali (Tang & Xu, 2023). While the expansion of various tourism forms can generate economic benefits for Bali, if not carefully managed, they run the risk of diverting attention away from the island's unique cultural heritage (Kurniasari et al., 2021). Rather than prioritising profit over cultural preservation, Bali's tourism branding should instead foster a more profound sense of commitment and pride among investors and visitors towards the local population and their cultural identity.

Promising Approaches for Enhancing Cultural Tourism

One promising approach to adding to the foundation of Bali cultural tourism is through the adoption of Vanaprastha Tourism, which is rooted in Balinese philosophy that encourages a mindful journey of detachment from material pursuits and a deeper connection with the natural environment and cultural practices (Rudiarta et al., 2022; Suyasa et al., 2023a). Bali can reclaim its status as a premier cultural tourism destination by prioritising cultural authenticity and integrating local wisdom, cultivating a deeper appreciation among investors and visitors for the island's rich cultural tapestry that transcends the mere pursuit of economic gain and instead fosters a genuine, long-lasting connection with the Balinese people and their heritage.

4. The Concept of Vanaprastha and Vanaprastha Tourism

The literal meaning of Vana is forest (Adhikari, 2017), in the modern context, where forests are scarce, it can also be connotatively understood as a garden or a condition representing the cycle of life (Subrata, 2019). The forest embodies mysteries that cannot be merely imagined; similarly, the mysteries of life and existence must be explored, understood, and studied to benefit future generations. It is an initial stage of learning to explore the universe (Adhikari, 2017). Yogapedia, a web-based yoga information site, describes Vanaprastha as a transitional phase where one undergoes a profound change in life purpose, moving from material pursuits like

pleasure, wealth, and pride to self-understanding, where the concept of "enough" is genuinely understood (Yogapedia, 2022).

Vanaprastha from Balinese Traditional Perspective

In Balinese tradition, Vanaprastha is generally understood as the third stage of the Catur Ashrama or four disciplines that relate directly to life phases (Subrata, 2019.; Santiawan, 2021). The Catur Ashrama begins with the *Brahmacari* stage, the initial phase of learning from childhood to adolescence, directed and guided by teachers. In Balinese philosophy, the term "Guru" refers to the Catur Guru philosophy, consisting of Guru Rupaka (parents), *Guru Pangajian* (teachers at school), *Guru Wisesa* (government), and *Guru Swadyaya* (the universe as the ontological embodiment of the Almighty God) (santiawan, 2021). During the *Brahmacari* stage, "guru" primarily refers to Guru Rupaka and Guru Pangajian. The second stage, *Grahastha*, represents adult learning, professional life, self-leadership, family, and community leadership. Here, the focus shifts from Guru Pangajian to Guru Wisesa (government, customs, etc.). The third stage of life is Vanaprastha, a period of life and learning post-adulthood characterised by independent learning, understanding the essence of life, and self-exploration (Adhikari, 2017). It involves withdrawing from worldly life to pursue inner journeys toward essential awareness, reducing material desires, and learning from nature and being close to it to maintain overall emotional stability and discern information that leads to a holistic, healthy life. The fourth stage, *Bhiksuka* or *Sannyasin*, is an extensive exploration and discovery of truth, symbolising learning from Guru Swadyaya, encompassing both transcendental and immanent aspects of God (Juni, 2020; Sarjana, 2018).

Bali's unique forest landscape, traditionally a part of ancient villages, was a life source and responsibility assigned by ancient Balinese rulers to local inhabitants (Laksmi Dewi et al., 2019). Today, traces of these traditional villages still exist, each with its forest, sharing the same name as evidence of their rightful responsibility as guardians. Balinese care for nature is embedded in their philosophy of life, where individuals are responsible for maintaining harmony in life—among humans, between humans and the environment, and with the universe, the manifestation of the Almighty Creator (Eiseman, F.B. 2011). This responsibility is called *Tri Hita Karana*, meaning three sources of harmonious life (Juni, N. K. 2020). When the three elements of *Tri Hita Karana* are sublimated as the foundation of cultural tourism, it aligns with eco-cultural tourism or *Saujana Budaya*, where integrating ecological and cultural aspects drives the tourism economy (Cajee, 2014; Rahmi et al., 2012; Soeroso, 2007).

5. Vanaprastha Contemporary Perspective

A slightly different perspective comes from Sadhguru, a modern spiritualist, who explains that the core meaning of Vanaprastha is communion with the forest (Sadguru, 2022). Vana can also mean garden. Modern life involves detaching the body from the confines of four walls, falsely creating a sense of security and immortality (Sadguru, 2022).

While humans desire long life or immortality, the reality is that humans are mortal. Realising this mortality helps the body understand its transient nature, gradually leading to better self-calibration and longevity. Vanaprastha is about becoming aware of one's mortality, a crucial shift in self-awareness (Sadguru, 2022).

Entering the forest brings a profound sense of the human body's smallness and fragility, providing a deep understanding of mortality. This awareness promotes faster cell regeneration, efficient energy use, and better bodily function (Sadhguru, 2022). In this research context, both perspectives above convey that being close to nature led to a holistic healthy life, which was taken as the base point of concern in synthesising it with tourism.

Vanaprastha and Tourism

Tourism can exemplify the harmony among humans, their environment, and nature, with interactions expected to be mutually beneficial (Putra et al., 2017). If people at a destination neglect each other and their environment, tourism will not thrive. Similarly, tourism will falter if they do not see the landscape as a divine manifestation and prepare for adequate mitigation. The interconnectedness of Vanaprastha, environment, wellness, and forest bathing is evident. Unlike conventional tourism, which often prioritises economic gain over cultural and environmental preservation, Vanaprastha Tourism offers an alternative that honours and sustains Bali's cultural essence. It provides an avenue for individuals to revitalise their mind, body, and spirit by engaging with nature and participating in mindfulness practices (Suyasa et al., 2023b). This kind of tourism is gaining popularity among people who seek a respite from their busy lives and a deeper connection with themselves and the natural environment (Olson et al., 2020). It focuses on integrating traditional wellness practices — such as yoga, meditation, Ayurveda, and natural healing therapies — within peaceful natural settings (Dillette et al., 2020).

A recent study, *Vanaprastha Wellness Tourism: A Conceptual Synthesis of Balinese Traditional Value* (Suyasa et al., 2023a), emphasises that Vanaprastha Tourism aims to raise awareness of one's mortality and promote conscious living through immersion in nature. The study suggests that by entering a forest and experiencing the smallness and fragility of the human body, individuals become more conscious of their mortality. This awareness leads to a deeper appreciation for life, sparking personal growth and prompting individuals to reflect on their priorities and values (Sadguru, 2022). In the realm of tourism, this can be seen as a retreat promoting wellness through deep connections with nature and cultural immersion. Vanaprastha Tourism combines visits to natural and forested areas to enhance self-awareness and health through local cultural practices while supporting environmental sustainability and positively impacting the local economy (Suyasa et al., 2023a). Essentially, Vanaprastha tourism encourages individuals to engage deeply with natural landscapes, especially forests, immersing themselves in rich natural environments. The goal is to foster a profound connection with nature, allowing participants to appreciate and understand the complex interplay of ecosystems. This immersive experience aims to go beyond mere observation, promoting active engagement with surroundings to appreciate nature's intricate beauty.

Vanaprastha tourism acknowledges the inherent healing properties of nature (Suyasa et al., 2023a). By encouraging individuals to spend time in forests and other natural settings, it seeks to leverage the therapeutic benefits of these environments, encompassing physical rejuvenation and mental and emotional well-being. The tranquil ambience, fresh air, and abundant greenery of forests are thought to have a calming effect, reducing stress and anxiety while enhancing overall mental well-being (Yu, C.P. et al, 2017).

Additionally, immersing oneself in nature can facilitate spiritual renewal, allowing individuals to reconnect with their inner selves and seek comfort in the serenity of the natural world (Li, Q. 2018). Therefore, it makes sense that Vanaprastha Tourism provides a viable new pillar to support and enhance Bali's cultural resiliency.

Vanaprastha Tourism operates on seven key components that distinguish it from other forms of tourism. These components are Visit (journeys) to Nature and Forests for Healing through Cultural Exercise while fostering the local community's economy (Suyasa, et al. 2023b). Suyasa et al. (2023b), in their book on *Vanaprastha Tourism: Beyond Wellness: A Synthesis of Future Tourism (a Soulful Odyssey)*, illustrate the vanaprastha components as the seven-pointed star (Figure 1).

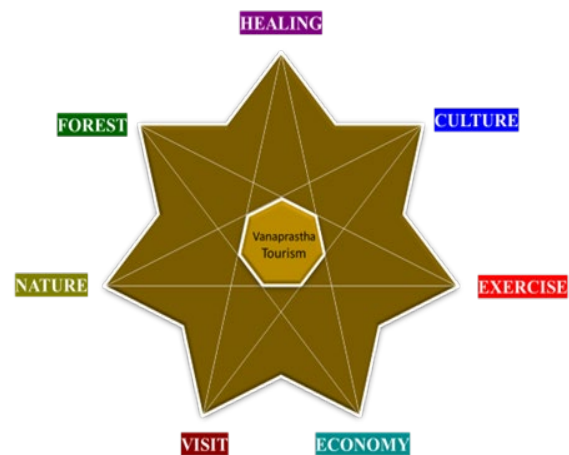


Figure 1- The seven-pointed star of Vanaprastha Tourism.
(source: Suyasa et al., 2023a)

6. Implementation of Vanaprastha Tourism in Bali

In the ever-evolving landscape of global tourism, destinations rich in cultural heritage face the dual challenges of maintaining their unique cultural identities while ensuring economic viability. Bali, known for its intricate tapestry of traditions, spirituality, and natural beauty, epitomises this delicate balance. Bali's tourism sector has long been a cornerstone of its economy, yet faces significant challenges (Pemayun, et al. 2019).

Global economic fluctuations can lead to volatile tourist numbers, affecting the stability of local businesses and livelihoods. Environmental degradation, driven by overdevelopment and unsustainable tourism practices, threatens Bali's natural landscapes and biodiversity. Cultural homogenisation, exacerbated by mass tourism, risks diluting the island's unique cultural identity, making it indistinguishable from other tourist destinations (Narottama, et al. 2016). Bali is particularly suitable for implementing Vanaprastha Tourism due to its unique blend of natural beauty, cultural richness, traditional wellness practices, holistic well-being approach, environmental consciousness, community involvement, and serene atmosphere for contemplation.

Firstly, Bali is renowned for its lush tropical forests, stunning beaches, and picturesque landscapes. This rich natural environment provides visitors numerous opportunities to immerse themselves in nature, aligning perfectly with Vanaprastha Tourism, which emphasises engaging with natural surroundings. Whether exploring the dense jungles of Ubud, or hiking up the majestic Mount Agung, Bali allows individuals to connect deeply with the environment, appreciating its beauty and healing power.

In addition to its natural allure, Bali is steeped in cultural heritage. The island has a vibrant cultural scene that includes traditional Balinese Hindu rituals, ceremonies, dance, and arts. This cultural wealth offers visitors a profound sense of immersion and authentic experiences. Engaging in local traditions, participating in temple ceremonies, and learning traditional crafts give tourists a deeper understanding and appreciation of Balinese culture. Such cultural immersion is a key aspect of Vanaprastha tourism, fostering a meaningful connection with the local way of life (Mihardja, et al., 2021).

Moreover, Bali is a global hub for traditional wellness practices. The island hosts numerous wellness retreats and centres specialising in yoga, meditation, and Ayurveda (Eiseman, F. B. 2011). These practices are integral to promoting physical and mental well-being, making Bali an ideal location for Vanaprastha tourism, which incorporates these traditional methods to enhance overall health. The availability of natural healing therapies (Silmi, C.A. 2021) further supports this objective, allowing visitors to benefit from age-old practices in a serene setting. Bali's cultural practices naturally embody a holistic approach to well-being. The Balinese philosophy of Tri Hita Karana, which emphasises harmony between humans, nature, and the divine (Pitana, 2010), aligns seamlessly with the Vanaprastha focus on the interconnectedness of mind, body, and soul. This holistic approach considers physical health and mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, creating a balanced and fulfilling experience for visitors.

Environmental consciousness is another strong suit of Bali. With an increasing focus on sustainability and eco-friendliness, various initiatives on the island focus on reducing the environmental impact of tourism and preserving natural resources (Mihardja, E. J. et al. 2021). This commitment to sustainability aligns with Vanaprastha tourism's principle of promoting minimal environmental impact and actively contributing to its preservation. Eco-resorts, organic farms, and conservation projects exemplify how Bali integrates sustainable practices into its tourism industry (Sardiana.,2021).

Furthermore, Bali's tourism sector is heavily focused on community involvement and ensuring that local populations benefit economically from tourism activities (Budiarta, I. P. 2018). Many tourism initiatives prioritise empowering local communities by involving them in tourism operations and ensuring fair economic returns (Pickel-Chevalier, S. 2017b). This socio-economic impact is critical to Vanaprastha tourism, which aims to empower local communities and foster sustainable development.

7. The Potential Benefits of Vanaprastha Tourism for Bali

Bali, an island renowned for its stunning landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and wellness practices, presents an ideal setting for implementing Vanaprastha tourism. The following sections present

multifaceted potential benefits of Vanaprastha tourism for Bali encompass environmental conservation, cultural preservation, economic diversification, community empowerment, enhanced well-being, and opening up the opportunity for research and education. These are captured in Figure 2.



Figure 2- List of potential benefits of Vanaprastha Tourism. (Source: authors' analysis)

Environmental Conservation

Vanaprastha tourism focuses on respecting nature and encourages practices that conserve and preserve natural environments (Suyasa et al., 2023a). Bali's beautiful tropical landscape and forests can greatly benefit from this approach. This approach helps manage resources sustainably and minimise the negative effects of mass tourism, ensuring that natural habitats remain intact for future generations (Cajee, L. 2014). Vanaprastha tourism increases awareness and efforts to protect local biodiversity (Suyasa et al., 2023a). Bali is home to many endemic and endangered species. Tourism initiatives that prioritise biodiversity conservation and community-led conservation projects can help preserve these species (Cajee L. 2014). Educational programs and guided tours can enhance visitors' understanding of Bali's unique biodiversity, fostering a commitment to its protection.

Cultural Preservation

Vanaprastha tourism integrates cultural experiences into its activities, helping preserve traditional practices and providing authentic cultural experiences (Suyasa et al., 2023a). This approach enriches the visitor experience and promotes cross-cultural understanding and respect (Suyasa et al., 2023a). Vanaprastha tourism supports the continuation of these traditions by involving visitors in Balinese rituals, ceremonies, and arts.

Bali's vibrant arts and crafts scene can benefit from Vanaprastha tourism by incorporating visits to artisan workshops and markets, Vanaprastha tourism can provide artisans with greater exposure and economic opportunities. This support helps sustain traditional crafts, ensuring these skills are preserved and passed down through generations. Promoting local arts and crafts enhances the cultural richness of the tourism experience.

Economic Diversifications

Vanaprastha tourism can attract wellness and eco-conscious travellers, thus diversifying Bali's tourism industry. Unlike mass tourism, Vanaprastha tourism focuses on meaningful and transformative experiences. This diversification makes Bali's cultural tourism more resilient to global economic changes, attracting a selected spectrum of tourists that support cultural and environmental sustainability. The development of Vanaprastha tourism can create new job opportunities in various sectors, including hospitality, wellness, conservation, and cultural tourism. The construction and operation of eco-friendly accommodations, wellness centres, and cultural attractions generate employment for residents (Gürsoy, İ T. 2018). Additionally, the demand for skilled professionals in yoga instruction, traditional healing practices, and environmental education can provide new career paths for the Balinese workforce, reducing unemployment and boosting the local economy.

Community Empowerment

Vanaprastha tourism actively involves local communities, this is ensuring economic benefits are widely distributed (Suyasa et al., 2023a). By integrating local communities into the tourism value chain — providing accommodations, guiding tours, producing handicrafts, and offering traditional wellness services — Vanaprastha Tourism is expected to enhance residents' livelihoods. This economic empowerment might reduce income disparities and potentially promote equitable development, fostering a sense of ownership and pride among communities. Active participation of local communities in tourism planning and implementation leads to greater community cohesion and a stronger sense of ownership over local resources and heritage. Involving communities in decision-making processes ensures tourism initiatives are sustainable, culturally appropriate, and beneficial to local populations.

Enhanced Well-being

Vanaprastha tourism promotes wellness practices such as yoga and meditation to enhance physical, mental, and spiritual health. Access to these practices and a healthier environment can improve health outcomes and reduce stress levels. For tourists, engaging in transformative wellness experiences leads to personal growth and rejuvenation, contributing to a harmonious and thriving society (Dini, M. and Pencarelli, T. 2022).

Bali's serene forest environment and wellness infrastructure are ideal for healing and recovery. Vanaprastha tourism enhances this appeal by offering tailored wellness programs focusing on forest healing and rejuvenation. These programs might include guided meditation sessions, digital detox retreats, and nature immersion experiences that can help visitors restore balance and harmony in their lives, contributing to long-term health and well-being.

Research and Education

Implementing Vanaprastha tourism can attract researchers and academics interested in sustainable tourism practices, traditional wellness methods and environmental conservation. Bali's diverse ecosystems and rich cultural heritage offer a unique setting for interdisciplinary research, providing valuable insights and innovations in sustainable tourism and conservation efforts (Howe, 2005; Mihardja et al., 2021; Kilipiris, F., & Zardava, S. 2012).

Vanaprastha Tourism can promote education and awareness about environmental conservation, wellness, and cultural heritage. Workshops, guided tours, and educational programs might provide tourists and locals with valuable knowledge and life skills. These initiatives can foster a deeper connection to Bali's natural and cultural landscapes and encourage responsible behaviours and stewardship.

8. Conclusion

The rapid expansion of mass tourism and wider socio-economic and environmental challenges pose significant risks to Bali's cultural resilience. Cultural resilience refers to a community's ability to maintain its cultural identity and legacy amidst external influences and changes. It involves preserving traditions, languages, arts, rituals, and community structures while adapting to modern challenges. In the context of tourism, cultural resilience is the capacity to manage tourism impacts while preserving cultural uniqueness, integrity, and vitality. These phenomena spurred interest in alternative tourism models emphasising sustainability, authenticity, and community involvement.

Refer to the aim of this study to explore and propose a sustainable and holistic form of tourism that can enhance the resilience of Bali's cultural tourism by examining the concept of Vanaprastha Tourism and its relevance to tourism and assess the potential benefits of implementing Vanaprastha tourism in Bali and understanding those arrays of Vanaprastha Tourism benefits, Bali can create tourism that not only thrives but also supports the well-being of its people, visitors and the preservation of its natural and cultural treasures.

Vanaprastha Tourism offers a profound tourism type that enhances Bali's cultural resilience. Centred around mindfulness, simplicity, and interconnectedness, Vanaprastha Tourism emphasises sustainable lifestyles, personal (inner) development, cultural interaction, and environmental responsibility. Its core principle is cultural immersion, fostering respectful and genuine connections with nature, local communities, and traditions.

Implementing Vanaprastha Tourism can enhance resilience across multiple dimensions. Environmentally, it can promote sustainable behaviours that preserve Bali's natural beauty and biodiversity. Culturally, it can safeguard and adapt Bali's rich heritage, ensuring its vibrancy and relevance in a changing world. Vanaprastha Tourism is a bridge to Bali's rich cultural past. This form of tourism might educate visitors about Bali's cultural heritage, enhancing their appreciation of the island's history and traditions. These cultural expressions are not only preserved but celebrated.

At the heart of Vanaprastha Tourism is the empowerment of local communities. By involving residents in tourism activities, they can gain control over their economic and social development. The inclusive nature of this tourism model ensures that the benefits are shared equitably, reducing social and economic disparities and fostering a sense of unity and pride.

There's something profoundly healing about spending time in nature. Vanaprastha Tourism promotes activities that nurture both body and soul. Imagine the peace that comes from a quiet walk in the forest or the rejuvenation from participating in traditional wellness practices.

These experiences can reduce stress and anxiety, leading to better mental and physical health. By blending physical, mental, and spiritual wellness practices, this tourism model might offer a holistic approach to health that enriches the lives of both visitors and locals. Furthermore, economically, it might diversify tourism options and support local businesses, creating a more stable and inclusive economy. Finally, Vanaprastha Tourism can turn Bali into a living classroom. These beautiful sites offer endless opportunities for studying biodiversity, conservation methods, and ecological balance. Researchers delve into the island's rich cultural traditions, documenting and analysing their evolution and relevance in today's world.

Takes away from the study is that Vanaprastha Tourism, inspired by the ancient Balinese tradition of retreating to nature for introspection and self-improvement, offers a beautiful way to enhance Balinese cultural resilience amidst the challenges of mass tourism. This unique form of tourism emphasises sustainable lifestyles, personal growth, cultural interaction, and environmental responsibility. By fostering genuine connections with nature, local communities, and traditions, Vanaprastha Tourism promotes behaviours that preserve Bali's stunning natural beauty and rich biodiversity while safeguarding and adapting its vibrant cultural heritage.

Implementing Vanaprastha Tourism can enhance resilience in many ways. Environmentally, it encourages sustainable practices that protect Bali's precious ecosystems. Culturally, it educates visitors about Bali's heritage, ensuring its vibrancy and relevance in a rapidly changing world. Economically, it diversifies tourism options and supports local businesses, creating a stable and inclusive economy. Socially, it empowers local communities, giving them control over their development and reducing disparities.

Moreover, Vanaprastha Tourism promotes mental and physical well-being through nature-based activities and traditional wellness practices. Imagine the peace from a quiet walk in the forest or the rejuvenation from ancient healing rituals. These experiences offer a holistic approach to health, enriching the lives of both visitors and locals. Additionally, Vanaprastha Tourism turns Bali into a living classroom, providing endless opportunities for research and education in biodiversity, conservation, and cultural studies. Future research can play a vital role in making Vanaprastha Tourism a reality in Bali. By studying the long-term impacts of this tourism model on local communities, economies, and environments, researchers can provide the data needed to support policy changes and investments. Developing and testing specific strategies, like community engagement frameworks and sustainable practice guidelines, will ensure that the suggested ideas can be effectively implemented.

By embracing Vanaprastha Tourism, Bali can create a tourism sector that is sustainable and resilient to external pressures, meeting the global demand for meaningful, authentic, and responsible travel experiences. This approach ensures enduring stability and prosperity, preserving Bali's cultural heritage for future generations and establishing a solid foundation for a sustainable and resilient future.

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