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From Attractions to Mental Wellbeing? A Content Analysis of Bali Tourism Promotion on Digital Platforms

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ABSTRACT

The growing mental health crisis globally and nationally has positioned tourism as a potential mechanism for psychological recovery and wellbeing enhancement. Previous studies have highlighted tourism's role in reducing stress, improving emotional states, and fostering both hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing. However, limited research has examined how these benefits are represented in tourism marketing communication. This study aims to analyze the extent to which Bali tourism promotion incorporates mental health and wellbeing narratives. Using a quantitative content analysis approach, this study examines 200 promotional contents of Bali tourism published on the Traveloka platform. The analysis is based on three dimensions: non-wellbeing framing, hedonic wellbeing, and eudaimonic wellbeing. The findings reveal that Bali tourism promotion is predominantly dominated by non-wellbeing framing, particularly through descriptive representations of natural beauty and cultural attractions. While hedonic wellbeing elements (such as relaxation and escape) appear moderately, eudaimonic wellbeing, including spirituality, self-reflection, and meaning-making, is almost entirely absent. These results indicate a significant gap between the theoretical potential of tourism as a mental health investment and its practical representation in digital marketing. This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that mental health narratives are not yet fully integrated into tourism promotion strategies.

Keywords: *Mental Health Tourism; Hedonic Wellbeing; Eudaimonic Wellbeing; Destination Marketing; Digital Tourism Promotion.*

.1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, tourism has no longer been understood merely as a recreational activity or the consumption of visual experiences, but has increasingly been positioned as a means of contributing to mental health and wellbeing. This shift aligns with a broader transformation in how mental health is conceptualized, moving away from a dichotomous view of health versus illness toward a dynamic continuum that fluctuates throughout everyday life [1]. Within this framework, individuals actively develop strategies to maintain and enhance their mental condition, and tourism emerges as an important form of investment in this process.

The urgency of this issue becomes more evident when considered in relation to both global and national mental health conditions. In Indonesia, recent data from the Ministry of Health indicate that approximately 20% of the population—equivalent to around 54 million people—experienced emotional mental disorders in 2023. Furthermore, it is estimated that about 28 million individuals suffer from more severe mental health problems [2]. These figures highlight that mental health has become a significant public concern, requiring multidimensional approaches that extend beyond clinical interventions to include preventive and promotive strategies, including tourism activities.

A growing body of research demonstrates that tourism plays a significant role in enhancing mental health. Tourism activities, particularly those based in natural environments, have been shown to reduce stress, increase happiness, and support psychological recovery [3], [4]. Visits to national parks and natural destinations, for example, have been framed as forms of nature-based therapy that effectively improve individual wellbeing [5]. In this context, tourism contributes not only to short-term emotional outcomes (hedonic wellbeing), but also to deeper dimensions such as self-reflection, the search for meaning, and personal transformation (eudaimonic wellbeing) [6].

As this perspective evolves, the concept of wellness tourism has emerged, emphasizing travel experiences as a means of enhancing quality of life in a holistic manner. The inspired wellness model developed by Valente-Mosqueda *et al.* conceptualizes wellness as a multidimensional construct encompassing physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions

[7]. Within this model, tourism is no longer viewed as a purely consumptive activity, but rather as a process of self-knowledge and personal development that enables individuals to better navigate everyday challenges. Consequently, tourism promotion should not only highlight destination attributes, but also emphasize the psychological and transformational benefits that tourists may experience.

However, despite the strong theoretical link between tourism and mental health, research examining how these aspects are represented in destination marketing communication remains limited. Cooper and Buckley argue that destination choice is fundamentally driven by individuals' needs to maintain and improve their mental health [1]. If so, destination marketing should explicitly articulate these benefits. Yet, there are indications that the tourism industry continues to rely on traditional approaches that prioritize visual attractiveness, cultural attractions, and recreational activities, without clearly linking them to mental health and wellbeing.

This issue becomes particularly relevant in the context of Bali as one of Indonesia's leading tourism destinations. According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) of Bali Province, total tourist arrivals in 2024 reached approximately 16.4 million, consisting of 6,333,360 international tourists and 10,120,786 domestic tourists [8]. Bali is widely recognized not only for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, but also for its global reputation as a destination for spiritual and wellness tourism, particularly in areas such as Ubud, which are closely associated with yoga, meditation, and retreat practices.

In the context of digital transformation, the processes of information search and travel decision-making have increasingly shifted toward online platforms. One of the key platforms in this ecosystem is Traveloka, a widely used ticketing and travel service platform in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. Traveloka not only facilitates bookings for transportation and accommodation, but also functions as a space where destinations are represented through descriptions, visuals, and promotional narratives presented to users. As digital platforms become central to travel planning, more tourists rely on such platforms to search for information, compare options, and purchase tickets for destinations and events. Therefore, Traveloka operates not only as a transactional intermediary but also as a marketing communication medium that shapes tourists' perceptions and expectations of destinations.

From a theoretical perspective, Bali has strong potential to be promoted as a destination that supports mental health and personal transformation. However, it remains unclear to what extent this potential is actually articulated in tourism promotion, particularly on digital platforms such as Traveloka, which play a significant role in influencing tourists' decision-making processes. This raises an important question regarding the gap between the conceptual potential of tourism as a means of enhancing wellbeing and its actual representation in destination marketing practices.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine the extent to which Bali's tourism promotion adopts narratives of mental health and wellbeing. Specifically, it addresses two research questions: (1) which dimension is most dominant in Bali's tourism promotion (non-wellbeing, hedonic wellbeing, or eudaimonic wellbeing); and (2) to what extent tourism promotion links travel experiences with mental health benefits and personal development. Using a content analysis approach, this study analyzes tourism promotion on the Traveloka platform to identify patterns of representation in destination marketing communication.

The objective of this study is to provide empirical insights into how mental health concepts are represented in tourism promotion, as well as to identify the gap between the theoretical potential of tourism as a means of enhancing wellbeing and its actual implementation in marketing communication practices. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to the theoretical development of tourism and mental health studies, while also offering practical implications for destination managers and tourism industry stakeholders in designing promotional strategies that are more responsive to tourists' psychological needs.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Tourism and Wellbeing

The relationship between tourism and wellbeing has emerged as a central theme in contemporary tourism studies. In the literature, wellbeing is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing both subjective and objective aspects of individuals' lives, including happiness, life satisfaction, and overall quality of life [6]. Although there is no single agreed-upon definition, wellbeing generally refers to a state of life that individuals perceive as positive and meaningful.

Smith and Diekmann distinguish between two primary approaches to understanding wellbeing: hedonic and eudaimonic [6]. The hedonic perspective emphasizes pleasure, relaxation, and enjoyable experiences derived from tourism activities. In this sense, tourism functions as a form of escape from routine and everyday stress. In contrast, the eudaimonic perspective focuses on meaning, personal growth, and self-realization. Tourism, therefore, is not only a source of temporary pleasure but also contributes to personal transformation and the search for meaning in life. In practice, these two dimensions often coexist within tourism experiences.

A number of empirical studies further support the role of tourism in enhancing wellbeing. De Bloom et al. demonstrate that holidays contribute to subjective wellbeing through recovery mechanisms from work-related and daily life stress, although these effects tend to diminish once individuals return to their routine [9]. This finding is reinforced by Buckley and Westaway, who show that outdoor tourism activities can generate significant psychological recovery effects even in crisis contexts such as the COVID-19 pandemic [4]. Moreover,

emotional experiences during tourism play a crucial role in shaping wellbeing. Jeong et al. find that positive emotions such as joy and love significantly contribute to tourist satisfaction, which in turn enhances overall wellbeing [10].

In addition, tourism motivations such as novelty seeking also contribute to wellbeing. New experiences allow individuals to break away from routine, stimulate cognitive processes, and enhance psychological vitality [10]. More broadly, tourism experiences can also be mediated through emerging formats such as virtual wellness retreats, which are capable of enhancing psychological wellbeing through immersive and reflective experiences [11]. These findings are consistent with McCabe and Johnson, who show that access to tourism, including through social tourism programs, can improve quality of life and wellbeing among vulnerable groups [12]. Thus, tourism should not be understood merely as the consumption of experiences, but also as a source of psychological recovery and quality-of-life enhancement.

2.2 Tourism and Mental Health

There is a strong and growing body of literature highlighting the relationship between tourism and mental health. Buckley emphasizes the need to systematically understand the foundations and mechanisms underlying this relationship, including how tourism experiences influence individuals' emotions, cognition, and psychological functioning [3]. More specifically, Buckley identifies several psychological mechanisms through which tourism enhances mental health, including relaxation, exposure to nature, social interaction, and personal achievement [5].

From a behavioral perspective, Cooper and Buckley argue that mental health is not only an outcome of tourism but also a key driver of destination choice [1]. Tourists tend to select destinations that offer psychological benefits, suggesting that tourism can be conceptualized as an investment in mental health. Consequently, the relationship between tourism and mental health is bidirectional: it functions both as a motivation and as an outcome.

Empirical studies further demonstrate that tourism contributes to the reduction of negative emotions. Sun et al. find that tourism expenditure is significantly associated with lower probabilities of anxiety, stress, and depression [13]. This suggests that tourism has implications not only at the individual level but also at the societal level in terms of public mental health. This is supported by Tian et al., who show that tourism enhances mental health through complex mechanisms involving internal psychological characteristics, social adaptation, and behavioral capabilities [14]. Similarly, Zhang and Lu demonstrate that tourism improves mental health through chain mediation mechanisms, including increased self-efficacy, enhanced emotional regulation, and improved body image [15].

However, access to the mental health benefits of tourism remains uneven. Park et al. highlight that individuals with mental health conditions face multiple barriers to tourism participation, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints [16]. Additionally, the positive effects of tourism on mental health are often temporary [9]. Therefore, more sustainable approaches are needed to integrate tourism into long-term mental health strategies.

2.3 Wellness Tourism

The concept of wellness tourism has developed in response to growing awareness of the importance of mental health and quality of life. Buckley emphasizes that wellness tourism encompasses various mechanisms integrating physical, psychological, and social aspects within tourism experiences [5]. In this context, wellness extends beyond physical health to include emotional balance, meaning in life, and the quality of social relationships.

More recent theoretical developments conceptualize wellness tourism within the paradigm of tourism as therapy, which posits that tourism activities can function as therapeutic interventions with both mental health benefits and socio-economic value [4]. This paradigm positions tourism not merely as a recreational activity, but as a form of non-clinical therapy that contributes to both prevention and recovery in mental health. Within this framework, tourism experiences can generate psychological benefits such as enhanced wellbeing, improved work performance, increased pro-social behavior, and reduced mental healthcare costs.

Table 1. Tourism as Therapy

Discipline	**Practice Paradigm**	**Research Paradigm**
Wellbeing tourism (e.g., spa, yoga)	Individuals travel to obtain wellness experiences such as spa or yoga	Tourism providers capitalize on discretionary spending to enhance perceived wellbeing
Medical tourism	Individuals travel for medical or cosmetic treatment	Medical facilities as tourism attractions; focus on choice, funding, and outcomes
Nature and adventure tourism	Travel to experience wildlife, scenery, and adventure	Focus on operator–tourist interactions, motivations, and satisfaction
Leisure and stress reduction	Leisure activities reduce stress	Leisure studies with approaches similar to tourism research
Therapeutic landscapes	Natural environments	Geographic perspectives on

Discipline	Practice Paradigm	Research Paradigm
	produce calming effects	space, place, and landscape
Outdoor recreation	Participation leads to psychological or lifestyle transformation	Social science analyses of behavior, emotions, and social patterns
Outdoor education	Outdoor experiences enhance resilience and leadership	Educational research on curriculum and social implications
Psychology of nature exposure	Nature improves cognition and mental health	Experimental and quantitative psychological research
Healthcare and policy	Outdoor therapy prescribed for mild conditions	Medical frameworks and public health policy
Conservation	Conservation areas provide mental health value	Economic and social valuation of benefits

Source: Buckley & Westaway (2020)

Valente-Mosqueda *et al.* propose the inspired wellness model, which conceptualizes wellness as a multidimensional construct encompassing physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and self-development dimensions [7]. This model highlights that wellness tourism is not limited to relaxation but also involves self-development and the search for meaning. In this sense, tourism becomes a medium for self-reflection and personal growth.

One important development within wellness tourism is the emergence of spiritual tourism. Dong *et al.* introduce the Place–Culture–Relationship (PCR) framework, which explains how tourism experiences based on natural environments, cultural engagement, and social interaction contribute to mental health [17]. Natural environments reduce stress, cultural engagement supports identity formation, and social interaction enhances emotional wellbeing, reinforcing the holistic nature of wellness tourism.

Other forms of wellness tourism, such as leisure sport tourism, also demonstrate significant contributions to mental health. Zhang and Lu show that sport-based tourism enhances mental health through increased self-efficacy and emotional regulation [15]. Similarly, Jeong *et al.* demonstrate that positive emotional experiences contribute to satisfaction and loyalty, indirectly strengthening overall wellbeing [10].

Nevertheless, the implementation of wellness tourism faces several challenges. Dong et al. note that wellness tourism services are often inaccessible to certain groups and lack sustainability mechanisms [17]. In addition, Rahmani et al. show that perceived mental health benefits are highly influenced by subjective experiences, leading to variability in effectiveness across individuals [11]. This suggests that although wellness tourism holds significant potential, its implementation requires further development in terms of accessibility, experience design, and communication strategies.

3. METHOD

This study aims to examine the extent to which the idea of tourism as a means of mental health recovery is emphasized in the promotion of Bali tourism. The primary focus is not on tourists' direct experiences, but rather on how destination promotion frames Bali as a space for relaxation, stress recovery, anxiety reduction, wellness enhancement, or the search for life balance. Accordingly, this study investigates the symbolic representation of mental health in tourism promotional materials.

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a descriptive quantitative content analysis. Content analysis is a research method used to systematically, objectively, and replicably identify, classify, and quantify patterns of meaning in texts, images, or communication materials. This method is particularly appropriate because the study focuses on tourism promotion content, specifically on how certain elements are presented, repeated, and emphasized.

In this context, content analysis enables the researcher to assess whether Bali tourism promotion primarily highlights entertainment and recreational aspects, or whether it also incorporates narratives related to mental health recovery. The use of content analysis is also consistent with the theoretical framework adopted in this study. Previous research has demonstrated that tourism is closely linked to wellbeing, wellness, mental health maintenance, psychological relaxation, eudaimonic experiences, and even therapeutic functions [6], [3], [1], [4], [7]. As these concepts are often embedded in language, imagery, and thematic emphasis within promotional materials, content analysis provides an appropriate methodological approach.

3.2 Research Object

The object of this study is Bali tourism promotion on Traveloka.com. The selection of Bali is based on several considerations. First, Bali is the most iconic tourism destination in Indonesia and has long been marketed not only through its natural beauty and cultural richness, but also through images of tranquility, spirituality, relaxation, yoga, and healing. In other words, Bali represents a highly suitable case for examining whether tourism promotion has incorporated narratives of mental health and wellness. Second, Bali offers a diverse range of tourism products, including beaches, spas, retreats, nature-based tourism, cultural attractions, and adventure activities, allowing for a wide variety of promotional representations.

Traveloka is selected as the platform of analysis because it is one of the largest digital travel platforms

widely used in Indonesia for searching and purchasing tourism products. Traveloka functions not only as a transactional channel but also as a promotional space that connects destinations, service providers, and potential tourists. The Bali promotion pages on Traveloka are particularly relevant as they present formal representations aimed directly at consumers. Therefore, the promotional content on this platform can be understood as a form of digital marketing communication that reflects how Bali tourism is positioned and marketed to the public.

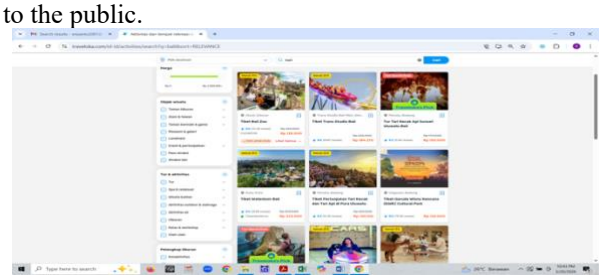


Figure 1. Research Object

3.3 Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of all Bali tourism promotional items displayed on the Bali search and promotion pages on Traveloka. This includes all available tourism products across categories such as activities, attractions, tours, spas, relaxation services, and other tourism experiences marketed on the platform.

From this population, a sample of 200 promotional items was selected. The sample was drawn randomly to ensure that each promotional item had an equal probability of selection, thereby avoiding overrepresentation of specific categories. Random sampling is particularly important given the high diversity of Bali tourism promotions in terms of product types, locations, and promotional styles. The unit of analysis in this study is a single tourism promotional item, which consists of the promotional title, a short description (if available), the activity category, and accompanying visual elements.

3.4 Conceptualization and Operationalization

The main concept in this study is the representation of tourism as a means of mental health recovery. Based on the literature, this concept is operationalized into three dimensions. The first dimension, hedonic wellbeing, captures how tourism is promoted as a source of pleasure, relaxation, and escape from daily stress. Previous studies indicate that tourism experiences are often associated with stress reduction, positive emotional states, and short-term psychological recovery [3]. Therefore, indicators such as relaxation, escape, and emotional calmness are used to identify this framing.

The second dimension, eudaimonic wellbeing, refers to deeper and more transformative tourism experiences, such as self-reflection, the search for meaning, spirituality, and holistic personal recovery [6], [7]. In this context, tourism is positioned not merely as a recreational activity but as a medium for personal growth and life balance. Additionally, concepts such as mental health investment [1] and nature-based therapy [4] support the understanding of tourism as a more complex form of psychological recovery.

The third dimension, non-wellbeing, serves as an important comparative category. Not all tourism promotions contain elements related to mental health or wellness. Many promotional materials focus solely on destination attributes such as natural beauty, cultural attractions, or entertainment, without linking them to visitors' psychological states. Including this dimension allows the study to more accurately determine whether Bali tourism promotion has genuinely adopted mental health narratives or remains dominated by conventional attraction-based approaches.

Table 2. Conceptualitation and Operationalization

No	Indicator	Operational Definition	Example Keywords/ Content	Scale
A. Hedonic Wellbeing				
1	Relaxation & pleasure	Promotion emphasizes enjoyable, stress-free experiences	relaxing, fun, enjoy	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
2	Escape from routine	Tourism framed as an escape from daily life or stress	escape, getaway, break	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
3	Stress reduction	Tourism linked to reduced stress or psychological relief	stress relief, calming	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
4	Emotional calmness	Emphasis on feelings of peace and emotional comfort	peaceful, calm, tranquility	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
B. Eudaimonic Wellbeing				
5	Self-reflection & meaning	Promotion emphasizes personal growth or meaningful experiences	self-discovery, meaningful journey	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
6	Spirituality	Inclusion of spiritual activities or meaning-seeking experiences	yoga, meditation, retreat	0 = Absent, 1 = Present

No	Indicator	Operational Definition	Example Keywords/ Content	Scale
7	Recharge & recovery	Tourism framed as holistic personal recovery	recharge, refresh, reset	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
8	Nature-based reflection	Nature linked to reflection or inner healing	nature healing, reconnect with nature	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
C. Non-Wellbeing				
9	Natural beauty (descriptive)	Focus on landscape without psychological meaning	beach, sunset, scenic view	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
10	Culture & tradition	Emphasis on cultural elements without emotional framing	temple, traditional dance	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
11	Entertainment & recreation	Focus on entertainment or attractions	theme park, waterpark	0 = Absent, 1 = Present
12	Informational content	Purely informational without wellbeing association	tickets, packages, itinerary	0 = Absent, 1 = Present

Source: Adaptation from Buckley (2023); Smith & Diekmann (2017); Valente-Mosqueda et al. (2025); Cooper & Buckley (2022); and Buckley & Westaway (2020).

3.5 Coding Procedure and Data Analysis

The coding process was conducted manually by trained coders using a coding sheet developed based on the conceptual framework outlined above. Manual coding was selected because this study does not rely solely on identifying explicit keywords, but also requires attention to the broader promotional context, meaning associations, and the relationship between textual and visual elements.

Prior to the main coding process, a pilot coding test was conducted on a subset of the data to ensure that all categories were consistently understood by the coders. To ensure consistency and reliability, intercoder reliability was assessed and yielded a coefficient above 0.80, indicating a very high level of agreement. With this level of reliability, the coding instrument can be considered sufficiently stable and capable of reliably identifying patterns of representation. The data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques. Specifically, the analysis involved calculating the frequency and percentage of each category across the 200 tourism promotional items examined. Through this approach, the study identifies which categories are most dominant and evaluates the extent to which mental health recovery narratives are emphasized in Bali tourism promotion.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of 200 Bali tourism promotional items on the Traveloka platform reveals a clear pattern in how the destination is positioned within digital marketing communication. Overall, the findings indicate that Bali tourism promotion is predominantly characterized by the *non-wellbeing dimension*, while narratives explicitly or implicitly linking tourism to mental health and wellbeing appear in much more limited proportions.

Table 3. Descriptive Results

Dimension	Indicator	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non-Wellbeing	Natural beauty (descriptive)	138	69
	Culture & traditional attractions	112	56
	General tourism activities	91	45.5
Hedonic Wellbeing	Entertainment & recreation	74	37
	Relaxation & pleasure	76	38
	Escape from routine	49	24.5
	Stress reduction	31	15.5
	Emotional calmness	28	14
	Spirituality	1	0.5
Eudaimonic Wellbeing	Recharge & recovery	18	9
	Nature-based reflection	7	3.5
	Self-reflection & meaning	2	1

Note: N = 200; one promotional item may contain more than one indicator.

The dominance of non-wellbeing is strongly reflected in the emphasis on natural beauty and traditional culture. A total of 69% of promotional items highlight natural landscapes such as beaches, rice fields, waterfalls, and sunsets. These representations are largely descriptive and visual, focusing on aesthetic appeal without linking them to visitors' psychological experiences. Phrases such as "beautiful beach," "exotic

scenery," and "stunning views" appear consistently, yet they are rarely associated with concepts such as inner peace, emotional recovery, or stress reduction.

Similarly, cultural elements constitute a major component of tourism promotion. Approximately 56% of promotional items feature cultural attractions such as Kecak dance performances, temple visits, and other local cultural experiences. However, as with natural landscapes, culture is primarily positioned as an attractive and unique tourism object, rather than as a medium for self-reflection or transformative experience. Thus, both nature and culture are framed within a *destination attractions* paradigm rather than as components of wellbeing experiences.

Other indicators within the non-wellbeing category, such as general tourism activities (45.5%) and entertainment (37%), further reinforce this pattern. Many promotional materials are informational or transactional in nature, such as ticket offers, tour packages, or recreational activities, without any narrative linking these experiences to tourists' mental or emotional conditions. This suggests that most tourism promotion continues to operate within a conventional paradigm emphasizing what can be seen and done, rather than what can be psychologically experienced.

In contrast, the hedonic wellbeing dimension appears at a moderate level. The most prominent indicator is relaxation and pleasure (38%), typically associated with activities such as spa treatments, massages, or enjoying a relaxed beach atmosphere. Narratives of escape from routine are also relatively common (24.5%), indicating that tourism is framed as a way to temporarily detach from daily pressures.

However, more specific indicators related to mental health, such as stress reduction (15.5%) and emotional calmness (14%), appear less frequently. This suggests that although wellbeing language has begun to emerge in tourism promotion, it remains relatively superficial and limited to comfort and short-term enjoyment. In other words, Bali tourism is increasingly promoted as a place to "rest," but not yet fully as a place for deeper mental recovery.

The eudaimonic wellbeing dimension is the least represented across all promotional materials analyzed. Indicators such as spirituality (0.5%) and self-reflection or meaning (1%) are almost entirely absent. Nature-based reflection also appears at a very low level (3.5%), with only a few promotional items framing nature as a space for contemplation or inner experience. The indicator of recharge and recovery appears slightly more frequently (9%), but still remains significantly lower than indicators in other dimensions.

The minimal presence of eudaimonic wellbeing suggests that the deeper aspects of tourism experiences (such as personal transformation, existential reflection, and the search for meaning) are largely absent from Bali tourism promotion on the Traveloka platform. This is particularly noteworthy given Bali's global reputation as a spiritual and reflective destination. However, this image does not appear to be substantially translated into promotional practices within commercial digital platforms.

Overall, these findings reveal a gap between Bali's potential as a wellness tourism destination and the way it is currently promoted. Bali tourism promotion continues to emphasize what can be seen (*visual attractions*) rather than what can be experienced psychologically (*psychological experience*). While mental health and wellbeing narratives are beginning to emerge, they remain secondary and have not yet become central to marketing communication strategies.

The findings of this study indicate that Bali tourism promotion on the Traveloka platform remains dominated by the non-wellbeing dimension, with a primary emphasis on natural beauty and cultural uniqueness, while mental health and wellbeing narratives (particularly those of a eudaimonic nature) are only minimally present. These findings contribute to the tourism literature by highlighting the gap between the theoretical potential of tourism as a means of mental recovery and its actual representation in destination marketing communication.

From a theoretical perspective, these results suggest that Bali tourism promotion continues to operate within the paradigm of tourism as attraction, focusing on the physical attributes of destinations such as landscapes and culture, which have traditionally been central to the tourism industry. This contrasts with recent developments in the literature emphasizing that tourism plays a significant role in enhancing wellbeing and mental health [6]. Within this framework, tourism is understood not only as the consumption of visual experiences, but also as a pathway toward a better life, both through pleasure (hedonic wellbeing) and personal growth (eudaimonic wellbeing).

However, the findings reveal that although hedonic wellbeing has begun to be incorporated into promotional narratives, particularly through themes of relaxation and escape, its use remains limited to surface-level representations. This aligns with previous arguments that tourism is often associated with stress reduction and positive emotional experiences, yet these benefits are not always explicitly communicated as part of mental health discourse [3]. In this context, Bali tourism promotion appears to utilize only a limited aspect of mental health narratives, focusing primarily on short-term relaxation without extending into deeper psychological dimensions.

Furthermore, the low presence of eudaimonic wellbeing suggests that Bali tourism promotion has not yet adopted tourism as a medium for personal transformation. Previous studies emphasize that eudaimonic tourism experiences, such as self-reflection, meaning-making, and engagement in meaningful activities, have stronger long-term effects on wellbeing [6]. Similarly, the wellness tourism framework highlights that tourism encompasses complex dimensions, including spirituality, personal development, and emotional regulation [7]. However, these dimensions are

largely absent in the promotional materials analyzed in this study.

These findings can also be explained through the perspective of mental health investment, which suggests that tourists select destinations based on expected psychological benefits [1]. If this is the case, destination marketing should logically align with these motivations. However, the results indicate that promotional strategies have not fully adapted to this logic. Despite Bali's strong potential as a wellness tourism destination, it continues to be marketed primarily through its physical and cultural attributes rather than through its psychological benefits.

In addition, the limited representation of eudaimonic dimensions can be attributed to the characteristics of Traveloka as a commercial digital platform. The platform is designed to facilitate quick transactions and purchasing decisions, and therefore tends to prioritize concrete, visual, and easily digestible information such as price, location, and attractions. In this context, more abstract narratives, such as self-reflection, meaning, or personal transformation, may be less compatible with the platform's logic. This explains why indicators such as spirituality and self-reflection are nearly absent, despite Bali's global reputation as a spiritual destination.

These findings reinforce the argument that although tourism, particularly nature-based tourism, has significant potential to provide mental health benefits, these benefits are not always explicitly communicated in promotional materials [4]. In other words, there is a disconnect between tourism's actual function as a means of mental recovery and its representation in marketing communication.

These findings can be better understood when compared with wellness tourism promotion strategies in other regional destinations, particularly Thailand and India. Several countries in Asia have increasingly positioned tourism not only as a recreational activity but also as a form of health and wellbeing investment. In Thailand, for instance, wellness tourism has become an important pillar of the national tourism strategy. The Thai government and tourism authorities have actively promoted spa tourism, medical tourism, and holistic healing experiences, positioning Thailand as a leading global wellness destination [18].

Similarly, India has long been recognized as a major destination for wellness tourism, particularly through traditions such as yoga, Ayurveda, and spiritual retreats. The promotion of wellness tourism in India frequently emphasizes holistic health, self-discovery, and spiritual balance, reflecting the strong integration between tourism and cultural–spiritual traditions [19]–[21]. Tourism experiences are framed not merely as leisure activities but as pathways toward personal transformation, mental balance, and spiritual wellbeing.

Compared with these destinations, the findings of this study indicate that Bali tourism promotion on the Traveloka platform still relies predominantly on attraction-based marketing. Natural landscapes, cultural attractions, and entertainment activities dominate the promotional narratives, while mental health and wellbeing benefits are only marginally emphasized. This suggests that Bali's tourism promotion has not yet fully adopted the wellness tourism discourse that has become increasingly prominent in other regional destinations.

This comparison highlights an important strategic implication. Although Bali possesses strong cultural and spiritual resources that could support wellness tourism development (such as meditation retreats, yoga practices, and nature-based spiritual experiences) these elements are not yet systematically articulated within digital promotional narratives. Integrating explicit mental health and wellbeing narratives into tourism promotion could therefore strengthen Bali's competitiveness in the rapidly growing global wellness tourism market.

The implications of these findings are significant. First, from a theoretical perspective, this study demonstrates that the adoption of wellbeing concepts in tourism remains partial, particularly within the domain of marketing communication. Second, from a practical perspective, the findings suggest that there is considerable opportunity for destination managers and digital platforms to develop more psychologically oriented promotional narratives. Integrating eudaimonic wellbeing dimensions, such as self-reflection, spirituality, and personal growth, could serve as a powerful differentiation strategy in an increasingly competitive global tourism industry.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that Bali tourism promotion on the Traveloka platform remains predominantly characterized by the non-wellbeing dimension, with a primary emphasis on natural beauty and cultural uniqueness as key attractions. The narratives presented are largely descriptive and visual, without explicitly linking tourism experiences to psychological benefits or mental health outcomes. This finding suggests that Bali tourism promotion continues to operate within a traditional paradigm of *attraction-based marketing*, rather than *experience-based marketing*, particularly in the context of mental health.

Nevertheless, there are early indications of the adoption of the hedonic wellbeing dimension, particularly through narratives of relaxation, pleasure, and escape from routine. However, the eudaimonic wellbeing dimension—such as self-reflection, spirituality, and the search for meaning, is almost entirely absent from the promotional content. This highlights a clear gap between Bali's potential as a wellness tourism destination and its representation in digital marketing communication. Accordingly, this study underscores that the integration of mental health narratives in tourism promotion remains limited and has not yet been fully utilized as a strategic tool for destination differentiation.

This study has several limitations. First, it relies on a single platform (Traveloka) as the data source. Although this platform plays a significant role in Indonesia's tourism industry, the findings may not fully reflect promotional strategies across other platforms,

such as social media or official destination websites, which may adopt different communication approaches. Second, the study employs a content analysis approach that focuses on explicit representations in textual and visual materials. As such, it may not fully capture implicit meanings or the subjective experiences of audiences in interpreting promotional messages. Therefore, the study primarily reflects how tourism promotion is constructed, rather than how it is perceived by tourists.

Third, the study does not differentiate between specific types of tourism products, such as spa, retreat, nature-based tourism, or entertainment activities, each of which may exhibit different tendencies in incorporating wellbeing narratives. A more granular analysis based on product categories could provide deeper insights into variations in promotional strategies. Fourth, the study focuses exclusively on the production side of communication (promotion), without examining audience responses to the narratives presented. Future research could address this limitation by combining content analysis with other approaches, such as surveys or interviews, to better understand how mental health narratives in tourism promotion influence tourists' perceptions and decision-making.

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