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**Tourist Behaviour, Emotional Engagement, and Destination Experience of Community-
Based Tourism: Field Study from South Asia**

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Master Thesis

presented as a partial requirement for obtaining a Master's Degree in Data-Driven Marketing

NOVA Information Management School
Instituto Superior de Estatística e Gestão de Informação

Universidade Nova de Lisboa

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Based Tourism: A Field Study from South Asia**

by

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Master Thesis presented as partial requirement for obtaining the Master's degree in Data
Driven Marketing, with a specialization in Marketing Research and CRM

Supervised by

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May, 2025

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism or any form of undue use of information or falsification of results along the process leading to its elaboration. I further declare that I have fully acknowledged the Rules of Conduct and Code of Honor from the NOVA Information Management School.

Lisbon, 25th May, 2025

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ABSTRACT

Community-based Tourism (CBT) aims to foster local participation through empowerment, equitable benefits, and redistributive measures, with the primary objective of supporting tourism and holistic community development. Over recent decades, CBT has emerged as a significant field of study, with extensive research conducted to understand its implications for communities, the integration of technology, empowerment projects, and the increasing inflow of tourists. However, empirical, data-driven evidence examining the success of these sustainable models, particularly regarding the complexity of CBT in the South Asian region and its impact on tourist behaviour, remains limited. This field study in Thrikkaipetta Village, a Community-based Tourism Project in Wayanad, South India, aims to gain a holistic understanding of regional CBT development, the behavioural and emotional engagement of tourists, and the role of communities in creating sustainable tourism models that facilitate overall economic growth within the community. Through conducting in-depth interviews with 13 CBT service providers and analyzing 246 customer reviews, this field study identifies 15 key factors that significantly shape the evolution, management, tourists' behaviour and characteristics. The study also highlights the major challenges faced by Community-Based Tourism (CBT) initiatives in the South Asian region. Finally, the study examines how perceived authenticity and embodied experience influence tourists' eudaimonic behaviour, while tourists' emotional involvement plays the role of a mediator.

KEYWORDS:

Community-based Tourism, Tourists' Behaviour, Emotional Engagement, Eudaimonic Happiness, Responsible Tourists, South Asia.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG):



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Acronym	Explanation
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CBT	Community-Based Tourism – A form of tourism managed and operated by local communities to support sustainable development, cultural preservation, and local empowerment.
CCT	Consumer Culture Theory – A theoretical framework used to study how consumption practices are shaped by cultural and social contexts.
FOL	Sense of fulfilment – A representation of eudaimonic happiness focused on purpose, growth, and life satisfaction.
LP	Local People – Interaction of tourists with local community members through the Community-based Tourism activities.
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals – A collection of 17 global goals set by the United Nations for a better and more sustainable future.
SWB	Subjective Well-Being – A measure of individual happiness based on self-reported life satisfaction and emotional well-being.
SWBPF	Subjective Well-Being Production Function – A theoretical framework by Mark Fabian including hedonia, eudaimonia, and conscience as components of well-being.
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization – A UN agency responsible for promoting responsible, sustainable, and accessible tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism has emerged as a vital contributor to global economic growth, particularly in regions rich in natural and cultural resources. Over half of the global travellers (more than 50%) are interested in sustainable travel options, with a significant 70% preferring eco-lodges or community-owned accommodations (World Economic Forum, 2023). This suggests a growing trend of travellers prioritizing eco-friendly and locally-focused travel experiences. At the same time, during the last decade, sustainability has become a central concern within the tourism industry, driven by increasing global environmental awareness, the effects of climate change, and the rising demand for eco-friendly practices and tourism experiences (Das et al., 2023). Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has been widely recognized for its potential to strengthen local economies (Dodds et al., 2018) and its significant environmental contributions to biodiversity conservation (Lee, 2009). CBT emphasises the involvement of locals, community empowerment, fair distribution of benefits, and the overall development of the community (Giampiccoli et al., 2020). In the last three decades, studies on CBT and empowerment initiatives have grown, with a focus on boosting tourist arrivals (Sharmaa & Thama, 2023); Sriyani, 2021; Jee et al., 2019); Susada, 2022). Despite numerous theoretical models being proposed (Borges Tiago et al., 2022; Krittayarangroj et al., 2023), there is a lack of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and achievement in terms of understanding the service providers' end as well as tourists' behaviour, perception, experience, expectation and the regional market dynamics to ensure long-term sustainability (Dodds et al., 2018). Numerous research studies indicate that local engagement is frequently influenced by external or dominant factors, resulting in a top-down strategy, underscoring the importance of transitioning to community involvement facilitated by facilitation (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2012; Fennell, 2007). The attention of sustainable tourism has shifted towards the social and cultural effects of tourism, with a focus on the financial and general welfare of community

members (United Nations Environment Programme, 2005). But the research shows that there is a lack in connecting local Community-based Tourism with global sustainable tourism principles, especially in advancing fairness, justice, and equal sharing of tourism resources (Dangi & Jamal, 2016) discovering pivotal factors for establishing a Sustainable CBT Ecosystem. The results of this study will assist in developing a structure, uncovering tourist preferences, and directing stakeholders in addressing project voids and enhancing tactics by understanding the tourists' behaviour and emotional engagement to gain sustainability in Community-based Tourism.

1.2 The Contribution:

Tourism has been acknowledged for its beneficial effects on both physical health and psychological well-being (Buckley, 2023). Studies indicate that tourists generally report higher levels of well-being compared to non-tourists, a trend linked to greater opportunities for community interaction, connected with nature, and exposure to new experiences (Chang et al., 2024; McCabe & Johnson, 2013). On the other hand, the concepts of eudaimonia and hedonia have long been explored as two distinct pathways to well-being from ancient times (Keyes & Annas, 2009). Aristotle's idea of eudaimonia emphasizes living a life of virtue and purpose, while Epicurus's hedonism centers on the pursuit of pleasure as the core of happiness (Bandara & Katukurunda, 2025). Philosophical discourse has often framed these concepts as normative approaches to achieving a happy or meaningful life (Huta & Ryan, 2010). Drawing on various interpretations of these terms, (Huta, 2022) outlines the primary features of each: "hedonia includes two main components: pleasure/enjoyment/fun and absence of pain/discomfort" (p. 511), whereas "eudaimonia often includes authenticity/autonomy, excellence/virtue, growth/self-actualization and meaning/contribution" (pp. 511–512), as further reviewed by Huta and Waterman (Huta & Waterman, 2014). Additionally, Mark Fabian conceptualizes

Subjective Well-being (SWB) through the Subjective Wellbeing Production Function (SWBPF), comprising three core elements: hedonia (pleasant life), eudaimonia (a fulfilling life), and conscience (a valuable life) (Dold, 2025). This research adopts Fabian's theoretical framework, interpreting 'fulfilling life' as a representation of tourists' eudaimonic behaviour. Using a mixed-method approach, this study also contributes to explore the overall well-being of tourists as well as the influence of CBT components – such as the meaning of life and community connection – on tourists' eudaimonic happiness, particularly focusing on the fulfilment of life.

This study further contributes to understand the sustainability of a Community-based Tourism ecosystem by: 1) Exploring the service providers perception and experience towards developing, managing and offering tourism products and services, 2) Investigating tourists' behaviour and emotional engagement towards the CBT services, 3) Assessing challenging areas and obstacles in current CBT initiatives. 4) Defining crucial factors for self-sustainable tourism approaches.

1.3 The Context:

Tourism has emerged as a vital sector in promoting community development, economic growth and eco-sensitivity, particularly in rural areas. This field study was conducted in a CBT project at Thrikkaipetta, a serene village located on the hills of Wayanad District in Kerala State of the southern part of India. The village has served as a Community-based Tourism initiative for more than a decade. Thrikkaipetta is celebrated for its lush green landscapes, mist-clad mountains, diverse flora and fauna, and a climate that remains pleasant throughout the year. This unique combination of natural beauty and cultural richness attracts tourists seeking tranquillity, recreation, and a connection with nature. As of 2014 India census, Thrikkaipatta village had a population of approximately 20,000. The nearest railway station to Thrikkaipetta village is Kozhikode Railway Station at Calicut, and the nearest airport is Calicut International

Airport, both approximately 90 km away, which is why the village is primarily connected to other communities by frequent buses.

Historically, Thrikkaipetta's roots trace back to the 18th century when it was governed by the Rajas of the Veda tribe and later the Kottayam royal dynasty. The region's strategic location made it a site of conflict and transition, eventually coming under British rule, which catalyzed infrastructural developments like roads connecting it to neighbouring cities such as Calicut and Mysore. These developments enhanced accessibility and laid the groundwork for Thrikkaipetta's emergence as a tourist destination. Today, Thrikkaipetta's tourism not only showcases its historical and cultural heritage but also emphasizes Community-based Tourism along with other community-driven initiatives.

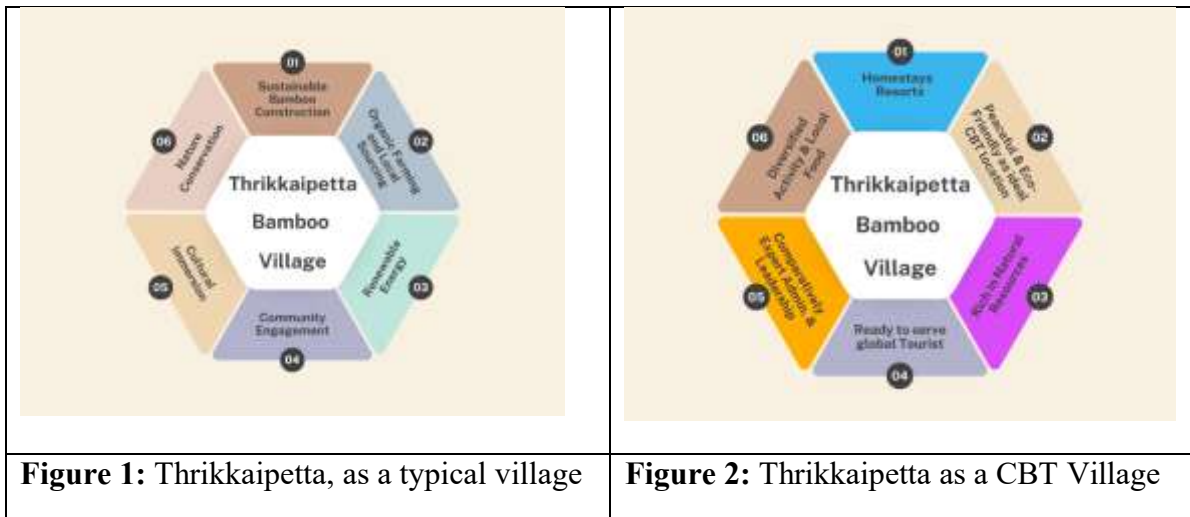
The way Thrikkaipetta has evolved into a community-based tourism project is a fascinating story and an important foundation for understanding the entire ecosystem. The CBT project in Thrikkaipetta began as a response to an agrarian crisis that severely affected local farmers. According to multiple interviewees, the origins of the project can be traced back early 2000s when the region faced severe economic distress, leading to numerous farmer suicides. The crisis in the village was driven by a combination of factors, including unsustainable farming practices, falling agricultural prices, and an inability to repay bank loans. As a result, many farmers lost their land to banks, which contributed to a wave of suicides.

In response to the crisis, a group of local village leaders came together to brainstorm solutions to protect their village. They realised that relying solely on agriculture was not sustainable and sought alternative sources of income. The group identified bamboo as an abundant local resource that could be used for livelihood generation. They established *Uravu*, an initiative focused on bamboo cultivation, training, and sustainable utilization. This initiative helped

create employment opportunities, particularly for women, and laid the foundation for a broader community-based development model.

Over time, as people became more involved in alternative income-generating activities, discussions around responsible tourism emerged. The idea was to develop a form of tourism that would support the local economy while preserving natural and cultural resources. This led to the concept of *Bamboo Village*, a sustainable tourism initiative that integrated homestays, handicrafts, and environmental conservation. Initially, many local families were hesitant to participate in homestay tourism, fearing cultural disruptions. However, after seeing positive feedback from early visitors and economic benefits, more families joined the initiative. The community tourism model ensured that revenue was distributed among multiple stakeholders, including farmers, artisans, and local guides. Tourism organisations like *Kabani* and other NGOs assisted in structuring the tourism model by conducting studies, providing training, and helping connect the village to responsible tourism networks in Europe. Gradually, the CBT initiatives had evolved into a model that emphasised slow, immersive experiences rather than mass tourism. Visitors now engage themselves in community activities like village walks, organic farming, traditional crafts, and cultural exchanges, all of which help sustain the local economy while minimising negative environmental and social impacts.

The Thrikkaipetta CBT project emerged as a grassroots response to an economic crisis, leveraging local resources and community collaboration to build a sustainable alternative to mainstream tourism.



A notable example of Thrikkaipetta’s Community-based Tourism initiative is the ‘Uravu’ Bamboo Project. Uravu epitomises the synergy between ecological conservation and socio-economic development, fostering skill training, promoting handicrafts, and facilitating eco-tourism, offering tourists a unique opportunity to engage with local communities while supporting sustainable practices. At Thrikkaipetta, tourists can explore bamboo plantations, participate in craft workshops, and purchase handmade souvenirs, thereby contributing directly to the livelihoods of local artisans and indigenous tribes where Uravu exemplifies how CBT can serve as a vehicle for cultural preservation and economic empowerment.

The region’s tranquil atmosphere provides an escape from urban life, while recreational activities like trekking, wildlife safaris, and cultural tours offer enriching experiences. This multifaceted appeal makes Thrikkaipetta suitable not only for solo travellers, couples, and families but also for business travellers and professionals from various capacities. The tourism infrastructure, comprising numerous homestays and resorts, ensures tourists have comfortable and immersive stays.

Despite its popularity, Thrikkaipetta’s tourism faces challenges such as balancing economic development with environmental conservation, ensuring equitable benefits for local communities, and managing the growing influx of tourists. Community-based tourism (CBT)

models, as exemplified by initiatives like Uravu, provide an effective approach, not enough to gain long-term sustainability, to addressing these challenges by fostering eco-friendly practices and prioritising local participation.

In the context of this research, Thrikkaipetta's Community-based Tourism model provides a valuable case study to analyze the dynamics of CBT in enhancing sustainable development. By examining the initiatives of this village, such as eco-tourism and artisan-focused programs, this study aims to identify critical success factors, major challenges, and the behavioural experience of tourists in achieving long-term sustainability.

1.4 Thesis Structure:

This thesis is structured to take the reader on a comprehensive journey through the process of understanding and exploring community-based tourism (CBT) in South Asia. It is designed to systematically address the research questions while providing clarity and depth at each stage.

In the introduction, the thesis begins by setting the stage with an exploration of the geographical, historical, and socio-economic background of the research field, particularly in the context of community-based tourism. This chapter delves into why CBT is a topic of significance in today's world, especially for countries like India, Bangladesh, and Nepal. It highlights the relevance of the study, identifies gaps in existing research, and emphasizes the potential contribution this work can make to both academic and practical realms.

Next, the *literature review* examines a rich tapestry of previous studies, offering insights into both established and emerging findings in the realm of CBT. A comparative table helps organize these findings, while the accompanying discussion pinpoints the gaps and inconsistencies in existing research. Building on this foundation, the hypotheses are articulated to guide the research direction, providing a bridge between what is known and what remains to be discovered.

Results and Discussion chapter presents the findings of the study, integrating data and analysis to generate meaningful insights. The results are not just numbers or narratives; they are the answers to the research questions, interwoven with thoughtful interpretation. Here, the discussion goes beyond the data, connecting findings to broader themes and offering an in-depth exploration of their implications in the context of CBT practices.

Finally, the thesis concludes by synthesizing the key insights from the research. This chapter not only summarizes the findings but also reflects on their significance in advancing the understanding of community-based tourism. It highlights the study's contributions, acknowledges its limitations, and suggests pathways for future research. In essence, it leaves the reader with a sense of closure while opening doors to further inquiry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 *Overview of Community-based Tourism Understanding*

A review of thirty key studies highlights diverse perspectives on Sustainability in Tourism, Community-based Tourism (CBT), and tourists' satisfaction, drawing from various theoretical frameworks and methodologies. Cayla and Eckhardt explored the cultural shaping of Asian brands within tourism contexts, employing Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) to understand how marketers redefine identities to attract diverse tourist demographics (Cayla & Eckhardt, 2008). Their findings emphasized the role of cultural branding in enhancing destination appeal. Anh Vu Mai analyzed factors influencing sustainable tourism development, identifying infrastructure development and social engagement as critical variables (Mai et al., 2020). Using sustainable development theories, their study highlighted the importance of social unity, inclusiveness and resource management in achieving long-term sustainability. Müller, Huck, and Markova investigated sustainable CBT in Cambodia, employing the concept of Willingness to Pay (WTP) (Huck & Markova, 2020). Their findings demonstrated that bottom-up approaches, emphasizing local community involvement, effectively promote environmental conservation and economic stability. Trupp, Dolezal, and Bui mapped the intersections of tourism, sustainability, and development in South Asia, applying modernization and dependency theories (Trupp & Dolezal, 2020). Their study highlighted the inequities in resource allocation and the challenges faced by local communities in capitalizing on tourism benefits. Vi Sa Tu (2008) examined community-based conservation practices, demonstrating that such practices enhance biodiversity conservation and empower local communities (Tu, 2008) Their study contributed to the discourse on integrating conservation with sustainable tourism development. Despite these valuable insights, there remains a notable lack of research on South Asian Community-based Tourism, especially identifying key factors that play vital roles in

ensuring long-term sustainability. Numerous studies indicate that local engagement is often influenced by external or dominant factors, leading to a top-down approach (Trupp et al., 2024; Burton et al., 2025). This highlights the pressing need to transition toward more inclusive, community-driven initiatives supported by local policy and governance. Furthermore, specifically in the context of CBT, there is a lack of in-depth research on identifying the key factors contributing to tourist satisfaction and addressing the operational challenges within existing CBT models.

2.2 *Perceived Authenticity*

In the context of tourism, Authenticity is recognised as an original, universal value and as a crucial driving force that motivates tourists to travel to distant lands (Daugstad & Kirchengast, 2013). Previous research has shown that the perceptions of authenticity influence perceived image in tourism, which are one of the key elements that tourists take into account when selecting destinations (Lu et al., 2015, (Martínez et al., 2014) . After having several arguments for the last few decades, Wang claimed that in tourism studies there are two main types of authenticity: the objective-related authenticity (objective authenticity and constructive authenticity) and activity-related authenticity (existential authenticity) (Wang, 1999) whereby objective authenticity refers to genuineness or the realness of things, and existential authenticity to human nature (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). Grayson and Martinec argued that authenticity is “a social construction that may change due to different evaluators’ perceptions and interpretations of the place, situation, person, or object” (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). As previous studies on CBT suggested that seeking local experience and engagement are the main attractions for visitors (Feriyanto et al., 2019; Nga Vo, 2020; Grayson & Martinec, 2004) this study focused on existential authenticity. Thus, this study adopts Grayson and Martinec’s definition, referring to Perceived Authenticity (Grayson & Martinec, 2004) as the perceptions of tourists’ cognitive recognition of “real” experiences of CBT. Study suggested that Perceived Authenticity in tourism can be measured by four variables and they are: 1) type of tourism represents a local life, 2) Represents

a local community, 3) offers a feeling of a real home and 4) allows for interaction with the local community (Shuqair et al., 2019).

Eudaimonic Happiness

Aristotle's concept of *eudaimonia* highlights the importance of living a life guided by virtue and purpose, while Epicurus's idea of *hedonism* focuses on the pursuit of pleasure as the essence of happiness (Bandara & Katukurunda, 2025). Philosophers have long debated these two approaches as models for achieving a happy and meaningful life (Huta & Ryan, 2010). Building on these ideas, Huta (2022) distinguishes between the two by describing *hedonia* as involving enjoyment, fun, and the absence of discomfort (p. 511), and *eudaimonia* often includes 4 primary features which are: 1. authenticity/autonomy, 2. excellence/virtue, 3. growth/self-actualization and 4. meaning of life/contribution (Huta, 2022) (pp. 511–512). Additionally, Mark Fabian introduces the concept of the Subjective Wellbeing Production Function (SWBPF), which frames well-being as consisting of three key elements: *hedonia* (a pleasant life), *eudaimonia* (a fulfilling life), and *conscience* (a valuable life) (Dold, 2025). This study is based on Fabian's framework, using 'fulfilling life' as a way to understand tourists' eudaimonic happiness.

Perceived Authenticity on Tourists' Eudaimonic Happiness

The research aims to explore how Perceived Authenticity in CBT experiences (local life, local community, feeling like a real home and interaction with the community) contributes to a deeper and more meaningful sense of happiness among tourists, particularly within rural and culturally rich destinations in South Asia. Therefore, the study examines whether Perceived Authenticity in Community-Based Tourism (CBT) as the independent variables (IVs) influences tourists' eudaimonic happiness (sense of fulfilment) as the dependent variable (DV).

H1a: *Experiencing Authenticity in CBT positively influences tourists' sense of fulfilment.*

2.3 Embodiment Experience on Eudaimonic Happiness

Embodied Experience is not merely a conceptual/propositional activity of thought, but rather constitutes our most basic way of being in, and engaging with, our surroundings in a deep visceral manner (Johnson, 2015). Merleau-Ponty argued that perception and experience are always embodied—we experience the world through our bodies, not just through mental or intellectual processes. The body is not an object but a subject of experience, central to how we engage with the world (Merleau-Ponty, 2013). In the context of tourism, an "embodied experience" involves the physical presence and participation of the tourist, engaging not just cognitively but emotionally and physically in local cultural practices and day-to-day life. (Crouch, 2000). In community-based tourism (CBT), visitors often engage in physical activities such as walking, trekking, dancing, and cooking, which foster deeper connections with local communities and environments. These activities contribute to what is termed an "embodied experience," where tourists actively participate both physically and mentally, enhancing the authenticity and memorability of their experiences (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2019). Therefore, this study examines the impact of embodied experience in CBT:

H1b: *Embodied Experience in CBT positively influences tourists' sense of fulfilment.*

2.4 Emotional Involvement

Destination attachment has been studied in different fields to understand how tourists are connected with places. This understanding is useful for managing and promoting tourism destinations effectively ((Dang & Weiss, 2021); (Dwyer, 2023)). Place attachment is a positive and personal connection that forms between a person and a place. In the context of Community-based Tourism, it usually develops when the services of CBT go beyond what the visitor expected and get involved psychologically. When people reflect on this experience, they often form an emotional bond with the place. In tourism, emotional involvement means the tourist has strong, positive feelings toward the destination (Nasyat et al., 2020).

As eudaimonic behavior also features people's engagement (Huta, 2022), this study seeks to find the impact of tourists' emotional involvement on eudaimonic behaviour.

The mediating role of Emotional Involvement

In the context of tourism, particularly community-based tourism (CBT), emotional involvement refers to the depth of emotional engagement and personal connection a tourist experiences during their interactions and activities within a destination. This concept is pivotal in understanding how tourists derive satisfaction and a sense of fulfilment from their travel experiences. (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018). research indicates that emotional responses significantly influence tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Emotions elicited during tourism experiences, such as joy, excitement, or a sense of belonging, can enhance the overall perception of the destination and increase the likelihood of revisitation and recommendation to others. (Santos et al., 2014). Understanding emotional involvement in tourism is essential for destination marketers and community planners aiming to create meaningful and memorable experiences that resonate with visitors on a personal level. (Prayag et al., 2013). Based on this well-established foundation, the current study posits that:

H2: *Emotional Involvement mediates the relation between tourists' embodied experience and tourists' sense of fulfilment.*

2.5 The moderating role of Digital Detox

The rising interest in digital detox is largely a response to our increasing reliance on technology and the constant flow of information in today's world (Bhattacharya & Raghuvanshi, 2019). This trend encourages people to seek out tourism experiences that are close to nature or involve limited use of technology, such as community-based tourism, as a way to reduce the stress and fatigue caused by excessive digital engagement (Yang et al., 2025; Gong et al., 2025). In this context, the present research aims to explore the moderating role of digital detox as a

motivational factor influencing tourists' experiences in Community-Based Tourism (CBT) and their eudaimonic behaviour:

H3: *Digital Detox moderates the degree of relationship between tourists' embodied experience and tourists' sense of fulfilment.*

As evidenced in the reviewed literature, existing studies provide valuable insights into sustainability in tourism and CBT practices. However, none explicitly identify the strongest contributors to gain long-term sustainability in community development through tourism, tourists' satisfaction or pinpoint the critical challenges faced by CBT models. Addressing these gaps is essential for developing a robust framework to enhance tourist experiences as well as optimizing the socio-economic benefits of community-driven tourism. This study aims to bridge these gaps by offering a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing CBT's long-term sustainability.

2.6 The Theoretical Context

While understanding the impact of CBT components and services on the overall well-being of tourists, it is important to frame the theoretical explanation of well-being. As described earlier, there are two distinctive pathways of well-being: 1) Hedonia and 2) Eudaimonia, representing Hedonic Happiness and Eudaimonic Happiness, respectively (Keyes & Annas, 2009). The main difference between hedonia and eudaimonia is that hedonic happiness is based on seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, while eudaimonic happiness is based on finding meaning, purpose, and virtue.

2.6.1 Hedonic happiness

Hedonic happiness, rooted in classical hedonistic philosophy, conceptualises well-being as the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. This perspective emphasises the importance of momentary positive experiences and emotional gratification as the primary sources of

happiness (Diener et al., 1999). According to the hedonic view, a happy life is one that maximises pleasurable activities and minimises discomfort or distress. Hedonic experiences typically include sensory and emotional pleasures such as enjoying good food, engaging in recreational activities, celebrating achievements, or experiencing intimacy and entertainment.

From a psychological standpoint, hedonic happiness is closely associated with the presence of positive affect, the absence of negative affect, and overall life satisfaction (Kahneman et al., 1997). These indicators reflect an individual's emotional evaluation of life, particularly in terms of how pleasant or enjoyable their experiences are. Common emotional states linked to hedonic well-being include joy, excitement, contentment, and satisfaction.

While the hedonic approach to happiness offers a valuable lens for understanding short-term emotional well-being, it has been critiqued for its limited focus on deeper or more enduring forms of happiness. Nonetheless, it remains a foundational construct in well-being research, particularly in studies related to consumer behaviour, tourism, leisure, and positive psychology. In such contexts, hedonic happiness is used to evaluate how pleasurable experiences influence an individual's subjective sense of fulfillment and life enjoyment.

This type of happiness is based on the idea that pursuing pleasurable experiences and avoiding painful ones will lead to happiness. Hedonic experiences include partying, eating delicious food, sexual intercourse, or winning an award. Hedonic happiness is often associated with positive emotions like joy, excitement, satisfaction, and contentment.

2.6.2 Eudaimonic happiness

As per Britannica Encyclopaedia, “Eudaimonia, in Aristotelian ethics, the condition of human flourishing or of living well. The conventional English translation of the ancient Greek term, “happiness,” is unfortunate because eudaimonia, as Aristotle and most

other ancient philosophers understood it, does not consist of a state of mind or a feeling of pleasure or contentment, as “happiness” (as it is commonly used) implies. For Aristotle, eudaimonia is the highest human good, the only human good that is desirable for its own sake (as an end in itself) rather than for the sake of something else (as a means toward some other end).”

Aristotle believed that everything—whether it's a living being or a human-made object—has a unique purpose or function that sets it apart from everything else. The highest good for something lies in how well it performs its purpose, and its "virtue" or excellence is the set of traits that enable it to perform that purpose effectively. For example, the virtue of a knife is what makes it cut well, and the virtue of an eye is what allows it to see well.

When it comes to humans, Aristotle argued that our unique function is our ability to reason. Therefore, the ultimate human good, or *eudaimonia* (often translated as flourishing or happiness), is living a life of reasoning performed excellently, guided by virtue. In other words, being truly fulfilled means engaging our rational minds in virtuous and meaningful ways. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I, chapter 7)

Both types of happiness can contribute to overall well-being in different ways.

Eudaimonic Happiness	Hedonic Happiness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfilling life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy Moments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Way of life that is satisfying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events/Experience that is satisfying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic – life as a whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragmented – elements of life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling your life has a meaning /purpose, your experience allow you to learn, grow and reach your full potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasure and feeling good in the moment/ reaching a goal/ feeling temporarily satisfied

Table 1: Difference between Eudaimonic Happiness and Hedonic Happiness

2.7 The Proposed Research Model

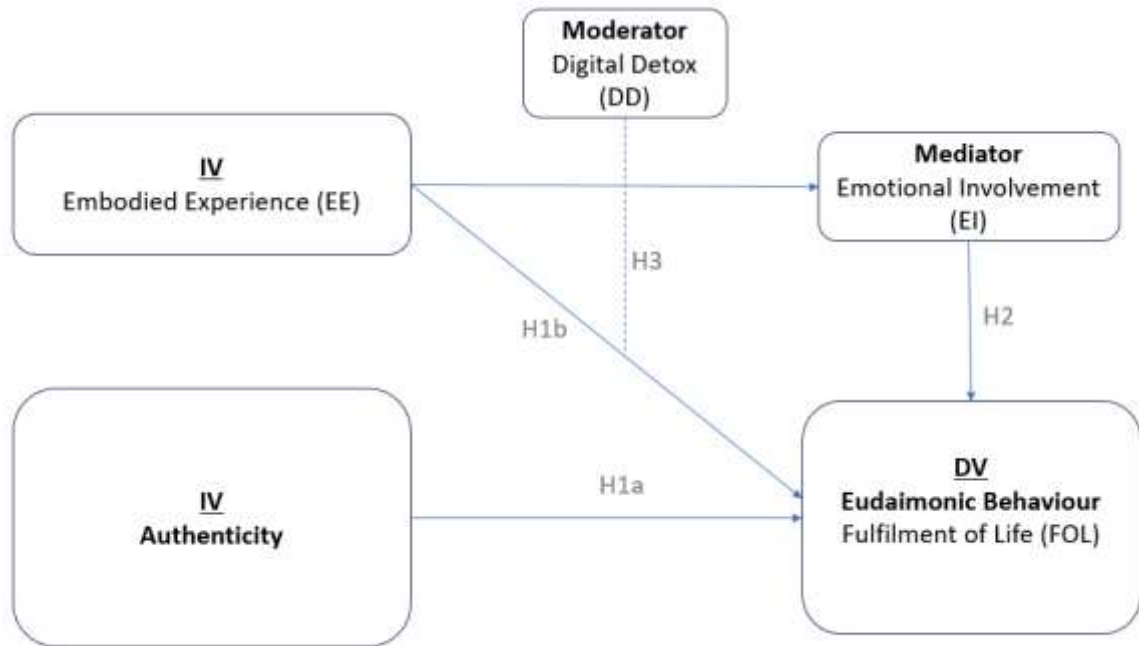


Figure 3: The Proposed Research Model

Theoretical Context of the Proposed Research Model

The proposed conceptual model offers a novel theoretical lens to understand how embodied experiences and authenticity contribute to eudaimonic well-being, particularly in the context of community-based tourism (CBT). Drawing from embodied cognition theory (Smythies, 1993) and self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2023), this model proposes that active engagement in physical and sensory experiences (e.g., village walking, trekking, participating in carft workshop, cooking or dancing) enhances tourists' emotional involvement, which in turn fosters a sense of fulfilment and purpose, the core of eudaimonic behavior (Huta, 2022). Emotional involvement here acts as a mediator, aligning with findings in consumer psychology that highlight affective engagement as a driver of meaningful experiences (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1986). Furthermore, digital detox is proposed as a moderator, recognizing the growing role of

technology disengagement in deepening mindfulness and emotional connection (Mursaleen, 2024). By integrating these elements, the model not only extends previous research on tourism experience and well-being but also provides a flexible framework to explore how authentic and immersive interactions contribute to psychological richness in the context of Community-based Tourism.

3. METHODOLOGY

This methodological framework ensures a robust and holistic exploration of community-based sustainable tourism in South Asia. By integrating quantitative surveys with qualitative observations and interviews, the study captures a comprehensive picture of the current practices, challenges, and opportunities in CBT. The results of this mixed-method approach will provide actionable insights for policymakers, local communities, and tourism stakeholders, contributing to the development of more effective and sustainable CBT models for the region.

3.1 Research Objectives:

This study was conducted to understand the behaviour, perceptions, experiences, and expectations of both CBT service providers and tourists, and to explore the marketing dynamics that could help identify potential initiatives to address the core challenges threatening the long-term self-sustainability of CBT projects, such as the Thrikkaipetta Bamboo Village in South Asia.

The objective of the research was:

- Identify key indicators that contribute to the creation and sustainability of self-sustaining CBT models.
- Analyse tourists' behaviour, emotional engagement, and fulfilment during CBT experiences.
- Examine the challenges faced by community-based tourism projects and propose strategies to overcome them.
- Assess the moderating role of digital detox and the mediating role of behavioural intention in shaping tourist fulfilment of life.
- Provide actionable insights to develop a flexible framework for stakeholders aiming to improve and sustain CBT initiatives in South Asia.

3.2 Research Design

To gain an empirical understanding of the topic through a mixed-method approach, the study was structured in two phases: (a) a qualitative phase and (b) a quantitative phase, comprising three individual studies.

- **Qualitative Phase:** Study 1 and Study 2
- **Quantitative Phase:** Study 3

3.2.1 Qualitative Study:

Study 1: In-depth Interview - Understanding and Evaluating the current understanding of Community-based Tourism from the Service Providers' End and how they conceptualize, develop and serve CBT products and services. Over the period, how stakeholders modify, evaluate and reengage themselves in dealing with tourists and maintain the economic cycle through marketing dynamics.

Study 2: Customer Feedback Review - Identifying the key components of CBT and the critical challenges from the tourists' perspective and experience with CBT services at Thrikkaipetta Village.

3.2.2 Quantitative Study:

Study 3: Survey Questionnaire – Evaluating the impact of CBT services on tourists' eudaimonic happiness—specifically, their sense towards the fulfilment of life. It also explores whether tourists' behavioural intention mediates the relationship between eudaimonic happiness and behavioural experience, and whether digital detox moderates the strength of the relationship between behavioural experience and eudaimonic behaviour.

4. QUALITATIVE STUDY

4.1 Study 1: In-depth interview with CBT Service Providers

Semi-structured questionnaires for the in-depth interview were developed to gather detailed qualitative data from CBT Service providers and stakeholders such as homestay owners, resort owners, management personnel, local artists, guides, and representatives from the local tourism authority.

4.2 Objective:

The questionnaires were designed to address all research objectives, including topics such as:

1. Impacts of tourism on local livelihoods and culture.
2. Community participation in decision-making and benefit-sharing.
3. Awareness of sustainable tourism practices.

4.3 Method:

Semi- structured interviews were conducted with 13 respondents face to face where 3 respondents were female and 9 were male. The duration of the interview span was from 29 minutes to 1 hour 50 minutes. The age group of the participants was 25 to 63 years.

4.4 Approach:

A thematic approach has been chosen to design the in-depth interviews. Exploratory method aimed at uncovering the underlying components of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) from the perspective of service providers. This approach was essential for identifying patterns and themes that might not be immediately visible but play a crucial role in shaping the CBT experience.

One of the key challenges in CBT is the gap between the services provided and the expectations of tourists. When these expectations are not met, tourists often experience dissatisfaction, which

in turn leads to a loss of trust in CBT initiatives. To address the root causes of this issue, it was important to explore perspectives from both sides—service providers and tourists.

By using a thematic approach, it was appropriate to analyze these perspectives in depth, identify recurring issues, and gain insights into the broader structural and operational challenges within CBT. This method allowed for a thorough understanding of the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and trust, ultimately contributing to the development of more effective and sustainable CBT strategies.

4.5 Sample: Participants of In-Depth Interview

Community-based Tourism (CBT) is a complex phenomenon that necessitates a holistic understanding of its mechanisms. To gain comprehensive insights, it was vital to engage respondents from diverse professional backgrounds. Consequently, the researcher selected interview participants not only from homestay and resort owners but also from key stakeholders across various sectors. These included Village Coordinators, Local Tourist Guides, and representatives of local authorities, ensuring a well-rounded perspective on CBT practices.

The in-depth interviews encompassed individuals from a range of disciplines, allowing for a nuanced exploration of the operational dynamics, challenges, and opportunities within community-based tourism. The following sectors were covered in the interviews:

SL. No.	CBT Stake Holding Areas	Number of People	Code of the interviewees	Age	Gender
1	Homestay Owner	3	WAY-COR-1 WAY-BAB-5 WAY-BRAJ-6	53 63 60	Female Male Male
2	Resort Owner	1	WAY-SIV-11	63	Male
3	Community Coordinator + Homestay Owner + Journalist	1	WAY-SUN-3	57	Male
4	Local Tourist Guide + Transport Service Provider	1	WAY-SIVR-12	62	Male
5	Local Environmentalist + Guide	1	WAY-GUI-13	27	Male

6	Village Farmer + Homestay Owner	1	WAY-DAN-2	59	Male
7	Local Artist + Resort Employee	1	WAY-SAD-7	54	Male
8	Administrator & Leader + Homestay Owner	1	WAY-SIVR2-13	62	Male
9	Food Supplier + Homestay Owner	1	WAY-ELY-8	65	Female
10	Local Tourism Authority + Homestay Owner	1	WAY-HAR-10	58	Male
11	Local Ayurvedic Doctor	1	WAY-SRE-4	36	Female
	TOTAL No. of INTERVIEWEE	13			

Table 2: CBT areas of the interviewees and allocated code against each interviewee

4.6 Tools:

All 13 interviews were conducted in person and recorded using a cell phone recorder, and the downloaded files were transcribed using the online application Maxoda.com. Later, the transcription was cleaned, prepared manually and analyzed by using Atlas.ti.

4.7 Procedure:

13 respondents who had volunteered to participate and represented a diverse socio-demographic setting were interviewed for the study. Informed consent was obtained from all the respondents, and they were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, especially related to their personal experiences and challenges. The 13 interviews consisted of a total of 906 minutes of audio recording. The average duration of the interview was approximately 69 minutes, where the duration varied upon the openness of the respondent, from a minimum of 25 minutes to a maximum of 1 hour and 50 mins.

The following process was followed to collect the data through in-depth interviews and final analysis.

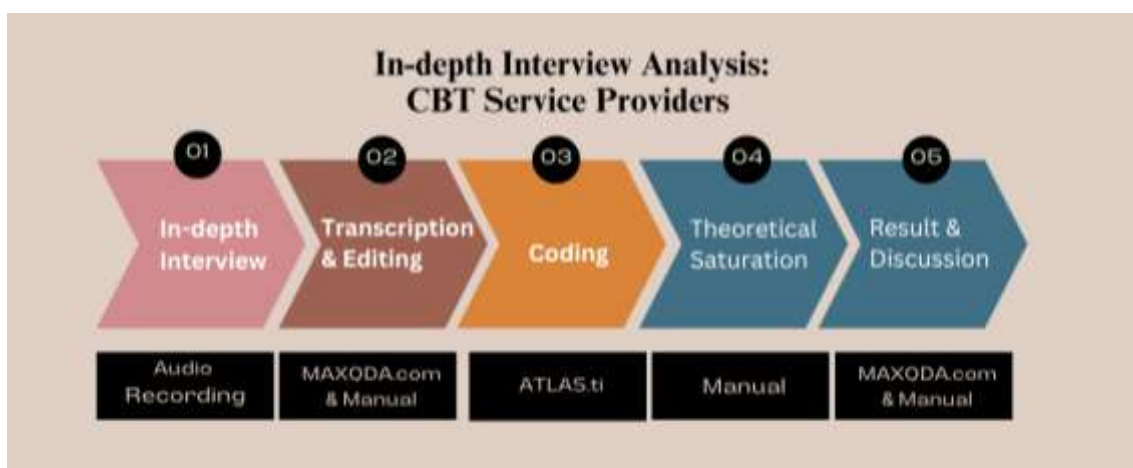


Figure 4: Process followed for the Analysis of In-depth Interview

4.8 Structure of the interview:

The interviews were designed with open-ended questions to encourage participants to reflect on their personal journey in understanding Community-based tourism, their experiences serving tourists, and how this work has impacted their lives and communities. Each interview began with a few basic, ice-breaking questions about the participant's background. This was followed by more direct questions about the CBT services they provide, including how those services were conceptualised, designed, developed, and delivered to tourists. The conversation then moved into more reflective questions about their experiences throughout the service delivery process and how those experiences shaped their knowledge and understanding over time. Additional follow-up questions were asked to explore certain topics like the concerns and challenges they face, in more depth. Before ending the interview questions were asked about their understanding regarding topics like authenticity, psychological fulfilment of life, Digital Detox and understanding of technology.

4.9 Interview Guide

An interview guide was developed to facilitate discussions with stakeholders, ensuring a structured yet flexible approach. Key topics included:

1. Community History, Culture and the background
2. Details of CBT services – past, present and the future
3. Demographic and psychographic profile of Tourists and their needs
4. Usage of technology
5. Benefit of Tourism - Mainstream vs CBT
6. Marketing initiatives in CBT – Past, present future – mainstream vs CBT – intervention of technology
7. Management, Operational and Overall challenges – What, why and how to overcome

8. Understanding about Authenticity in CBT, Psychological Fulfilment, Digital Detox and Technology

The full list of topics covered in the interviews is outlined in the table below, which served as the Interview Guide.

SL	CBT AREA	GENERAL QUESTIONS	TARGET AREA	TARGET QUESTIONS
1	Identity	Your journey in Community-based Tourism – CBT.	Art, culture, local craft	As an artist/ Dancer/ Craftsman, how did you start your journey with CBT?
			Food Production/Delivery	How did you start your food production/ delivery journey?
			Transport Service Provider	How and When did you start your transportation business in this village?
2	Background	The reason for choosing CBT, not mainstream tourism? Why?	Art, culture, local craft	How is your art/cultural performance/craftwork contributing to CBT or mainstream tourism?
3	Who is a CBT tourist?	Describe your tourists. – origin, age, behaviour, way to get information, selection process, food habits, average duration of stay, likes-dislikes, feedback and more.	Art, culture, local craft	Describe tourists based on your experience while you perform/ present your artwork?
			Food Production/Delivery	Describe tourists based on your experience while you serve them food?
			Transport Service Provider	Describe tourists based on your experience while you travel with them?
4	Tourist's need	How do you recognise tourists' needs/reason to visit (Lets not mentions	Food Production/Delivery	How do you select your menu?

		'psychological fulfilment', 'escapism', 'digital detox'... let them say first..)		
			Art, culture, local craft	How do you select your artwork/ what to perform
			Transport Service Provider	How do you prepare yourself for the travel route/program?
5	Source of CBT services	How do you design and characterize services for tourists (Lets not mention, authentic, traditional... let them speak first) and finally how do you gain confidence about your service?		
6	CBT services/activities	Tell us about other CBT services in your community. Past to present – why these changes?		
7	Tourist's need – relaxed	What specific services or experiences do you offer that help tourists feel relaxed / time is slowing down / no rush... during their stay? Can you share examples of activities?	Guide	How do you guide tourists to feel relaxed / time is slowing down / no rush... during the tour? Can you share examples of activities?
			Art, culture, local craft	How do your artwork/performance help tourists to feel relaxed / overwhelmed / time-shifted ... during the presentation? Can you share examples of activities?
			Food Production/Delivery	How do you cook/present/deliver food that make tourist feel special/happy/time-shifted?
8	Tourists' CBT needs	What do you think about tourist's need to visit this village/CBT?		

9	CBT activity - connect with nature	What activities or experiences do you offer that help tourists to connect with nature?	Ayurvedic Doctor	How do you help tourists to get back to/connect with nature?
10	CBT activity - connect with community	What activities or experiences do you offer that help tourists to connect with community?	Art, culture, local craft	How do you help tourists to get back to/connect with local tradition/culture/heritage/history?
11	CBT activity - tourist's involvement	What activities or experiences do you offer that help tourists to involve with community?	Guide	How do you guide tourists to get involved with the community?
12	Tourist's expression	Share tourists' expressions after experiencing your services/activities.		
13	Benefit from CBT	How you / your community / village get benefit from CBT?		
		As per your knowledge, what are the benefits that tourist get from CBT?		
14	Marketing for CBT	Past, present future – mainstream vs CBT – intervention of technology	Art, culture, local craft	How do you promote yourself/get job/business?
15	Sustainability matrix	When can you say – “Your village is sustainable in CBT?”	Village Coordinator	What are sustainability matrix that you want to achieve for your village to become sustainable?
16	Overall challenges	What, why, how to overcome (Do not tell economical, political, operational, technology understanding.... Let them tell first..) present and upcoming challenges?		
17	Scope of improvement	Scope of improvement (Do not mention the area such as service design, conservation, environment, or policy....let them say first...) in CBT		
18	Authenticity	What is authenticity in CBT as per your understanding? Do you	Food Production/Deliv	How is your food authentic? How do you manage/keep

		provide it here? How? What makes the experience authentic?		the balance of authenticity in food vs tourist's taste?
19	Psychological fulfilment	What is Psychological fulfilment as per your understanding? Do tourists get it here? How?		
20	Understanding technology	mainstream vs CBT – Digital Detox vs Necessity vs habit – by the tourist		
		How do you use technology for your business/activity and for the tourists?		

Table 3: Interview Guide – Qualitative Study

4.10 Ethics followed in research

Before conducting the interviews, informed consent was obtained from all participants. They were asked for permission to record the conversations in advance. Participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential, and they were free to skip any questions they didn't feel comfortable answering. They were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time, and if they did, their data would not be included in the research. All the information collected is only accessible to the researcher.

4.11 Code Description of Qualitative Study:

The Coding Group in this document serves as an essential framework for categorizing qualitative data from interviews and field research. It systematically organizes key themes related to Community-Based Tourism (CBT) under Document Groups, each of which includes specific Codes that represent relevant topics and insights. This structured approach enables researchers to analyze qualitative responses efficiently, identify patterns, and draw meaningful conclusions about sustainable tourism.

Document Group	Code	Memo
Authenticity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authenticity 2. Community Activity 3. Feel Home 4. Festival and Exhibition 5. Interaction with Community 6. Involvement of the Community 7. Local Art 8. Local Community 9. Local Food 10. Local History & Culture 11. Local life 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Genuine local experiences 2. Village Walk, Bird watching, Cooking Class, Ayurvedic Massage and many... 3. Feel like home as a family member 4. Local Festival, show, Exhibition 5. Interaction with local people 6. Tourist's Involvement with community 7. Local art, painting, handicrafts etc. 8. Local activities representing community 9. Authentic local cousin 10. Local History, tradition & culture 11. Life of people, daily activity and practices
Understanding Technology Impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Digital Detox 2. Understanding Technology 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unnecessary digital detachment 2. The usage of Technology by Tourists vs Service providers
External Affairs on CBT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaboration 2. Outsider Impact 3. Policy and Regulation 4. Tourism Policy 5. Trade Politics 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Linking external resources/help 2. Those who are not native / immigrant 3. Governance, Local Authority and Admin 4. Tourism Policy – National & State 5. Local Trade Politics
Internal Affairs of CBT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CBT Benefits 2. CBT Training 3. Innovation 4. Involvement of the Community 5. Monitoring 6. Socio-Economic Role 8. Tourist's Involvement 9. Trade Politics 10. Village Administration and 11. Leadership 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal & Community Benefit from CBT 2. Tourist's Benefit from CBT 3. Getting ready for CBT 4. New Ideas for the development 5. People getting together to grow 6. Village Coordinator's role 7. Internal driving mechanism 8. Allowing Tourists Involvement in activity 9. Internal Trade Politics / sharing business 10. Anyone can lead, unlimited areas and administration is a must
Understanding CBT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background - Why CBT 2. CBT Behaviour 3. Mass Tourism 4. Negative impact of Tourism 5. Negativity of Home Stay 6. Negativity of Resort 7. Right Tourist for CBT 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How the CBT journey started 2. Behaving responsible and sustainable 3. Understanding mass tourism 4. How tourism impacts negatively 5. Where Homestay is not suitable 6. Where local resort is not suitable 7. Who is the right tourist for CBT

Sensitivity Towards Nature	1. Nature and Environment 2. Sustainable Infrastructure	1. Role of nature and environment in CBT 2. Role of Eco-friendly infrastructure in CBT
Challenging Areas of CBT	1. Challenges 2. Future Plan	1. What makes CBT unsustainable 2. Scope of improvement
Eudaimonic Happiness	1. Emotional Involvement 2. Psychology Impact	1. Long term emotional engagement 2. Purposeful, Meaning of life and fulfilment of life

Table 4: Code description Gudie – Qualitative study

4.12 Code Document Analysis of Qualitative Study:

The following code document analysis represents 9 groups and 32 sub-groups, which were created to develop a strategic categorisation of the key factors. This table of code document was developed by using Atalat.ti, an online qualitative analytical application where all the transcription of the in-depth interview was uploaded for systematic analysis.

INTERVIEW EE Code (Total = 13 persons)	W AY - CO R-1 Gr =1 52	W AY - DA N- 2 Gr =9 4	W AY - SU N- 3 Gr =5 6	W AY - SR E- 4 Gr =1 6	W AY - BA B- 5 Gr =2 2	W AY - BR AJ -6 Gr =3 5	W AY - SA D- 7 Gr =2 5	W AY - EL Y- 8 Gr =1 9	W AY - G RO UP -9 Gr =6	W AY - H AR -10 Gr =1 2	W AY - SI V- 11 Gr =1 0	W AY - SI VR -12 Gr =1 2	W AY - SI VR 2- 13 Gr =2 3	Tota ls
Authenticity Gr=137; GS=11	32	43	17	9	7	6	9	3	1	2	0	4	4	137
Challenging Areas of CBT Gr=65; GS=2	26	3	7	1	1	15	4	1	0	2	1	1	3	65
Eudaimonic Happiness Gr=25; GS=2	4	1	5	0	5	2	0	1	1	3	0	0	3	25
External Affairs on CBT Gr=49; GS=5	23	6	6	0	1	3	0	0	3	1	0	2	4	49
Internal Affairs of CBT	38	41	16	2	19	9	4	3	0	3	5	1	6	147

Gr=147; GS=9														
Sensitivity Towards Nature Gr=41; GS=2	13	3	12	0	1	3	4	1	0	1	0	1	2	41
Understanding CBT Gr=122; GS=7	44	14	9	5	2	9	8	11	0	3	6	5	6	122
Understanding Technology Impact Gr=42; GS=2	14	7	6	3	0	5	2	1	0	1	0	0	3	42
Marketing Gr=43	16	9	4	2	0	5	0	1	3	0	0	0	3	43
Toal	210	127	82	22	36	57	31	22	8	16	12	14	34	671

Table 5: Code Document Analysis (generated by using atlas.ti)

The above table of code document analysis shows the number of times the code is being used by 13 interviewees, which were categorized into 9 key factors. The table indicates that interviewees discussed more on Authenticity, Internal affairs, Understanding and challenging areas in CBT, along with other key factors shown in the table.

4.13 Results and Discussion of Study 1:

As the approach of this in-depth interview was thematic and exploratory, several issues were discussed by repondenats such as impact of local event management, arranging local festivals, influence of local hotels and tour operators to bring tourists for the CBT village, impact of non-touirsm organizations to bring CBT business and so on, which were not common in most of the discussions, whearas this research more focused on issues which were widely, repetedly and strongly mentioned by most of the respondents.

Based on this approach, the in-depth interview was summarised in 4 categories:

A. Reflection on CBT Experience by the Stakeholders

- B. CBT Management – how the village coordination team manages the CBT services
- C. Tourist of CBT – how service providers and stakeholders perceive CBT Tourists
- D. Overall challenges in CBT

Discussion Summary – In-depth Interview			
A. Reflection on CBT Experience	B. CBT Management	C. Tourist of CBT	D. Challenges in CBT
1. Local Lifestyle 2. Community Activity 3. Authentic Food 4. Feel like Home 5. Benefits of CBT 6. Why CBT Became Essential 7. Authenticity 8. Psychological Fulfilment 9. Digital Detox 10. Understanding Technology in CBT	1. The Power of Collaboration 2. Skill Development for CBT Success 3. Innovation in CBT	1. Influence of Foreign Tourists vs Local Tourists 2. The Behaviour of CBT Tourists 3. Comparing Mass Tourism and CBT	1. Challenges in Community-Based Tourism in Wayanad 2. The Impact of Outsiders 3. The Role of Policy and Regulations 4. Active Community Participation

Table 6: Discussion Summary – In-depth Interview

4.13.1 Reflection on CBT Experience

4.13.1.1 Local Lifestyle

CBT in Wayanad allows travellers to immerse themselves in the everyday life of the region. Visitors take part in activities like organic farming, cattle rearing, and traditional cooking, gaining hands-on experience of rural life. Unlike conventional tourism, which often involves rushing from one attraction to another, CBT promotes slow tourism, encouraging meaningful interactions with locals. Village walks offer tourists insight into agricultural practices, medicinal plants, and cultural heritage, ensuring that traditional knowledge is preserved while enhancing visitors’ understanding of the community.

4.13.1.2 Community Activity

Community activity in Wayanad, as seen in the establishment of homestay networks and local tourism committees. They have collectively discussed, developed and plan tourism activities, ensuring that economic benefits are distributed fairly among all the villagers. Regular community meetings help in decision-making, and cultural events, such as traditional performances and village tours, are arranged with active involvement from locals. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, reinforcing the community's commitment to sustainable tourism.



Figure 5: The CBT Activity of Thrikkaipetta Village, Wayanad, Kerala, India

4.13.1.3 Authentic Food

As with today's tourism sectors, it has become very important to provide an authentic dining experience to become more competitive (Xu et al., 2023). Stakeholders in Thrikkaipetta village

consistently highlighted the powerful impact of authentic local food on tourists' satisfaction, long-term memories, and their sense of feeling at home. Food-related activities often began with visits to the garden or fields to collect vegetables or fruits, followed by cooking alongside the host, learning traditional cooking methods, and sharing meals with the family. These immersive experiences deeply moved tourists and played a key role in how they evaluated CBT services. Recognising the central importance of food, villagers developed a range of engaging activities that encouraged tourist participation and hands-on learning. These experiences created a clear distinction from mass tourism, where such personal and meaningful interactions are rare. Many tourists shared how food was not just nourishment but a gateway to connection, culture, and a true sense of belonging.

4.13.1.4 Feel like Home Experience

A key aspect of community-based tourism (CBT) in Thrikkaipetta Village is the warm, family-like hospitality offered by homestay owners, guides, and local villagers. Instead of being treated as just random visitors, tourists were welcomed as part of the household. They took part in daily activities like sharing meals, learning about cultural traditions and cooking styles, and engaging in local customs. This immersive experience often created a strong sense of belonging, encouraging many visitors to return and recommend the experience to others. Travelers often preferred this kind of personal connection over staying in commercial hotels, as it allowed for more meaningful interaction with the local community.

4.13.1.5 Benefits of CBT

Community-based tourism has transformed local economies by providing alternative income sources, particularly for small-scale farmers, artisans, and women. Homestays offer financial security to villagers, reducing dependence on agriculture, which has become increasingly unpredictable due to economic and environmental challenges. CBT also plays a crucial role in cultural preservation, encouraging locals to maintain their traditions and crafts to attract

visitors. Additionally, the financial and social benefits of CBT have contributed to reducing rural migration, allowing families to sustain themselves within their own communities.

“(My daughter) very easily attended the interview. That year, only five people were selected from India... She benefited from tourism. She learned how to manage people and had good experience (at home). That’s why it was easy for her to attend the interview. And her thinking and ambition are very high. She wanted to study abroad. That’s also the benefit from the tourism.” - Mentioned by WAY-DAN 2, age 62 years, male, a homestay owner.

4.13.1.6 Why CBT Became Essential

The emergence of community-based tourism (CBT) in Thrikkaipetta was largely a response to an agricultural crisis that left many farmers facing unstable incomes due to fluctuating crop prices, debt, and land-related issues. CBT offered a practical and sustainable alternative, providing economic relief while also helping to preserve the village’s cultural and environmental heritage. By making use of existing resources—such as traditional homes, local crafts, and community knowledge—the village developed a tourism model that delivers long-term benefits. What makes this initiative especially unique is that while many community members contribute to CBT, none of them are solely dependent on it. Instead, tourism has been integrated into their regular livelihoods. With minimal investment, training, and management, the CBT model has opened up a new pathway for sustainable economic development. It is now playing a significant role in improving local well-being, addressing climate change, and strengthening economic resilience.

4.13.1.7 Authenticity in the eyes of CBT service providers

Beyond the academic understanding, this qualitative study explored the meaning of ‘Authenticity’ from the perspective of CBT service providers. From the in-depth interviews, it was found that no stakeholder had a clear and complete idea of ‘Authenticity’; each had a

distinctly different understanding of it. Interview findings highlight the need for a better understanding of authenticity among stakeholders in Community-Based Tourism (CBT), as it holds significant potential to influence tourists' eudaimonic behaviour.

“They (tourists) want to experience the genuine (Authentic) thing, genuine Ayurveda, not just in the name of Ayurvedic massage, because then they can go to so many other resorts. -

Mentioned by WAY-SRE-4, an ayurvedic doctor, female, age 36

4.13.1.8 Psychological Fulfilment

Stakeholders believe that CBT services offer tourists a sense of psychological fulfilment by bringing them closer to nature—the lush greenery, the peaceful silence, the morning calls of birds, and even the simple joy of watching ‘touch-me-not’ leaves respond to a gentle touch. They feel that it’s not just the observation or sensory experience that matters, but also the chance to actively participate in community activities. Whether it's joining a bamboo workshop, playing local sports with villagers, cooking with the host’s family, dancing together, or helping organize a village event, these immersive experiences create lasting memories that tourists cherish for a long time. Such meaningful interactions, rarely found in mass tourism, are what truly enrich the psychological well-being of tourists.

4.13.1.9 Digital Detox in the eyes of CBT service providers

An emerging trend in community-based tourism (CBT) is the idea of digital detox—encouraging visitors to unplug from technology and reconnect with nature and human interaction (Talukder et al., 2024). While the term ‘digital detox’ may not be widely known among stakeholders, many homestay owners in Thrikkaipetta partially support this approach. They observed that most tourists do not appear to be addicted to their devices; instead, they tend to focus on enjoying the activities and outdoor experiences. Stakeholders often promote

village walks, trekking, bird-watching and cultural events, which guests find refreshing, as these moments allow them to take a break from their fast-paced, screen-driven lives and be more present. Interestingly, as Bangalore—a globally recognized IT hub—is the nearest major city, many tourists from there are IT professionals who visit Thrikkaipetta for the weekend or even work remotely while staying in the village. These guests typically use digital devices for a few hours after breakfast or before dinner but also make time for village walks and appreciate the calm and connection with nature. Stakeholders do not see the use of digital devices as a barrier to enjoying CBT experiences. They distinguish between digital use for professional purposes and digital overuse as a form of addiction. What matters, they believe, is not whether devices are used, but *how* they are used. From their perspective, CBT encourages tourists to use technology meaningfully—balancing screen time with real-world engagement—while still immersing themselves in the unique experiences the village has to offer.

4.13.1.10 Understanding of Technology in CBT

While technology plays an important role in modern tourism, its presence in Thrikkaipetta's Community-based tourism (CBT) remains minimal. Most homestay owners still rely on traditional word-of-mouth promotion, and only a few uses basic social media platforms like Facebook or Instagram. Many do not have their own websites or even official social media pages. A lack of technical skills and the slow adoption of online booking systems continue to be challenges for most stakeholders. In many cases, televisions are not provided in guest rooms or restaurants—but interestingly, there has not been much demand for them either. While stakeholders acknowledge that adopting technology could help them reach more visitors and grow their business, some also express concerns. They worry that attracting too many tourists to this small village by using modern technology could disturb the balance of the local ecosystem and community harmony. In this context, the meaning of 'understanding technology' may differ from its conventional definition. Rather than focusing on using advanced digital

tools, the use and purpose of technology in CBT should be evaluated from a local, community-based perspective—prioritizing sustainability, balance, and meaningful engagement over mass promotion or use of modern technology.

4.13.1 CBT Management in Thrikkaipetta

4.13.2.1 The Power of Collaboration

Collaboration with various organizations, agencies, and tourism operators has been a key factor in the success of community-based tourism (CBT) in Thrikkaipetta Bamboo Village. Local villagers, NGOs, tourism committees, and government bodies work hand in hand to develop structured homestay programs, organize cultural events, and provide training related to tourism. Organizations like Kabani have played a vital role from the very beginning, supporting the community through skill development and marketing initiatives. Over time, CBT efforts have promoted economic inclusivity by involving local farmers, artisans, and transport providers, ensuring that the income generated from tourism benefits a broad cross-section of the community.

“World actually by the through company. Because they were talking about sustainable tourism. There was lot of linkages. There was one group from Switzerland, then some Swedish universities. They had sent their study groups”- mentioned by WAY-COR-1, Resort owner, female, age 53

4.13.2.2 Skill Development for CBT Success

Stakeholders were highly grateful to the importance of training programs, which were essential for the successful implementation of CBT in Thrikkaipetta. Various initiatives have been launched throughout the last decade to equip locals with skills in hospitality, hygiene, language proficiency, and tourism management. In many cases, tourism organisations like ‘Kabini’ along with village leaders, NGOs and local organizations like ‘Uravu’, conducted workshops on preparing traditional meals, guiding tourists, housekeeping, keeping the environment clean,

maintaining hygiene issues and other sustainable tourism practices. These training sessions empower villagers, increasing their confidence in hosting guests and ensuring that tourism development and management meet at least the basic standard.

“When a lot of people come, they get together and share their feedback. What could be improved? What like they had discussions like that in the training session. And then there is an organization called Kudambasri. So they. They also came and gave training to them and they gave certification. - Mentioned by WAY-ELY-8, a homestay owner, female, age 65

4.13.2.3 Innovation in CBT

Thrikkaipetta village locals adopted innovative practices from the very beginning of the CBT project, such as using bamboo-based infrastructure for eco-friendly accommodations and integrating organic farming into tourism activities. Waste management initiatives, including composting and plastic-free zones, help maintain environmental balance. Additionally, technology is being used creatively for storytelling and guided village walks, enhancing the tourist experience while preserving local heritage. Moreover, they organize workshops for the community people to get engaged with more innovative initiatives such as baking, art projects, bamboo products and battling climate change.

“With some other farmer's friend. We are developing an organic bakery. They make cookies from local resources without chemical, without Maida with wheat and millet powder..- mentioned by WAY-SUN-3, a homestay owner, male, age 57

4.13.2 Tourist of CBT

4.13.3.1 Influence of Foreign Tourists vs Local Tourists

Foreign visitors have significantly influenced the way community-based tourism evolves in Thrikkaipetta. Their expectations and travel habits have encouraged local businesses to integrate sustainable practices, such as eco-friendly accommodations and ethical tourism

principles. While the core traditions of the community remain intact, there is a mutual exchange of ideas—leading to improvements in hygiene, structured tour programs, and multilingual communication. This interaction is not one-sided; tourists also gain a deeper appreciation of local customs, making it a mutually enriching experience.

Foreign Tourist	Domestic Tourist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Behaviour • Show respect to the community • Respect local culture • They are gentle • They are friendly to family members • They respect the family culture and house rules • They are accommodative, extremely polite and behave as responsible tourists • They appreciate, encourage and are helpful to host’s family • Foreign tourists are more careful to the sensitivity of nature and environment • Keeping foreign tourists at home bring more prestige and social recognition than hosting local tourist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less sensitive to nature • Some ask for alcohol without realising that we have kids at home. • They think they paid money so that they can do whatever they want. • Local tourists lack the qualifying skills what a CBT tourist should possess • Family members feel more comfortable with foreign tourists than local tourists

Table 7: Understanding of Foreign Tourist vs Domestic Tourist – a view of stakeholders

“The ones who came from Bangalore (Domestic Tourist), they were disturbing. They were creating a bad impression about the homestay....these people, they just drink and they sleep”

– Mentioned by WAY-ELY-8, a homestay owner, female, age 65

“Foreign people are more very good behavior and irrespective. Domestic people are very rare people to this. But majority of domestic people who respect... kind of very positive people are coming to this village, But majority of course with the foreign people too. So many lessons can be learned from them.” – mentioned by WAY-SUN-3, a homestay owner, male, age 57

4.13.3.2 The Behaviour of CBT Tourists

Tourists participating in CBT in Thrikkaipetta are typically drawn to slow, immersive travel experiences rather than hurried sightseeing. They take part in local activities like rice planting, cooking, and craft-making, engaging in meaningful cultural exchanges. Rather than passively consuming experiences, these travelers seek to learn from and contribute to the community. Hosts, in turn, focus on creating enriching stays that encourage visitors to interact with multiple members of the village, fostering a strong sense of connection.

4.13.3.3 Comparing Mass Tourism and CBT

Mass tourism and community-based tourism operate on fundamentally different principles. While mass tourism prioritizes large-scale, profit-driven developments, CBT emphasizes equitable economic benefits for local communities. Mass tourism often leads to overcrowding and environmental degradation, whereas CBT focuses on sustainability and cultural preservation, ensuring that tourism remains a positive force for both visitors and locals.

4.13.3 Challenges in CBT

4.13.4.1 Challenges in Community-Based Tourism in Wayanad

CBT in Thrikkaipetta faces challenges such as tourism policy, local authority, trade politics and bureaucratic issues in licensing. Moreover on ongoing tourist expectations and financial instability due to natural disasters are beyond control. Limited use of technology hampers marketing, while waste management and environmental conservation remain concerns. Despite, locals continue to improve CBT through training, infrastructure development, and collaboration.

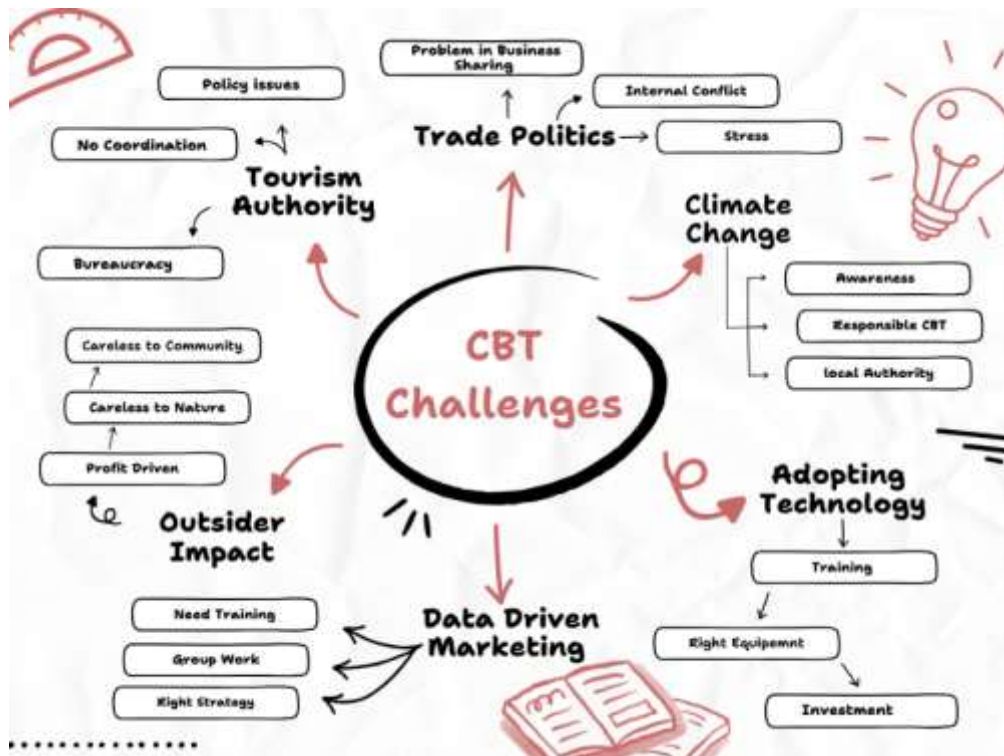


Figure. 6: The CBT Challenges in Thrikkaipetta Village

4.13.4.2 The Impact of Outsiders:

One key concern raised by stakeholders is the growing presence of outsiders in Thrikkaipetta who are attracted by its tourism success but disregard the core values of Community-Based Tourism (CBT). These profit-driven individuals often introduce practices, like unregulated construction or noisy parties, that disrupt local life and the environment. Despite these challenges, local authorities remain passive, as there are no legal protections in place. As a result, the community has little power to stop unsuitable developments that threaten the village’s cultural and ecological balance.

“A local farmer sold this plot (land) there. Now some people from Calicut bought this plot. They built A swimming pool. They have constantly these partying people coming. There's a lot of sound, which is annoying. Yeah.” Mentioned by WAY-COR-1, a resort owner, female, age

4.13.4.3 The Role of Policy makers and Regulatory authority:

Government policies play a vital role in shaping community-based tourism, but inconsistent enforcement remains a significant challenge in Thrikkaipetta. Villagers often express concerns about the lack of support in areas such as waste management, land use, and infrastructure development. Regulatory frameworks tend to favor large-scale tourism projects over smaller, community-led initiatives, making it difficult for homestay owners to secure financial aid and legal approvals. The local community actively advocates for policies that protect their culture, environment, and tourism-based livelihoods.

“based on the constitution, there should not be any exclusion of anybody. Everybody should have the same rights. But in reality it's not always the status”- Mentioned by WAY-COR-1, a resort owner, female, age 53

4.13.4.4 Active Community Participation

Thrikkaipetta's Community-Based Tourism (CBT) was once driven by strong local participation, with youth as guides, women running homestays, and elders preserving cultural heritage. Decisions were made collectively, and benefits were shared fairly. However, this coordination is weakening. Many young people have moved abroad, and community involvement is declining. Kabani, the organization that once supported CBT, is now less active. As a result, tourism efforts are becoming fragmented, and benefits are unevenly distributed. Without renewed collaboration and local engagement, the core values and sustainability of CBT in Thrikkaipetta are at risk.

“the local community involvement reduced, we try to really involve them. The idea was it should not benefit only one person or a few people. We try to, but everyone should play ethically. That the benefits are spread within the village. So, for example, we don't have cook, we hire. We

have different people from different cooking teams. So, for example, we also. Now we have people from different communities. But there are families who work differently” Mentioned by WAY-COR-1, a resort owner, female, age 53

4.13.4.5 Summary (Qualitative: Study 1)

This qualitative study explores the impact of community-based tourism (CBT) in Thrikkaipetta, focusing on sustainability, economic resilience, and cultural preservation. Through interviews with key stakeholders, homestay owners, NGO founders, and tourism entrepreneurs, the study highlights how CBT emerged as a response to the agrarian crisis, providing an alternative livelihood while fostering environmental conservation and social empowerment. Findings reveal key benefits, including increased financial stability, preservation of local traditions, and deeper tourist engagement. However, challenges such as bureaucratic licensing hurdles, marketing limitations, and the impact of natural disasters pose significant obstacles. The study underscores the importance of collaboration, technological adoption, and regulatory support in ensuring the long-term sustainability of CBT initiatives.

4.14 STUDY 2: CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REVIEW

Capturing the behavioural perspectives of tourists is essential for understanding and evaluating the effectiveness of CBT services. This research analyzes 246 tourist reviews to explore how visitors expressed their experiences with community-based tourism in Thrikkaipetta Bamboo Village. The focus of the study is specifically to identify key strengths and highlight challenging areas that may play a significant role in gaining sustainability in CBT.

4.14.1 Objective:

While the research explored the understanding of CBT service providers, it was equally important to understand the perception of tourists. At the same time, recognizing the key driving factors, influencers, main challenges and exploring practical ways to overcome them may

contribute to achieving the long-term sustainability of Community-Based Tourism. Hence, study-2 was designed to have a better understanding of tourists' views.

4.14.2 Method:

Customer reviews were collected from the Customer Feedback Register of the stakeholders (homestay owners and resorts) of Thrikkaipetta Village. A thorough content analysis was done to reveal the insights that tourists expressed in their feedback over 11 years.

4.14.3 Tool:

The feedback was initially captured as images using a mobile camera. The text was then extracted using Gemini by Google, and later summarized and analyzed with the help of the online tool Atlas.ti.

4.14.4 Sample:

246 customer reviews were collected from 7 stakeholders of Thrikkaipetta village, and the duration of the feedback spanned from 2013 to 2024.

4.15 Results and Discussion of Study 2:

4.15.1 Tourists' Expression of Behaviour towards CBT Services:

The research identified 15 key factors that contributed to tourists feeling deeply satisfied and emotionally moved by their experience. These factors were extracted and compiled using qualitative analysis tools and are summarized as follows:

Key Factors that were overwhelming to tourists	No. of Tourists
1. Unique Experience/Discovery during the stay	66
2. Warm Hospitality by the host and villagers	60
3. Authentic Local Food Served	35
4. Initiatives to empower the community	14
5. Connecting with people	13
6. Village Activity that tourists participated in	12
7. Wilderness of nature	10
8. Professional Skill	9
9. Solidarity of the village	7
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	6
11. Lifestyle of the village people	6
12. Cultural Exchange with the tourists	4
13. Eco-Friendly Initiatives by the villagers	4

14. Relaxing Environment offered	1
15. Wellness	1
Total No. of Tourists' Feedback Count: 246	

Table 8: Key factors towards tourists' satisfaction – stakeholders' view



Figure 7: Tourists' Feedback from Review Book

4.15.2 Unique Experience/ Discovery during the stay:

Over the past 11 years, international tourists hosted by various homestays in Thrikkaipetta have shared diverse and meaningful experiences that contributed to their overall satisfaction with Community-Based Tourism (CBT). Feedback from 66 tourists revealed recurring themes such as cultural immersion, interaction with local families, nature-based activities, community events, and opportunities for learning. Activities like school visits, bird-watching, traditional performances, village walks, food preparation, and conversations with hosts were frequently described as unique, enriching, and unlike anything they had experienced before. These responses highlight that the sense of uniqueness and emotional connection plays a vital role in tourist satisfaction and is a key strength of the CBT model in Thrikkaipetta.

4.15.3 Warm hospitality by the service providers and villagers:

Feedback from 60 tourists highlighted that warm hospitality from both hosts and villagers was a key factor in their satisfaction and memorable experiences in Thrikkaipetta. Expressions such

as “feeling like family,” “friendly and welcoming atmosphere,” “kindness and care,” and “help with planning and activities” reflected a deep appreciation for the emotional warmth and personal attention they received. These consistent remarks suggest that the sense of being genuinely welcomed and cared for greatly contributed to the positive perception of Community-Based Tourism in the village.

4.15.4 Authentic Local Food Served

Feedback from 35 tourists emphasized that authentic local food and related experiences—such as traditional cooking, food festivals, and shared meals with host families—were highlights of their stay in Thrikkaipetta. Expressions like “delicious meals,” “amazing food,” “homegrown vegetables,” and “meal times with family” reflected the importance of culinary authenticity in enhancing tourist satisfaction. These comments suggest that local cuisine played a significant role in shaping positive perceptions of Community-Based Tourism.

4.15.5 Initiatives to empower the community

14 tourists mentioned that the initiatives taken by the villages to empower the community were notable and made them happy. Some of the expressions were: Activities to help local people, Amazing initiatives by villegers, Interesting projects, products, and handmade items, Wonderful work in India and projects like homestays and farms, Wish for continued success in projects, villege coordinator's work promoting jackfruit, Host's inspiration and work, Supporting the homestay project, host's introduction to Bamboo Village and Uravu programs, Activities to help local people. Therefore, it seemed profound that the initiatives taken by the service providers to empower the community had impacted positively on tourists' behavioural expression.

4.15.6 Connecting with people of the village

13 Tourists mentioned that connecting with local people made their CBT experience memorable and the expression included for example: Beautiful moments shared with locals, Enjoyable company and laughter, Enjoyed staying with the family, Great people, Love for people, family, friends, and neighbors, Meeting host's family, Meeting friendly people, Meeting the family, Memorable stay with the family, People were never forgotten, Staying with the family, Talking about host's life and feeling closer to her. These expressions showed that connecting with local people is one of the key factors that make tourists satisfied.

4.15.7 Other Key Factors

60 tourists also expressed their feedback emphasising 10 more key factors that made their experience remarkable which are Village activity that tourists participated in (12), Wilderness of nature (10), Professional skill (9), Solidarity of the village (7), Facilities and infrastructure (6), Lifestyle of the village people(6), Cultural exchange with the tourists(4), Eco-friendly initiatives by the villagers(4), Relaxing environment offered(1) and Wellness(1).

The expression of tourists includes: joining the hike, Hiking on Mammikummu Mella mountain with guide Raju, Host's guided tour of the countryside, Guide's knowledge and patience, Host's intelligence and interest, Guide's knowledge and informative trekking, Guide's excellent guiding skills, Granddad serving lunch, showing the garden and dancing style, local engagement ceremony, Enjoying local coffee, harvesting, and the musical chair game, Cultural exchange and learning about local customs, Sustainable development in their own village, village coordinator's concept of a sustainable tourism initiative, Uravu Bamboo initiative, Beautiful landscape and social-ecological commitment, Yoga classes etc.

5. QUANTITATIVE STUDY:

5.1 Objective:

The objective of this survey is to test the hypothesis whether there is a significant and positive influence CBT components such as perceived authenticity, embodied experience on tourists' Eudaimonic Happiness (sense of fulfilment). In addition, the research investigates the moderating role of digital detox and the mediating role of emotional involvement in the relationship between embodied experience and sense of fulfilment.

5.2 Method:

A survey questionnaire consisting of 31 questions was used in this study to investigate and represent the key variables, which were developed based on previously published research papers (as discussed in detail in Section 5.6: Structure of the Survey). This questionnaire was developed and maintained by using Qualtrics, and the collected data was analysed by Smart PLS-SEM 4. As the impact of CBT attributes such as authenticity has not been extensively explored in the tourism context, this study adopted an exploratory research design, which is best suited for such investigations. An online survey was conducted to collect quantitative data, and the analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Specifically, the Partial Least Squares approach (PLS-SEM) was used, as it aligns well with the exploratory nature of the study. PLS-SEM helped assess and compare the influence of CBT attributes—particularly authenticity—along with emotional involvement and sense of life meaning, on tourists' eudaimonic happiness. Additionally, the model tested the mediating role of behavioral intention in the relationship between tourists' eudaimonic happiness and their overall behavioral experience.

5.3 Procedure:

A 7-point Likert scale was used for responses, ranging from 1 = "Strongly Disagree" to 7 = "Strongly Agree," allowing participants to express the extent of their agreement with each statement. In addition to these scaled items, the survey included 2 open-ended questions to capture participants' overall experiences with CBT, and 3 demographic questions to understand the profile of the respondents.

5.4 Data Collection:

Data was collected using Qualtrics, and the survey link was shared across social media and travel-related digital platforms to efficiently reach the target audience within a short period of time.

5.5 Sample:

A total of 413 respondents from Bangladesh and India participated in the survey, focusing on individuals who had either experienced community-based tourism (CBT) in South Asia or had a clear understanding of the concept. The survey was designed to include only those who met this specific criterion. Respondents who did not qualify were excluded from the survey. Only fully completed responses were considered, and after thorough data cleaning, 121 valid responses were accepted for the final analysis.

5.6 Structure of the Survey Questionnaire:

Construct	Items	Questions	Reference
Local Life	LL1	I have experienced or observed the daily life of local people in my travel	(Han et al., 2019)
	LL2	The activities at my travel destination reflected local culture and traditions	
	LL3	The travel activities of the place was reflecting local history	
Local Community	LC1	I participated/observed travel activities which was rich in local culture, traditon and heritage.	(Han et al., 2019)
	LC2	The events and activities I participated/observed usually reflect local practices and rituals.	
	LC3	Festivals and events authentically represented the elements of local community.	
Interaction with Local Community	LP1	We exchanged our stories and experiences with community people.	(Han et al., 2019)
	LP2	Local people were welcoming and friendly to interact with tourists.	
	LP3	Local people were willingly sharing information regarding their history, culture and heritage.	

	LP4	The local products and services were enriched with local tradition, heritage and eco-friendly.	
Feel Like Home	RH1	The facilities and practices of place made me feel like home	(Han et al., 2019)
	RH2	The hospitality of people made me feel emotionally connected	
	RH3	The involvement in local activities made me feel attached with the destination.	
Emotional Involvement	EI1	When I visited a CBT destination, my heart fills with joy by the wilderness of the environment.	(Huang et al., 2013)
	EI2	When I visit a CBT destination, I feel as if I am part of the nature.	
	EI3	When I visit a CBT destination, I feel deeply about the environment.	
Embodied Experience	EE1	I engaged in physical activities when I was in CBT Destination	(Barnes et al., 2014)
	EE2	A CBT Destination gave me the opportunity to engage physically	
	EE3	A CBT destination is not activity-oriented	
Sense of Fulfilment (Eudaimonic Behaviour)	FOL1	I experienced the local way of accommodation and their way of living.	
	FOL2	The emotional attachment with community people that I experience in CBT is rare in mainstream tourism.	(Han et al., 2019)
	FOL3	The destination felt close to my heart	
	FOL4	During my travel I experience a clear sense of purposeful life.	
Digital Detox	DD1	Switching off digital devices allows me to take a meaningful break from my daily routine.	
	DD2	Unplugging from digital devices, even for a short-time help me to improve my mental well-being.	(Gaafar, 2021)
	DD3	Staying away from digital devices allows me to enjoy the beauty and silence of the nature, local activities, and other experiences more.	

Table 9: Survey Questionnaire – Quantitative Study

5.7 Ethics followed in research

Before the survey, informed consent was obtained from all participants. They were assured of the purpose of the survey, confidentiality, given the freedom to skip questions or withdraw at any time, and informed that the data will be used only for research purposes.

5.8 The model:

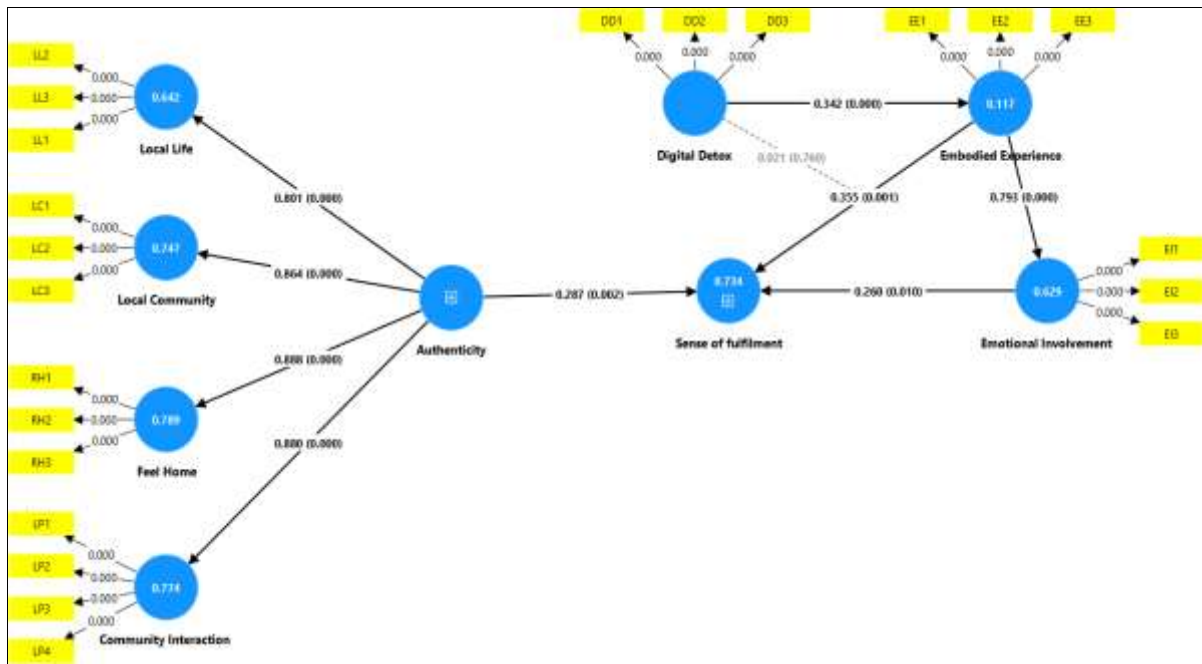


Figure 8: Structural Model of LOC and HOC with Path Coefficient and R²

5.9 Measurement Model – Lower Order Components (LOC)

As the model contains Lower Order Components (LOC) and Higher Order Components (HOC), it is important to validate the measurement model of LOC first (Sarstedt et al., 2019). In this study, the LOCs—comprising local life, local community, feeling like a real home, community interaction, embodied experience, digital detox, and emotional involvement—serve as independent variables, with sense of fulfillment representing tourists' eudaimonic well-being as the dependent variable. The Higher Order Component (HOC), authenticity, is modeled in a reflective-reflective structure in PLS-SEM, as each LOC is considered a reflection of the broader construct of authenticity. Therefore, validating the LOCs ensures a reliable foundation for assessing the overall measurement model.

To evaluate the quality of the reflective measurement model, four key criteria were assessed: indicator reliability, internal consistent reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Indicator reliability was examined by checking the factor loadings, where values above 0.7 are considered acceptable. Most items met this threshold, except EE3 (0.570) and FOL2 (0.672), which were slightly below, but overall the indicator reliability was acceptable.

Next, internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR). Cronbach’s Alpha, which measures the internal consistency among items within a construct (J. F. Hair et al., 2017)). showed values above 0.7 for all constructs, except for Embodied Experience, which scored 0.663—still close to the acceptable level.

Composite Reliability (CR), which is more suitable for PLS-SEM as it accounts for different indicator loadings (Henseler et al., 2009). showed strong reliability across all constructs, ranging from 0.820 (Embodied Experience) to 0.939 (Digital Detox), confirming consistent measurement.

Lastly, convergent validity was tested using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). AVE values should be at least 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; J. Hair et al., 2017), indicating that the construct explains more than half the variance in its indicators. All constructs met this criterion, confirming convergent validity (see Table 10).

Construct	Item	Outer Loading	Cronbach’s Alpha	CR	AVE
Digital Detox	DD1	0.939	0.906	0.939	0.836
	DD2	0.898			
	DD3	0.906			
Embodied Experience	EE1	0.854	0.663	0.820	0.610
	EE2	0.881			
	EE3	0.570			
Emotional Involvement	EI1	0.905	0.770	0.868	0.688
	EI2	0.828			
	EI3	0.748			
Sense of fulfilment	FOL1	0.822	0.812	0.876	0.640
	FOL2	0.672			

	FOL3	0.842			
	FOL4	0.852			
Local Community	LC1	0.920			
	LC2	0.878	0.858	0.913	0.777
	LC3	0.845			
Local Life	LL1	0.777			
	LL2	0.900	0.776	0.871	0.692
	LL3	0.813			
Community Interaction	LP1	0.762			
	LP2	0.885			
	LP3	0.837	0.861	0.906	0.707
	LP4	0.873			
Real Home	RH1	0.856			
	RH2	0.920	0.869	0.919	0.792
	RH3	0.893			

Table 10 - Model Loadings, Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) - LOC

To examine discriminant validity, we first assessed the cross-loadings, where we confirmed that all the indicator's outer loadings on the connected constructs were greater than any of its cross-loadings on other constructs (J. Hair et al., 2017). Subsequently, we used Fornell-Larcker's criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). The Fornell-Larcker criterion infers that the square root of each construct's AVE should be higher than its greatest correlation with any other construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). We can observe in Table 11 that this condition is met except Embodied Experience (0.781), which is very close to the validation mark.

	LP	DD	EE	EI	LC	LL	RH	FOL
LP	0.841							
DD	0.325	0.915						
EE	0.686	0.342	0.781					
EI	0.668	0.381	0.793	0.829				
LC	0.601	0.197	0.616	0.552	0.882			
LL	0.521	0.200	0.524	0.480	0.774	0.832		
RH	0.798	0.322	0.684	0.680	0.648	0.556	0.890	
FOL	0.742	0.396	0.800	0.773	0.560	0.538	0.730	0.800

Table 11: The Fornell-Larcker Criterion – LOC Discriminant Validity

Note:

1. LP: Community Interaction, DD: Digital Detox, EE: Embodied Experience, EI: Emotional Involvement, LC: Local Community, LL: Local Life, RH: Real Home Feel, FOL: Sense of fulfilment
2. Diagonal contains the square roots of AVEs and off-diagonal contains the correlations.

Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2015) found that neither of these two methods unfailingly detects discriminant validity issues. Therefore, their research proposes using the Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) as a more effective approach. HTMT is the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations relative to the average of the monotrait heteromethod correlations. We can verify on Table 12 that all HTMT values are not below 0.9; therefore, desirable discriminant validity ((J. Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2015)) has not been fully achieved here.

	LP	DD	EE	EI	LC	LL	RH	FOL	DD X EE
LP									
DD	0.341								
EE	0.901	0.400							
EI	0.822	0.433	1.105						
LC	0.699	0.195	0.774	0.672					
LL	0.639	0.216	0.728	0.614	0.942				
RH	0.926	0.342	0.905	0.831	0.735	0.673			
FOL	0.868	0.440	1.088	0.952	0.640	0.662	0.849		
DD X EE	0.170	0.158	0.164	0.179	0.126	0.149	0.184	0.145	

Table 12: HTMT – Low-Order Components

Note:

LP: Community Interaction, DD: Digital Detox, EE: Embodied Experience, EI: Emotional Involvement, LC: Local Community, LL: Local Life, RH: Real Home Feel, FOL: Sense of fulfilment

The HTMT values for several construct pairs exceed the threshold of 0.9 (e.g., Emotional Involvement and Embodied Experience = 1.105 and so on), indicating potential issues with discriminant validity. This suggests that these constructs may be conceptually or empirically overlapping, and their measurement items might not capture distinct aspects of the theoretical model. This overlap may lead to multicollinearity, redundancy in construct measurement, or ambiguity in construct interpretation.

In this circumstance, it is important to check the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to test multicollinearity among all the variables. Accordingly, as all constructs' VIF values are lower

than 5 (J. Hair et al., 2017), indicating an absence of a major multicollinearity problem (see Table 13).

	LP	DD	EE	EI	LC	LL	RH	FOL	DD EE	X
LP								3.155		
DD			1					1.208		
EE				1				3.304		
EI								3.103		
LC								3.189		
LL								2.544		
RH								3.42		
FOL										
DD X EE								1.05		

Table 13: VIF values – Low-Order Components

Note: LP: Community Interaction, DD: Digital Detox, EE: Embodied Experience, EI: Emotional Involvement, LC: Local Community, LL: Local Life, RH: Real Home Feel, FOL: Sense of fulfilment

5.10 Measurement Model – High-Order Components (HOC)

Validating Reflective – Reflective Higher Order Components – Authenticity

Authenticity was the higher-order construct in the study based on four lower-order constructs: local life, local community, feel of real home and community interaction. *Authenticity* is measured as a Reflective-Reflective higher-order construct in the study. In order to establish the higher order construct validity, the factor loadings, reliability and validity were assessed. The factor loadings of all the indicators for *Authenticity* have a value greater than the minimum acceptable value of 0.50 (Sarstedt et al., 2019). None of the items were removed due to low factor loadings. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability; statistics for both were greater than the recommended value of 0.7 (Wasko & Faraj, 2005) for the higher-order construct (Table 14), hence, indicating good reliability (Henseler et al., 2016). Convergent validity was acceptable because the AVE was higher than 0.5 for the higher-order construct.

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite (rho_c)	reliability	Average (AVE)	variance extracted
Authenticity	0.883	0.918		0.737	

Table 14: Higher Order Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the correlations among the latent variables with the square root of AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio. The Square root of AVE for the construct is higher than its correlation with all other constructs except the score of Embodied Experience (0.781), which was very close to the validation criterion (see Table 15).

	Authenticity	Digital Detox	Embodied Experience	Emotional Involvement	Sense of fulfilment
Authenticity	0.859				
Digital Detox	0.312	0.914			
Embodied Experience	0.737	0.342	0.781		
Emotional Involvement	0.701	0.381	0.793	0.829	
Sense of fulfilment	0.757	0.395	0.800	0.773	0.800

Table 15: Fornell and Larcker Criterion – High Order Discriminant Validity

By observing the score of the HTMT Ratio (see Table 16), it was found that there are a few factors, such as emotional involvement, sense of fulfilment and embodied experience, that reflect more than the expected threshold of 0.9. Hence, discriminant validity is not properly established for the higher-order construct of *Authenticity*, and we need to check VIF in the Structural model to address the multicollinearity effect.

	Authenticity	Digital Detox	Embodied Experience	Emotional Involvement	Sense of fulfilment
Authenticity					
Digital Detox	0.312				
Embodied Experience	0.942	0.400			
Emotional Involvement	0.835	0.433	1.105		
Sense of fulfilment	0.860	0.440	1.088	0.952	

Table 16: HTMT - High Order Discriminant Validity

In the structural model of HOC, all constructs' VIF values are displaying a value of less than 5 (J. Hair et al., 2017), indicating an absence of a major multicollinearity problem (see Table 17).

	Authenticity	Digital Detox	Embodied Experience	Emotional Involvement	Sense of fulfilment
Authenticity					2.401
Digital Detox			1		1.192
Embodied Experience				1	3.27
Emotional Involvement					3.026
Sense of fulfilment					

Table 17: VIF Values – High Order Components - HOC

5.11 Structural Model

The structural model results were assessed through path coefficients (β), using a bootstrapping technique with 5,000 iterations to determine the t-statistics and significance levels of relationships among the constructs. H1a proposed that perceived authenticity in CBT positively and significantly influenced tourists' sense of fulfilment (FOL) ($\beta = 0.002$, $p < 0.05$). H1b tested the effect of embodied experience in CBT on tourists' sense of fulfilment, which was also supported, showing a significant path ($\beta = 0.001$, $p < 0.05$). H2 assessed whether emotional involvement (EI) mediates the relationship between embodied experience (EE) and tourists' sense of fulfilment (FOL). The mediation is supported, showing a significant path from embodied experience to emotional involvement (EI) ($\beta = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$) and from emotional involvement (EI) to tourists' sense of fulfilment. ($\beta = 0.010$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H2 is confirmed. H3 proposed that Digital Detox moderates the degree of relationship between embodied experience and tourists' sense of fulfilment. This interaction effect is not supported, as the result is not significant ($\beta = -0.760$, $p > 0.05$). To assess the structural model, the most frequently used measure is the coefficient of determination (R^2), which shows the quantity of variance in the endogenous constructs explained by the exogenous constructs connected to it

((J. Hair et al., 2017)). And in addition, according to Hair et al. (2017), who classify R² values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. The proposed model explains 73.4% for sense of fulfilment (FOL), which is considered substantial, 62.9% for emotional involvement (EI), considered close to substantial and 11.7% for embodied experience (EE), considered as weak.

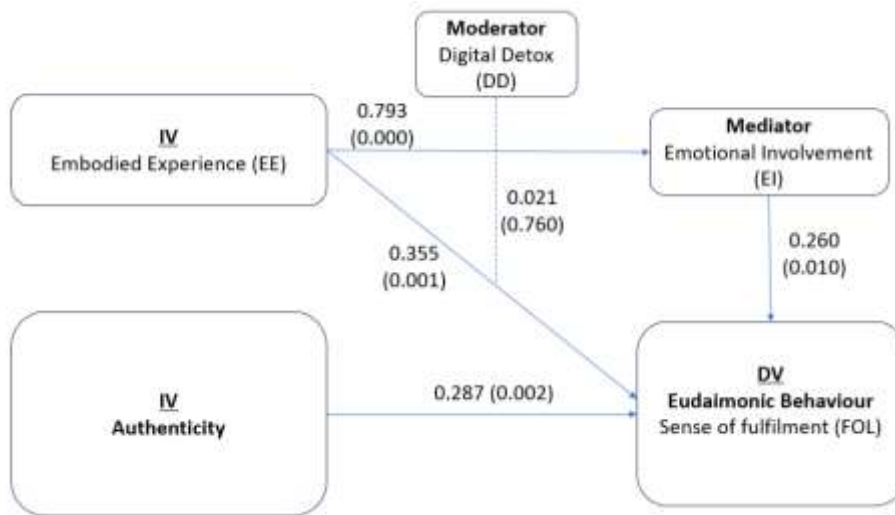


Figure 9: The research model (Study 3) result

5.12 Discussion of Study 3:

Based on the hypothesis testing and structural model evaluation, the study reveals mixed findings regarding the influence of CBT attributes on tourists' eudaimonic well-being. Among the eight hypotheses tested, only two (H4 and H7) showed statistically significant relationships. Notably, interaction with the community (H4) had a strong and significant positive impact on Fulfilment of Life, reinforcing the importance of meaningful local engagement in enhancing tourists' deeper sense of well-being. The mediation hypothesis (H7) was also supported, with Fulfilment of Life significantly predicting Behavioural Intention, which in turn significantly influenced Behavioural Experience. This confirms the indirect effect and the mediating role of behavioural intention in shaping tourists' eudaimonic happiness. However, other relationships—such as those involving Local Life (H1), Local Community (H2), Feeling of Real Home (H3), Behavioural Experience (H5), Emotional Involvement (H6), and Digital Detox as a moderator (H8)—were not statistically significant, suggesting that these

constructs may not directly impact tourists' eudaimonic outcomes within the current model. In terms of explanatory power, the model showed a substantial R^2 value only for Fulfilment of Life, indicating strong predictive accuracy for this key construct. Overall, the findings emphasize the remarkable role of community interaction and internal psychological processes in generating meaningful tourism experiences.

6. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This summary comprises the key findings from the three main studies conducted in this research: Study 1 (Qualitative Study with Service Providers), Study 2 (Customer Feedback Analysis), and Study 3 (Quantitative Analysis through Survey). Each study contributed distinct insights that, when combined, provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics, challenges, and potential to gain sustainability in Community-Based Tourism (CBT) of South Asia.

6.1 Study 1: Service Providers' Perspective

Study 1 focused on gathering in-depth qualitative insights from service providers, including homestay owners, guides, artisans, and community leaders. The findings highlighted the deeply embedded community spirit in managing CBT initiatives, emphasizing local collaboration, traditional hospitality, and authentic experiences. Service providers acknowledged that CBT was not just an economic model but also a way to preserve culture and community solidarity. Key challenges identified included the encroachment of outside investors, a lack of robust technological adoption, and limited governmental support in regulatory measures. The stakeholders emphasized that while tourism brought economic empowerment, maintaining the village's harmony and sustainability required strict policy implementation, guidance, following community principles and cultural respect.

6.2 Study 2: Tourists' Feedback Analysis

Study 2 involved a systematic analysis of 246 tourist feedback entries collected over 11 years. The content analysis identified 15 key factors that significantly influenced tourist satisfaction. Unique experiences such as participating in village life, engaging in local activities, and enjoying authentic local food were repeatedly highlighted. Tourists expressed overwhelming satisfaction with the warm hospitality and personal connection with hosts, which contributed to a 'feel-at-home' experience that distinguishes CBT from mainstream tourism. This phenomenon supported that the reflective components of authenticity influenced tourists' eudaimonic happiness. Additionally, cultural exchange, nature immersion, and eco-friendly initiatives were seen as unique attributes that elevated the

experience. However, certain challenges like last-minute accommodation changes, language barriers, and short stays were noted as areas for improvement.

6.3 Study 3: Quantitative Analysis - Survey Findings

Study 3 quantitatively assessed the impact of CBT attributes on tourists' Eudaimonic Happiness (sense of fulfilment). Four hypotheses were tested to understand the relationships between constructs in CBT (authenticity, embodied experience, emotional involvement, digital detox) and tourists' sense of fulfilment. The analysis revealed that *authenticity* (H1a) and tourists' embodied experience (H1b) positively and significantly influence tourists' Eudaimonic Behaviour. Additionally, tourists' emotional involvement was found to mediate the relationship between their embodied experience and sense of fulfilment. However, constructs like digital detox did not show significant moderating effects on the degree of mediating relationship, suggesting that it requires more strategic integration to impact tourists' well-being.

6.4 Summary (Study 1, Study 2 and Study 3)

Combining insights from all three studies reveals a clear narrative: CBT in South Asia, as in Thrikkaipetta, thrives on local engagement, authentic experiences, and innovative community-driven tourism initiatives. However, it faces pressing challenges in areas like effective management, technological adaptation, policy support, and safeguarding against external commercialization. The findings support the need for stronger regulatory frameworks, enhanced technological integration for marketing and booking systems, and strategic community training to enhance both service quality and sustainability. Importantly, the model's success is deeply rooted in the community's collective spirit, which serves as a resilient foundation for a long-term Sustainable CBT framework.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORKS

7.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in South Asia, in villages like Thrikkaipetta, is not only an economic driver but also a tool for environmental conservation, cultural preservation and community empowerment. The integration of authenticity and embodied experience are the key factors contributing to tourists' sense of fulfilment. The mediation effect of emotional involvement on Eudaimonic Happiness underscores the importance of tourists' psychological engagement through meaningful community interactions and initiatives. However, the CBT project's current limitations, such as lack of technology, regulatory oversight, external commercial pressures and policy issues need to be addressed to ensure long-term sustainability.

7.2 Practical Implications

The research reveals important practical implications for all stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of Community-Based Tourism (CBT). These include: 1) Strengthening regulatory measures to protect community values and resources, 2) Implementing technological solutions to enhance global outreach and optimize marketing strategies, and 3) Empowering community leadership to effectively initiate and manage CBT services. Additionally, CBT service providers expect tourists to act responsibly and have a clear understanding of what to expect from a CBT experience. Therefore, it becomes crucial for tourists to be well-informed about the principles and unique offerings of CBT before visiting, to fully appreciate and respect the community-driven tourism model.

7.3 Limitations

The qualitative study was primarily focused on Thrikkaipetta Bamboo Village, in South India only, which may limit its generalizability to other CBT projects across South Asia, such as Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the region. Additionally, the research was conducted shortly after a natural disaster occurred in the Wayanad District (South India), during which there were very few foreign tourists. As

a result, it was not possible to conduct in-depth interviews with international visitors to gain deeper insights from their perspective.

Furthermore, during the online survey phase, time constraints prevented the collection of data from other South Asian countries beyond Bangladesh and India. For future research, expanding data collection to include more CBT destinations would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the community-based tourism experience in the region.

7.4 Future Works

Future research should focus on 1) exploring the impact of advanced technology in enhancing CBT services, 2) assessing the role of policy-making in protecting CBT projects from external commercialisation, and 3) investigating long-term economic impacts on local communities participating in CBT. In conclusion, Thrikkaipetta Bamboo Village's CBT model provides a strong case for sustainable Community-based tourism, but more CBT projects in this region should be analyzed to observe the local collaboration, data-driven strategic planning and its supportive policy frameworks.

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APPENDIX

A. NOVA IMS Ethics Committee Approval

NOVA-IMS | Ethics Committee – APPROVED



This is to certify that

Project No.: **DDMKT2025-2-216723**

Project Title: **Tourist Behavior, Emotional Engagement, and Destination Experience of Community-Based Tourism: Field study from South Asia**

Principal Researcher: **Syed Akhteruzzaman**

According to the regulations of the Ethics Committee of NOVA IMS and MagIC Research Center this project was considered to meet the requirements of the NOVA IMS Internal Review Board, being considered **APPROVED** on 2/22/2025.

It is the Principal Researcher's responsibility to ensure that all researchers and stakeholders associated with this project are aware of the conditions of approval and which documents have been approved.

The Principal Researcher is required to notify the Ethics Committee, via amendment or progress report, of

- Any significant change to the project and the reason for that change;
- Any unforeseen events or unexpected developments that merit notification;
- The inability of the Principal Researcher to continue in that role or any other change in research personnel involved in the project.

Lisbon, 2/22/2025

NOVA IMS Ethics Committee
ethicscommittee@novaims.unl.pt

Appendix B: Online Survey Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

Welcome!

You are invited to take part in a short survey (32 Questions, 8 to 10 minutes) on **Community-Based Tourism (CBT)** which is part of my Master's Thesis. **CBT (Community-Based Tourism)** is a type of tourism where local communities manage and benefit from tourism activities. It often involves staying with locals, participating in cultural traditions, and supporting small businesses.

Your Participation: Your input will help us understand why tourists choose CBT (Community-Based Tourism) over general mainstream tourism. Your participation is **voluntary**, with no risks or monetary benefits, and you can withdraw anytime.

Confidentiality: All responses are anonymous and used strictly for academic purposes. No personal data will be shared. Results may be published as grouped data without identifying individuals.

Important note:

There are 32 items, rated from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 7 ("Strongly Agree"). Please read carefully and select one option out of 7.

For any questions, feel free to contact akhteruzzaman.syed@gmail.com.

We need your consent and valuable insights to conduct this survey.

Thank you,

Syed Akhteruzzaman

Dear Participant,
Welcome!
You are invited to take part in a short survey (32 Questions, 8 to 10 minutes) on **Community-Based Tourism (CBT)** which is part of my Master's Thesis . **CBT (Community-Based Tourism)** is a type of tourism where local communities manage and benefit from tourism activities. It often involves staying with locals, participating in cultural traditions, and supporting small businesses.
Your Participation: Your input will help us understand why tourists choose CBT (Community-Based Tourism) over general mainstream tourism. Your participation is **voluntary**, with no risks or monetary benefits, and you can withdraw anytime.
Confidentiality: All responses are anonymous and used strictly for academic purposes. No personal data will be shared. Results may be published as grouped data without identifying individuals.
Important note:
There are 32 items, rated from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 7 ("Strongly Agree"). Please read carefully and select one option out of 7.
For any questions, feel free to contact akhteruzzaman.syed@gmail.com.
We need your consent and valuable insights to conduct this survey.
Thank you,
Syed Akhteruzzaman

- Yes, I agree
 No, I do not agree

Validation ★ ...

Have you ever experienced Community-Based Tourism (CBT)?

Yes

No, but I know the basics of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) and willing to experience in future.

No, not at all

▼ community-based

💡 ★

Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

A type of tourism where local communities manage and benefit from tourism activities. It often involves staying with locals, participating in cultural traditions, and supporting small businesses.

Please, think about a past trip where you experienced Community-Based Tourism, and write a short description below.
[If you want, you can write in your own language as well.]

▼ mass tourism

💡 ★

Mass Tourism

A type of tourism where large numbers of visitors travel to popular destinations, often staying in hotels or resorts, with limited interaction with local communities. Mass tourism is also known as mainstream tourism.

Think about a past trip where you experienced mainstream Tourism, and write about it below.
[If you want, you can write in your own language as well]

Q1
I have experienced or observed the daily life of local people in my travel

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 = Strongly Agree

Q2
The activities at my travel destination reflected local culture and traditions

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree

Q3
The travel activities of the place reflected local history

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree

Q4
I participated/observed travel activities which was rich in local culture, tradition and heritage.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree

Q5
The events and activities I participated/observed usually reflect local practices and rituals.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree

Q6
Festivals and events authentically represented the elements of local community.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree

Q7
The facilities and practices of place made me feel like home

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree

Q8
The hospitality of people made me feel emotionally connected

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 6 7 = Strongly Agree

Q8

The involvement in local activities made me feel attached with the destination.

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q80

We exchanged our stories and experiences with community people.

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q81

Local people were welcoming and friendly to interact with tourists.

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q82

Local people were willingly sharing information regarding their history, culture and heritage.

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q13

The local products and services were enriched with local tradition, heritage and eco-friendly.

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q14

I experienced the local way of accommodation and their way of living.

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q15

The emotional attachment with community people that I experience in CBT is rare in mainstream tourism.

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q16

The destination felt close to my heart

🔍 ☆

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q17

During my travel I experience a clear sense of purposeful life.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q18

During my travel, I experienced things that made my life meaningful.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q19

By getting involved with travel activities I discovered a satisfying purpose of life.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q20

While I traveled this place I felt long-lasting joy through its natural beauty.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q21

While I travelled this place, I felt as if I was part of the community and its nature.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q22

while travelled this place, I felt the nature deeply and it was long-lasting.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q23

I get opportunity to engage in local physical activities and group works.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q24

This travel destination gave me opportunity to engage my skills, interest and knowledge with the local people.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q25

The place was designed and filled with purposeful activities and meaningful experiences.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q26

I prefer to travel a CBT destination more than a mainstream tourism destination.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q27

Select 5 in this response.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q28

I have plan to travel CBT destination in future rather than travelling to a general tourist places.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q29

I like to suggest my friends to travel Community-Based destinations more than mainstream travel destinations.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q30

Switching off digital devices allows me to take a meaningful break from my daily routine.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q31

Unplugging from digital devices, even for a short-time help me to improve my mental well-being.



1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q32



Staying away from digital devices allows me to enjoy the beauty and silence of the nature, local activities, and other experiences more.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q33



This scenario was about community based tourism

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Page Break

Q34



This scenario was about mass tourism

1 = Strongly Disagree

2

3

4

5

6

7 = Strongly Agree

Q35



Do you like to add any further feedback or comments regarding this survey or your CBT experience? Feel free to write below.

