

WHAT FACTORS DRIVE EDU-TOURISTS' REVISIT INTENTIONS TO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES IN JIANGXI, CHINA?

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Abstract

This study explores the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and revisit intention at intangible cultural heritage sites. It also examines how satisfaction mediates the relationship between psychological and perceptual factors and revisit behavior. A total of 500 valid questionnaires were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) with AMOS. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) confirmed the reliability and validity of the measures, and path analysis tested the proposed hypotheses. The findings show that perceived service quality ($\beta = 0.451$) and destination image ($\beta = 0.359$) are the strongest predictors of tourist satisfaction, while attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control also have significant positive effects. Moreover, tourist satisfaction ($\beta = 0.511$) strongly predicts revisit intention, confirming its mediating role in shaping behavioral outcomes. This study extends previous research by applying these relationships to intangible cultural heritage tourism. It offers insights for heritage protection and sustainable tourism development by showing how tourist perceptions and experiences can support both satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: Tourist Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Intangible Cultural Heritage Sites, Tourism

Introduction

Cultural tourism involves traveling to experience heritage, art, and traditions. The World Tourism Organization notes that it enables visitors to understand the values, beliefs, and customs of communities worldwide (UNWTO, 2019). With the rising demand for immersive and meaningful experiences, China's educational tourism market has grown rapidly, reaching an estimated value of RMB 31 billion in 2022, with domestic study tours accounting for more than 50% of this total (Daxue Consulting, 2024).

Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism (ICHT) emphasizes living traditions such as music, dance, crafts, and festivals. Jiangxi Province alone hosts 70 national-level ICH projects, 560 provincial-level, 832 municipal-level, and 1,657 county-level projects, illustrating its cultural richness and tourism potential (The China Journey, 2024). Protecting these resources requires clear strategies and effective conservation measures (Grefe, 2004).

In recent years, edu-tourists, who combine learning with tourism, have become increasingly important. Educational tourism not only strengthens cultural identity but also supports sustainable heritage learning and regional development (Wang & Li, 2008). Despite this, research on edu-tourists' behavior in the context of intangible cultural heritage remains limited.

Prior studies have linked perceived authenticity and motivation to behavioral intention and satisfaction (Nguyen & Cheung, 2016). However, the problem remains that empirical research on these constructs is limited in explaining satisfaction and revisit intention among edu-tourists at Chinese ICH sites. Few studies specifically explore how psychological and perceptual factors interact to influence satisfaction and loyalty within Jiangxi's cultural heritage context.

This study addresses this gap by examining how tourist motivation and perceived authenticity influence satisfaction and revisit intention among edu-tourists visiting intangible cultural heritage sites in Jiangxi, China. The findings contribute to theory by extending cultural tourism and behavioral intention models to the ICHT context, and they provide practical insights for policymakers seeking to balance heritage preservation with sustainable tourism development.

Literature Review

1. Attitude (ATT)

Attitude is an individual's evaluation of a behavior or experience. Baghirov et al. (2023) define it as the degree to which a person holds a positive or negative view of a behavior. Hoyer et al. (2018) describe attitude as a learned, consistent evaluation of an object, idea, or experience formed through cognitive and emotional processes, while Crano and Prislin (2006) stress the role of behavioral, affective, and cognitive responses. In tourism,

attitude within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) reflects favorable or unfavorable feelings about expected outcomes (Bianchi et al., 2017).

Research shows that positive attitudes enhance value and satisfaction. Ha and Jang (2010) found that consumers with positive mindsets experience more pleasure and enjoyment. Kim and Choe (2019) showed that novel foods foster healthy and cross-cultural values. Batat et al. (2019) confirmed that positive emotions in consumption improve satisfaction and quality of life. In tourism, attitudes toward sensory and cultural experiences directly shape satisfaction (Kwun et al., 2013). Positive attitudes enhance enjoyment and create memorable experiences, which increase satisfaction (Ponferrada, 2015). Thus, attitudes strongly influence tourist satisfaction.

H1: Attitude has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction.

2. Subjective Norm (SN)

Ajzen (2020) defines subjective norms as perceptions of how others judge behavior in social contexts. They involve both personal value judgments and external social pressure. Baghirov et al. (2023) explain that these norms reflect how individuals believe significant others approve or disapprove of their actions. In tourism, Hsu and Huang (2012) found that travelers are more likely to join activities when they expect encouragement from friends or family.

Studies confirm the influence of subjective norms on travel behavior. Quintal et al. (2015) showed that tourists often follow the opinions of close social groups when choosing destinations. Choo et al. (2016) reported that subjective norms positively affect revisit intention, as social approval increases the likelihood of returning to a destination.

Subjective norms also shape satisfaction by creating expectations. Zhang et al. (2019) found that when tourists believe others expect them to enjoy a destination, their satisfaction increases if the experience meets those expectations. These findings suggest that social influence plays an important role in shaping tourists' satisfaction with their experiences.

H2: Subjective norm has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction.

3. Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

Perceived behavioral control (PBC) refers to an individual's judgment of their ability to perform a specific behavior. It influences both behavioral intention and actual action. Ajzen (2020) emphasized that PBC reflects the perceived ease or difficulty of performing a behavior and directly affects both intentions and actual behavior. Recent tourism research confirms that PBC significantly predicts behavioral intention in destination choice (Pahrudin et al., 2021). Control beliefs, such as access to resources and opportunities, shape this perception by either enabling or constraining action (Claudy et al., 2013).

Studies also show that perceived control enhances satisfaction. In a recent service context, Lantican (2025) found that customers who felt greater control over self-service

technologies reported higher satisfaction. Similarly, in tourism, travelers who believe they can manage and enjoy their experiences tend to express greater satisfaction. These findings suggest that PBC enhances satisfaction by shaping perceptions of control and confidence during consumption and travel experiences.

H3: Perceived behavioral control has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction.

4. Perceived Service Quality (PSQ)

Perceived service quality (PSQ) is the customer's evaluation of a service compared with expectations. Lim (2014) notes that it depends not only on provider actions but also on customer perceptions. Zeithaml (1988) defines PSQ as an overall judgment of service superiority. At the destination level, quality relates to accessibility, facilities, attractions, and supporting services (Žabkar et al., 2010).

Research shows that PSQ is a strong predictor of satisfaction. Cronin and Taylor (1992) confirmed this direct link, while Ali et al. (2016) emphasized that enhancing service quality significantly increases tourists' emotional satisfaction and loyalty. Prayag et al. (2017) further demonstrated that service quality positively affects satisfaction and perceived value, influencing behavioral intentions among hospitality customers. Similarly, Han et al. (2021) found that service quality and destination image jointly influence tourists' satisfaction and revisit intentions. In tourism, these findings confirm that PSQ not only determines immediate experiences but also shapes emotions, loyalty, and future travel behavior.

H4: Perceived service quality has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction.

5. Destination Image (DI)

Destination image refers to the overall perception, beliefs, and impressions people hold about a place. Rather (2021) emphasizes that destination image is dynamic, reflecting how visitors perceive destination quality, authenticity, and emotional appeal. Likewise, Agapito et al. (2017) note that both cognitive and affective components shape tourists' overall impressions and guide their travel decisions. Stylidis and Cherifi (2018) further suggest that destination image significantly influences tourists' satisfaction, loyalty, and behavioral intentions.

Research confirms that destination image strongly influences satisfaction. Prayag et al. (2017) found that favorable images lead to higher satisfaction. Sun et al. (2013) showed that the cognitive image of Hainan Island directly affects satisfaction and perceived value. Loi et al. (2017) demonstrated that satisfaction with destination image predicts revisit intention in Macau. Similarly, Chiu et al. (2016) found that destination image is the strongest predictor of satisfaction among Chinese tourists in South Korea. Girish et al. (2017) further confirmed a significant positive relationship between satisfaction and destination image. These findings suggest that enhancing destination image is vital for improving tourist satisfaction.

H5: Destination image has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction.

6. Tourist Satisfaction (TS)

Tourist satisfaction arises from comparing expectations with actual experiences. Kotler (2000) describes it as the outcome of this comparison, while Oliver (1981) defines it as a psychological state shaped by emotional responses. Rust and Oliver (1994) note that satisfaction reflects the degree to which experiences generate positive emotions. When the value gained exceeds the time, money, and effort invested, satisfaction increases (Assaker & Hallak, 2013).

Research shows that satisfaction strongly influences revisit intention. Hasan et al. (2019) found that satisfied tourists are more likely to return. Kahraman and Cifci (2023) highlighted that memorable experiences shape positive memories, which encourage repeat visits (Gohary et al., 2020). An et al. (2019) confirmed this in the context of Airbnb tourists, while Wong et al. (2019) showed that experience quality and satisfaction predict future visits. Earlier work also identified satisfaction as a core factor in revisit decisions (Do Valle et al., 2006). These studies suggest that satisfaction is central to predicting tourist behavior and future loyalty.

H6: Tourist satisfaction has a significant impact on revisit intention.

7. Revisit Intention (RI)

Revisit intention refers to a tourist's likelihood of returning to the same destination. Yeap et al. (2020) describe it as the short-term propensity to revisit, while Akbari et al. (2021) define it as the willingness to return. Chen and Tsai (2007) emphasize the subjective judgment of the probability of revisiting. Baker and Crompton (2000) add that revisit intention is both a predictor of actual behavior and a measure of tourist loyalty (Cakici et al., 2019).

Satisfaction plays a central role in shaping revisit intention. When services and experiences meet or exceed expectations, tourists are more likely to return to the same destination (Wong et al., 2019).

Research Framework

This study builds on three established theories to examine edu-tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention in intangible cultural heritage (ICH) tourism.

First, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) explains how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control shape tourists' intentions toward ICH experiences. Second, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) highlights how external stimuli influence tourists' emotions and cognition, which in turn drive behavioral responses. Third, Brand Equity Theory (BET) by Aaker (1997) shows how brand awareness, associations, and loyalty affect destination image and overall value.

Drawing from these theories, this study develops a conceptual framework (Figure 1). The framework guides analysis of causal relationships among these variables and provides

both theoretical and empirical insights into edu-tourists' psychology, decision-making, and behavioral patterns in ICH tourism.

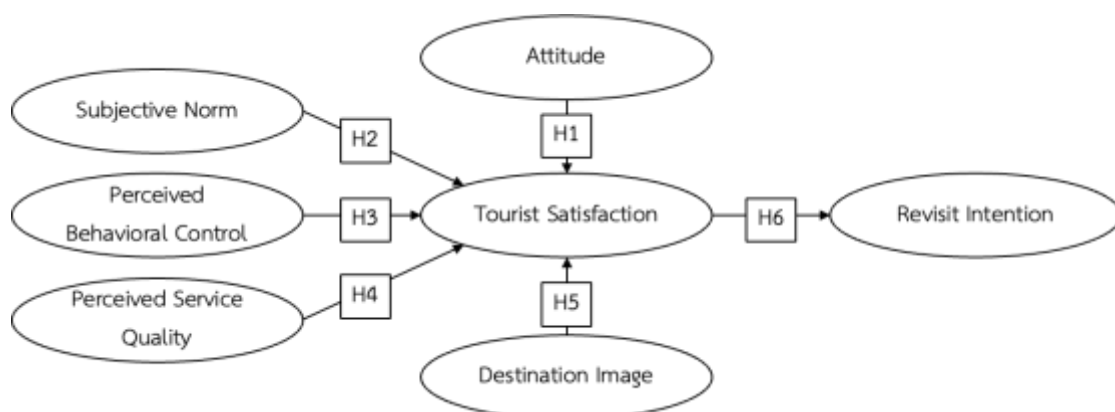


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This study used a quantitative research design to test causal relationships among variables and draw generalizable conclusions (Creswell, 2014). A stratified random sampling method was applied to ensure fair representation of students from different academic schools. The respondents were undergraduate students from Nanchang Institute of Science and Technology who had visited intangible cultural heritage (ICH) sites in Jiangxi Province. In this study, edu-tourists are defined as students who travel to cultural or heritage sites for learning and enrichment. This definition distinguishes them from general tourists by focusing on educational intent.

Before distribution, three experts reviewed the questionnaire using the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) method to ensure content validity. A pilot test with 30 students confirmed reliability. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire included screening questions, demographic information, and items measuring the study variables.

Data were analyzed using JAMOV and AMOS software. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) tested construct validity and model fit, while structural equation modeling (SEM) examined the hypothesized relationships.

1. Research Population and Sample Size

The population consisted of 4,753 undergraduate students from three schools: 910 from Marxism Studies, 1,776 from Architectural and Environmental Engineering, and 2,067 from Art and Media Design. A proportional random sample of 500 students was selected, including 96, 187, and 217 students from each school respectively. Participants were screened to confirm they had visited at least one of the 20 ICH sites listed in the Jiangxi Provincial Work Plan for Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection.

Data were collected from August 2024 to January 2025. A total of 556 questionnaires were distributed, and 500 valid responses were retained after excluding incomplete or duplicate entries, giving a response rate of 89.9%. Although stratified random sampling improved representativeness within the university, the findings may not fully represent edutourists from other institutions. Future studies should include broader samples to enhance generalizability.

Results and Discussion

1. Demographic Information

This study analyzed 500 valid questionnaires from undergraduate students at Nanchang Institute of Science and Technology. By college, 96 students (19.2%) were from the School of Marxism Studies, 187 (37.4%) from the School of Architecture and Environmental Engineering, and 217 (43.4%) from the School of Art and Media Design.

In terms of gender, 239 respondents (47.8%) were male and 261 (52.2%) were female. Age distribution showed that 184 students (36.8%) were under 19 years old, 237 (47.4%) were between 20 and 22, 60 (12.0%) were between 23 and 25, and 19 (3.8%) were over 25 years old.

These results indicate a balanced gender representation, a predominance of students aged 20 to 22, and a relatively even distribution across the three schools.

2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

This study applied confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the reliability and validity of the measurement model. Factor loadings for all items ranged from 0.686 to 0.827, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.50. Composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.810 to 0.893, all above the 0.70 benchmark, confirming strong internal consistency. Average variance extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.564 to 0.625, exceeding the recommended 0.50, indicating good convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was also established. As shown in Table 2, the square roots of the AVE values (diagonal elements) were higher than the inter-construct correlations, confirming that each construct was distinct.

The model fit indices further supported the adequacy of the measurement model. CFA results showed $\text{CMIN/DF} = 1.579$, $\text{GFI} = 0.919$, $\text{AGFI} = 0.903$, $\text{NFI} = 0.925$, $\text{CFI} = 0.971$, $\text{TLI} = 0.967$, and $\text{RMSEA} = 0.034$. All values met acceptable criteria, indicating a strong model fit.

Overall, the CFA confirmed that the measurement model demonstrated satisfactory reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and goodness of fit.

Table 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Variable	Source of Questionnaire (Measurement Indicator)	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
ATT	Siddiqui et al. (2023)	5	0.883	0.722-0.827	0.883	0.603
SN	Siddiqui et al. (2023)	4	0.860	0.686-0.814	0.862	0.610
PBC	Siddiqui et al. (2023)	4	0.851	0.747-0.779	0.851	0.588
PSQ	Tiwari et al. (2023)	4	0.871	0.718-0.790	0.87	0.574
DI	Ahmed (2023)	5	0.892	0.769-0.819	0.893	0.625
TS	Genc and Gulertekin (2023)	3	0.809	0.743-0.778	0.810	0.587
RI	Ahmed (2023)	5	0.866	0.718-0.770	0.866	0.564

Note: Composite Reliability (CR); and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Table 2: Discriminant Validity Output

Variable	ATT	SN	PBC	PSQ	DI	TS	RI
ATT	0.777						
SN	0.313	0.781					
PBC	0.357	0.296	0.767				
PSQ	0.379	0.348	0.359	0.757			
DI	0.331	0.306	0.306	0.363	0.791		
TS	0.503	0.475	0.506	0.582	0.516	0.766	
RI	0.358	0.230	0.328	0.379	0.355	0.501	0.751

Note: The diagonally listed value is the AVE square roots of the variables

Table 3: Goodness of Fit for Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Fit Index	Recommended Value and Source	CFA Value	SEM Value
CMIN/df	< 5.00 (Awang, 2012)	1.579	2.487
GFI	≥ 0.85 (Sica & Ghisi, 2007)	0.919	0.857
AGFI	≥ 0.80 (Sica & Ghisi, 2007)	0.903	0.834
NFI	≥ 0.80 (Wu & Wang, 2006)	0.925	0.877
CFI	≥ 0.80 (Bentler, 1990)	0.971	0.922
TLI	≥ 0.80 (Sharma et al., 2005)	0.967	0.915
RMSEA	< 0.08 (Pedroso et al., 2016)	0.034	0.055

Note: CMIN/df = The ratio of the chi-square value to degree of freedom, GFI = goodness-of-fit index, AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit index, TLI = Tucker Lewis index, NFI = normalized fit index, CFI = comparative fit index, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation

3. Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted to examine the proposed relationships among variables. The results showed good model fit: CMIN/DF = 2.487, GFI = 0.857, AGFI = 0.834, NFI = 0.877, CFI = 0.922, TLI = 0.915, and RMSEA = 0.055. All values met acceptable thresholds, confirming that the structural model was well aligned with the observed data and suitable for hypothesis testing.

4. Research Hypothesis Testing Result

This study examined six hypotheses to test the relationships among the proposed variables. Standardized path coefficients and t-values were used to determine significance. The results in Table 4 show that all hypotheses were supported.

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing Result

Hypothesis	Standardized Estimate (β)	t-Value	Result
H1: ATT $\rightarrow$ TS	0.299	6.377	Supported
H2: SN $\rightarrow$ TS	0.259	5.582	Supported
H3: PBC $\rightarrow$ TS	0.328	6.726	Supported
H4: PSQ $\rightarrow$ TS	0.451	8.632	Supported
H5: DI $\rightarrow$ TS	0.359	7.512	Supported
H6: TS $\rightarrow$ RI	0.511	8.396	Supported

Note: * = $p < 0.05$

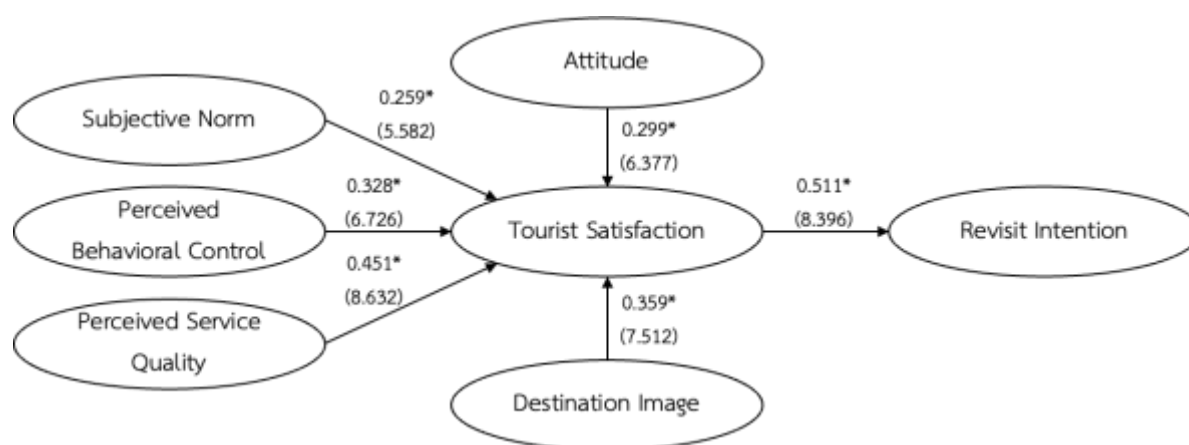


Figure 2 Path Diagram Result

Note: Solid lines represent standardized coefficients ($p < 0.05$), with t-values shown in parentheses.

For H1, attitude had a significant effect on satisfaction ($\beta = 0.299$, $t = 6.377$). This indicates that students with more positive attitudes toward intangible cultural heritage experiences reported higher satisfaction. For H2, subjective norm also influenced satisfaction ($\beta = 0.259$, $t = 5.582$), suggesting that social expectations and encouragement from peers and family shape satisfaction levels.

H3 tested the effect of perceived behavioral control. The results confirmed a positive and significant impact on satisfaction ($\beta = 0.328$, $t = 6.726$), showing that when students felt capable of managing their travel experiences, their satisfaction improved. H4 revealed that perceived service quality exerted the strongest effect on satisfaction ($\beta = 0.451$, $t = 8.632$), highlighting the importance of reliable services, facilities, and overall quality in enhancing the tourist experience.

Destination image was also significant in H5 ($\beta = 0.359$, $t = 7.512$), indicating that favorable impressions of Jiangxi's intangible cultural heritage sites contributed to higher satisfaction. Finally, H6 confirmed that tourist satisfaction strongly predicted revisit intention ($\beta = 0.511$, $t = 8.396$), demonstrating that satisfied students are more likely to return to the same destinations.

In summary, five factors, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, service quality, and destination image, had direct positive effects on satisfaction. Among them, service quality showed the strongest influence. Satisfaction itself had a decisive role in driving revisit intention, underscoring its importance as a mediator between experience and future behavior

Conclusions, Recommendations, Limitations, and Future Research

1. Conclusions

This study examined the factors influencing satisfaction and revisit intention among undergraduate students visiting intangible cultural heritage (ICH) sites in Jiangxi Province. Using 500 valid responses analyzed through structural equation modeling, the model demonstrated good fit, confirming the reliability and validity of the constructs.

Among the five predictors of satisfaction, perceived service quality had the strongest effect, confirming that service consistency and reliability are crucial in shaping edu-tourists' experiences. This finding supports recent studies such as Han et al. (2021), who found that service trust and quality significantly enhance satisfaction and loyalty in tourism settings. It suggests that ICH site managers should improve service delivery by enhancing staff training, facility maintenance, and visitor-centered services to increase satisfaction and encourage repeat visits.

Destination image was the second most influential factor, consistent with Rather (2021) and Agapito et al. (2017), who noted that positive emotional and cognitive

impressions shape tourists' perceptions and engagement. This implies that policymakers should invest in branding strategies, interpretive storytelling, and digital promotion to project a distinct image of Jiangxi's ICH sites that appeals to educational travelers.

Perceived behavioral control also had a significant effect, aligning with findings from Pahrudin et al. (2021), who emphasized that tourists' confidence and ability to manage their experiences enhance satisfaction and intention. ICH managers can strengthen this factor by improving accessibility, providing clear visitor information, and designing educational activities that give tourists greater autonomy in learning.

Attitude contributed positively to satisfaction, consistent with Lim (2014), who highlighted that favorable evaluations of cultural activities enhance experiential enjoyment. This means ICH programs should focus on designing interactive workshops and hands-on experiences that build positive emotional engagement and appreciation for cultural traditions.

Subjective norm had the smallest yet significant effect, consistent with Quintal et al. (2015) and Choo et al. (2016), suggesting that peer influence and social encouragement still affect satisfaction. Educational institutions can leverage this by organizing group heritage trips and peer-learning projects that reinforce social motivation and collective participation in cultural learning.

Finally, tourist satisfaction emerged as the key determinant of revisit intention, confirming results from Kahraman and Cifci (2023) and Wong et al. (2019). This demonstrates that satisfaction is both an outcome of psychological and perceptual factors and a driver of future behavior. For heritage management, this means that improving satisfaction through better services, enhanced accessibility, and stronger cultural engagement can foster repeat visitation, contributing to the sustainability of ICH sites.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that satisfaction is multidimensional and shaped most strongly by service quality and destination image. It serves as a bridge linking tourists' perceptions, emotions, and intentions, providing a clear foundation for ICH policy and management. By prioritizing service quality, enhancing destination branding, and promoting educational engagement, Jiangxi can strengthen edu-tourism's role in preserving and revitalizing intangible cultural heritage.

2. Recommendations

This study contributes to both theory and practice in educational tourism and intangible cultural heritage (ICH) tourism. On the theoretical side, it extends research on tourism behavior by integrating the Theory of Planned Behavior, service quality models, and destination image theory into a unified framework. The findings confirm that satisfaction is most strongly influenced by service quality and destination image, while perceived behavioral control, attitude, and subjective norm also play important roles. The results also show that satisfaction mediates the link between these factors and revisit intention, offering

new insights beyond earlier studies that focused only on direct effects. This model can guide future scholars to add further dimensions, such as cultural identity, emotional attachment, or perceptions of authenticity.

From a practical perspective, the results highlight several priorities for managers and policymakers. Service quality should be the main focus. High-quality facilities, efficient reception, professional services, and trained staff directly increase satisfaction and indirectly encourage return visits. Destination image also requires attention. Promoting ICH projects, offering cultural and educational activities, and creating a positive atmosphere can strengthen impressions and long-term loyalty. Perceived behavioral control can be improved by removing barriers to travel. Providing clear information, accessible transport, and well-managed sites helps tourists feel confident and in control. Positive attitudes should be encouraged through marketing that stresses enjoyment, cultural enrichment, and personal value. Subjective norms can be strengthened by involving peers, families, and student communities, thereby increasing word-of-mouth promotion and group participation.

Since satisfaction plays a central role in shaping revisit intention, destinations should establish systems to monitor and evaluate satisfaction regularly. Collecting feedback, identifying trends, and adapting services will improve visitor experiences, strengthen loyalty, and raise return rates. These actions support sustainable ICH tourism while preserving cultural heritage and delivering economic benefits.

3. Limitations and Future Research

This study offers useful insights, but several limitations should be noted. The sample was limited to undergraduate students from one university, which reduces the external validity of the findings. The results may not reflect the views of students from other universities or regions. Future studies should include multiple institutions across different provinces to improve representativeness.

The focus on student participants also limits generalization to other edu-tourist groups, such as teachers or lifelong learners. Future research could examine these groups to capture broader behavioral patterns. In addition, the cross-sectional design reflects behavior at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies that follow tourists across different visits could better explain how satisfaction and revisit intention change over time.

Expanding the study across regions, populations, and timeframes would enhance its generalizability and contribute to a deeper understanding of edu-tourists' behavior in intangible cultural heritage tourism.

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