

Community Based Tourism for Destination Development of Thimi

The roles of community-based tourism (CBT) in sustainable
destination development.



MA Tourism

Thesis Prepared by

Sujit Shrestha

Student No.: 20211542

No. of Characters:104,313

Supervisor:Martine Trandberg Jensen

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the role of community-based tourism (CBT) in the sustainable destination development of Thimi, Nepal. The theme centres on the concept of community-based tourism, destination development based on CBT principles and the linkage with sustainability.

This study explores the attributes of community-based tourism (CBT) observed in Thimi, its impacts on the local economy and its contributions to sustainability. Furthermore, how CBT influences cultural preservation and heritage conservation in Thimi, while identifying the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating CBT into Thimi's broader destination development strategies. These issues are crucial as they address the growing need for sustainable tourism models that generate economic benefits, preserve cultural heritage, and promote environmental conservation. This focus is particularly important for Thimi, a culturally rich and historically significant town facing the pressures of modern development and the need to sustain its unique cultural identity.

The study uses qualitative research including participatory observations, structured interviews, and thematic analysis of field notes and archival data. This approach allows us to gain insights on the local community's involvement in tourism, the impact of CBT on Thimi's sustainability, and the dynamics between various stakeholders.

The findings indicate that CBT in Thimi is characterized by extensive community involvement, cultural preservation, and environmentally sustainable practices. The active engagement of the local community has been instrumental in preserving cultural heritage, including traditional festivals, local crafts, and customs, which are integral to Thimi's tourism offerings. However, the economic benefits of CBT have been limited and seasonal, suggesting a need for more diverse and year-round tourism activities.

Several challenges were identified, including coordination between various stakeholders, seasonal fluctuations in tourism, and efficient resource management. Nevertheless, significant opportunities exist to leverage CBT for environmental stewardship, enhance stakeholder cooperation, and align tourism development strategies with sustainability principles. Addressing these challenges requires strategic planning, continuous stakeholder engagement, and fostering a culture of sustainability within the community.

In conclusion, community-based tourism is a viable and critical strategy for sustainable destination development, particularly for culturally significant destinations like Thimi. Future strategies should focus on integrating community-based initiatives with broader tourism management practices, aligning CBT practices with global sustainability standards, and innovating to address evolving challenges in the tourism industry. This thesis contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable tourism management and offers valuable insights for policymakers, tourism practitioners, and local communities aiming to develop sustainable and inclusive tourism practices in developing regions like Nepal.

Keywords: Community-based tourism, community, culture, destination development, sustainability, participations

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Abbrevations and Acronyms

AAU	Aalborg University
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
CBT	Community Based Tourism
CBTP	Community Based Tourism Planning
DD	Destination Development
NGO's	Non Governmental Organisations
SDG's	Sustainable Development Goals
TBL	Triple Bottom Line
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organizations

Glossary of Nepali Vocabulary

Bhajan	Hymn
Bisket Jatra	Festival that locals celebrate during the Nepalese New Year in Thimi
Dhemey	Traditional Newar Drum
Guthi	Traditional informal community institution in the Newar community.
Jatra	Religious and cultural festival
Khaja Ghar	Eatery place
Naach	Traditional Dance
Newar/ Newari	Indigenous people of Kathmandu

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the importance of tourism in Nepal and the overview of Community-based tourism (CBT), particularly in lesser-known tourism destinations like Thimi, Nepal. It outlines the problem statement, research aim, key questions, scope, limitations, and the report's structure, setting the stage for further exploration of CBT and destination development in Thimi.

1.1 Background

Tourism is a rapidly expanding industry and serves as one of Nepal's primary revenue sources. Known for its adventure tourism, Nepal attracts numerous visitors each year. The country also showcases rich cultural heritage, exemplified by places like Thimi, which serves as the case study in this research and is popular for its vibrant festivals, diverse cultures and heritage. Thimi is an ancient settlement located in Bhaktapur district. Moreover, a recent study by the Central Bureau of Statistics in Nepal shows that the tourism industry provides about 372,000 jobs, which is 11.5 percent of employment created across all industries (Jha & Rijal, 2022).

Traditionally tourism studies were mainly concerned with the economic effects of tourism activities. It was very much consumer-centric. However, with the changing environmental dynamics, tourism now emphasizes responsible practices, including community involvement, for competitive and sustainable destinations. Responsible tourism therefore accounts not only the economic activities like revenue generation and job creation but also emphasizes a holistic approach and sustainable practices benefitting hosting communities as well as tourists (Foris et. al., 2020).

Community-based tourism (CBT) has emerged as one of the key approaches in tourism management to address the changing dynamics. CBT and destination development are closely related and complement each other in establishing sustainable tourism destinations. Thoughtfully planned and practiced CBT initiatives can fulfill sustainability principles and contribute positively to the socio-cultural, environmental, and economic benefits of the communities within the tourism destination (Abreu et al., 2024; Asker et al., 2010). However, CBT requires careful evaluation by experts and stakeholders to understand its weaknesses and potential and ensure better service. Despite its benefits to marginalized communities,

destination development based on CBT principles has its limitations. It lacks clarity in the planning process in cases where the society is fragmented and disorganized, and access to information for decision-making is limited, leading to problems in the implementation of destination development strategies (Lo & Janta, 2020; Asker et al., 2010; Pinel, 1968;98).

This research study aims to explore the role of community-based tourism in sustainable destination development, focusing on Thimi, Nepal as the case for an ethnographic study contributing to a wider sustainable tourism management discourse.

1.2 Problem statement

Recent trends indicate a growing interest in discovering new, lesser-known destinations in small cities, significantly influencing tourism preferences (Llupart & Rosa, 2022). However, tourism management, including community-based tourism (CBT), faces challenges across technical, economic, and social dimensions. Research highlights the need for a more profound theoretical exploration of non-mass tourism models like CBT. In East Asia, host communities strive to improve their quality of life through diversified tourism activities, yet limited research on CBT reveals the necessity for better comprehension and planning within its framework (Lo & Junta, 2020). Critics question the legitimacy and authenticity of CBT's benefits to local communities, underscoring the need for comprehensive, theory- and practice-based studies to advance CBT's application. Challenges such as weak governance, inadequate preparation, and limited stakeholder knowledge hinder CBT's effectiveness.

The absence of a universally accepted concept for CBT underlines the ongoing debate about its definition and the need for practical validation (Llupart & Rosa, 2022). Issues like poor distribution channels, inefficient partnerships, and insufficient local participation are linked to concerns about CBT's success rate (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Moscardo, 2008). Moreover, recent studies emphasize integrating sustainable tourism and CBT to achieve broader socio-economic and environmental goals. Dangi and Jamal (2016) discuss emerging sustainable tourism principles with CBT, advocating for a unified approach. Priatmoko et. al. (2021) highlight CBT's contributions to local communities and stress community leadership's importance for sustainable outcomes. These studies collectively underline the need for a comprehensive approach to CBT, supporting the development of a robust framework for future research in sustainable (tourism) destination development.

Research in community-based tourism (CBT) faces critical gaps despite tourism's growing role in driving economic growth. Haugland et al. (2011) highlight challenges in developing strategies for CBT, especially in destination planning and management. Existing frameworks for CBT are fragmented, leading to ambiguity regarding its role in sustainable destination development. Particularly in the context of least developed and developing nations like Nepal, there's a lack of research on the roles of CBT's contribution to local tourism development. This study aims to address this gap by investigating CBT's role in sustainable destination development, focusing on Thimi, Nepal.

1.3 Research aims and questions

This study aims to investigate and understand the roles of community-based tourism (CBT) in sustainable destination development, with a specific focus on Thimi, Nepal. By investigating the attributes, processes, and related elements of CBT, the research aims to clarify how CBT contributes to sustainable destination development.

The following research questions guide this inquiry:

1. What attributes of CBT are revealed in the tourism activities in Thimi, Nepal, contributing to sustainable destination development?
2. How does the application of CBT impact the local economy of Thimi, Nepal, and contribute to its sustainability as a tourism destination?
3. In what ways does CBT influence cultural preservation and heritage conservation in Thimi, Nepal, contributing to its role as a sustainable tourism destination?
4. What are the key challenges and opportunities associated with integrating CBT into broader destination development strategies in Thimi, Nepal, and how can they be addressed to enhance sustainability?

1.4 Scope of the research

This research study investigates the roles of community-based tourism (CBT) in destination development (DD) within Thimi, Nepal, with a focus on economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts. It aims to explore how CBT initiatives drive sustainable development in Thimi by boosting local economies, preserving culture and heritage, and promoting environmental sustainability.

However, the study's scope is limited to Thimi, which may not fully represent other regions. The exploratory nature of the research aims to provide insights rather than definitive conclusions or new CBT models. Additionally, the ethnographic approach, while offering in-depth insights, may be subject to researcher bias.

Despite these limitations, the study seeks to offer valuable insights into CBT's potential for sustainable and inclusive tourism development in developing countries like Nepal, paving the way for future research and policy-making.

1.5 Outline of report

The structure of this report of introduction in Chapter 1 describes problem statements, research gaps, research aims, and research questions. It is then followed by Chapter 2, background concepts related to tourism destination development, community-based tourism, (CBT) and CBT principles. In Chapter 3 literature perspective is included followed by Chapter 4, the empirical case, and methodology in Chapter 5 respectively. It is then followed by results and discussion in Chapter 6. In the final Chapter 7, a summary and conclusion of this research report is presented.

Background information

In this chapter, it describes the concepts of tourist destination development, and concepts and principles of community-based tourism (CBT). The final section describes destination development (DD) planning based on CBT principles. The background in the topics sets the groundwork for exploring the interplay between CBT, DD, and sustainable tourism management.

2.1 Background concepts

Tourism management is defined as a process involving the coordination of travel logistics, marketing, and destination exploration to attract visitors. It is influenced by various elements of society and the natural environment, such as culture, security, infrastructure, visas and permits, demographics, education, income, languages, and the availability of accommodation (Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Page, 2014). With changing dynamics tourism management involves strategic planning and coordination to ensure sustainable development, balancing economic benefits with minimizing negative impacts (Hall & William, 2019; Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Asker et. al., 2010). Components include destination planning, marketing, visitor management, community engagement, and sustainable practices (Voight & Pforr, 2013). CBT empowers local communities for cultural preservation, while Destination Development (DD) provides infrastructure support (Scheyvens, 2018; Asker et al., 2010; Jamal & Stronza, 2009). CBT and DD are not mutually exclusive but intrinsic to one another. CBT emphasizes community participation and aligns with responsible tourism principles, while DD focuses on strategic planning for sustainable growth and cultural preservation (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Asker et. al., 2010; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

2.1.1 Tourism Destinations Development

Concept of Tourism Destinations

Tourism destinations function as complex networks with numerous actors, i.e. tourism stakeholders, including tourists, businesses, governments, local communities, and NGOs co-producing a diverse area of products and services (Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Page, 2014). Despite tourists viewing the destination as a single, integrated experience, it is crafted by individual contributors. The success of these individual actors and the destination as a whole

relies on the effective coordination and integration of their resources, products, and services (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Haugland et al., 2011).

Concept of Destination Development

Destination development enhances a location's tourist appeal while ensuring sustainable economic, social, and environmental growth through integrated strategies involving local and regional authorities (Voight & Pforr, 2013). Sustainable destination development aligns tourism with long-term objectives, benefiting present and future generations. Community-based tourism (CBT) plays a vital role by empowering local communities, promoting cultural preservation, and contributing to environmental conservation (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Asker et al., 2010; Jamal & Stronza, 2009). Operating on multiple levels, destination development focuses on destination capabilities, local coordination, and inter-destination connections (Haugland et al., 2011). This involves resource integration, local networks, and information exchange for value creation. Destination brand image formation is shaped by marketing and tourist experiences, while "destination design" uses design thinking to address contemporary challenges through collaboration and experiential planning (Dilletta et. al., 2021; Manhas et al., 2016). These approaches help create authentic, competitive tourist experiences while ensuring sustainable growth (Hall, 2019; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Govers & Go, 2009).

Strategic planning in destination development includes infrastructure development, cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and community engagement (Hall & William, 2019). Collaboration among stakeholders ensures alignment and minimizes negative impacts. And market research helps understand tourist preferences and craft targeted strategies (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Furthermore, branding and storytelling create distinct identities and foster emotional connections with visitors (Govers & Go, 2009). Incorporating CBT into destination development fosters community involvement, supports sustainable methods, and preserves cultural heritage. This approach ensures sustainability by harmonizing economic growth with social fairness and environmental care (Voight & Pforr, 2013; Hall & William, 2019). Consequently, destination development plays a vital role in creating attractive, culturally vibrant, and environmentally conscious destinations that benefit both tourists and local populations.

2.1.2 Community-Based Tourism

Concept of Community-Based Tourism

Community-Based Tourism (CBT), which emerged in the mid-1990s, emphasizes local community ownership, management, and control over tourism initiatives, fostering interactions between visitors and host communities primarily in rural areas (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Asker et al., 2010). Managed and owned by the community, CBT focuses on 'local' tourism, empowering local service providers to interpret the culture and environment. This approach addresses criticisms of traditional tourism models by involving communities at every stage of development, from planning to monitoring (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Asker et al., 2010; Moscardo & Pearce, 1999). CBT promotes democratic participation in decision-making processes (Asker et al., 2010; Okazaki, 2008), and pro-poor strategies by engaging locals in small-scale tourism projects to alleviate poverty and preserve cultural and environmental heritage (Scheyvens, 2018; Asker et al., 2010). This community-centric approach to tourism aligns with the concept of destination development, where the destination is treated as a product. The planning, development, and monitoring phases of destination development are intertwined with CBT, with the local community taking ownership of tourism products and projects, thus ensuring sustainability and inclusivity (Sharpley, 2014; Hall, 2008).

Attributes, Participants, Power Distributions

CBT operations embrace various legal ownership forms, often promoting community centrality in tourism development, with hosts significantly influencing development processes. Asker et al. (2010) identify 11 potential CBT stakeholders: communities, government, tourism organizations and operators, NGOs, tourists, suppliers, employees, small and medium enterprises, education, utilities and infrastructures, and transport. Hosting communities and external partners must collaborate to support CBT initiatives (Asker et al., 2010). It is illustrated in Figure 1.

CBT operations typically exhibit the following attributes (Asker et al., 2010; Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Okazaki, 2008):

- benefiting local and Indigenous communities,
- hosting national and international tourists within the community,

- communal management, equitable profit sharing among community members,
- community development through profits and resource allocation for maintaining and protecting natural and cultural heritage,
- active community participation in tourism planning, ongoing decision-making, development, and operations.



Fig 1: CBT Participants/ CBT Stakeholders (Asker et. al., 2010)

In summary, understanding attributes, participants, and power distributions lays the foundation for understanding the roles of CBT in sustainable destination development, highlighting the importance of community empowerment and participation in achieving sustainable outcomes.

Enabling Conditions

Scheyvens and Biddulph (2018), Asker et al. (2010), and Okazaki (2008) work on community-based tourism and provide insight into the enabling conditions and barriers of community-based tourism (CBT). It can be crucial for sustainable destination development. Enabling conditions include well-organised and cohesive communities, active involvement of diverse demographic groups in decision-making, clear land ownership and resource rights, grassroots desires reflected in facility design, thorough understanding of impacts and outcomes, high levels of community participation, focus on income generation and heritage conservation, effective marketing strategies, robust visitor management plans, strong partnerships with local stakeholders, tailored approaches to local contexts, integration into

broader community development strategies, visitor education about local culture, and adequate infrastructure to support CBT initiatives (ibid.). However, these enabling conditions face barriers such as community fragmentation, dominance of decision-making by powerful individuals, disputes over land and resources, centralised decision-making imposed by outsiders, limited local information, decreased community participation during project implementation, primary focus on financial gain, ineffective marketing, reliance on external funding without local ownership, lack of adaptation to local contexts, viewing CBT as a quick solution to poverty, inadequate visitor education, and infrastructure deficiencies. Recognizing and addressing these factors is crucial for advancing sustainable tourism development, where CBT plays a pivotal role in encouraging community involvement, preserving cultural heritage, and ensuring fair economic advantages.

Benefits and Challenges

Community-based tourism (CBT) serves as a crucial tool for promoting biodiversity conservation and reducing rural poverty sustainably, particularly in APEC developing countries (Scheyvens, 2018; Asker et al., 2010; Kiss, 2004). It intertwines livelihoods with biodiversity preservation, empowers local communities to manage resources, offers meaningful employment, and contributes to capacity building and cultural preservation, thereby supporting social sustainability. Additionally, CBT generates environmental benefits by providing income streams for communities to actively safeguard their land from degradation and bolster conservation efforts, especially within eco-tourism initiatives. When effectively implemented, CBT supports local economic development, encourages equitable participation, is financially viable and sustainable, minimizes adverse environmental impacts, conserves cultural heritage, educates visitors, and ensures a quality experience for all involved (Asker et al., 2010).

However, challenges persist, including conflicts arising from differences in perception between the local community and destination management, necessitating effective management strategies for alignment. Despite these challenges, CBT facilitates the transfer of wisdom and knowledge, fosters social cohesion and individual self-reliance, and enhances the quality of life for communities (Scheyvens, 2018; Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Asker et al., 2010). These benefits and challenges underscore the integral role of CBT in sustainable destination development, where it contributes to economic growth, social well-being, and environmental conservation, aligning with the principles of sustainability.

2.1.3 Destination Development Planning Based on CBT Principles

Community involvement in tourism planning, stemming from the 1970s' participatory development and empowerment discourse, is central to Community-Based Tourism (CBT) (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2012). Influential models include Okazaki's eight levels of participation and Pinel's Community-Based Tourism Planning (CBTP) Process Model, which emphasize active community roles in tourism development, aligning with community aspirations and ensuring sustainable outcomes (Okazaki, 2008; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Pinel, 1968; 98). Pinel's model involves stages like assessment, visioning, strategy formulation, implementation, and monitoring. CBT integrates social, economic, and environmental factors for sustainable practices, emphasizing local community participation and empowerment to create tourism destinations that align with community goals (Hall, 2019; 2008). It ensures tourism activities reflect community aspirations and capabilities (Pinel, 1998; 1968).

1. Assessment Stage: This stage involves comprehensive community assessment, gathering insights from residents, tourism operators, and stakeholders (Pinel, 1998). It includes a situational analysis to understand the community's current state and tourism potential, and resource identification to catalogue assets and assess carrying capacity (Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Asker et al., 2010; Goodwin, 2006).

2. Visioning, Goal Setting, and Strategy Formulation Stage: Strategic planning and visioning develop strategies for tourism development, identifying community priorities, assets, and desired impacts (Pinel, 1998). Stakeholder engagement creates a shared vision, setting long-term and short-term objectives aligned with community aspirations and sustainable resource use (Beeton, 2006; Dangi & Jamal, 2016). Strategies include marketing plans, infrastructure development, and niche tourism products like eco-tourism or cultural tours, with action plans detailing specific activities, timelines, responsibilities, and resource requirements (Murphy, 2013; Wearing & Neil, 2009; Mair & Reid, 2007; Kiss, 2004).

3. Implementation Stage: This phase integrates tourism with broader community development, emphasizing a holistic perspective where the destination is a home for residents, wildlife, and natural features (Pinel, 1998). Execution involves implementing action plans with active community engagement, including capacity building and training to enhance tourism management and hospitality skills (Asker et al., 2010; Timothy, 2002;).

4. *Monitoring and Evaluation Stage*: Key elements ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of CBTP (Community Based Tourism Planning) . Engagement catalysts initiate and sustain the assessment process, fostering cooperation, trust, and tourism awareness (Pinel, 1998). Indicators measure tourism initiatives' success and impact, informing strategy adjustments (Scheyvens, 2018; 1998; Blackstock, 2005). Adaptive management ensures ongoing alignment with community objectives through continuous monitoring and adjustments (Murphy 2013; Stronza & Gordillo, 2008).

5. *Relationship Building*: Relationship building is integral throughout the CBTP process, establishing trust and cooperation among stakeholders (Pinel, 1998). It ensures a shared vision during visioning and strategy formulation, fosters community empowerment during implementation, and facilitates informed adjustments during monitoring and evaluation (Scheyvens, 1999; 2018; Asker et al., 2010; Simpson, 2008; Stronza & Gordillo, 2008 Beeton, 2006; Timothy, 2002;).

The CBT process planning model is a valuable tool for comprehending community participation in tourism planning and development, ultimately contributing to the promotion of sustainable tourism destinations. Analyzing this model in the context of destination development identifies strategies for integrating community-based approaches into broader tourism management practices.

Summary of Chapter

Overall, Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive background on Thimi, Nepal, and introduces fundamental concepts of tourism management, Community-Based Tourism (CBT), and Destination Development (DD). Thimi's rich cultural heritage and economic activities lay the groundwork for understanding its potential as a sustainable tourism destination. The introduction to tourism management principles stresses the necessity of harmonizing economic advancement with environmental and social factors. Furthermore, the examination of CBT emphasizes its capacity to empower local communities and advocate for sustainable tourism methods. Understanding these concepts establishes the foundation for further exploration of the interplay between CBT and DD in Thimi, Nepal, in the upcoming chapters.

Theoretical Perspective

This chapter includes the theoretical perspectives of the study. It starts with a discussion on sustainability theory as a foundational framework, highlighting its core dimensions: environmental, social, and economic sustainability. These dimensions form the bedrock for understanding sustainable practices across various sectors, including tourism. Further, the chapter explores the integration of CBT within sustainability theory, emphasizing its potential roles in nurturing sustainable destination development through active community engagement and equitable resource management. Through the analysis of fundamental processes and attributes of CBT, this chapter elucidates how sustainability principles can be successfully integrated into tourism planning and management. This integration ultimately fosters the long-term resilience and prosperity of tourism destinations.

3.1 Sustainability Theory

Sustainability theory provides a foundational framework for sustainable development across various sectors, including tourism (Scheyvens, 2018;1998; Asker et al., 2010). Within this framework, community-based tourism (CBT) has emerged as a promising paradigm for sustainable destination development, emphasizing proactive community engagement in tourism planning, management, and operations (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Asker et al., 2010).

3.1.1 Concept of Sustainability

Brundtland Commission (1998) defines sustainability as ‘meeting present needs without compromising future generations’. Sustainability encompasses three dimensions: environmental, social, and economic. Environmental sustainability involves conserving natural resources, reducing pollution, and maintaining ecological balance (Adams, 2006). Social sustainability emphasizes fairness, inclusion, communal welfare, and cultural preservation (Dillard et. al., 2009). Economic sustainability seeks enduring growth, stability, and equitable benefit distribution (Goodland, 1995). These dimensions are interdependent, requiring balance for true sustainability.

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) address global challenges like poverty, environmental preservation, and social equity (. Elkington's Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach highlights the interconnectedness of economic, social, and environmental

performance, urging organizations to assess their impacts in all three areas (Elkington, 1998). The Adaptive Cycle model illustrates the dynamic interplay among social, economic, and ecological systems, emphasizing resilience and adaptability (Gunderson & Holling, 2002). These theories provide a robust foundation for evaluating how sustainability principles underpin community-based tourism (CBT) processes and attributes.

This integration facilitates a nuanced understanding of how sustainability principles influence CBT processes and attributes, informing effective strategies for sustainable destination development.

3.1.2 Sustainable Tourism Management

The tourism industry, by its inherent nature, deeply interacts with environmental, social, and economic systems. Applying sustainability theory in tourism entails the development of practices aimed at minimizing adverse impacts and maximizing positive contributions across all three dimensions (Hall et. al., 2015). These sustainable tourism practices encompass a range of strategies, including promoting eco-friendly accommodations and transportation (Bramwell & Lane, 2012), fostering cultural tourism that respects and preserves local traditions (Smith, 2009), and ensuring that tourism revenues bolster local economies and benefit host communities (Sharpley, 2009).

Sustainable tourism management entails the implementation of strategies and practices directed towards minimizing negative environmental impacts, maximising social and cultural benefits for local communities, and ensuring long-term economic viability (UNWTO, 2020; 2019; Scheyvens, 2018; 1999; Asker et al., 2010). Key principles guiding sustainable tourism management include destination stewardship, community engagement, resource conservation, and visitor education (UNWTO, 2020; 2019; Scheyvens, 2018;1999; Asker et al., 2010). Integration of these principles into destination planning and development processes enables destinations to attain sustainability objectives while enhancing the overall visitor experience (Foris et. al., 2020; Voigt & Pforr, 2013; Hall & Lew, 2009) .

In summary, sustainable tourism management involves a comprehensive approach that addresses environmental, social, and economic concerns, thereby fostering sustainable development within tourism destinations. In essence, CBT process planning, when integrated with sustainability principles, becomes a powerful tool for achieving balanced and resilient tourism destinations.

3.2 Linkage between Community-Based Tourism (CBT), Destination Development, and Sustainability

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) plays a pivotal role in sustainable destination development by integrating its principles, fostering inclusive experiences, and aligning with local needs (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Asker et al., 2010; Moscardo & Pearce, 1999). CBT actively engages communities in decision-making, preserves cultural assets, integrates environmental sustainability, and promotes local economic empowerment (Llupart & Rosa, 2022; Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018; Smith & Diekmann, 2017; Asker et al., 2010; Pinel, 1998).

The synergy between CBT and sustainable development is evident in its incorporation of environmental, social, and economic dimensions. By following structured planning models, destinations can achieve balanced development. CBT processes, such as assessment, visioning, implementation, monitoring, and relationship building, are integral to achieving sustainability goals in tourism development (Scheyvens, 2018; Asker et al., 2010; Okazaki, 2008). Community involvement and empowerment align with principles of social sustainability by ensuring equitable distribution of tourism benefits and providing locals with a voice in decision-making processes. Furthermore, CBT strategies for environmental conservation and cultural preservation contribute to ecological and cultural sustainability, safeguarding natural resources and heritage sites for future generations (Smith & Diekmann, 2017; Hall & Lew, 2009).

Overall, integrating CBT principles enhances sustainability across economic, social, and environmental domains, empowering local communities and ensuring destination viability. Understanding CBT's role in sustainability is crucial for informed industry policies and practices. Through its multifaceted roles, CBT emerges as a key driver of sustainable destination development, fostering resilience, inclusivity, and stewardship (Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Dredge & Jamal, 2015).

3.2.1 Contributions of Community-Based Tourism to Sustainability

Community-based tourism (CBT) makes significant contributions across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. By aligning its principles with sustainability goals, CBT initiatives foster local empowerment, equitable benefit-sharing, and environmental stewardship, thus promoting holistic sustainability within tourism development. Based on the

discussion in the earlier chapter the contributions of CBT to sustainability can mainly be summarised as:

Contributions to Economic Sustainability:

- CBT initiatives stimulate local economic development by investing in capacity building, entrepreneurship, and job creation within communities.
- The emphasis on local ownership and operation ensures that tourism revenues circulate within the destination, supporting local businesses and infrastructure.
- Equitable benefit distribution enhances economic stability and resilience, contributing to long-term economic sustainability.

Contributions to Social Sustainability:

- CBT prioritizes social equity and inclusivity by involving marginalized groups in tourism planning processes and ensuring accessibility to tourism activities for all members of society.
- Through capacity-building initiatives, CBT enhances local skills and capabilities, promoting self-sufficiency and community resilience.
- Collaboration on tourism projects fosters community cohesion and pride, enriching the overall destination experience and contributing to social sustainability.

Contributions to Environmental Sustainability:

- Environmental stewardship is a core principle of CBT, promoting responsible environmental practices such as sustainable resource management and waste reduction.
- By conserving biodiversity and preserving natural ecosystems, CBT contributes to ecological resilience and long-term environmental sustainability.
- Sustainable tourism practices advocated by CBT help mitigate negative environmental impacts, ensuring the preservation of natural resources for future generations.

These contributions are mutually reinforcing, collectively promoting sustainable development within tourism destinations while balancing economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental conservation.

3.2.2 Roles of CBT in Sustainable Destination Development

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) embodies fundamental characteristics that align closely with sustainability principles, fostering local empowerment, equitable benefit-sharing, and resource stewardship (Zapata et al., 2013; Tolkachet. Et. al., 2013; Giampiccoli & Kalis, 2012a; 2012b). These attributes contribute significantly to economic, social, and environmental sustainability within tourism development. Based on our discussion in an earlier section the potential roles of CBT in sustainable destination development can mainly be identified as:

1. Facilitator of Community Empowerment

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) acts as a catalyst for empowering local communities by actively involving them in decision-making processes concerning tourism development. Initiatives such as community participation in tourism planning and development instill a sense of ownership and stewardship among community members, empowering them to influence the trajectory of tourism activities in alignment with their needs and aspirations (Andereck & Vogt, 2000). CBT planning processes provide platforms for meaningful participation, ensuring community empowerment through inclusive mechanisms such as consultations and participatory workshops. This participatory approach not only empowers communities but also fosters social cohesion and trust among stakeholders (Honey, 2008).

Community Ownership, Control, and Participation:

CBT ensures that local communities retain significant control over tourism activities and decision-making processes, enabling them to shape the direction of tourism development (Zapata et al., 2013). Active participation in planning and decision-making empowers communities to ensure that tourism aligns with their needs and priorities, thereby promoting social inclusion and community well-being (Okazaki, 2008; Asker et al., 2010). The emphasis on local community involvement in decision-making processes related to tourism development ensures alignment with community needs and aspirations, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for the destination's well-being (Dredge & Jamal, 2015; Andereck & Vogt, 2000).

Strengthening Community Identity and Pride:

Engagement in CBT strengthens community pride in cultural and natural heritage, fostering collective efforts to protect and promote unique attributes (Saarinen, 2006; Timothy, 2002). Collaboration on tourism projects enhances social cohesion within the community (Murphy, 2013; Beeton, 2006). This emphasis on community identity and cohesion not only empowers individuals but also enriches the overall destination experience, contributing to its sustainability and resilience.

2. Preserver of cultural Heritage

One of the primary roles of community-based tourism (CBT) is the preservation and promotion of local cultural heritage. By prioritizing cultural authenticity and offering immersive experiences, CBT contributes to safeguarding unique cultural traditions and practices within tourism destinations. This not only enhances the visitor experience but also guarantees the sustainability of cultural heritage for future generations (Stronza & Gordillo, 2008). CBT planning integrates strategies for cultural preservation into destination development plans, involving initiatives such as heritage conservation programs and cultural tourism initiatives. Engaging local communities in identifying and preserving cultural heritage sites, along with promoting sustainable tourism practices, ensures the protection and celebration of cultural assets (Dredge & Jamal, 2017).

Cultural Authenticity and Preservation:

CBT prioritizes the preservation and promotion of local cultural heritage, offering authentic experiences that enrich visitor experiences (Fennell, 2014). By safeguarding cultural identity and traditions, CBT contributes to the long-term sustainability of destinations (Stronza, 2008). Hosting national and international tourists, CBT promotes the preservation and celebration of local culture and traditions, enriching both tourist experiences and community identity (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005). Cultural preservation efforts foster community pride and resilience, ensuring that cultural heritage is safeguarded for future generations (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005). Additionally, by preserving cultural heritage and promoting local traditions, CBT fosters community cohesion and strengthens social bonds.

Enhanced Visitor Experience:

CBT offers authentic, immersive experiences, leading to higher visitor satisfaction and repeat visits (Asker et al., 2010). Smaller-scale operations in CBT provide unique services, enhancing destination attractiveness (Timothy, 2002). CBT spreads tourist traffic to less-visited areas, reducing pressure on popular sites and distributing economic benefits more evenly (Blackstock, 2005). By offering diverse attractions, CBT helps prevent over-tourism and its negative impacts (Dangi & Jamal, 2016). This approach promotes sustainable tourism practices while enhancing the overall visitor experience and preserving cultural heritage.

3. Catalyst for Sustainable Economic Development

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) plays a pivotal role in promoting sustainable economic development within tourism destinations. By investing in local capacity building, entrepreneurship, and job creation, CBT contributes to poverty alleviation and economic resilience among local communities. Moreover, by promoting local sourcing of goods and services, CBT generates economic benefits that circulate within the destination, contributing to its overall economic sustainability. CBT planning processes identify opportunities for sustainable economic development within tourism destinations. Initiatives such as community-based enterprises and tourism revenue-sharing mechanisms ensure equitable distribution of economic benefits among local stakeholders. This involves fostering partnerships between tourism businesses and local communities to promote economic inclusion and empowerment (Telfer & Sharpley, 2015).

Equitable benefit distribution, economic development:

CBT creates local employment opportunities and ensures equitable revenue distribution, reducing poverty and enhancing economic stability within communities. Prioritizing local ownership and operation, CBT keeps tourism revenues circulating within the community, supporting local businesses and infrastructure (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). The emphasis on equitable distribution of economic benefits reduces disparities and fosters economic stability within communities. Sharing tourism profits equitably enhances social cohesion and resilience, contributing to long-term economic sustainability. CBT's focus on sustainable economic development ensures that tourism benefits reach all members of the community, fostering economic stability and resilience while promoting inclusive growth.

4. Guardian of Environmental Conservation

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) prioritizes responsible environmental practices to minimize negative impacts on the natural environment within tourism destinations. Initiatives such as sustainable resource management, waste reduction, and conservation efforts are central to CBT's mission of protecting biodiversity and preserving natural ecosystems. By integrating environmental stewardship into tourism activities, CBT ensures the long-term ecological sustainability of destinations.

Environmental Stewardship:

CBT promotes responsible environmental practices to minimize negative impacts on the natural environment. Through sustainable resource management and conservation efforts, CBT helps protect biodiversity and preserve natural ecosystems. Emphasizing sustainable practices in tourism operations, CBT advocates for eco-friendly accommodations and responsible resource management to minimize environmental impact. These practices contribute to ecological resilience and long-term environmental sustainability, preserving natural resources for future generations. The emphasis on environmental stewardship underscores the critical role of CBT in promoting sustainability across economic, social, and environmental dimensions within tourism development.

5. Promoter of Social Equity and Inclusivity

Community-based tourism (CBT) plays a vital role in promoting social equity and inclusivity within tourism destinations. By prioritizing the inclusion of marginalized groups, such as indigenous communities and vulnerable populations, CBT ensures that the benefits of tourism development are equitably distributed among all members of society. This fosters social cohesion and resilience, contributing to the overall sustainability of destinations.

Community Participation for Social Equity:

The attribute of community participation promotes social equity and inclusivity within tourism destinations. By ensuring that all members of society have a voice in tourism development decisions, CBT fosters a sense of belonging and social cohesion. This involves prioritizing the inclusion of marginalized groups, such as Indigenous communities and vulnerable populations, in tourism planning processes (Dredge & Jamal, 2015). CBT

planning processes prioritize social equity and inclusivity as key objectives. Through initiatives such as inclusive tourism planning workshops and accessibility audits, CBT ensures that tourism activities are accessible to all members of society. This involves identifying barriers to participation and implementing measures to address them, such as providing accessible facilities and promoting cultural sensitivity among tourism stakeholders.

Capacity Building and Skills Development:

CBT initiatives provide training and resources to enhance local skills and capabilities, promoting self-sufficiency and resilience. Building local capacities fosters economic sustainability by promoting entrepreneurship and job creation within communities, reducing dependency on external investments. Through capacity-building initiatives, such as training in sustainable practices and entrepreneurship, CBT enhances the economic resilience of communities.

3.3 Synthesis of Literature Review

This section synthesizes the entirety of the literature review by integrating key concepts from sustainability theory and the linkage between CBT and destination development. The synthesis reflects the author's thought process in conceptualizing the research. Sustainability theory serves as the overarching framework, emphasizing the balance of economic, social, and environmental dimensions for sustainable development, underpinning the examination of CBT's role in destination development. The synthesis (Figure 2) highlights the multifaceted roles of CBT in sustainable destination development, showing how CBT practices contribute to sustainability. By integrating theoretical perspectives and literature insights, the author creates a model illustrating the progression from CBT elements to sustainable destination development. This provides a clear pathway for analyzing CBT's potential in driving sustainable tourism.

The synthesis organizes concepts into a structured progression: starting with sustainability theory at the meta-level, followed by CBT elements (attributes, enabling conditions, barriers, participants), and then tourism destination development. It outlines CBT-based destination development planning in five stages, linking CBT, destination development planning, and general destination development with sustainability. The ultimate goal is the integration of CBT practices and strategic planning to achieve economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

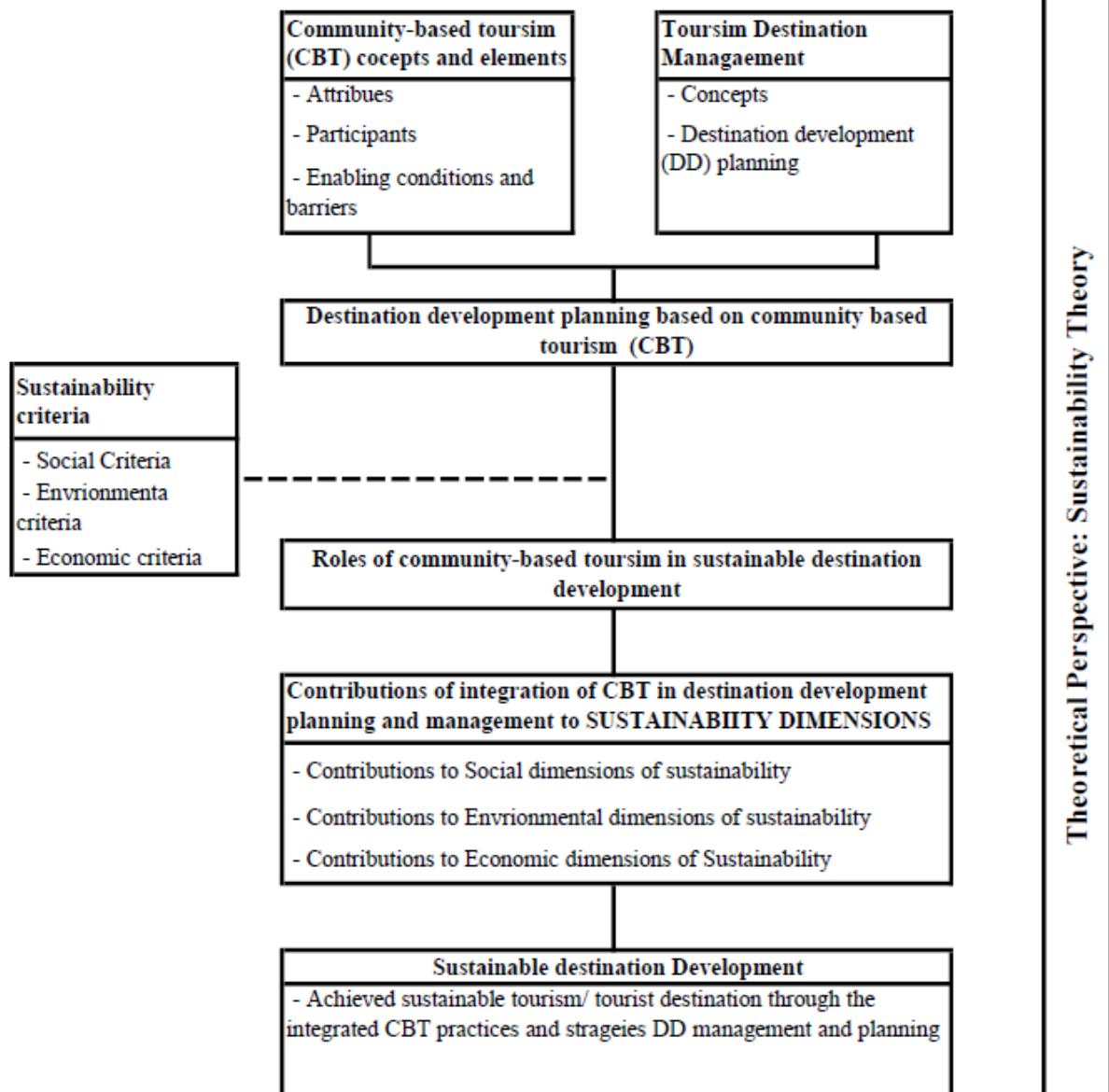


Figure 2: Synthesis of Literature Review (Own's processing)

Empirical case

This study will use Thimi, Nepal, a geographic location as an empirical case since Thimi carries a history and rich heritage and holds the potential to develop itself as the main tourist attraction in the Kathmandu Valley. Nevertheless, Thimi being a lesser known tourism destination with a closely related population in the community makes it relevant. Moreover, it is in an industry (tourism industry of Nepal) where (Nepal's) government is actively seeking new tourist destinations that bring both economic benefits to the community and overall sustainability.

4.1 Overview of the Case Destination: Thimi

Thimi is located in the Bhaktapur District in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal. It is located approximately 12 km east of Kathmandu and is surrounded by the ancient cities of Bhaktapur and Kathmandu. The town boasts traditional Newari architecture and a vibrant local culture. It is approximately 11.47 square kilometres in area (Bhatta and Chan, 2016).

Thimi has a population of around 1,10,000 people (National Statistics Office, 2021), predominantly from the Newar community, engaged in agriculture, pottery, and small-scale commerce. The close-knit community fosters strong familial and social bonds, pivotal in local economic and cultural activities.

Historically, Thimi served as a cultural and trading hub in the Kathmandu Valley, renowned for its traditional pottery, festivals, and rituals. The town's temples, courtyards, and ancient buildings reflect its rich Newari heritage. Thimi, formerly known as Madhyapur, is a hub for various deities, boasting temples such as Balkumari, Lokeshwar, Bhairab, Ganesh, Siddhi Kali, and more. It is rich in cultural traditions, including masked dances like Navadurga, Bhairava Naach, Peacock Dances, Salancha Naach, and Radha Krishna Naach. With a predominantly Newar population, Thimi is deeply rooted in Newari culture.

Despite being overshadowed by neighbouring cities like Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, Thimi holds untapped potential as a tourist destination. Its cultural heritage and traditional craftsmanship present significant opportunities for Community-Based Tourism (CBT) initiatives to promote sustainable tourism and local economic development.

Methodology

This part of the thesis will include the methodological choices used to address the research objectives. It will thoroughly discuss and present the research design, choice of research philosophy, approach, and strategies, as well as the reasons behind the choices made. In a research work, methodology can be referred to as a theoretical approach to doing research that includes the philosophical assumptions on which the research is based (Saunders et. al., 2012). This research includes Thimi as a case study location for the ethnographic study to understand the role of CBT for sustainable destination development. As for the research strategy, an exploratory approach is undertaken. The core of the methodology for this research thesis is inspired by a research model or framework known as the ‘Research Onion’ (Saunders et al. 2019, p.130), which provides a structured approach to design the research from philosophical assumptions to data collection and analysis. Figure 3 illustrates the ‘the Research Onion’. The paragraph hereafter in this chapter will illustrate reasons, logic, and comprehensive explanations, along with the selected research design and data collection techniques as the methodology of this research work.

5.1 Research Design

In this part of the chapter, brief narratives about the process of design methods for the research study throughout the problem statement phase, mode of data collection, and conclusion of the study are presented.

The conceptualization for the research started with brainstorming for possible research themes, staying within the core subjects from the MA program's main focus as defined by the curriculum. When choosing a topic, the author considered academic areas with which he was familiar from previous studies and research issues. Community-based tourism (CBT) as a sustainable practice for destination development was selected as the research topic. Initially, a thought process for a possible tourism destination with good prospects was undertaken. Thus, the less explored and promoted Thimi was selected for its culturally rich heritage and traditions to work with for the study. Furthermore, to understand and build knowledge about CBT and provide context for the research study, a literature review of articles from different authors, studies of previous thesis from the Aalborg University (AAU) project library, and assessments of reports published on CBT trends on the internet were conducted. This initial desk research resulted in creating a historical background and defining the concepts of the

research topics. Analyzing the data collected as mentioned above and the findings from it has enabled the provision of suggestions and addressing the research objectives in the final sections of this thesis.

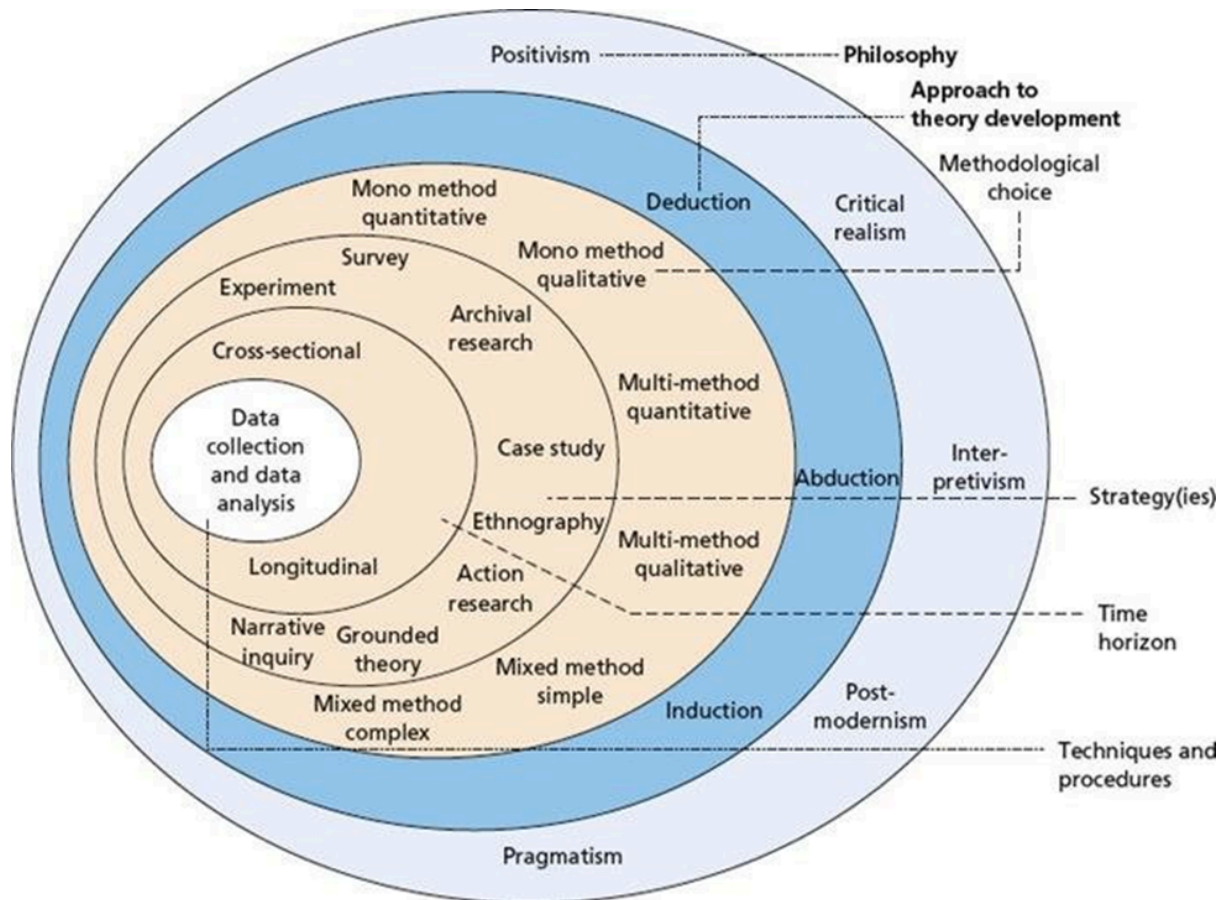


Figure 3: Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2019)

5.2 Research Philosophy and Strategy

Philosophy in research refers to the belief system guiding the development of knowledge within a specific field. It maintains credibility through consistent assumptions, impacting methodological choices, research strategies, and data collection techniques (Saunders et al., 2019). For this study, it is crucial to consider the role of Community-based tourism (CBT) in destination development and the ethnographic study of Thimi. The research is guided by social constructivism, acknowledging that knowledge production is shaped by social contexts (Adhikari, 2021). This study incorporates the concept of CBT from various cultural, social, and ethical dimensions. Epistemologically, the research philosophy is inspired by interpretivism, emphasizing subjective meanings and socially constructed realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The research initially reviews CBT, destination development (DD), and

sustainability through a constructivist lens before assessing qualitative data aligned with interpretivism (Adhikari, 2021). To achieve qualitative interpretive research outcomes, an exploratory strategy is employed, allowing for the exploration of the research topic without necessarily reaching definitive conclusions (Aityan, 2022; Bell et al., 2022). This approach uncovers new insights and acknowledges the uncertainties inherent in the research process (Swedberg, 2020). Given Thimi's status as an undeveloped tourism destination, qualitative exploratory research is deemed suitable to delve deeper into the feasibility of CBT products and community support (Ruska, 2011).

5.3 Data Collection

This section outlines the methods used to collect information for the study. Data collection involved desk research, literature review, field visits, interviews, and archival resources (Bell et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2019). Practical assessments with fellow students, community members, industry experts, stakeholders, and group discussions were valuable. Informal talks within the informal group facilitated the sharing of thoughts and experiences related to the research topic. Qualitative data was gathered through paper-based interviews, field notes, and archival resources, aligning with an exploratory ethnographic study strategy. These sources ensured the quality and relevance of the research data (Bell et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2019).

5.3.1 Sample Selection

Criteria for selecting interviewees included local individuals involved in developing Thimi as a sustainable tourism destination, tourism student, administrative and policy-level government representatives, tourism scholars, and tourism entrepreneurs. Convenience sampling was employed, utilizing personal networks to connect with potential respondents. This snowball method ensured objectivity by avoiding direct relationships between the researcher and respondents. Due to time constraints, the sample size was intentionally limited to five respondents, with structured open ended questions, paper-based interviews were selected (Bell et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2019).

5.3.2 Data Collection Methods

Participatory observation is fundamental in analyzing tourism interactions and understanding cultural behaviors (Marujo, 2021). It has been extensively used in tourism studies to examine tourist behavior and local community reactions to tourism (Cole, 2005). For this ethnographic

research, participatory observation arose as the most appropriate approach for achieving the research objectives (Marujo, 2021). The research begins with participatory observation of the destination, focusing on various social-cultural aspects of the community. Field visits involve active participation in social events, visits to cultural heritage sites, and immersion in the daily lifestyle of locals. Observations are centred on experiencing and recording significant events to create detailed field notes, similar to ethnographic practice (Emerson, 2011). Field notes are categorized under different themes to aid research findings. James P. Spradley suggests using "The Condensed Account" format, which includes phrases and single words, as a mnemonic device for recalling particular scenes (Spradley, 1980). Field notes are taken based on predetermined themes aligned with research objectives, following steps recommended by Emerson (2011). This includes capturing initial sensory impressions, observing major events, and noting personal biases and reactions to contextual experiences, complementing the research process as a whole.

A structured interview was conducted in a pen and paper format (and email when direct contact was not possible). Respondent was sent a Word document containing the question and they were asked to fill it and send it in a pdf so that credibility and reliability are maintained, which, although unconventional for ethnographic study, offers advantages such as flexibility, convenience, standardization for consistency, and anonymity for better qualitative data (Spradley, 2016a; 2016b). While it may seem to limit direct engagement, it still allows for core understanding and own-time interviews. For the selection of respondents, individuals including locals from Thimi, tourism entrepreneurs, local government representatives, tourism students, and frequent visitors were chosen as informants. The summary of interview respondents is presented in Table 1. They were provided with a brief introduction of the student researcher and the research's purpose before receiving the interview document, which included a consent paragraph. The structure of questions was open-ended, presented in both English and Nepalese to accommodate language preferences. Responses in Nepalese were translated using Google Translate and verified for accuracy up to the author's knowledge capacity. Additionally, archival sources—such as meeting minutes from community meetings, field notes, photographs taken during field visits, and reflections from participatory observation during field trips, alongside other available data from local community and municipality offices. Each method contributes distinct perspectives, enriching the dataset and enhancing the overall validity and depth of the research findings.

Table 1: Summary of interview informants/ respondents.

Respondent	Age	Occupation	Address
Respondent 1	32	Govt. service	Bhaktapur
Respondent 2	38	Service/ Nepal Tourism Board	Madhaypur thimi 2
Respondent 3	45	Tourism planning	Lubhu
Respondent 4	55	Entrepreneur	Madhaypur Thimi 3
Respondent 5	53	Tourism entrepreneur	Madhaypur Thimi 5

5.3.3 Data Analysis Methods

In contemporary research, methodological triangulation is crucial for enhancing the credibility and depth of data analysis. This report employs a triangulation approach by integrating interviews, participatory observation, field studies, and archival research, each contributing unique perspectives to enrich understanding (Bell et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2019). The primary analysis method is thematic analysis, which identifies and reports patterns within the data. When thematic analysis is insufficient and narrative analysis provides context for storytelling elements. This combination ensures a comprehensive, reliable, and nuanced understanding of the research findings. By leveraging these varied methods, the report achieves a holistic analysis that mitigates individual method limitations and enhances overall validity and reliability (Bell et al., 2022; Saunders et al., 2019).

Thematic analysis description: The thematic analysis analysis focused on identifying three key aspects: attributes, contributions, and roles of CBT. Attributes refer to specific characteristics or features of CBT observed in the data, while contributions encompass the environmental, social, and economic impacts of CBT on sustainability. Roles denote the functions or responsibilities played by CBT within the realm of sustainable tourism. Additionally, color and symbols were used as the visual codes to identify these key aspects. It is summarised in Appendix 1. While thematic analysis helps to identify and analyze elements with the key aspects - attributes, and roles of CBT, for personal opinions which are not directly related to the case - for examples, challenges, potential solutions recommended by the interview respondents, personal reflection, and critique narrative analysis is used in combination with the results from thematic analysis for sense-making.

5.4 Quality Evaluations

As this study uses ethnographic study and the nature of the research has been exploratory, it requires specific types of qualitative data based on participatory observations, interviews, and archival records for analysis and to reach conclusions. Bell et. al. (2022), Saunders et. al. (2019), and Shelton (2004) have recommended a few criteria to evaluate the quality of data collected. Quality evaluations in this ethnographic study are based on credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Credibility underscores the importance of alignment of research findings and interpretation with the experience and viewpoint of individuals or groups being studied (Baker et al. 2015). As a local to the community, the author, with a deep understanding of the cultural norms and social values, the data and information from the respondent conciliates with observations made by the author. And can further be verified as considerably credible since the author is aware of the socio-cultural dimension of Thimi being born and brought up in the same community.

However, it is also noteworthy that the complex nature of CBT while communicating cannot be compiled into a single interpretation (Baker et al. 2015) and the research finding, more or less, is an addition to knowledge building in prior or upcoming research in the field. There is a margin for change in the future with the change in socio-cultural and economic context.

The ability of research findings and conclusions to be used and compared across different interpretations in various contextual settings is known as transferability in qualitative data. Since no two social contexts are the same, and given the exploratory nature of this study, the changing socio-economic and cultural aspects of Thimi will likely alter future research strategies. Findings from this research may not be exactly replicable in future studies, as the destination is still in an exploratory phase and will undergo significant changes in the coming years. Continuous research on the topic will help the community gain more knowledge about tourism, allowing them to evaluate and implement new initiatives for community-based tourism (CBT). This research contributes to the transferability of the CBT concept as a basic manifestation, although it will vary across different contexts.

The subjective and personal dimension of interpretation in this research has been established, as the author acknowledges his positioning within humanistic inquiry and the inevitable influence of his values and beliefs on the interpretation. This implies that confirmability can only be assessed by researchers other than the one involved in the particular study. To address

confirmability, transparency and reflexivity were maintained throughout the research process, following the recommendations of Saunders et al. (2019) and Shelton (2004). It is crucial to acknowledge potential biases resulting from the author's subjective positioning, therefore interpretations were grounded in the data and reflective of the diverse perspectives within the community. Additionally, a triangulation approach is employed, including interviews, participatory observation, and archival data, as suggested by Saunders et al. (2019) and Bell et. al. (2022) to enhance the dependability and authenticity of the research findings. This approach allowed for the cross-verification of data from multiple sources, strengthening the validity and reliability of the study.

5.5 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were paramount in conducting this research, guided by the recommendations of Bell et al. (2022) and Saunders et al. (2019). To ensure ethical integrity, several measures were implemented. The anonymity of all respondents was strictly maintained by removing or coding personal identifiers to protect their privacy. Participants received a comprehensive consent form outlining the research objectives, methodologies, potential risk and benefits enabling them to make an informed decision about their involvement. The consent form required a signature to confirm their voluntary participation.

Additionally, respondents were given a clear overview of the research context and main concepts, ensuring they fully understood the scope and purpose of the study. The specific topic aims, and objectives of the research were communicated to all participants to build trust and ensure they knew how their contributions would be used. To accommodate linguistic diversity, all research materials, including consent forms and questionnaires, were provided in both English and Nepali, ensuring language barriers did not impede understanding or participation. By adhering to these ethical guidelines, the research complied with established ethical standards and fostered a respectful and trustworthy relationship with participants, enhancing the overall integrity and validity of the study.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of the interview data and the field notes from the participatory observation during the field visits conducted in Thimi, focusing on the roles of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in sustainable destination development. The analysis is structured around key themes identified through thematic and narrative analysis, providing a comprehensive view of the current state, perceptions, challenges, and opportunities related to CBT in Thimi. The data collected is triangulated using quotes and stories from the interviews and field notes to support the thematic analysis.

It is then followed by discussion on potential effects of implementing CBT in existing tourism management practices, contributions to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the relationship between CBT-based destination development and sustainability, economic outlook, the fabric of society, promotion of local art and architecture, and critical reflections on research implications and limitations. Additionally, implications for academia, local communities, stakeholders, and policymakers are explored, along with future recommendations and research directions.

Results

6.1 Current State of Community-Based Tourism in Thimi

Local Participation and Cultural Festivals

Attributes of community-based tourism (CBT) in Thimi are manifested as the participation of the locals in the cultural festivals and the engagement in the preservation of traditional crafts and heritage. During the interview, Respondent 1 also highlighted, *"All locals were participating in the jatra... the restaurants were packed too... locals were kind; they were providing bottles of water for the participants."* This sentiment was also presented by Respondent 2, who stated, *"Thimi still operates local 'guthi,' which is one of the best examples of CBT initiatives."* Guthi is a traditional informal community institution in the Newar community. Moreover, it was reflected in the interview response of Respondent 3 about the potential for CBT if it is systematically organized and marketed beyond the local festivals.

Furthermore, field observations also confirm some form of active local participation mentioned in the interview response. Field visit during the Bisket Jatra (Bisket Jatra is a big festival that locals celebrate during the Nepalese New Year in Thimi). Excerpts from the field note taken on the 13th and 14th of April 2024 show “... *the town was vibrant with energy. Stalls selling traditional food and crafts were everywhere, and the streets were filled with locals and tourists alike. The economic activity was noticeable, with restaurants and shops crowded ...*”. However, outside these events, tourism activities were minimal, reflecting the need for more structured and year-round CBT initiatives.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The preservation of cultural heritage emerged as a notable concern discussed both in the interview response and informal conversation with locals during the field visit. Respondent 1 was worried in this response, where he said “*It's even sadder to see that so many traditional houses have been replaced by new structures.*” This concern is inherently shared by Respondent 2, who emphasized that cultural exhibitions can attract tourists and promote the preservation of traditional crafts and practices. Similarly, respondent 3 suggested that CBT should prioritize preserving the traditional Newar architecture, and organizing cultural exhibitions.

Field observations endorse these views. During the fifth field visit (April 17, 2024) it was observed at the palace that there was active participation of all age groups in the renovation of the palace courtyard, a tradition followed in other conservation projects as well. It is a testament to the community's commitment to preserving their heritage. However, similar to concerns mentioned in the interview response, the replacement of traditional Newari houses with modern buildings is noticeable and concerning as it threatens the cultural and historical fabric of Thimi. It was observed in the first field visit which was dated April 5, 2024.

Destination Management and Planning

There is an evident lack of formal destination management and planning for sustainable tourism in Thimi. Respondent 3 noted that CBT can contribute significantly to sustainable development if there is a strategic focus on preserving cultural heritage and promoting tourism activities. A similar response was made by Respondent 5, who stated, “... *several tourism master plans were made, but so far not single one of them has been operationalized...* ” Field observation dated on 20th April 2024 of religious sites in

Siddhikali temple premises revealed the existence of ongoing construction and maintenance efforts of the temple premise and related infrastructure, but there were not any signs of integration of infrastructural development into a broader tourism strategy.

Awareness about CBT

There is a varied level of awareness and perception about CBT and sustainable tourism among the stakeholders. According to Respondent 2, locals enjoy the festivals but are not fully aware of the broader concept of sustainable tourism and lack integration of local festivals into broader tourism and value creation. Furthermore, Respondent 3 also emphasized the need for awareness programs to educate the community about the benefits of the unique culture and heritage Thimi offers to the development of tourism and practices that can be linked to sustainable tourism. Respondent 4, a tourism entrepreneur and local of Madhyapur Thimi also noted “... *the efforts made in the past were not holistic*”, illustrating lack of awareness. Field engagements revealed varying levels of awareness and understanding of CBT, with many expressing pride in sharing their culture but also raising concerns about the need for better infrastructure and support.

Roles of Stakeholders and Participants

Stakeholders play diverse roles in promoting CBT, from preserving cultural practices to engaging in tourism activities. Respondent 2 pointed out that social equity, cultural preservation, and fair sharing of benefits are critical roles of CBT in sustainable development. Respondent 5 also highlights the collaborative role between tourism entrepreneurs and local associations in the past in tourism-oriented and cultural-oriented activities. Field visits also indicated the active participation of locals in maintaining cultural sites and engaging with visitors during festivals, suggesting strong potential for CBT if properly organized.

Community Engagement in Thimi

Community engagement is a vital component of successful CBT. Respondent 1 stressed the importance of community participation in cultural festivals, noting that all locals participate and enjoy the festivals but they may not be fully aware of the broader concept of sustainable tourism. Respondent 2 highlighted the existence of ‘Guthis’ and the role of local ‘Guthis’ in community engagement and the successful preservation of cultural practices. Respondent 3 stated that there exists community engagement at the informal level but stressed the

importance and need for having formal institutions that have more power to pull the necessary resources and participants toward a common cause. Field observations during the 'Bisket Jatra' showed extensive collective community participation from different neighbourhoods of thimi and was proof of engagement that was not limited just to individual participation, demonstrating the community's strong engagement. Furthermore, it was illustrated in one occasion where in every settlement area, the chariot carrying the status of different deities' was being assembled collectively with the musical rhythm of "Dhemey" (traditional Newar drum). (Field visit from April 13, and 14 2024). Nevertheless, during one of the field visits in the Chapacho Pottery Square, one of the artisans from the pottery community mentioned there is a clear need for more formalized support and coordination to maximize the impact of their efforts (Field Note 8, April 27, 2024).

6.2 Potential Contribution of Community-Based Tourism on Sustainability

Economic Empowerment

The economic benefits of community-based tourism (CBT) were evident during cultural festivals where local eateries experienced high demand. Respondent 1 mentioned, "*All the Newari khaja ghar are always full... sometimes we even had to wait for 15 mins to just get a table...*" Respondent 2 linked CBT initiatives to equitable development and empowerment of local people's income generation, particularly through the preservation of arts and crafts. Respondent 3 suggested, "*Locals should be encouraged to create experiences and products that attract visitors year-round.*" Field observations confirmed this economic activity, during a conversation with a pottery maker he claimed, "*.....but now the products are becoming souvenirs that have been exported to foreign land.....*" (Field Note 8, April 27, 2024). Similarly, during a visit to a mask making workshop, the artist said, "*The masks are being used as souvenirs and gifts for tourists in different hotels in major cities. And most of these are sold through word of mouth networks*" (Field Note 9, April 28, 2024). Furthermore, the observation highlights eateries and shops that thrived during the festival, maintaining this level of activity outside festival times remains a challenge.

Cultural preservation

CBT initiatives also contribute to cultural preservation by engaging locals in maintaining cultural practices and heritage sites. Respondent 2 highlighted Thimi's strong cultural identity and indigenous practices. Respondent 3 emphasized CBT should prioritize preserving the

traditional Newari architecture and organizing cultural exhibitions. Field observations documented similar concerns, noting that the replacement of traditional Newari houses with modern buildings threatens the cultural heritage of Thimi. Visits to the mask-making workshop revealed the artisans' keen interest in sharing their craft with tourists, though they mentioned the lack of support and promotion.

Environmental conservation

Environmental conservation emerged as a key theme in the analysis. Respondent 1 noted the maintenance of green spaces but identified a lack of broader environmental initiatives within the town. Although Respondent 1 praised the conservation effort made for the park, he was quite vocal about the lack of open and green space within the main town. Respondent 2 said, *"I must share that different Indigenous practices of Thimi communities are pro-environmental like pottery making which are alternatives to plastics"*. Similarly, Respondent 3 insisted environmental sustainability should be integrated into all CBT initiatives for Thimi ensuring that tourism does not degrade local ecosystems. During one of the field trips around the Siddhikali Temple on the outskirts of the main town of Thimi, it was observed that there was plenty of greenery surrounding the temple area and on the hill where the temple is situated. Furthermore, there were new trees planted on each side of the pathways. In a conversation with a local, he mentioned *".. trees were recently planted to stop the landslide and soil erosion"*. The well-maintained entrance area shows progress and some conservation efforts, though broader environmental conservation was less visible and the main town itself is not integrated with the environmental initiatives (Field Note 6, April 20, 2024).

6.3 Motivation and challenges

Challenges

Several challenges to CBT in Thimi were identified. The seasonal nature of tourism is a significant issue. Respondent 1 observed, *"Outside the festivals, there is hardly any tourist activity."* This was confirmed by field observations noting quiet streets and empty shops outside festival periods (Field Note 5, April 17, 2024). Heritage preservation is another challenge, with Respondent 1 noting the replacement of traditional houses with modern structures, a concern also documented in field notes (Field Note 1, April 5, 2024). The lack of formal structures for organizing and promoting CBT activities was highlighted by

Respondent 1, who stated, *"Formal institutions have more power to pull the necessary resources and participants toward a common cause...."* Field observations indicated a need for better coordination and support from formal institutions (Field Note 8, April 27, 2024). Policy and political challenges were also noted by Respondent 5, who mentioned in the response that there is a lack of friendly policy and a tourist-friendly environment, a sentiment echoed by the representative of the local community who were frustrated with bureaucratic hurdles (Field Note 9, April 28, 2024).

Opportunities

Several opportunities for enhancing CBT in Thimi were identified. Developing and promoting year-round tourism initiatives is a key opportunity. Respondent 3 suggested locals should be encouraged to create experiences and products that attract visitors year-round. Field observations made during a meeting illustrated potential year-round attractions with local entrepreneurs, including craft workshops, culinary tours, and cultural performances, and the chairman mentioned, *"..... to organize a food and agro festival that includes the local agro product and opening the possibility to collaborate with local and international agencies for wider exposure."* (Field Note 7, April 25, 2024). Marketing and promotion are also critical, with Respondent 3 noting the potential for systematic marketing beyond local festivals. The need for integrated marketing strategies was observed in field notes (Field Note 4, April 14, 2024, Field Note 8, April 27, 2024). Capacity building and training are essential, as highlighted by Respondent 2, who called for more training programs to educate locals on managing tourism activities sustainably. This need was reinforced in field engagements (Field Note 8, April 27, 2024). Leveraging traditional crafts is another opportunity, with Respondent 2 emphasizing the promotion of pottery making and other crafts as sustainable tourist products. Artisans expressed their interest in sharing their craft with tourists but noted the lack of prompt support and promotion (Field Note 9, April 28, 2024).

6.4 Future Directions for CBT in Thimi

Strategic Planning and Policy Development

Future directions for CBT in Thimi should focus on strategic planning and policy development. Respondent 3 noted that CBT can contribute significantly to sustainable development if there is a strategic focus on preserving cultural heritage and promoting tourism activities as he has mentioned as points to be noted. This was supported by

Respondent 4, who emphasized the need for a strategic plan involving all stakeholders, and Respondent 5, who highlighted the importance of operationalizing tourism master plans. Field notes observed the need for integrated planning among various tourism initiatives and suggested policy reforms to encourage sustainable tourism practices (Field Note 8, April 27, 2024; Field Note 9, April 28, 2024).

Capacity Building and Training

Capacity building and training are crucial for sustainable CBT development. Respondent 1 mentioned the need for more training for locals on engaging with tourists and promoting their culture. Respondent 2 emphasized the importance of training programs to handle tourism-related activities effectively. Educational programs can raise awareness about sustainable tourism and its benefits to the community, as noted by Respondent 3. For capacity building around the pottery area the guys explained, “....we are planning community homestay in coordination with technical help from the municipality” (Field Note 8, April 27, 2024). Field notes documented workshops and training sessions for community members as the mask artist mentioned, “..... conducted training classes of interested individuals and the results are satisfactory to some extent.” heritage preservation and sustainable tourism (Field Note 9, April 28, 2024). In another field visit while interaction with locals about folklore and ‘Bhajan’, an individual stated, “the municipality is taking initiatives in teaching young people and.....” He further explained, “..... planning to create a unique product for night tourism in thimi inducing bhajan as a major attraction for tourists.” (Field Note 10, April 28, 2024)

Summary of Results

The data collected from interviews and field notes reveal a complex and multifaceted picture of community-based tourism (CBT) in Thimi. The current state of tourism in Thimi shows active participation during festivals, yet a lack of sustained tourist activity outside these periods. The power within the community is somewhat decentralized, with local guthis and informal groups playing significant roles in organizing cultural events. Destination management and planning are fragmented, with various initiatives lacking coordination and a cohesive strategy. The community’s perception and awareness of sustainable tourism are limited, highlighting the need for educational and awareness programs. Stakeholders and participants, including tourism entrepreneurs and local associations, are pivotal in driving

CBT activities, but their efforts are not always aligned or adequately supported by policy frameworks.

Economic empowerment through CBT is evident during festivals, with local eateries and markets thriving. However, there is potential for year-round economic benefits if CBT initiatives are expanded and diversified. Furthermore, cultural preservation is a key strength, with efforts to maintain traditional crafts and cultural sites. Similarly environmental conservation initiatives are present but need to be more integrated into tourism strategies. And community engagement in CBT is robust during festivals, but there is room for more structured and ongoing involvement.

Overall, the results have highlighted the current state of CBT in Thimi, its impact on sustainable development, the roles of stakeholders, challenges and opportunities, and future directions. The data collected through interviews and field notes provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of CBT in Thimi and suggest pathways for enhancing its sustainability and effectiveness. By inventing a more strategic and integrated approach to CBT, involving all stakeholders, and focusing on sustainable practices, Thimi can harness its cultural and environmental assets to create a thriving tourism sector that benefits the entire community.

Discussion

6.5 Understanding the role of community-based tourism in sustainable destination development

Community-based tourism (CBT) has emerged as a promising approach to sustainable destination development, leveraging local resources and cultural heritage to create economic, social, and environmental benefits for communities. In Thimi, the findings from the results section shed light on the multifaceted roles of CBT and its potential to drive sustainable development.

Potential effects of implementing CBT in tourism management practices

Implementing CBT in Thimi offers opportunities to enhance existing tourism management practices by integrating local knowledge, traditions, and resources into destination development strategies. The active participation of locals in cultural festivals and

preservation efforts demonstrates CBT's potential to enrich the tourism experience and promote cultural authenticity. As noted by Respondent 2, preserving traditional crafts and practices through CBT initiatives can contribute to destination differentiation and attract culturally-minded tourists. The findings support the notion of various scholars discussed in literature review that community-based tourism (CBT) can significantly enhance destination authenticity and visitor satisfaction by offering unique, culturally immersive experiences. Furthermore, findings also align with Asker et al.'s (2010) discussion on authentic experience. CBT's focus on providing authentic, immersive experiences not only leads to higher levels of visitor satisfaction but also encourages repeat visits. By integrating local cultural elements into tourism products and services, destinations can differentiate themselves in a competitive market and attract niche markets seeking authentic cultural experiences.

The findings also suggest emphasizing community engagement, cultural preservation, and environmental stewardship. Local stakeholders, including tourism entrepreneurs and community associations, play critical roles in driving CBT initiatives and shaping the sustainable tourism landscape. As suggested by Respondent 3, formal institutions can enhance their role in supporting CBT by providing necessary resources and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. Findings indicate the need for evolving roles of stakeholders, mainly local communities, in sustainable destination planning and management. The findings stress the need for greater community involvement to link local initiatives with wider tourism development goals. By empowering local communities as active participants in tourism development, destinations can foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for sustainable tourism practices. The emphasis on local community involvement in decision-making processes related to tourism development ensures alignment with community needs and aspirations, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for the destination's well-being as discussed in Andereck & Vogt (2000) and Dredge & Jamal (2015). In other words, integrating traditional knowledge and cultural values into tourism planning and management can raise the destination's ability to enhance destination resilience and sustainability through regular economic activities, preservation efforts and improved coordination.

Contributions to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

CBT-based sustainable destination development aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those related to poverty alleviation through increased economic

opportunities for household - for instance, the case of thriving business mainly the local eateries in Thimi during the festivals and sells of pottery and mask to visiting tourist . Community-based tourism also leads to cultural preservation, and environmental conservation. Findings show CBT initiatives in Thimi have the potential to contribute to SDG targets related to inclusive economic growth (SDG 8) and the preservation of cultural heritage (SDG 11) by empowering local communities economically and culturally. But also highlights the needs for expanding the role of existing local community initiatives to integrate with tourism. This is in line with the argument of Scheyvens and Biddulph (2018), who highlight CBT's potential to contribute to sustainable development by fostering community empowerment, cultural preservation, and environmental stewardship. By positioning CBT initiatives with the SDGs, destinations can leverage tourism as a tool for achieving broader development objectives and promoting social and environmental sustainability.

6.6 Understanding the relationship of destination development based on CBT principles to Sustainability

Economic Outlook of the Society

Results indicate community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives have the potential to enhance the economic outlook of society by creating income-generating opportunities for local communities and businesses. For example, it can be inferred from the case of Thimi that the well integrated community based tourism initiatives, where the community activities are aligned with tourism objectives has potential to generate a continuous stream of economic benefits round the year. The economic benefits observed during cultural festivals underscore the importance of CBT in stimulating local economies and promoting entrepreneurship. However, sustaining economic benefits beyond festival periods requires diversifying tourism products and marketing strategies, as highlighted by Respondent 3.

These findings support the arguments related to economic benefits discussed in Chapter 2, where several scholars have indicated the economic benefits of CBT in generating income, employment, and investment in local communities. By promoting community-based enterprises and supporting local livelihoods, CBT initiatives can contribute to poverty reduction and economic empowerment. Prioritizing local ownership and operation, CBT certainly helps to keep tourism revenues circulating within the community, supporting local businesses and infrastructure. Furthermore it can enhance economic resilience and reduce

dependence on external markets. However, like it is discussed in the earlier paragraph, a stronger alignment of community initiatives with the tourism objectives is required to maintain the stream of revenue generated through CBT initiatives for a longer period of time. It also indicates the roles of well aligned CBT initiatives to provide capacity building opportunities to integrate locals, local arts and skills, local heritage into economic aspects of tourism management to attain socio-economic sustainability.

Fabric of the Society

The fabric of society in Thimi is intricately woven with cultural traditions and heritage, serving as the foundation for CBT initiatives. The active participation of locals in preserving cultural practices and engaging with tourists reflects the strong social cohesion and identity of the community. However, replacing traditional houses with modern structures threatens the cultural fabric of Thimi, emphasizing the need for concerted efforts to safeguard heritage assets. This underscores the importance of cultural preservation and identity in sustainable destination development, as highlighted by scholars. For instance, Asker et al. (2010), Scheyvens (2018), and Jamal & Stronza (2009) in earlier chapters highlighted that community-based tourism (CBT) strengthens local communities by enabling them to preserve their cultural heritage, whereas Destination Development (DD) offers the necessary infrastructure support.

Findings reflect that, by preserving cultural heritage and fostering community pride, destinations can strengthen social capital and sense of ownership. Additionally, promoting cultural tourism can create opportunities for intercultural exchange and dialogue, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation among residents and visitors. Preservation efforts not only nurture community pride and resilience but also ensure that cultural heritage is safeguarded for future generations. For example, it can be seen in Thimi that there is a wider participation in celebration of the local festivals from all age groups. At the same time, older generations are equally concerned about the continuation of local traditions for a longer period of time. CBT has potential to provide incentives for preserving local heritage by creating economic opportunities. Unique cultural heritage of the destination can be marketed to attract culturally interested tourists. This helps in the destination's ability to preserve the local heritage for the future generations. It also helps in promoting local traditions consequently nurturing community cohesion and strengthens social bonds.

Promotion of Local Art and Architecture

Community based tourism (CBT) can play a key role in promoting local art and architecture as part of destination branding and differentiation. The preservation of traditional crafts, such as pottery making and mask carving, showcases the unique artistic heritage of Thimi and provides authentic cultural experiences for visitors. By highlighting these artisanal traditions, CBT has potential to contribute to the cultural enrichment of tourism destinations and fosters appreciation for local art and architecture. This aligns with the principles of sustainable tourism management, which emphasize cultural heritage preservation and authenticity of the tourist destination. By promoting local art and architecture, destinations can distinguish themselves from mass tourism destinations and attract discerning travellers seeking authentic cultural experiences. Furthermore, promoting local art and architecture through CBT initiatives empowers local artisans and craftsmen, providing them with economic opportunities and preserving traditional skills for future generations.

Finding from the result and analysis chapter highlights the role of cultural heritage in destination branding and differentiation, emphasizing the need to preserve and promote local traditions. Similar to discussion in the Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 authentic cultural experiences are essential for sustainable tourism, as they foster respect for cultural diversity and support local communities. In Thimi, promoting local art and architecture through CBT initiatives contributes to sustainable destination development and enriches the overall tourism experience. Visitors can engage with local artisans, participate in traditional craft workshops, and purchase handmade souvenirs, enhancing their connection to the destination and supporting the local economy.

Environmental Conservation

Findings reflecting the concerns of the interview respondents related to the environment put lights on challenges related to maintenance of open and green spaces. Additionally, the findings from the field visits also reflects the misaligned and slow efforts made by the municipality and infrastructure planners. Nevertheless, it was observed in the findings that the locals during the field trips and the interview respondents were equally concerned and aware about the significance of environmental conservation for holistic development of Thimi as a tourist destination. For instance, in an interview, respondent 3 has pointed out environmental conservation as being part of local tradition but pointed out challenges of

modern times in Thimi like waste management which need more attention. Implementing community based tourism initiatives needs protection of local environment and infrastructural development alongside the preservation of culture and heritage which will ensure concerted effort from the local community and local authorities to implement sustainable practices. For example, in the case of the Thimi, it is mainly the artisan who are responsible for promoting the pottery and craft. However, commodities like earthenware and pottery have potential to replace the use of plastic wares and are pro-environment friendly. It reflects the facilitating role of CBT and its potential to bring about a coordinated effort between the artisans, municipality, and local community organisations to promote pottery and local crafts that are environment friendly.

6.5 Critical Reflection on Research Implications and Limitations

Implications for Academia

The findings of this study contribute to academia by providing empirical insights into the roles of CBT in sustainable destination development. By triangulating data from interviews and field observations, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with CBT initiatives in Thimi. Academics can build upon these findings by conducting further research to explore specific aspects of CBT, such as community engagement strategies, marketing techniques, and policy implications. It also adds on understanding the role of community based tourism in sustainable destination development, and provides insights on challenges and important aspects within CBT for the future researcher interested in research related to multi-level CBT framework whose objectives can be to address the gaps related to fragmented framework for community based tourism planning and management.

Implications for Local Communities

For local communities in Thimi, the study has practical implications for promoting sustainable tourism practices and preserving cultural heritage. By highlighting the economic, social, and environmental benefits of CBT, the study encourages community members to actively participate in tourism development initiatives. Moreover, identifying challenges such as heritage preservation and seasonal tourism can inform community-based organizations and local authorities in developing targeted interventions to address these issues.

The seasonal nature of tourism was identified as a problem that hinders year-round economic opportunities in Thimi. The discussion chapter examines how CBT initiatives offer solutions to this challenge by diversifying tourism products and experiences. By promoting cultural exhibitions, heritage preservation activities, and eco-friendly tourism practices, Thimi can attract visitors throughout the year and mitigate the impacts of seasonality on local livelihoods.

One of the research gaps identified was the limited community engagement in tourism planning and decision-making processes. The discussion chapter explores how the findings underscore the significance of community involvement in CBT initiatives. By empowering local communities and fostering partnerships between stakeholders, Thimi can overcome the challenge of limited community engagement and promote inclusive tourism development.

Implications for Stakeholders

Stakeholders involved in tourism planning and management, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and tourism businesses, can benefit from the findings of this study. By recognizing the importance of collaboration and partnership in CBT initiatives, stakeholders can work together to develop inclusive and sustainable tourism strategies. Moreover, emphasizing environmental conservation and cultural preservation underscores the need for stakeholders to integrate sustainability principles into their planning and decision-making processes.

Building upon the findings and implications discussed above, a sustainable CBT model for Thimi can be developed to enhance destination development. This model should prioritize community engagement, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation as core pillars of sustainable tourism. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders, leveraging local resources, and integrating sustainability principles into tourism planning and management, Thimi can emerge as a model destination for community-based and environmentally responsible tourism.

Research Limitations

Despite the valuable insights gained from this study, there are few limitations. The first one concerns sample size and the scope of this study. This study focused specifically on the context of Thimi, which might limit the generalizability of the findings to other destinations.

Future research could explore similar themes in different cultural contexts to provide comparative insights. Another limitation is related to data collection methods. The data collection methods, such as interviews and field observations, may have introduced bias or subjectivity into the findings. Future research in a similar setting is recommended to consider employing mixed-methods approaches to enhance the validity and reliability of the results.

Future Research Directions

Future research should focus on long-term impacts of CBT on economic, social, and environmental sustainability, strategies for effective community engagement and participation in CBT, implementation of CBT practices, comparative studies of CBT initiatives in similar contexts to identify best practices and lessons learned.

Summary of Discussion

The discussion highlights the transformative potential of CBT in sustainable destination development, emphasizing the need for holistic and collaborative approaches to tourism management. By addressing the challenges and maximizing the opportunities associated with CBT, small and lesser known destinations like Thimi can achieve its goals of economic prosperity, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability while providing meaningful and authentic experiences for visitors.

Summary and Conclusions

7.1 Summary and conclusion

This thesis aims to explore community-based tourism (CBT) within the context of sustainable destination development, with a specific focus on Thimi, Nepal. A detailed literature review contained core concepts surrounding tourism development, sustainability theories, and CBT, in combination with insights from sustainable tourism management concepts relevant to destination planning and community engagement in tourism initiatives. Perspectives from both sustainability and tourism management disciplines were integrated, offering a nuanced understanding of the socio-economic and environmental dimensions of CBT and its implication in destination development.

The empirical investigation utilised a qualitative approach, including insights from field visits during participatory observations and structured interviews. Thematic analysis supported by narrative analysis were crucial in analysing the information collected from the interview, field visits and available archival records. Following this analysis approach helped to understand the relationship between local cultural practices, economic benefits, and environmental sustainability under the framework of CBT, highlighting its multifaceted impacts in Thimi. Additionally, it also helped to gain insights on the roles of CBT in destination development, challenges and opportunities for effective application of CBT principles in destination management and future directions of research in the field of CBT and destination development in Thimi and similar context.

The findings of this study contributes to understanding roles of community-based tourism in sustainable destination development. The findings revealed that key attributes of CBT in Thimi include extensive community involvement, preservation of local culture, and environmentally sustainable practices. Furthermore, it highlights how community engagement has effectively leveraged local participants to preserve the local heritage, mainly local traditions, festivals and customs. Community engagement has played a critical role in preserving Thimi's cultural heritage. The community's proactive engagement in tradition, cultural norms, as CBT initiatives has led to the maintenance of such traditional practices and festivals, which are and can now be central elements of Thimi's tourism offerings if integrated with border tourism management strategies. This not only preserves the cultural identity of Thimi but also enriches the visitor experience, making the destination unique and

sustainable. However these attributes have not been successfully integrated into local tourism activities, lacking significant contributions to the social, cultural, and environmental fabric of Thimi, thereby limiting its sustainability credential. In other words, the findings suggest benefits are short even if the community shows higher degree of community participation and preservation efforts if such community engagements are not integrated with a broader set of tourism goals and tourism management practices.

Furthermore, the study shows economic benefits exist in some forms, for example - the thriving eateries in Thimi. This certainly has stimulated local entrepreneurship, empowered the local household mainly womens and ensured the financial benefits are retained within the local community but the economic benefits thus generated are not holistic and very much one dimensional. This lack indicates year round tourism activities are needed. It indicates the need for a wider stakeholder engagement including tourism business, policy makers and communities, all along to create economic opportunities by identifying and creating a diverse set of tourism products, beyond just traditional events and celebrations. Furthermore, by marketing these diverse sets of products to both national and international tourists will enhance the overall resilience of the local economy.

Key challenges include coordinating between various stakeholders, seasonality in tourism, managing resource allocation efficiently, and ensuring policy formulation and implementation. However, opportunities have potential to flourish in leveraging CBT for greater environmental stewardship, enhancing stakeholder cooperation, and aligning destination development strategies with sustainable principles. The findings suggest addressing these challenges involves strategic planning, continuous stakeholder engagement, and fostering a culture of sustainability within the community and among visitors.

The conclusion of this thesis marks that community-based tourism is not only a viable approach to tourism development but also one of a critical strategy for ensuring the sustainability of smaller, culturally significant destinations like Thimi. Future strategies should focus on creating a clear and direct link between community-based initiatives with tourism, enhancing the alignment of CBT practices with global sustainability standards, improving the scalability of successful models, and innovating in response to evolving challenges in the tourism industry.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Description of thematic analysis

Key aspects	Main themes	Identifiers / codes to identify sub themes	Visual codes	
			Symbolic	Color
Community based tourism attributes	CBT Attributes	Benefiting local and indigenous communities, Hosting national and international tourism, Communal management, Community development through profits, Active community participation in tourism planning	strikethrough	

Note: Strikethrough were used as visual codes to identify the attributes which were later assigned to sub themes for analysis.

Sustainability Contributions	Environmental	Environmental stewardship, Sustainable resource management, Waste reduction, conserving biodiversity, Preserving natural ecosystems	
	Social	Social equity and inclusivity, Collaboration and community cohesion, Enriching destination experience	
	Economic	Capacity building and job creation, Supporting local businesses and infrastructure, Equitable benefit distribution	

Note: 3 color codes for three sustainability dimensions were used as visual codes and assigned to sub themes for analysis.

Roles of community-based tourism in sustainable destination development	Facilitator of Community Empowerment	Community Ownership, Control, and Participation	€€
		Strengthening Community Identity and Pride	€€€
	Preserver of Cultural Heritage	Cultural Authenticity and Preservation	#
		Enhanced Visitor Experience	##
		Reducing Over-Tourism	###
	Catalyst for Sustainable Economic Development	Equitable Benefit Distribution	%
		Economic Stability and Resilience	%%%
	Guardian of Environmental Conservation	Environmental Stewardship	++
	Promoter of Social Equity and Inclusivity	Community Participation for Social Equity	□□□
		Capacity Building and Skills Development	□□□□

Note: Different symbols were used in the headnotes / comment box and later assigned to sub themes for analysis.

Note: For all other texts which couldn't be assigned any codes were underlined and later analyzed and presented as results.

Appendix 2: Interview questions including consent form.

नाम (Name) :-

ठेगाना (Address):-

उमेर (Age):-

Date:-

लिङ्ग (Gender):-

पेशा (Occupation):-

यो अन्तर्वार्ता Aalborg University, Copenhagen (Master of Arts in Tourism) थीसिस पूरा गर्नको लागि गरिएको हो। यस अनुसन्धानको उद्देश्य दिगो पर्यटन गन्तव्य विकासमा समुदायमा आधारित पर्यटनको भूमिकाको अनुसन्धान गर्नु हो। अन्तर्वार्ता डेटा अनुसन्धान उद्देश्यका लागि मात्र प्रयोग गरिनेछ। अनुसन्धान डेटा सँगै विद्यार्थीहरू, अलबोर्ग विश्वविद्यालय, र कुनै पनि बाह्य सह-परीक्षकहरूसँग वितरण / साझेदारी गरिनेछ। *(This interview is conducted as part of a Master of Arts in Tourism program for the completion of a Master's thesis at Aalborg University, Copenhagen. This research aims to investigate the role of community-based tourism in sustainable destination development and the interview data will be used solely for research purposes. The research data will be shared with fellow students, Aalborg University, and any external co-examiner.)*

के तपाईं यो अन्तर्वार्तामा भाग लिन सहमत हुनुहुन्छ? *Do you consent to participate in this interview?*

म सहमत छु (Yes, I agree) :-

म सहमत छैन (No, I don't):-

Topic of Research Study: Roles of community-based tourism in sustainable destination development

Research Conducted by: Sujit Shrestha, Aalborg University, Copenhagen (email: mesuzit5@gmail.com)

विषयवस्तुको परिभाषा (Overview of the subject matter)

समुदायमा आधारित पर्यटन (CBT) पर्यटन विकासको लागि एउटा दृष्टिकोण हो जसले स्थानीय समुदायको योजना, व्यवस्थापन, र पर्यटन गतिविधिबाट लाभान्वित हुने कार्यमा सक्रिय संलग्नतालाई जोड दिन्छ। *(Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is an approach to tourism development that emphasizes the active involvement of local communities in planning, managing, and benefiting from tourism activities.)*

दिगो पर्यटन गन्तव्य विकास वा केवल गन्तव्य विकास भन्नाले सामाजिक समानता र पर्यावरण संरक्षणसँग आर्थिक वृद्धिलाई सन्तुलनमा राखेर पर्यटन गन्तव्यहरू सिर्जना गर्ने प्रक्रियालाई जनाउँछ। यस सन्दर्भमा, दिगो विकास भनेको भावी पुस्ताको आफ्नै आवश्यकताहरू पूरा गर्ने क्षमतामा सम्झौता नगरी वर्तमानका आवश्यकताहरू पूरा गर्नु हो। *(Sustainable destination development refers to the process of creating tourism destinations that balance economic growth with social equity and environmental conservation. Sustainability, in this context, involves meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.)*

थिमीलाई अध्ययनको विषयका रूपमा लिएर, दिगो पर्यटन गन्तव्य विकासमा, समुदायमा आधारित पर्यटन (CBT) को भूमिकाबारे अनुसन्धान गर्न अन्तर्वार्ताका सातवटा प्रश्नहरू यहाँ छन्: *(Considering Thimi as the empirical case, here are seven interview questions tailored to explore the roles of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in sustainable destination development)*

Understanding of CBT in Thimi

1. थिमीमा सामुदायिक पहलमा आधारित पर्यटन (CBT) सँग तपाईं कतिको परिचित हुनुहुन्छ? थिमीमा सञ्चालित समुदायमा आधारित पर्यटन (CBT) परियोजनाहरूको संक्षिप्त विवरण दिन सक्नुहुन्छ? वा तपाईंलाई थिमीमा सञ्चालित कुनै समुदायमा आधारित पर्यटनको विसयमा जानकारी छ? *How familiar are you with Community-Based Tourism (CBT) initiatives in Thimi? Can you provide a brief overview of CBT projects or efforts you're aware of within the community?*

Perceived Impact of CBT on Sustainable Development in Thimi

2. तपाईंको दृष्टिकोणबाट, पर्यटन बिकासका लागि भएका सामाजिक पर्यटन प्रयासले (CBT) थिमी भित्र दिगो विकासमा कस्तो योगदान पुऱ्याएको छ, विशेष गरी आर्थिक सशक्तिकरण, सांस्कृतिक संरक्षण र वातावरण संरक्षणमा कसरी योगदान पुऱ्याएको छ? *From your perspective, how has CBT contributed to sustainable development within Thimi, particularly concerning economic empowerment, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation?*

Roles of CBT in sustainable development Thimi

3. विशेषगरी थिमीमा दिगो विकासमा समुदयमा आधारित पर्यटन (CBT) को मुख्य भूमिका वा फोकस के हुनुपर्छ भन्ने तपाईंको विश्वास छ? CBT ले समुदायको कल्याण र गन्तव्यको दिगोपनमा कसरी योगदान गर्न सक्छ? *What do you believe should be the primary role or focus of CBT in sustainable development specifically in Thimi? How can CBT contribute to the community's well-being and the sustainability of the destination?*

Objectives Relevant to Thimi's Context

4. थिमीको अद्वितीय (विशिष्ट वा फरक) विशेषता र चुनौतीहरू मध्यनजरमा राखि, कुन दिगो विकासको उद्देश्यहरू - (वातावरणीय, सामाजिक वा आर्थिक) तपाईंको विचारमा दिगो पर्यटन गन्तव्य विकास तथा समग्र दिगो विकास हासिल गर्न सबैभन्दा सान्दर्भिक लाग्छ ? *Considering Thimi's unique characteristics and challenges, which specific objectives – environmental, social or economic objectives of sustainable development, do you think are most relevant for achieving sustainable tourism destination development and sustainable development in general through CBT within this community?*

Community Engagement in Thimi

5. दिगो विकासका लक्ष्यहरू प्राप्त गर्न सामुदायमा आधारित पर्यटनका (CBT) पहलहरूमा, थिमीका समुदायका सदस्यहरूको सक्रिय संलग्नता र सहभागितालाई तपाईं कतिको महत्त्वपूर्ण ठान्नुहुन्छ ? के तपाईं कुनै उदाहरण वा उदाहरणहरू साझा गर्न सक्नुहुन्छ जहाँ समुदायको संलग्नता विशेष रूपमा प्रभावकारी भएका छ ? *How crucial do you consider active engagement and participation of Thimi's community members in CBT initiatives for achieving sustainable development goals? Can you share any examples or instances where community involvement has been particularly impactful?*

Challenges and Opportunities in Thimi

6. थिमीमा दिगो विकासका लागि समुदयमा आधारित पर्यटन (CBT) परियोजनाहरू कार्यान्वयन गर्दा तपाईंले देख्नुभएको मुख्य चुनौती र अवसरहरू के के हुन्? यी चुनौतीहरूलाई कसरी सम्बोधन गर्न सकिन्छ, र अवसरहरूलाई कसरी प्रभावकारी रूपमा

प्रयोग गर्न सकिन्छ? *What are some of the main challenges and opportunities you see in implementing CBT projects for sustainable development specifically in Thimi? How can these challenges be addressed, and how can opportunities be leveraged effectively?*

Future Directions for CBT in Thimi

7. आगामी दिनहरूमा, थिमीको पर्यटन दिगो विकासलाई अझ प्रभावकारी रूपमा अगाडि बढाउनको लागि, थिमीमा भविष्यमा समुदायमा आधारित पर्यटनका (CBT) पहलहरूको केन्द्रविन्दु के हुनुपर्छ भन्ने तपाईं विश्वास गर्नुहुन्छ ? तपाईंको विचारमा कुनै विशेष क्षेत्र वा पक्षहरू (समाजिक बिकास, सांस्कृतिक सम्पदा तथा दरोहरहरूका सुरक्षा , पर्यायअवरण तथा वातवरण, आर्थिक बिकास, आदी इत्यादी) छन् जसमा थप ध्यान आवश्यक छ ?
- Looking ahead, what do you believe should be the focus of future CBT initiatives in Thimi to further advance sustainable development of Thimi? Are there any specific areas or aspects that require more attention?*

Appendix 3: Interviews response including translated text from Nepali

(Note: The original text is included in the attachment. The response here includes the excerpt from the main interview response.)

Respondent 1

(A frequent visitor and a doctoral student of tourism)

Answer 1

I am not a local, therefore I don't know. But I was in Thimi last year during last year celebration for Bisket jatra. I also don't know if there is any formal office. But it was interesting all locals were participating in the jatra. If I am not wrong aren't those jatra by the locals every year. There were lots of people in Thimi, maybe thousands of them. I don't all of them were local. Maybe that could be reason me and my brother didn't get any parking, so sad we had return back earlier because we left our car in the streets maybe about a kilometer away from the town. The restaurants were packed too. But, it was interesting the locals were kind, they were providing bottles of water for the participants in the festivals and they seemed so friendly. We didn't get a chance to eat, I mean try the local Newari food. But, I heard from another friend who were in Jatra but came early morning told me that they managed to get a table and he said food were very delicious. But yeah they had wait for a while. He also said that there some traditional dances which were unique unlike the one we have here in Bhaktapur.

Answer 2

Here again, I don't have knowledge about CBT initiatives within Thimi. But I can give my opinion based on my observations as a frequent visitor. I think I have seen any major events that the local organise besides those big jatras. Aren't they more like a cultural thing, if I am not wrong? I haven't seen many visitors in Thimi outside those festive events. I have been to Thimi with my friends so many times because the local Newari foods are so good there. But

in all those visits, I have only seen like very few foreigners. Still I think all the Newari khaja Ghar are always full whenever we are in Thimi, sometimes we even had to wait for 15 mins to just get a table. I think that has helped the locals to earn some money.

I think it was also good to see so many young locals in jattras. I think locals in Thimi are connected to the root. I felt bit sad when I couldn't understand Newari languages. I think I have heard most locals speaking Newari whenever I am in Thimi. And me being a Newari and not being able to speak my mother tongue feels sad.

I think the locals have done preserving the park at the entrance is the town. It's good to see some green, u know, especially When I know that if enter the Thimi I will only see the buildings until I get out of the main part of the town. I have been visiting Thimi for about 15 years, maybe few times in a year, it's even sadder to see that so many traditional houses have been replaced by new structures.

But it was good to see that they were at least renovating the temples when I visited Thimi in January.

Answer 3

I think the locals should try to maintain the heritage. In Bhaktapur, locals build new buildings in old style. I think it will help to preserve the old heritage. Also, there are few open spaces in Thimi. Whenever we were visiting, we either had to sit in the restaurant or walk and past Thimi because we couldn't find a place to sit and experience Thimi.

Maybe preserve the old houses because the old houses in Thimi are very unique and beautiful. But every passing I can see less and less of those. Also last time when in January I was there, there was some road construction going on and I was in Thimi few weeks back, it wasn't complete. It was bit of a hassle.

Also I think the locals should organize other events other than the jattras to attract more ticket. I think so many tourist even don't know about Thimi if they are not from near Thimi. I think there are lot more to offer, like, the temples, old houses and Newari style architecture and wood work, not just Newari food.

Answer 4

I think culture and old heritage. Thimi has its unique culture, festivals, old Newari style houses, food, friendly locals etc. It is always fun to be in Thimi.

Environment is no say, though it has a small park at the entrance of town, the town plan won't allow to make any big structural changes to have natural spaces when you get inside town. But I think that's its uniqueness. The small alleys, old houses, wood arts that you see in those old structures, temples etc. Like I said earlier locals should market it more, not just wait for festivals and jatra to have big events, just like how Bhaktapurians are able to promote Bhaktapur, u know.

Answer 5

I think it is very important and it is these community participants that's makes the experience unique for Thimi. I can say that because I have been there in Jattras. But I have also been in Thimi when there are no jattras and it is very laid back. Only thing that's more active is those Newari restaurants.

Answer 6

I think it would be more difficult to convince people to keep and renovate old houses. I know that because I have experienced that in Bhaktapur. But luckily there were assistance from the metropolitan office and few other INGOs to the locals in Bhaktapur that they were able to preserve the old heritage of Bhaktapur as it is. In my opinion, the same things might be helpful in Thimi, but I also think the locals should be ready to walk in that direction because in the end, it is the owners of those properties who are the ones to decide if they want to keep the old structures or build a new structures.

I think Thimi has social unity. But not to forget I think it might be difficult to get the locals together to organize the events that are foreign to traditional jattras, events and festival. I think people tend to not care about cause if they cannot associate them with the cause. So it would be difficult to maintain that social unity in other causes that are not rooted in the traditions, culture and heritage of Thimi, I think. There is not much in my mind that I can recommend but I think having a more formal entity to promote sustainable tourism in Thimi is necessary. Because I think formal institutions have more power to pull the necessary resources and participants toward a common cause compared to informal social groups.

Answer 7

I think marketing of Thimi other than a place to hangout to eat is very important. I have found it more common in my case that if it's not those jattras I will probably come Thimi only when I want to try some Newari food, go out and eat with my friends.

I think locals in Thimi should come together to promote Thimi other than when there is jatra. I think Thimi has a good potential for tourism. Thimi is a pretty decent place sight see. For example having art exhibition, art and handicraft stores, cultural events can attract more visitor all around the year and not just on jatras and festival.

I think Thimi can also use any available open space inside the main town and plant it with flowers and trees to make the town more environment friendly, build a sitting space and a place to rest and hang out.

Respondent 2

(Government service in national tourism organisations)

Answer 1

Thimi has proved itself as a benchmark of the transferring of indigenous culture and norms to the younger generation. The place is popular not only in Nepal but all over the world for the famous tongue piercing festival during Biska Jatra. Further, Thimi still operates local ‘guthi’ which is one of the best examples of CBT initiatives.

Answer 2

Sustainable Development emphasizes to different dimensions equally and it emphasizes on equity, cultural preservation and fair sharing of benefits. These all are outcomes of CBT initiatives. Further, preservation of local arts, cultures, artifacts and traditions contribute in cultural preservation, equitable development and empowerment of local people. I must share that different indigenous practices of thimi communities are pro-environmental like pottery making which are alternatives to plastics.

Answer 3

Community is the primary stakeholder of any destination. The community people is responsible to develop, promote and position the destination. In case of Thimi, these CBT stakeholders are responsible in planning and executing SD plans and activities. From the level of creating awareness to the level of implementation and collaboration, these stakeholder are quite active.

The CBT ensures that the community economy is uplifted in the forms of : revenues, employment, local businesses and alike. Similarly, the CBT works on empowerment and equitable sharing of the benefits of the development. The CBT is one of the forms of tourism which is directly or indirectly dependent on the environment (both human made and natural), therefore, the stakeholders works on preserving and conserving those.

Answer 4

I would say that Thimi is one of the potential regions where CBT will contribute on local economy in the forms of income generation, revenue, employment and local businesses. Similarly, CBT will help preserve indigenous professions of Thimi people like pottery making which is environment friendly, help in preserve local festivals, traditions and customs. Lastly, CBT can help Thimi find alternatives to becoming cosmopolitan, rather it can help the place prove itself as a living museum. Therefore, I believe that CBT can ensure Sustainable Development of Thimi.

Answer 5

As stated earlier, it can help achieve many SDGs by contributing significantly in different targets out of 169 targets. For instance: when CBT provides jobs, boosts local businesses, it will help in achieving SDG number 1, 2 ,8 & 11. Similarly, while preserving local culture and tradition and improvising indigenous professions, it will help in SDG number 10, 11, 16. Further, the place is famous for local cuisines which can help in achieving SDG 12 and minimizing food mile, it can contribute in SDG 13. As we know, tourism has a multiplier impact, therefore it would not be wrong if I claim that CBT can directly or indirectly help in achieving all SDGs.

Answer 6

The major challenges are:

1. Comparisons with already established destinations like Bhaktapur
2. Lack of interest of younger generation and brain drain
3. Preference of political leaders
4. Modern settlements replacing traditional lifestyles

Some of the ways to address the challenges could be

1. Creating Awareness

2. Collaboration with other destinations (creating joint heritage trail, joint promotional events)
3. Creating local accommodation facilities to the tourists as Thimi itself does not have any hotels/traditional homestays or apartments on operation.
4. Launching more activities like Live pottery experience, storytelling etc

Answer 7

I believe that the focus of the future CBT initiatives shall be towards collaboration and joint promotion with other destinations like Bhaktapur instead of competing with each other.

Respondent 3

(PhD, Professor and tourism planner)

Answer 1

Thimi municipality is as older as cultural, UNESCO registered, Bhaktapur municipality but not being able to attract tourists and arrivals of tourist in Thimi is considerably low. To attract the tourists Thimi Municipality has initiated to make a Tourism Development Master Plan. The Masterplan will guide the tourism stakeholders and municipality in the entire aspects of sustainable tourism-based community development. Specially, the Newa Culture – 365 days festival is the wonderful and unique tourism attributes of Thimi. Agro tourism, riverside tourism, Pottery and Mask tourism Jatra and festival tourism, Sindurjatra, Bisket Jatra, tounge piercing festivals plus 2000 years old historical cultural monuments of all sects of Hinduism and Buddhism are the perfect tourism product of the land. Jatras led by community are unique and awesome.

Answer 2

People of Thimi are highly conscious on their art and culture, however tourism awareness is comparatively low. They love and preserve their art and culture as a regular duty conservation of art and culture is a pattern of life, but commodification of these products in tourism development is not satisfactory. Thus, economic empowerment on community-based tourism is very low however conservation and preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and environment are culturally linked with life and livelihood. Municipality is planning to list the ancient historical city into UNESCO world heritage site. The historic

cultural city, Thimi is surrounded by two beautiful rivers. These riversides are developing as tourism hub of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur. The tourism development masterplan has addressed it. The embankment, plantation, access and beautification related programs are going on.

Answer 3

The primary role or focus of CBT in sustainable development is the formation of vibrant tourism development committees and its network. The members of tourism development committee must be trained on hospitality culture and tourism business. 11.4 square km land of Madhyapur Thimi is divided in 9 wards. At least one community homestay for community-based tourism development in a ward are recommended. Thus, in next year there will be Nine community Homestays and all the cultural aspects will be transformed into cultural tourism product in the community. The members of tourism development committee and homestay development committees will train the community members on the issues of sustainable community-based tourism development initiatives in Madhyapur Thimi.

Answer 4

The unique characteristics of Thimi can be divided into environmental, cultural, and economic dimensions.

- Environmental unique characteristics: Religious forests of Bishnubir, Shankhadhar chowk, and Nilbarahi and religious rivers- Manohara and Hanumante
- Cultural unique Characteristics: Temples of all sects of Hindu and Buddhists Jatra festivals (dance, music, and play)
- Economic unique Characteristics: Agriculture (Vegetable hub of Ktm Valley: but the real estate investments are jeopardizing the vegetable land and historical identity); world class pottery, ceramics, Mask making, and carving arts are the tourism products could be linked with livelihood.

Opportunities:

- Closer than Thamel from Tribhuvan International Airport
- Located between historical cities Kathmandu and Bhaktapur
- Historical and Cultural City
- Urban sustainable community-based tourism

Challenges:

- Low confidence of People

- Lack of tourism linkage strategies

Answer 5

The Sustainable development Goal's secretariate has forgotten the to include tourism itself an effective indicator of sustainable development. Tourism cannot flourish in hunger, poverty, malnutrition, discrimination, and pollution. Promotion of Tourism means reduction of all these points and increase of natural and cultural environment protection, scientific consumption, level of education, health and hygiene. Thus, community-based tourism development is itself the sustainable development. Thus, tourism development directly increases the speed to achieve the target of SDGs but here in Nepal these two are not linked. Jatras and festivals are directly related with cultural and natural environment protection in Thimi. All the community members – almost 80 % Newa community members obliged to take part in the Jatra and festivals. These jatra and festivals are itself a massive community involvement of cultural and environmental conservation. It is already existed there but its linkage with tourism and sustainable community development is necessary.

Answer 6

Opportunities

SN	Opportunities	Leverage
1	Close to Bhaktapur	Strategic Linkage Development
2	Close to Kathmandu	Strategic Linkage Development
3	Closer than Thamel	Strategic Linkage Development
4	Centre of Newa Culture	Commodification of Newa Brand
5	Ancient City (Mohanjodharo)	Heritage tourism planning and promotion
6	Religious Harmony	Religious route development
7	Rivers	Eco Tourism

8	Forest	Eco Tourism
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Challenges

SN	Challenges	Leverages
1	Lack of tourism awareness	Formation of Tourism development committee
2	Lack of confidence	Motivational Programs
3	Lack of Accommodations	Development of Homestays
4	Government's Negligence	Active tourism development programs
5	Lack of Cleanliness	Community awareness
6	Lack of tourism entrepreneurship	Hospitality dialogue

Answer 7

Points to be noted

- Formation of a vibrant tourism development committee in municipal level
- Establishment of 9 homestays in 9 wards
- Homestay Training for community
- Hospitality training for Guthi Members
- Preservation of agricultural land and environment
- Massive Publicity of art and culture of Thimi
- Development of tourism activities
- Enhancement of beautification and cleanliness

- Development of network among hospitality entrepreneurs
- Motivation, utilization and mobilization of students and housewives in tourism business

Respondent 4

(Entrepreneur including tourism business)

Answer 1

As far as I know few attempts have been made to envisage the overall development of community based tourism. The efforts made in the past were not comprehensive but only focussed on a certain topic. For example, pottery. In the same way, some cultural festivals of the Thimi region have not been attempted to be developed as a tourist tool. But those efforts were made only by some small groups or certain individuals, which does not seem to be sustained. the Tourism Development Group, which was formed only last year, shows a signs that tourism development programs will be continued in a sustainable manner. It seems that they are trying to develop "Wah Festival" as the first tool.

Answer 2

As mentioned in the answer to the first question above, sustainable and clearly social tourism does not have a long history within the theme. Some chit-footed efforts must have made some contribution. But the contribution of those efforts is not seen as results. Certainly, it seems that the target community in the Pottery sector has been economically empowered. In the same way, it seems that the same proportion has been contributed to cultural protection and environmental protection in that area. After that, it is not only pottery, but other areas should also be developed as a sustainable tourism tool by learning from Pottery.

Answer 3

I believe from to local produce, culture, and agricultural production should be developed and promoted as a basic tourism tool. Here heritage means not only tangible but heritage such as language and script. To provide long life to above mentioned sector which is under theart due to world globalization and development of information technology.

It is necessary to have sustainable tourism development programs.

Community- based tourism efforts seem to be the only option in the current situation of not being able to attract the large private sector.

Answer 4

The fact that Thimi is located in the middle of the Kathmandu valley is its unique geographical feature. In that sense, its cultural and linguistic review, is another feature of it. In Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur and other small medium sized Newar settlements, there are differences even within cultural and linguistic similarities. due to the geographical location, all those differences are also reflected in the theme. Based on this, the goal of sustainable development of tourism in this area can be achieved if the implementation is focused by making a tourism plan.

Answer 5

In the answers to the above questions, has already been mentioned that there are no examples of community- based tourism development initiatives being carried out significantly. The reason for this is that even though there is a lot of potential, the tourism programs do not seem to be effective. Therefore, what is meant to be mentioned here is that it is possible to develop sustainable tourism in this area only with active community-based active participation. As an example, last year only among some efforts made by the Madhyapur Tourism Development Group, Wah Festival was seen very effectively. Based on which sustainable tourism can be drawn.

Answer 6

The Challenge is ignorance and education. On top of that, the Thimi region is also not untouched by Nepal's wrong tendency to dominate politics in the old region. Therefore, if there is a will to develop the challenge as an opportunity, the goals of sustainable development can be achieved. If those challenges can be transformed into healthy competition practices, the challenge itself will develop into an opportunity.

Answer 7

It seems that there should be program focused on the subjects mentioned below:-\

1. Jatra festival targeted tourist programs
2. Food (food heritage) promotional programs

3. Homestay Programs that suit their location.
4. It should be developed as a center for handicrafts and handicraft production
5. Protection and promotion of tangible and intangible assets.

Respondent 5

(Tourism Entrepreneur, runs trekking and tours)

Answer 1

Since there are many community-based Jatra festivals in Thimi, I have always thought that tourism should also be community-based.

After the establishment of Madhyapur Thimi Municipality consisting of Balkumari, Chapacho, Nagesh, Dode and Divyashwari V.D.C, 3-4 comprehensive tourism master plans were made, but the previous plans were limited to planning, but it seems that the municipality made community-based plans in the this year of 2080 (2024 A.D). It has not yet been operational.

Answer 2

There have been many tourism activities in the Thimi area, some from the municipality and some from local associations, but all of them seem to be promotional programs. However, after the local elections in 2074, there were many construction and reconstruction works, some of those infrastructures were oriented and some were culturally oriented, but those works could not be said to contribute to economic empowerment and environmental protection. Instead, young tourism professionals have been contributing to the development of the tourism industry and entrepreneurship since last year. 2080 Jestha 6th Festival and Kayoshala seminar with tourism expert Karna Shakya is trying to develop base tourism entrepreneurship in the community.

Answer 3

Because the tourism industry is interconnected, the Thimi area is also a production site of traditional pottery making, Mask making, traditional dance like mask dance (Bhaila, Gho Pankh, Mahakali and green vegetable, Harkhoo, which is not found in modern foreign restaurant of Nepal). It seems that we should focus on these things while making the CBT plan. If these things are implemented, there is no doubt that self-sustainability will be in the interest of the community.

Answer 4

There is no doubt that as the society becomes more modern, the values of money also increase. If the economic side is strong, the environment and social relations can be raised to a new level. In this regard, the specialty of Thimi is the culture here, from Bhaila Pyakhan to pottery making (traditional and new ceramics), many Jatra festivals (Biska), Dafa hymns which are characteristics that are about to disappear but are trying to be re-established due to the reawakening of the youth. It seems that emphasis should be placed on local food and agricultural tourism. I think that the tourist destination of the day can be found by managing these things.

Answer 5

To move this forward, we need to look back into the past. Like VISIT NEPAL 1998 Madhyapur Thimi Festival, all the communities in Madhyapur Thimi Municipality were awakened, due to which a great contribution was made to identify potential tourist destinations in the Thimi area. Then in the year 2080, Wah Festival added a step, as destination for local Newa taste to the tourist:, it can attract ordinary Nepali tourists and foreign tourists as well, so there is a special contribution of local associations, women's groups and mothers' groups.

Answer 6

Thimi region is itself a fertile organic region from the point of view of tourism. There are opportunities in this field. Where there are opportunities, there are challenges.

Here I want to write about the first challenges.

1. Lack of friendly policies.
2. Lack of tourism friendly environment,
- 3- He wants to write about the opportunities in peer-friendly education and the lack of awareness.

Now some opportunities

1. Guru Rionche, and the temple of Padampani Lokeshwar can attract Buddhist pilgrims as well.
2. Bhail: Prayakhe, Mahakali can attract Tantra science researchers and curious people due to its beauty.
3. A large mass gathering like Bisca Jatra can attract the youth generation
4. The Get Back to Your Childhood scheme can be implemented because the traditional Newa: culture is still alive.
5. Being the most central and fertile land in the Kathmandu Valley, rich in potential for Agro Tourism as the main production area is vegetables and modern agricultural produce.
6. The bird watcher could not attract Har in the Manohesh Corridor, which was also promoted by the name of Mine Koshi.

Answer 7

The main thing that a tourist needs is delicious healthy food, deep sleep, safe travel and it would be a heavenly joy to witness with one's own eyes the things that the tourist has not seen in his life but heard and imagined. The main thing here is as I have mentioned in the above answers, the traditional pottery making profession, the Jatra festivals that take place every month, the hundreds of years old folk love (Dafa Bhajan Khalah), green agricultural produce and local Tastes and foods can be managed.

Appendix 4: Records from field observation (field notes)

(Note: 'The extended account' is included in the attachment. The images here include the excerpt of the field notes from participatory observation.)

Date 5th April Week 1
 First visit South
 Chi Sing? seeing Y Page 1
 Home - 1 Base to Highway.
 Finished construction of the gate
 ① workers getting ready to pull up -
 local & labours chatting - Harmony
 ② New project discussion -
 local representative from municipality -
 tea offered - picking from market.
 about such project (place gates,
 well pass
 ③ middle of road - small shrine -
 construction - tourist watching -
 excited - old people - commercial
 since feeling

Date 11 11
 Page 1
 - less tourist again again -
 most of them - policy policy
 Municipality - Awareness program
 - tourism - benefits - better life
 ④ Change - House - new left ^{old} _n -
 now not bold style - thought reasons
 for less tourist - bikes parked -
 obstruction in movement - local
 eatery - full of domestic visitor -
 farmers - middle aged people -
 local Alcohol - fishery -
 No proper waste disposal -
 hygiene bad.

Second Shigwa

in April

Date: / /
Page:

Buy two sight saving.

(*) one the right — open space for all — because temples — lobby for Bhajan — just after — two ponds — walking street — in between — people taking rounds of pond — evening walk — many people — to the way 'wall' just by the side — on left dhabadi (stage) — front another two storey temple — first.

(*) used and flay — alot — may be flattery — for next visit — traditional

Date: / /
Page:

Structure — into inside — Buddist — Shave — looks down dirty (impure) — instant of construction — damage houses — rather quiet —

(*) Beautifully ^{wooden} ~~carved~~ ^{carved} — ~~next~~ — next to it dumping site? — about local eating — many customers — ~~smells~~ ^{smells} delicious — wow — lot of award delicacy — ~~the taste~~ — very very authentic — late service — many people — busy shop.

Fieldnote 3
13 April, 2011
14 April
Date: / /
Page: /

① local vendors — small — on
the side of main road — local
market — product vegetable —
livestocks — chickens — ducks —
ambience good — people shopping —
— chatting — (lost by some tourists)
(attraction) — bakery with cakes,
coffee — Bika gata — preparation —
community oriented for — game
② signboard — pottery square —
See no pottery — just temple & well
— Buddha statue — up north
Construction of falcha (Bhujan place temple)

Date: / /
Page: /

Very pleasant! Court full.

"The previous place after area to
be changed into museum, discussion
on going, school to be shifted somewhere.
Budget allocated from different authorities.
Initially the main gate is going to be
renovated & more beautiful."

① Bala Khandi temple — Bika gata —
Surrounding falcha — community
participation
Sata Shakti Satahar — all together
4 falcha — 3 entrance — inside
many needles — upper story — told
by local the needles are from jungle
primary school — Bika gata — same
place

Fillmore
5 Home -

Home - 2 visits to Historic
Sites & Temples.

logke Durbar (palace)

big gate (wooden) nice-dress type

will painting both sides - dirty

big court yard - burning stones

lived into school - doesn't look

palace - right & straight from

gate entry - Shrine small - looks

another door - leads to another

small court yard - the walls are

wood - wooden windows -

beautifully crafted - young

in structure dig into court

Fillmore
6

and visit home

30

Shr Siddh Kadi temple

out skirt of the vi case case

locating

very beautiful two story temple

lots of ornament from inside

pinagaleto entrance - mystical

environment - young people

Blagans - smoking sweets -

not - place dated for 'Blag'

is - Family Feast - wedding

Field work 8-7

Home - 3

Monday meeting.

27th April
Date: / /
Page: /

- ① meeting at Grand Kaja's House
- ② Tourism Development
- ③ Tourism Development committee
- ④ Agenda: - was: festival organization (food festival & Agave Expo)
- ⑤ meeting Attendees: 8 members
- ⑥ meeting started by chairperson - Applauded Applauded for last years great success of the festival
- ⑦ moving to million worth transactions all over the town

Home - 4
Field work 8
pottery symposium - 27th April
Date: / /
Page: /

- ① Visiting pottery making area.
- ② Little Chapachco pottery source
- ③ local engaged from generation to generation - a specific community involved in it.
- ④ suggestion of museum to showcase local technology and pottery skill, products for OP - to be handled by user committee at surrounding province.
- ⑤ are you visiting pottery.

destruction w. 0 /
 in April (Karl's visit)
 (R) music shop.
 got one woman - took it
 turned - business down -
 they chose new sector for livelihood.
 before government to
 government transfer - about
 to exist from them -
 demand higher - No Sic!!
 manpower left.

5th Nov 10
 Home 6
 Date: 1 / 1
 Page: 1
 interacting with local
 evening Shyue - mostly
 old & aged people - very
 very sweetening & relaxing
 vibe.
 (R) Ancient songs about the story,
 religious, indigenous, spirituality.
 mostly
 (R) Across all the major
 temple area - young people
 not engaged - threat of losing
 cultural.