

Psychological Effects of Eco-Tourism and Cultural Preservation in Coastal Destinations: Evidence from Weh Island, Indonesia

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Abstrak

Studi ini mengeksplorasi praktik ekowisata dan pelestarian budaya di Casanemo Beach Resort, sebuah destinasi pesisir di Pulau Weh, Aceh, Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini mengkaji inisiatif ekowisata resor tersebut serta dampaknya secara psikologis terhadap para pemangku kepentingan utama, termasuk karyawan, masyarakat setempat, dan wisatawan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur yang didasarkan pada *Theory of Planned Behavior* (TPB), observasi langsung, dan analisis dokumen. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari 11 individu yang dipilih melalui teknik pengambilan sampel secara purposif dan insidental. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Casanemo Beach Resort berhasil mengintegrasikan praktik ramah lingkungan, seperti kebijakan nol limbah (*zero-waste*), pengelolaan sampah organik, penggunaan alternatif plastik, pelestarian lahan, kegiatan bersih pantai, penggunaan material bangunan berkelanjutan, serta pelatihan karyawan. Resor ini juga mendorong pelestarian budaya melalui kolaborasi dengan masyarakat adat, penggunaan produk tradisional buatan tangan, pemindahan rumah tradisional Aceh yang autentik, pendirian sanggar tari tradisional bagi anak-anak setempat, pembentukan grup musik Aceh kontemporer, dan penyelenggaraan upacara adat Aceh. Tantangan yang dihadapi meliputi keterbatasan keterlibatan wisatawan serta adanya resistensi masyarakat setempat terhadap pengaruh budaya asing. Meskipun demikian, praktik-praktik resor tersebut telah memberikan dampak positif bagi karyawan, wisatawan, dan masyarakat setempat, dengan menumbuhkan rasa bangga, kesadaran, serta ikatan yang lebih mendalam terhadap lingkungan dan budaya. Temuan ini diharapkan dapat menginspirasi para pembuat kebijakan dan praktisi pariwisata untuk mengadopsi kerangka kerja yang holistik dan berkelanjutan, yang mengintegrasikan aspek lingkungan, ekonomi, dan budaya.

Kata Kunci: Ekowisata; Pariwisata Berkelanjutan; Praktik Berkelanjutan; Pelestarian Budaya; Wisata Pesisir; Dampak Psikologis; Keterlibatan Masyarakat; Sabang; Pulau Weh.

Abstract

This study explores eco-tourism and cultural preservation practices at Casanemo Beach Resort, a coastal destination on Weh Island, Aceh, Indonesia. Using a qualitative case-study approach, the research examines the resort's eco-tourism initiatives and their psychological impact on key stakeholders, including employees, local communities, and tourists. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), direct observations, and document analysis. The sample consists of 11 individuals, selected through purposive and incidental sampling. Findings reveal that Casanemo Beach Resort successfully integrates eco-friendly practices, including zero-waste policies, organic waste management, plastic alternatives, land preservation, beach clean-ups, sustainable building materials, and employee training. The resort also promotes cultural preservation by collaborating with indigenous communities, using handmade traditional products, relocating an authentic Acehnese house, establishing a traditional dance studio for local children, creating a contemporary Acehnese music band, and celebrating traditional Acehnese ceremonies. Challenges include limited tourist engagement and resistance to foreign cultural influences among the local community. Nevertheless, the resort's practices have positively impacted employees, tourists, and the local community, fostering pride, awareness, and a deeper connection to the environment and culture. The findings aim to inspire policymakers and tourism practitioners to adopt holistic, sustainable frameworks that integrate environmental, economic, and cultural considerations.

Keyword: Eco-Tourism; Sustainable Tourism; Sustainable Practice; Cultural Preservation; Coastal Tourism; Psychological Impact; Community Engagement; Sabang; Weh Island.

1. Introduction

Tourism has become a crucial part of Indonesia's economy, contributing significantly to the country's foreign exchange earnings. In 2020, the sector generated USD 43 billion, highlighting its importance in driving economic growth. However, the rapid expansion of tourism also brings several challenges, such as environmental damage (Wang & Cheablam., 2025), loss of culture (Liodakis, 2023), and economic inequality (Wang & Alexander, 2023). The large number of tourists in various destinations often leads to overcrowded infrastructure, excessive waste, and negative impacts on the environment, all of which undermine the principles of sustainable tourism and cultural preservation (Wasudawan & Weissmann., 2025; Gossling *et al.*, 2020). For example, coral reefs are damaged by irresponsible tourism activities, which goes against the goal of sustainability. Overcrowding and traffic congestion also reduce the quality of the tourist experience and harm the well-being of local communities, violating the standards of responsible tourism management (Draženka *et al.*, 2019; Vu *et al.*, 2020; Dijana, 2022). Cultural loss is another major issue in tourism, as uncontrolled development can lead to the commodification of local traditions and the erosion of cultural values. Previous studies have shown the harmful effects of tourism on cultural heritage, stressing the need to balance tourism development with efforts to protect cultural assets. Vu *et al.* (2020) explored the connection between tourism development and cultural sustainability, pointing out that unplanned growth often leads to a dilution of cultural significance. Similarly, Tuyen (2023) documented the negative effects of cultural commodification, calling for policies that prioritize the preservation of indigenous traditions in tourism planning. The need to address these challenges has led to various initiatives at both the national and international levels. For instance, Indonesia's "Kita Mulai Sekarang" movement is part of its commitment to the Paris Agreement's goals to reduce global carbon emissions by promoting sustainability across different sectors, including tourism (www.kemenparekraf.go.id). However, government efforts are often concentrated on popular destinations like Bali or Java, while regions such as Sumatra receive less attention. Weh Island, located at the northernmost tip of Sumatra, has been largely overlooked by the central government, despite boasting natural resources that are just as remarkable as those of Bali or other prominent maritime tourism destinations. This uneven allocation of resources has slowed efforts to achieve balanced sustainable development across the country. While eco-villages have been developed in seven locations, no coastal destinations have received similar recognition, which highlights the disparity in sustainability initiatives (Putri *et al.*, 2023; Iqbal *et al.*, 2021).

Pulau Weh, a rising coastal destination, is a prime example of the opportunities and challenges associated with sustainable tourism. In 2023, the island welcomed 261,489 tourists, marking a 10% increase from the previous year. This growth emphasizes the island's potential as an important tourism destination in Indonesia. However, it has also put pressure on the island's natural and cultural resources, resulting in issues like poor waste management, coral reef damage, and threats to local traditions (Tumiar, *et al.*, 2022). The arrival of international tourists has also introduced foreign cultural influences that contrast with the predominantly Islamic values of the local community, adding complexity to tourism development. This situation highlights the need for well-planned strategies that balance tourism development with environmental and cultural preservation (Dijana, 2022; Vu *et al.*, 2020; Birkić *et al.*, 2019). Research on sustainable tourism has increasingly focused on finding ways to align economic growth with environmental protection and cultural preservation. Birkić *et al.* (2019) highlighted the importance of involving local stakeholders in promoting sustainable practices. Additionally, Gede *et al.* (2022) have suggested that community-based tourism models can be integrated with sustainability principles to create a more sustainable future for tourism. These studies emphasize the need for more research into the psychological effects of sustainability practices on various stakeholders, such as employees, tourists, and local communities. Casanemo Beach Resort, located on Pulau Weh, serves as an important case study for examining these issues. The resort received the Indonesia Sustainable Tourism Award in 2017 and 2018, demonstrating its commitment to integrating sustainable practices with cultural preservation. Some of its initiatives include eco-friendly management, waste reduction, and community engagement, all of which aim to balance economic goals with environmental and cultural sustainability. These efforts provide a

valuable example for exploring how tourism development can be made more sustainable in practice. This research aims to achieve two main objectives. First, it will analyze the eco-tourism and cultural preservation practices implemented by Casanemo Beach Resort. Second, the study will examine the psychological impacts of these practices on key stakeholders, such as employees, tourists (both local and international), and indigenous people. It also makes a significant contribution to the existing literature on sustainable tourism. Unlike previous research, which often focuses on a single aspect of sustainability, this study aims to explore the psychological impacts of implementing sustainable practices and cultural preservation in maritime tourism areas. By examining a coastal destination like Weh Island, the research will address a gap in the literature and provide practical insights into the challenges and opportunities of sustainable tourism in less-explored regions. Ultimately, this study aims to establish a framework for responsible tourism development in Indonesia and beyond, contributing to the global discourse on sustainable tourism management.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sustainable Tourism and Eco-Tourism Practices

In recent years, sustainable tourism has become more than just a concept—it is increasingly seen as a necessity. As tourism continues to grow, the challenge is no longer about attracting visitors, but about ensuring that tourism activities do not harm the environment or local communities in the long run. Scholars argue that sustainable tourism should create a balance between economic benefits, environmental protection, and social well-being (Anusree & Swarupa, 2023). Within this framework, eco-tourism plays a particularly important role, especially in environmentally sensitive areas such as coastal destinations. Practices such as reducing waste, using eco-friendly materials, and promoting environmental awareness among tourists have been shown to contribute positively to both environmental conservation and visitor satisfaction (Baloch *et al.*, 2023). However, without proper management, tourism can easily shift from being beneficial to harmful. Coastal ecosystems, including coral reefs, are especially vulnerable, making sustainability not just an option, but a critical priority (Wang & Chealbam, 2025).

2.2 Cultural Preservation in Tourism Context

Beyond environmental concerns, tourism also has a profound impact on culture. On one hand, tourism can help preserve traditions by increasing their visibility and value. On the other hand, it can also lead to cultural commodification, where traditions are altered or simplified to meet tourist expectations. Recent studies suggest that when cultural elements—such as traditional performances, crafts, and ceremonies—are integrated thoughtfully into tourism, they can strengthen both community identity and the authenticity of tourist experiences (Panagiotopoulou & Skoultos, 2025). However, the presence of international tourists may introduce different values and lifestyles, which can sometimes create tension within local communities. This highlights the importance of culturally sensitive tourism planning that respects local norms while still allowing for meaningful cultural exchange (Roxas *et al.*, 2020).

2.3 Psychological Impacts of Sustainable Tourism

While many studies focus on environmental or economic outcomes, there is growing recognition that tourism also affects people at a psychological level. Engaging with sustainable tourism practices can shape how individuals think, feel, and behave. Tourists who experience eco-friendly environments often develop a stronger awareness of environmental issues and a greater sense of responsibility toward sustainability (Lei *et al.*, 2025). For employees and local communities, these practices can foster a sense of pride and purpose. Being part of an organization or community that values sustainability often leads to stronger emotional attachment and commitment. In some cases, individuals even carry these values beyond the tourism setting and into their daily lives. This suggests that sustainable tourism has the potential to create not only environmental benefits, but also meaningful psychological change.

2.4 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in Sustainable Behavior

To better understand why people, engage or do not engage in sustainable behavior, many researchers rely on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). According to this theory, behavior is influenced by three main factors: personal attitudes, social pressure (subjective norms), and perceived control over the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of tourism, TPB helps explain why some tourists are willing to adopt eco-friendly practices while others are not (Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). For example, individuals are more likely to behave sustainably if they believe it is beneficial (attitude), feel that others expect them to do so (subjective norms), and perceive that it is easy or feasible (perceived behavioral control). This framework is particularly useful in identifying barriers to sustainable behavior and designing more effective interventions (Esfandiar & Hadinejad, 2025).

2.5 Community Engagement and Stakeholder Participation

Another key factor in sustainable tourism is the role of local communities. Research consistently shows that sustainability initiatives are more successful when local stakeholders are actively involved in the process. Community participation not only improves the effectiveness of these initiatives but also ensures that the benefits of tourism are shared more equitably (Roxas *et al.*, 2020). Community-based tourism models, in particular, have gained attention for their ability to combine economic development with environmental and cultural preservation (Panagiotopoulou & Skoultzos, 2025). However, participation is not always easy to achieve. Limited awareness, lack of motivation, and resistance to change can pose significant challenges (Dijana, 2022). This highlights the need for continuous education, collaboration, and culturally appropriate strategies to support long-term sustainability priority (Wang & Chealbam, 2025).

2.6 Research Gap

Although the literature on sustainable tourism continues to grow, several gaps remain. Many studies tend to focus on environmental or economic outcomes, while the psychological experiences of stakeholders are often overlooked. In addition, research on coastal destinations in less-developed regions, such as Weh Island, is still limited. This study seeks to address these gaps by exploring not only how eco-tourism and cultural preservation are implemented, but also how they are experienced psychologically by employees, tourists, and local communities. By focusing on a coastal destination, this research also provides insights into a context that is often underrepresented in the literature.

3. Research Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative research approach to explore sustainable practices and cultural preservation within a tourism context. A qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate as it enables an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and the underlying meanings associated with the implementation of sustainable practices and cultural preservation. This research employed a phenomenological approach, which is suitable for investigating the lived experiences of individuals and their interaction with specific phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). This design allows the study to delve deeply into the subjective experiences of employees, local communities, and tourists regarding sustainable tourism and cultural preservation.

3.1 Population & Sample

This study was conducted at Casanemo Beach Resort, Jl. KH Agus Salim, le Meulee, Kecamatan Sukajaya, Sabang, Weh Island – Aceh. The population in this study includes the owners, workers, local community, and both local and international tourists who are directly involved with the daily operations of Casanemo Resort. The sampling method for selecting the local community and tourists was incidental sampling. Incidental sampling is a technique where samples are chosen based on those who are encountered unexpectedly during data collection (Creswell & Creswell., 2023; Sudaryono., 2022). making it suitable for studies involving diverse and dynamic populations such as tourists and local communities.

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Given the context of this research, where the target populations (tourists and local residents) are not predetermined and can vary based on time and location, incidental sampling provides a practical approach to obtaining relevant data. This method is particularly effective in exploratory research or when the population is transient or difficult to define. By employing this method, the study ensures that the perspectives of individuals directly involved in or impacted by activities at the research site are captured effectively. Meanwhile the sampling technique for the owners and workers at Casanemo was carried out using purposive random sampling. Purposive sampling was used because it allows for the selection of participants who meet specific characteristics and have relevant experience related to the research topic (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The criteria for purposive sampling in this study are as follows:

- 1) Permanent employee at Casanemo Beach Resort
- 2) Has worked at Casanemo for a minimum of 5 years
- 3) Resides in Sabang

Data obtained from the Human Resources Department at Casanemo Beach Resort indicates that the organization employs a total of 47 individuals. This includes 30 permanent employees, 4 trainees, 6 contractual staff, and 7 interns. Based on the established sampling criteria, a total of five participants were identified as meeting the specified criteria and were eligible to participate in this study. Therefore, the detailed descriptions of all participants involved in the research are as follows

Table 1. Demographics of the Participants

Subject	Initial	Origin	Age	Sex	Description
1	Blq	Sabang	38	Female	Owner
2	I	Sabang	45	Male	General Manager
3	Jn	Sabang	29	Female	Employee
4	Mil	Sabang	35	Female	Employee
5	A	Sabang	31	Female	Employee
6	Ags	Mozambique	17	Female	International Tourist
7	Syt	Netherlands	42	Female	International Tourist
8	Mr	Italia	22	Male	International Tourist
9	Jo	Jakarta	51	Male	Indigenous people
10	Yh	Banda Aceh	27	Female	Indigenous people
11	Si	Sabang	31	Female	Indigenous people

Before the study began, informed consent was secured from all participants. Participants received a consent form detailing the study's purpose, methods, and their rights, including the assurance of confidentiality and the voluntary nature of their involvement. This ethical practice adheres to the standards outlined by Creswell and Poth (2018) and the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020), ensuring the participants' protection and autonomy throughout the research process.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection in this study employed multiple qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten participants, including employees, indigenous people and tourists, to gather in-depth insights into their experiences and perspectives. An interview guide was designed to maintain consistency across interviews while providing the flexibility for participants to express their unique viewpoints. Quantitative data collection in this study was conducted using a questionnaire designed to assess the the perception and psychological impacts of the cultural and environmental preservation practices implemented by Casanemo. The questionnaire was developed based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which explains how a person's intention to perform a behavior is influenced by three factors: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). These factors were designed to reflect the core components of the TPB framework, which considers belief, attitude, intention, and behavior as crucial factors influencing individuals' actions

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regarding sustainability practices (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). The summary of the interview guide, based on the indicators mentioned, is as follows:

Table 2. *Summary of Interview Questions Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)*

Aspects	Indicators	Questions
Attitude	Belief about outcomes	What are the benefits of Casanemo's preservation practices?
	Evaluation of outcomes	How important are these practices for the sustainable tourism and culture?
	Overall opinion	Do you support these preservation practices?
	Emotional response	How do these practices make you feel?
Subjective norm	Perceived social pressure	Do others encourage you to support these practices?
	Motivation to comply with social expectations	Would you participate more if others supported these practices?
	Perceived approval	Do you seek for approval to value these efforts?
	Social influence	Do others' actions affect your willingness to participate?
Perceived Behavioral Control	Perceived ease or difficulty	Is it easy or hard for you to support these practices?
	Control over resources	Do you have the resources to participate?
	Perceived obstacles	What challenges do you face in contributing to these efforts?
	Confidence	How confident are you in contributing to preservation efforts?

Additionally, observational data were gathered through real-time observations of sustainable practices and cultural preservation efforts. The researchers carefully recorded these practices to assess their implementation and effectiveness. Finally, document analysis was utilized to review existing materials related to sustainable practices and cultural preservation initiatives, such as reports, operational guidelines, and other pertinent documents. These diverse data collection techniques provided a rich and triangulated approach to understanding the phenomena under investigation.

3.3 Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a method suitable for identifying patterns and themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The analysis involved the following steps:

- 1) Verbatim Transcription
Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and maintain the integrity of participants' responses.
- 2) Coding
Initial codes were assigned to key phrases and ideas in the transcripts.
- 3) Theme Development
Codes were grouped into broader themes that aligned with the research objectives.
- 4) Narrative Construction
A descriptive narrative was developed to present the findings coherently.

To ensure the validity of the findings, data triangulation was applied by cross-referencing information obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 The implementation of Eco-Tourism and Cultural Preservation Practice

Casanemo Beach Resort has made significant strides in implementing sustainable tourism practices that align with global environmental standards. The resort's commitment to sustainability is reflected in its efforts to minimize environmental impact while simultaneously preserving local culture. Through a combination of eco-friendly initiatives and cultural integration, the resort aims to foster a responsible tourism experience. The following section outlines the various sustainable practices adopted by Casanemo Beach Resort, highlighting their environmental and cultural significance. Casanemo Beach Resort demonstrates its commitment to sustainability and cultural preservation through various practices. In terms of eco-tourism, the resort adopts zero-waste policies, sorts waste for recycling or composting, and converts organic waste into fertilizer for its plants. They also use bamboo and stainless steel straws instead of plastic, and order biodegradable plastic materials from abroad. Additionally, the resort purchased a one-hectare plot of land that is not used for business purposes to protect the local flora and fauna, and organizes beach clean-up activities that foster a collective sense of environmental responsibility among employees. Regarding building materials, Casanemo prioritizes the use of wood, a renewable resource with low embodied energy, which helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and naturally regulates temperature, minimizing reliance on energy-intensive cooling systems. This approach highlights the importance of environmentally friendly material choices in the tourism industry and supports the local economy. From a managerial perspective, Casanemo ensures that employees recruited share the same vision for environmental conservation and provides training on waste sorting, composting, and guest education about reducing plastic use. In terms of cultural preservation, Casanemo emphasizes the use of handmade traditional products and has relocated an authentic traditional Acehese house as an iconic attraction. They also support cultural heritage by establishing a traditional dance studio for the local community, hiring professional instructors, and offering free classes for local children to learn and preserve Acehese dances. Furthermore, talented young dancers are given opportunities to perform at events organized by the Sabang city government or during receptions for international tourists. Casanemo has also formed a contemporary ethnic Acehese music band called "The Budhi Project," which entertains guests by blending traditional Acehese music with modern styles. Additionally, the resort actively celebrates traditional ceremonies such as Kenduri Tot Apam and Kanduri Laot, helping to preserve these customs and attract tourists interested in Acehese culture. These efforts demonstrate the resort's dedication to safeguarding cultural heritage while enhancing the appeal of Acehese traditions to a broader audience.

4.1.2 The Barriers

However, while the resort has made significant strides in implementing eco-tourism and cultural preservation practices, challenges remain in measuring the long-term impact of these efforts, namely: One of the major challenges faced by Casanemo is the limited personal motivation among both tourists and the local community to engage in eco-friendly behaviors. This lack of motivation often stems from insufficient knowledge about the environmental benefits of sustainability; for instance, a local tourist interviewed mentioned requesting plastic or Styrofoam items despite being informed that the resort does not provide such materials. This situation underscores the ongoing difficulty of changing established habits and attitudes toward sustainability, especially when individuals are unaware of the environmental impact of their choices. Research by Hoffmann *et al.* (2024) suggests that people tend to avoid pro-environmental actions when they do not perceive clear personal benefits, while Stankuniene *et al.* (2020) emphasize that readiness to adopt eco-friendly practices depends heavily on understanding and attitudes toward sustainability. To overcome this barrier, environmental education initiatives are crucial, as studies by Mosca *et al.* (2024) indicate that increasing environmental awareness can significantly boost individuals' motivation to practice sustainability. Additionally, despite Casanemo's efforts to promote eco-friendly practices, some resistance from the local community has emerged due to cultural tensions. The influx of

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foreign influences through tourism has led to disapproval over certain behaviors, such as tourists' dress styles, which are seen as inconsistent with Islamic dress codes in Aceh. This resistance has caused some apathy towards the resort's initiatives, highlighting the complex interplay between tourism development and cultural preservation. As noted by Hall & Weiler (2019), such tensions illustrate how increased tourism can conflict with local traditions and values, making it essential for sustainable tourism to foster cultural sensitivity and ensure that local community values are respected and integrated into tourism practices, as emphasized by López-Sánchez *et al.* (2020).

4.1.3 Psychological Impacts of Sustainability Practices on Key Stakeholders

Sustainability practices at Casanemo have led to positive changes in attitudes and behaviors, fostering greater environmental awareness and a commitment to preserving local traditions. The psychological impact manifests in various forms, including increased pride in environmental and cultural preservation, greater self-discipline, and a heightened sense of responsibility towards sustainability. For example, engaging in waste sorting, beach clean-ups, and cultural preservation activities has inspired employees and visitors to adopt eco-friendly behaviors, both professionally and personally. The sustainability practices at Casanemo Beach Resort have generated significant psychological impacts on various stakeholders. For the staff, these initiatives foster a strong sense of pride and purpose, as participating in waste management, beach clean-ups, and traditional dance rehearsals enhances their connection to environmental and cultural preservation efforts. This sense of responsibility and cultural pride contributes to higher job satisfaction and a deeper commitment to sustainable practices. Tourists also experience positive psychological effects, as the resort's focus on sustainability and cultural authenticity heightens their awareness of environmental issues and appreciation for local customs. Engaging in eco-friendly accommodations and cultural activities enriches their travel experience, fostering respect and understanding of the local culture. Meanwhile, the local community benefits by feeling more valued and proud of their cultural heritage, as the resort actively incorporates traditional arts and performances into its offerings. These initiatives strengthen community identity and pride, creating opportunities for locals to engage with and preserve their traditions, thereby fostering a deeper sense of belonging and cultural connection within the community.

4.2 Discussion

The integration of eco-tourism and cultural preservation practices in coastal destinations has been shown to generate positive psychological impacts on various stakeholders. According to Gede *et al.* (2022), sustainable tourism initiatives that actively involve local communities and promote environmental conservation can foster a sense of pride, responsibility, and emotional attachment among residents and tourists alike. Their study emphasizes that when local traditions are preserved and integrated into tourism activities, it not only enhances cultural identity but also increases visitors' appreciation and respect for local customs. Similarly, research by Birkić *et al.* (2019) highlights that community participation in sustainable tourism development leads to greater psychological well-being and a stronger sense of ownership over cultural and environmental assets. These findings suggest that well-implemented eco-friendly and cultural practices can create meaningful psychological benefits, such as increased pride, awareness, and connection to the environment and culture, ultimately supporting the long-term sustainability of coastal tourism areas.

5. Conclusion

This study indicates that the integration of eco-tourism practices and cultural preservation at Casanemo Beach Resort can positively shape psychological outcomes, including heightened environmental awareness, stronger motivation toward sustainable behavior, and greater cultural connectedness among tourists and local residents. However, limited motivation among local tourists to consistently adopt eco-friendly behaviors remains a challenge. Practical efforts should therefore focus on

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simple, behavior-driven interventions—such as providing refill water stations, clear waste sorting, and visitor information that highlights personal and collective benefits of sustainable practices. In addition, collaborative cultural programs developed with local leaders can help strengthen cultural pride and reduce resistance to outside influences. From a policy perspective, local authorities and tourism managers should promote participatory planning, offer incentives for verified eco-cultural initiatives, and include sustainability indicators in destination management systems. These steps may address the motivational barriers identified in this study and support broader sustainable tourism goals in coastal areas. This study has several limitations. First, it is a single-site case study conducted at one resort, which limits the generalizability of findings to other destinations. Second, the research used cross-sectional and self-reported data, which restricts causal interpretation and may be affected by social-desirability bias. Third, the study did not include objective behavioral measures such as actual energy or water use, nor did it capture seasonal variations in tourist behavior. Lastly, certain cultural constructs—such as resistance to foreign influences—were not measured with validated multi-item scales, reducing measurement precision. Future studies should therefore employ multi-site and longitudinal designs, integrate objective environmental indicators, and explore behavioral mechanisms that explain how eco-tourism and cultural preservation jointly influence psychological outcomes among different stakeholder groups.

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