

Research Paper

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Impact of Global-Local Identity and Perceived Cultural Resilience on Sojourners' Sustainable Uses of Cultural Heritage: Evidence from Dali

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Abstract

This study investigates how sojourners' global-local identities influence their sustainable behaviors toward local cultural heritage, with a focus on the mediating role of perceived cultural resilience and the moderating effect of relative deprivation. Using a quantitative approach with 352 survey responses from sojourners in Dali, China, the research employs PLS-SEM to test a conceptual model. Results reveal that both global and local identities positively affect perceived cultural resilience, which fully mediates their relationship with sustainable heritage use. Relative deprivation negatively moderates the link between local identity and perceived cultural resilience, indicating that perceived inequities weaken the positive impact of local attachment on resilience perceptions. Notably, global identity's effect on perceived cultural resilience remains unaffected by relative deprivation, suggesting a "cosmopolitan buffer" against deprivation. The findings contribute to cultural resilience theory in tourism and offer practical insights for heritage management, emphasizing the need for inclusive governance to leverage dual identity pathways for sustainable cultural conservation.

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Keywords

Global identity; Local identity; Perceived cultural resilience; Relative deprivation; Sojourner; Sustainable utilization

1. Introduction

The delicate balance between tourism development and cultural heritage continues to be a crucial issue. While tourism can promote cultural inheritance through cultural dissemination and stimulate economic value creation, it concurrently gives rise to potential threats, including cultural conflict and over-commercialization (Ghermandi et al., 2020; Hu, Xiong, Lv, & Pu, 2021). In ethnic destinations, such disruptions pose significant challenges for the conservation and propagation of traditional culture, leading to problems such as cultural distortion and transplantation (Zhang et al., 2024). Such alterations compromise cultural authenticity and integrity, potentially sparking a crisis in cultural inheritance (Li et al., 2022; Pesce et al., 2019).

In this context of evolving environmental changes, cultural resilience is central to the ethnic heritage destinations' adaptation strategies. The concept of cultural resilience underscores how cultural systems can mitigate risk infringement and even transform "crisis" into "opportunities", thereby contributing to heritage destinations'

sustainable development (Clarke & Mayer, 2017; Holtorf, 2018; Hu, Qiao, Yang, & Zhang, 2021). Given the burgeoning global interest in sustainable tourism (Bramwell, 2015; Bramwell & Lane, 2014; Buckley, 2012), particularly considering pressing concerns about safeguarding cultural heritage (Elshaer et al., 2024), it is crucial to understand how tourists perceptually and behaviorally engage with cultural heritage sites. The nature of this engagement can significantly influence the sustainable trajectory of the tourism destinations (Jurowski et al., 1997; Ramkissoon et al., 2012).

Increasingly, the role of sojourners, tourists who temporarily reside in host destinations and often adapt to local lifestyles (Miocevic, 2024), has come into sharp focus. As sojourners adopt sustainable practices, they inadvertently contribute to cultural conservation efforts and bolster the resilience of the host destination (Buckley, 2012). Imbued within global and local consumer cultures, sojourners form multicultural identities, the psychological upshot of globalized consumer habits (Arnett, 2002; Kipnis et al., 2019).

However, tourism development often gives rise to stakeholder conflicts endemic to disparities in income distribution, social status, quality of life, and employment opportunities. These socio-cultural imbalances can trigger relative deprivation among individuals, inflating feelings of inferiority and dissatisfaction (Wu et al., 2024). Sojourners in these situations, often compromising their moral compass, could resort to confrontative coping strategies, perceiving uncivil behavior as an unconventional yet effective means to navigate dissatisfaction (Liu et al., 2020; Liao & He, 2018). Exploring the socio-cultural environment's influence on perceptions of relative deprivation and cultural resilience becomes pertinent.

According to a UNESCO report, overtourism has led to the commercial erosion of 67% of the world's living cultural heritage. For instance, the proportion of indigenous people in the Lijiang Ancient Town has dropped from 80% in 2000 to 12% in 2023. The Bai culture in Dali has also experienced some difficulties under the impact of tourism, such as the fault of handicrafts inheritance and the contradiction of traditional architecture transformation. However, most of the existing studies have focused on the perspective of residents (Ramkissoon et al., 2012), and the mechanism of dual identity in the cognition of cultural resilience among the more mobile sojourner group has not yet been deconstructed.

Drawing from this, the present study uses Dali City as a representative ethnic tourism destination to investigate the interplay between global-local identity, perceived cultural resilience, relative deprivation, and the sustainable use of local cultural heritage sites. Dali has some uniqueness as the case site of this study. Nestled in western Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China, Dali City, capital of Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, is a city steeped in history and culture. Recognized as *Jumie* (苴咩, *Jūmiē*) in ancient times, it served as the capital of the Bai Kingdom Nanzhao during the 8th and 9th centuries and later, the Kingdom of Dali (A.D. 937-1253). This city was once the political, economic, and cultural epicenter of the Yunnan region, and a vibrant hub for the Southern Silk Road (南絲綢之路) and the Ancient Tea Horse Road (茶馬古道). In just a decade from 2012 to 2023, the number of tourists surged from 18.47 million to 95.3 million. Concurrently, the total tourist expenditure skyrocketed from around 2.69 billion USD to 22.11 billion USD, marking a tenfold increase. The upward trend continued into 2024, with a 15.46% year-on-year increase in tourist arrivals and a 7.06% surge in total tourism expenditure (source: Official Website of People's Government of Yunnan Province).

In addition, Dali is one of the most visited tourist destinations in China that also houses a significant ethnic minority population. Since the 1990s, it has been a preferred spot for sojourners and lifestyle entrepreneurial migrants seeking semi-permanent stay (Hao, 2019; Zhang et al., 2020). Dali, as a demonstration area for the protection of ethnic minority cultures in China, saw its resident population reach 37% of its permanent residents in 2024 (data from the Dali Bureau of Culture and Tourism). Its "new immigrants - indigenous people – tourists" tripartite interaction model provides a typical field for studying cultural resilience.

The ultimate endeavor is to build a comprehensive model that delineates sojourner perceptions and behavioral intentions towards cultural conservation. This knowledge can provide strategic insights that foster the sustainable development of tourism destinations in a manner respectful of cultural integrity.

1.1 Perceived Cultural Resilience (PCR)

Critical to the discourse on resilience is the early definition of resilience as the ability of a material to regain its original shape post-deformation due to external forces. Much later, in the realm of ecosystem resilience, the definition has transitioned towards the ability of a system to reset to its original state after disturbance (Gunderson & Holling, 2002; Weis et al., 2021).

In the 1990s, resilience research extended to social-ecological systems, championing an adaptive resilience perspective. This perspective sees resilience as dynamic, multi-dimensional, and functioning at multiple scales (Gunderson & Holling, 2002; Prayag, 2023). Emphasizing the process of 'bouncing forward', resilience encapsulates absorption, adaptation, and transformation (McAreevey, 2022). As ethnic destinations encounter changes and disturbances during transformation and development, resilience becomes a key pillar for ensuring sustainable development. From the perspective of sociology, Sakakibara's (2017) research on Inuit whale-hunting culture reveals that resilience is essentially a symbolic regeneration process of cultural symbols.

In socio-ecological discourses on community resilience, cultural resources have gained increased attention for their role in resilience-building, leading to the burgeoning interest in cultural resilience (Beel et al., 2017; Crane, 2010). At the crossroads of resilience systems in rural communities, cultural resilience collaborates with other forms of resilience (ecological and economic) to combat crises through resistance, adaptability, and transformation (Davis et al., 2021; Wu & Yuan, 2023).

From the cultural heritage perspective, resilience is celebrated for fostering stability in cultural heritage communities (Beel et al., 2017; Choi et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2020). Culture, encapsulating customs, beliefs, and values, serves as a potent resource for communities and individuals to tackle crises (Clarke & Mayer, 2017; Sakakibara, 2017). Cultural resilience reflects the residents' capacity to positively adapt to challenges such as cultural erosion triggered by environmental disturbances (Sakakibara, 2017). In line with this, Holtorf (2018) described cultural resilience as a cultural system's (composed of local communities' cultural elements) potential to absorb adversity, adapt to change, and continuously evolve. Given this framework, Li et al. (2024) constructed a heritage site cultural resilience scale to study cultural sustainability.

Therefore, based on Holtorf (2018), perceived cultural resilience denotes sojourners' subjective evaluation of a cultural system's resistance to disturbances and its adaptability, which differs from community-level resilience. Although existing research offers theoretical frameworks for assessing tourism destinations' cultural resilience, there remains a need for extensive research into PCR from sojourners' perspectives to probe their behavioral responses to local cultural heritage.

1.2 Global Identity (GI) and Local Identity (LI)

The concepts of global and local identities are firmly grounded in cultural identity theory, which defines cultural identity as shared beliefs and behaviors within a community (Arnett, 2003; Balabanis et al., 2019). Increased globalization, characterized by cross-border flows of people, technologies, ideas, capital, and media, has engendered the formation of global communities alongside traditional local communities. Often, these two are intertwined, creating a bicultural identity (Arnett, 2002; Strizhakova & Coulter, 2019).

In this context, Arnett (2002) explores the psychological implications of globalization on identity formation and development. People around the world typically forge a bicultural identity incorporating elements from both local (local identity) and global (global identity) cultures (Arnett, 2002). Local consumers identify with their local community, while global consumers identify with people worldwide (Zhang & Khare, 2009). From a mental representation perspective, local identity emphasizes respect for local traditions and customs and recognizes local community uniqueness, while global identity acknowledges the positive impacts of globalization and identifies commonalities amongst global populations (Tu et al., 2012; Strizhakova & Coulter, 2019).

Previous studies on consumer global-local identity primarily focus on the impact of global and local identity on foreign and/or domestic brand (product) preferences. Zhang et al. (2022) found that a stronger global identity predicted positive consumer xenocentrism, while a greater local identity reduced xenocentrism. They noted that local

identity significantly influences locavorism, but, contrary to expectations, global identity did not. The interaction between the globalized lifestyle and local cultural immersion makes the global-local dual identity a suitable antecedent variable in the tourism context (Arnett, 2002).

This study aims to examine how sojourners' global-local identity impacts their perceived cultural resilience in ethnic destinations. When sojourners identify with their destination, they likely develop a vested interest in the destination's preservation, viewing it as an integral part of their identity (Hu, Qiao, Yang, & Zhang., 2021) Destination identification is positively associated with sojourners' efforts to preserve and improve the destination and counteract its degradation (Vorkinn & Riese, 2001; Scannell & Gifford, 2013). Therefore, the hypotheses that guide this investigation on global identity/local identity impact on sojourners' perceived cultural resilience are:

H1a: The global identity of sojourners influences their perceived cultural resilience towards the destination.

H1b: The local identity of sojourners affects their perceived cultural resilience towards the destination.

1.3 Sustainable Use of Local Cultural Heritage (SU)

Changing perspectives on environmental sustainability in tourism increasingly recognize tourists as key agents of change (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2016). With choices of eco-friendly options and acting sustainably during their time at the heritage sites and destinations, tourists contribute significantly to softening tourism's adverse effects (Shen et al., 2020).

The fostering and elevation of positive sentiments towards tourism locations remain crucial in provoking favorable visitor conduct (Amaro, 2021; Elshaer et al., 2022) and in countering harmful attitudes (Swanson, 2017). In this light, higher cultural resilience—defined as the cultural system of heritage sites having a greater capacity to cope with various perturbations—can foster cultural protection, inheritance, and facilitate sustainable development (Li et al., 2024).

Evidence has shown that cultural resilience contributes to enhancing cultural sustainability (Bui et al., 2020; Clarke & Mayer, 2017; Hu, Xiong, Lv, & Pu, 2021; Zhu et al., 2022). Consequently, a resilient destination can motivate tourists to engage in sustainable utilization of cultural heritage sites, thereby supporting the ethos of sustainable tourism (Stylidis, 2018; Theodori, 2018). In such contexts, tourists are likely to adhere to social norms and conform to "typical" behavior, driven by their perception of majority behavior. This study proposes that sojourners' sustainable use of local cultural heritage is deeply mediated by their perception of local cultural resilience.

Hence, the overarching hypothesis that emerges is:

H2: Sojourners perceived cultural resilience positively affects their sustainable utilization of local cultural heritage.

1.4 Mediating Effect of Perceived Cultural Resilience (PCR)

Local identity can enhance perceived cultural resilience by reinforcing the understanding of local cultural values, fostering a sense of "cultural belonging" (Anton & Lawrence, 2014). At the same time, global identity may prompt individuals to support resilient maintenance of cultural diversity through a sense of "global citizenship responsibility" (Chhabra et al., 2003). High resilience perception can decrease anxiety about cultural heritage destruction and promote long-term conservation behaviors (Folke et al., 2010). Perceived resilience can deepen the understanding of cultural values and stimulate a sense of responsibility (Lew, 2014). Perceived cultural resilience's positive impact has been noted on cultural heritage protection behaviors (Loulanski & Loulanski, 2011). Based on these premises, this study proposes:

H3a: Perceived cultural resilience mediates the relationship between global identity and the sustainable use of cultural heritage.

H3b: Perceived cultural resilience mediates the relationship between local identity and the sustainable use of cultural heritage.

1.5 Moderating Effect of Relative Deprivation (RD)

Relative deprivation is often conceptualized within a social comparison framework (Wu et al., 2024). This subjective cognitive and emotional experience stems from individuals or groups seeing themselves at a disadvantage compared to a reference group, inducing negative emotions such as anger and dissatisfaction (Smith et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2024; Xiong et al., 2016). Relative deprivation arises from cognitive comparison, evaluation, and the subsequent emotional responses (Smith et al., 2015). Pan et al. (2024) revealed that social comparisons, evaluations of relative disadvantages, and the resulting sense of relative deprivation can influence tourists' uncivil behavioral intentions.

According to the relative deprivation-cognitive assessment model of Smith et al. (2015), when individuals perceive that cultural resources are distributed unfairly (such as exclusive Aboriginal rituals are forbidden to participate in), their local identity will trigger defensive disidentification. According to the research on the deprivation of cultural rights of residents in tourist destinations by Pan et al. (2024), the "cultural participation barriers" (such as language barriers and exclusion of traditional rituals) that travelers may face, while according to the research on the threat of group status by Branscombe et al. (1999), The psychological mechanism of local identity being affected by relative deprivation (such as the decline in the willingness to protect due to the "breakdown of belonging"). Relative deprivation's subjective nature closely links it to objective environmental changes and individual psychological traits, thereby influencing their assessments of their situation (Mao et al., 2022). Within the context of cultural heritage tourism, sojourners may experience deprivation due to disparities in economic and cultural rights or social resources. Consequently, the study posits:

H4a: Relative deprivation positively moderates the relationship between global identity and perceived cultural resilience. The stronger the sense of deprivation, the more significant the positive impact of global identity on perceived cultural resilience.

H4b: Relative deprivation negatively moderates the relationship between local identity and perceived cultural resilience. The stronger the sense of deprivation, the weaker the positive impact of local identity on perceived cultural resilience.

Based on these insights, Figure 1 presents the integrated research model.

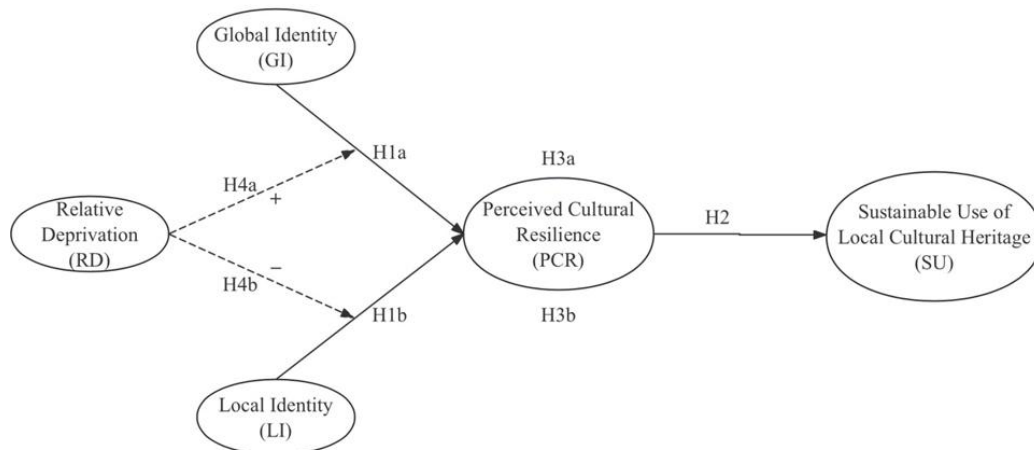


Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework underlying this research. (Resource: Author).

1.6 Case Study Context: Dali as a Living Cultural Landscape

Dali City, located in the Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan Province, China, serves as an exemplary site for studying cultural resilience and sojourner behavior. As illustrated in Figure 2, Dali is situated along the historical Southern Silk Road and Ancient Tea Horse Road, embedding it within a rich tapestry of transnational cultural exchanges.

The city is home to the Bai ethnic group, whose traditional architecture, handicrafts (e.g., tie-dyeing), and festivals (e.g., Torch Festival) constitute a living cultural heritage. However, rapid tourism development since the 1990s has

led to significant socio-cultural transformations, including demographic shifts, commercialization of cultural practices, and tensions between indigenous residents, sojourners, and tourists.

Dali's dual identity as a UNESCO-noted cultural landscape and a hub for lifestyle migrants makes it an ideal setting for examining how global-local identities interact with perceptions of cultural resilience. The “new immigrants–indigenous people–tourists” tripartite interaction model further provides a microcosm of contemporary cultural governance challenges in heritage tourism.



Figure 2. The location of Dali City (Resource: Author).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Measurements and Data Collection Procedure

To ensure conceptual and functional consistency in this study, all measurement constructs have been sourced and adapted from existing research. Specifically, scales from Tu et al.'s work (2012) were used to measure global identity and local identity, each represented by four items. Perceived cultural resilience was gauged through a five-item scale derived from Li et al. (2024), made semantic adaptation adjustments, and deleted the items irrelevant to this study. Sustainable use of local cultural heritage was measured by a five-item scale from Elshaer et al. (2024). Relative deprivation was evaluated using a five-item construct drawn from Wu et al. (2024).

This study also accounted for potentially influential demographic variables such as gender, age, income, and education, given their likely impact on respondents' perceptions and behaviors (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). All items were gauged using a five-point Likert scale: 5 denoting 'strongly agree', and 1 denoting 'strongly disagree'. For the empirical data analysis of the survey data, this study employed the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) methodology.

The research was conducted in Dali City, situated in the Yunnan Province of southwestern China. Dali is renowned for its wealthy concentration of ethnic minorities and cultural heritage, distinguished by its inviting climate, relaxed lifestyle, and diverse ethnic communities. Since the 1990s, Dali has become a significant hub for the sojourner group under study, with thousands of urban youths choosing the city for semi-permanent residence. This high density of the research population assures the easy accessibility of participants and the representativeness of the Dali phenomenon in the data.

This study's data were collected over ten days, from May 9th to May 21st, 2025, through an on-site survey conducted among adult sojourners residing in Dali. Sojourners were recruited through youth hostels and cultural and creative

markets in the ancient city of Dali to ensure that the sample covered sojourners with different residence durations (1-12 months). From the original 384 survey questionnaires, 32 incomplete responses were excluded, yielding 352 valid questionnaires for final data analysis. This gives a response rate of 91.7%. Detailed respondents' profiles are presented in Table 1. The final dataset was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software to test the hypothesized model.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N=352) (Resource: Author).

		Count	Percent
Gender	Male	172	48.9%
	Female	180	51.1%
Age	18-25 years old	93	26.4%
	26-35 years old	179	50.9%
	36-45 years old	68	19.3%
	46-55 years old	12	3.4%
	Above 55 years old	0	0.0%
Monthly income	Less than 5000 yuan	46	13.1%
	5000-8000 yuan	158	44.8%
	8000-10000 yuan	90	25.6%
	10000-15000 yuan	40	11.4%
	More than 15000 yuan	18	5.1%
Education	Primary and below	0	0.0%
	Junior high school	0	0.0%
	Senior high school	26	7.4%
	Undergraduate course	275	78.1%
	Master's degree or above	51	14.5%

2.2 Statistical Analysis Method

To test the proposed hypotheses and model, this study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4 software. PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for exploratory research and models with complex relationships, as it does not require normally distributed data and performs well with small to medium sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019). This method is also robust in estimating mediating and moderating effects, aligning with the objectives of this study.

The analysis followed a two-step approach: first, the measurement model was assessed for reliability and validity; second, the structural model was evaluated for path coefficients and hypothesis testing. For reliability, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) were used, with thresholds of 0.70. Convergent validity was assessed through average variance extracted (AVE > 0.50). Discriminant validity was confirmed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio.

Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was conducted to test the significance of path coefficients, mediation, and moderation effects. All analyses were performed at a 95% confidence interval.

3. Results

3.1 Data Analysis

Two indices were used to assess the reliability of the constructs in this study: the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and the composite reliability (CR). Results of the reliability test of scales indicated that the CR values of latent variables were greater than the threshold of 0.70 and ranged from 0.782 to 0.955. The Cronbach’s alphas of all constructs were between 0.779 and 0.949, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, which indicates that the scales and dimensions exhibited high reliability, stability, and consistency. In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) values of each variable exceeded 0.5, with a range of 0.601 to 0.787, supporting convergent validity. Finally, as shown in Table 2 and Table 3, the square root of the AVE of all constructs was larger than the correlation coefficient, supporting discriminant validity.

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker criterion of GI. (Resource: Author).

Global identity				
	GI	PCR	RD	SU
GI	0.849			
PCR	0.685	0.775		
RD	0.640	0.570	0.846	
SU	0.554	0.687	0.503	0.812

Note: Diagonal data are the square roots of the AVEs.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion of LI. (Resource: Author).

Local identity				
	LI	PCR	RD	SU
LI	0.832			
PCR	0.419	0.775		
RD	-0.398	-0.570	0.887	
SU	-0.346	-0.540	0.368	0.879

Note: Diagonal data are the square roots of the AVEs.

3.2 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4 presents path coefficients. Results show that both the global and local identities of sojourners positively impact their perceived cultural resilience towards the destination. Additionally, their perceived cultural resilience significantly influences their sustainable use of local cultural heritage. Perceived cultural resilience was found to mediate the relationship between sojourners' global identity and sustainable use of local cultural heritage, and between their local identity and sustainable use of local cultural heritage. However, the moderating effect of relative deprivation between global identity and perceived cultural resilience was not significant, while the negative moderating effect of relative deprivation between local identity and perceived cultural resilience was significant. These findings imply that, while holding other conditions constant, H1a, H1b, H2, H3a, H3b, and H4b were supported, but H4a was not.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results (Bootstrapping 5,000 samples) (Resource: Author).

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
GI → PCR	0.570	0.571	0.054	10.504	0.000

LI → PCR	0.687	0.689	0.042	16.328	0.000
PCR → SU	0.259	0.259	0.058	4.465	0.000
GI→PCR→SU	0.555	0.556	0.059	9.397	0.000
LI→PCR→SU	0.665	0.665	0.046	14.568	0.000
GI×RD→PCR	0.039	0.037	1.049	0.037	0.294
LI×RD→PCR	-0.570	-0.591	0.075	7.606	0.000

3.3 Discussion

This study uncovers a dual-pathway mechanism wherein global and local identities stimulate sustainable heritage use, with these effects entirely mediated by perceived cultural resilience. A noteworthy finding is the detrimental moderating effect of relative deprivation on the relationship between local identity and resilience, accentuating the susceptibility of place-based associations to contextual injustices. At the same time, the resilience-building property of global identity remains steadfast, despite the perception of deprivation.

The parallel positive effects of both global and local identities on cultural resilience (supported by H1a and H1b) underscore their complementary roles in heritage conservation. Local identity fosters a sense of place-specific belonging among sojourners (Williams & Vaske, 2003), while global identity triggers cosmopolitan ethics that transcend geographical borders (Norris & Inglehart, 2009). According to the coefficient values (GI→PCR=0.570, LI→PCR=0.687), local identity is more likely to directly drive the perceived cultural resilience, perhaps due to the high-frequency contact of sojourners with local cultural details (such as participating in tie-dyeing workshops and torch festivals).

The complete mediation of resilience (as evidenced by support for H2, H3a/b) corroborates the proposition that identities indirectly encourage sustainability by enhancing the perceived adaptive capacity of cultural systems. This aligns with resilience theory, which postulates that heritage protection arises not only from affection but also from confidence in the culture's resilience to confront challenges (Folke et al., 2010). The erosion of local identity's positive effect due to relative deprivation (supported by H4b) manifests as a social identity threat (Branscombe et al., 1999). When sojourners perceive inequities, such as exclusion from local resources, their attachment to the place could turn from a source of motivation to a source of distress. This elucidates why feelings of being 'unwelcome' could undermine the potential of local identity for conservation.

The non-impact of relative deprivation on global identity (evidenced by non-support for H4a) suggests that the foundations of global identity lie in universalist values rather than in contextual fairness (Jost & Hunyady, 2003). According to the system legitimacy theory of Jost & Hunyady (2003), global identity holders tend to view deprivation as a systemic issue rather than an individual responsibility, and therefore, the perception of resilience is not affected. The immunity of global identity to relative deprivation ($\beta=0.039$, $p>0.05$) confirms Norris & Inglehart's (2009) theory of world citizenship - those holding universal values regard cultural heritage as the commonwealth of mankind, and their protective behaviors transcend considerations of regional equity. Consequently, sojourners with a strong global identity may perceive heritage protection as an unassailable moral duty, providing a 'cosmopolitan buffer' against deprivation.

3.4 Implications

The present study offers a conceptual model, underpinned by empirical evidence from sojourners in Dali, that delineates the relationships between global-local identity, perceived cultural resilience, sustainable use of cultural heritage, and relative deprivation. The implications of the study are theoretically enriching and practically beneficial in various ways.

Firstly, on the quantitative aspect, the study elucidates the role of global and local identity in driving the sustainable use of local cultural heritage within the purview of resilience theory. It posits cultural resilience as a crucial determinant in understanding sojourners' behavioral intentions towards local cultures and heritage. This study

innovatively reveals that in a fluid society, there exists a dual-path mechanism for the construction of cultural resilience - local identity provides the emotional driving force, and global identity constitutes the ethical stabilizer.

Secondly, the study decrypts the process of sustainable use of local cultural heritage among sojourners. It contributes to the discourse on sustainable culture conservation in transient or emergent non-local settings, fulfilling the research vacuum on the cultural identity of sojourners and their behavioral intentions towards cultural heritage conservation and utilization.

Thirdly, it ventures into the intricate web of cultural identity within the sojourn context, affirming that sojourners likely possess dual cultural identities — a local one for establishing a connection with the destination or community, and a global one, attached to the idea of global citizenship. This provides a nuanced understanding of sojourners' identity from a theoretical perspective.

Lastly, in view of the negative impact of relative deprivation, it is possible to establish a cultural co-governance platform between sojourners and residents, such as adopting the model of "new immigrants' meeting", so that multiple subjects in Dali can participate in the heritage management practice. In practical terms, the study suggests mitigating relative deprivation through inclusive governance tactics, such as co-management of heritage sites, ensuring equitable benefit distribution, and implementing cultural exchange programs to alleviate 'outsider' perceptions. It also encourages leveraging moral framing to emphasize the heritage's role as a 'global common' and to empower sojourners as transnational stewards, thus navigating around local inequities.

The findings underscore a distinction between the vulnerability of local identity and the resilience of global identity to relative deprivation. For the sustainability of heritage, local identity requires contextual fairness, while global identity provides a pathway resistant to deprivation. This differentiation necessitates that managers must tailor interventions accordingly: rectify inequities for those with a local attachment and stimulate universal ethical norms for those with a global orientation.

3.5 Limitations and Future Research

Despite its meaningful contributions to the sojourner literature, this study acknowledges certain limitations.

Firstly, the globalized environment of Dali, as a mature ethnic tourism destination, may have buffered the effects of relative deprivation, resulting in global identity's insensitivity to relative deprivation. We recommend that future research investigate similar dynamics in less developed or marginalized heritage sites where relative deprivation may spur compensatory action.

Secondly, relative deprivation's operationalization in this study primarily focuses on material deprivation. Future research should expand this understanding by examining cultural rights deprivation (such as exclusion from participation), as it could impact global identity differently.

Lastly, while this study focuses on individual sojourners, the sustainable use of local cultural heritage might be influenced by other factors such as interactions with residents and cultural adaptation. Consequently, future studies should consider these potential influences and identify additional factors that could impact behavioral intentions towards cultural conservation. These pointers could facilitate a broader and more nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play.

4. Conclusion

This study elucidates the mechanisms through which sojourners' global and local identities shape their sustainable engagement with cultural heritage. The findings demonstrate that both global and local identity positively enhance perceived cultural resilience, which in turn fully mediates their relationship with sustainable heritage use. While local identity exerts a stronger direct influence on perceived resilience, its positive effect is significantly weakened under conditions of relative deprivation. In contrast, global identity remains resilient to such contextual inequities, suggesting that a cosmopolitan orientation may serve as a protective ethical buffer in the face of perceived unfairness.

The theoretical contribution of this research lies in integrating dual-identity theory with cultural resilience literature within a mobile population context, thereby extending our understanding of how transient individuals contribute to cultural sustainability. Practically, the results underscore the importance of fostering inclusive governance and equitable participation to strengthen locally grounded stewardship, while also leveraging global ethical narratives to engage sojourners as transnational custodians of heritage. These insights offer a nuanced identity-sensitive approach to balancing tourism development with cultural conservation.

Future research could further examine the boundary conditions of these identity pathways across diverse cultural and geographical settings. Longitudinal designs and mixed-methods approaches would help capture the dynamic interplay between sojourners, residents, and heritage environments over time. Additionally, exploring other contextual and psychological moderators beyond relative deprivation could refine our understanding of how mobile populations navigate and support cultural resilience in an increasingly globalized tourism landscape.

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Ethics approval.

This study was conducted in accordance with the principles of the 1964 Helsinki Declaration. Formal ethical approval was obtained from the author's institution (Reference No.: MUST-FHTM-2026-0021), confirming that the research involved no collection of traceable personal data and that participant anonymity was fully ensured. Stringent ethical procedures were rigorously followed throughout the study. Prior to participation, all respondents were informed of (1) the academic purpose of the study; (2) the completely anonymous nature of their participation (no personally identifiable information was collected); (3) the confidentiality of their data, which would be stored on a password-protected computer accessible only to the research team and used solely for academic research; and (4) their voluntary participation and right to withdraw at any point without penalty. Informed consent was obtained from all participants by proceeding with the survey after reading this information.

Conflict of interest.

The author declares that this work has no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are not publicly available due to the need to protect respondent confidentiality, but are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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