



USING TOURISM ARCHITECTURE TO DEVELOP CULTURAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

In the tourism sector, cultural identity is crucial, particularly in the field of tourism architecture. Because it allows visitors to sense and experience local culture firsthand, tourism architecture that represents cultural identity can be a big draw. Additionally, local communities might gain economically and socially from tourism architecture that enhances cultural identity. The significance of using tourism architecture to create cultural identity, traits of such architecture that reflect cultural identity, successful examples of such architecture, the idea of sustainable tourism architecture to preserve cultural identity, and the role of architects in fostering cultural identity through tourism architecture, challenges in using tourism architecture to create cultural identity, government interests in using tourism architecture to promote cultural identity, the benefits of using tourism architecture to create cultural identity for local communities. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze the relationship between tourism architecture and cultural identity. Data were collected through a combination of literature review, case study analysis, and comparative evaluation of selected tourism architectural projects that successfully integrate cultural elements. The findings from these multiple sources are synthesized to develop recommendations for applying tourism architecture as a tool for strengthening and preserving cultural identity in sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Tourism Architecture, Cultural Identity, Sustainable Tourism, Heritage Preservation, Community Empowerment

1. Introduction

The distinctive quality that sets one group or society apart from another is its cultural identity. A group's language, customs, art, architecture, and values are all components of its cultural identity. A society's history, customs, and legacy are also reflected in its cultural identity. The design and construction of buildings or structures intended to draw tourists is known as tourism architecture. Buildings of all kinds, including hotels, resorts, museums, and houses of worship, are included in the category of tourism architecture. By fusing modern and traditional architectural components, tourism architecture also represents a region's cultural identity.

There are numerous advantages of using tourism architecture to develop cultural identity. First, a significant draw for travelers may be tourism architecture that embodies cultural identity. When traveling, tourists frequently look for genuine cultural experiences, and tourism architecture that upholds cultural identity can offer distinctive and differentiating experiences. This has the potential to boost tourism and bring in a sizable sum of money for nearby communities. Second, enhancing pride and knowledge of regional cultural heritage can also be achieved through the development of cultural identity through tourism architecture. The preservation and promotion of cultural identity through tourism architecture can help locals better understand and value their cultural heritage. Future generations may benefit from this preservation of cultural legacy.

Third, local communities may gain socially from the development of cultural identity through tourism architecture. Locals can engage with visitors from different cultures and discover cultural similarities and contrasts as a result of the growing number of tourists. This can improve links between local communities and visitors while also fostering tolerance and understanding across cultural boundaries.

2. Literature Review

Culturally reflective tourism architecture includes a number of unique features. First, modern and traditional architectural elements are frequently combined in tourism architecture. For instance, a hotel

in Bali may blend a modern interior design with a traditional thatched roof. This displays a distinct cultural character and strikes a balance between tradition and innovation. Second, traditional building methods and local materials are frequently used in tourism architecture that reflects cultural identity. The primary building materials for a resort in a hilly region, for instance, might be local wood and stone, together with centuries-old building methods. This preserves traditional knowledge and abilities in addition to producing a genuine appearance (Chandra et al, 2024). Third, local culture-related motifs or narratives are frequently portrayed in tourism architecture that embodies cultural identity. For instance, a hotel might have a theme based on the local history, while a museum might have a design influenced by folklore. Tourists' experiences become richer and more significant as a result, and cultural identity is reinforced. Tourism architecture acts as a physical and symbolic medium for expressing local traditions, values, and stories. Design elements such as motifs, spatial layouts, and climate-responsive features not only attract tourists but also reinforce cultural identity.

Table 1. Tourism Architecture as a Cultural Medium

Aspect	Description	Benefits	Impact on Cultural Identity
Design Elements	Integration of local motifs, symbolism, spatial organization, and climate-responsive architecture.	Creates unique visitor experiences; strengthens tourism appeal.	Communicates cultural stories and values through the built form.
Aesthetic Harmony	Use of colors, textures, and forms derived from local tradition.	Enhances visual identity of the destination.	Reinforces a sense of belonging and pride within the community.

Numerous instances of tourism architecture that have been successful in fostering cultural identity may be found. Bali, Indonesia's Besakih Temple serves as one illustration. One of the most significant sacred sites for Hindus in Bali is Pura Besakih, the greatest Hindu temple complex there. By utilizing traditional architectural features like thatched roofs and elaborate wood carvings, the temple's design expresses Balinese cultural identity. Besakih Temple faces Mount Agung, a mountain revered by the Balinese, and also features a symbolic design.



Figure 1. Pura Besakih

Another example of tourism architecture that has succeeded in developing cultural identity is the Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum in the United Arab Emirates. French architect Jean Nouvel created the museum, which uses traditional Arab architectural features like domes and intricate geometry to represent the cultural identity of the United Arab Emirates. Reflecting the cultural richness of the United Arab Emirates, the Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum also features a collection of artwork and artifacts from many cultures throughout the globe.



Figure 2. Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum

3. Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze the relationship between tourism architecture and cultural identity. Data were collected through a combination of literature review, case study analysis, and comparative evaluation of selected tourism architectural projects that successfully integrate cultural elements. The literature review draws on academic journals, government reports, and relevant architectural guidelines to establish theoretical foundations. Case studies focus on both local and international examples, chosen for their demonstrated ability to reflect and preserve cultural identity while functioning as tourism attractions. Comparative analysis is used to identify common characteristics, design strategies, and sustainability measures that enhance cultural value. Stakeholder perspectives including those of architects, local communities, and policymakers are examined through secondary data sources to understand roles and challenges in implementation. The findings from these multiple sources are synthesized to develop recommendations for applying tourism architecture as a tool for strengthening and preserving cultural identity in sustainable tourism development.

4. Research Findings and Discussion

4.1 An Architecture Concept for Sustainable Tourism to Preserve Cultural Identity

The idea of sustainable tourism architecture must be taken into account while using tourism architecture to create cultural identity. A design and construction method that takes into account the building's effects on the environment, society, and economy is known as sustainable tourist architecture. Sustainable tourist architecture can support the preservation and upkeep of distinctive cultural identity in the context of cultural identity building (Adiyanto, 2021).

Utilizing regional resources and customary building methods is one of the principles of sustainable tourist architecture. Utilizing regional resources like wood and stone, together with conventional building methods like employing local workers, can help tourism architecture lessen its negative effects on the environment and encourage sustainability. Additionally, preserving traditional knowledge and skills linked to cultural identity can be facilitated by the utilization of regional resources and traditional building methods. The use of locally sourced materials and customary construction techniques contributes to environmental sustainability and helps safeguard traditional knowledge and craftsmanship (Fanggidae et al, 2020).

Table 2. Utilization of Regional Resources and Traditional Building Methods in Sustainable Tourism Architecture

Aspect	Description	Benefits	Impact on Cultural Identity
Regional Resources	Use of locally available materials such as wood, stone, bamboo, clay, or other indigenous resources.	Reduces transportation costs and carbon emissions; supports local economy.	Reflects local aesthetic and environmental context, reinforcing a sense of place.
Traditional Building Methods	Application of conventional construction techniques and employment of local craftsmen/artisans.	Preserves craftsmanship; ensures cultural appropriateness; promotes job creation.	Maintains traditional knowledge and skills that form part of cultural heritage.

Sustainability Contribution	Integration of eco-friendly practices in design and construction using local means.	Minimizes environmental impact; ensures long-term viability of structures.	Ensures that cultural values are embedded within the built environment.
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Using renewable energy and eco friendly design is another idea in sustainable tourist architecture. Tourism architecture may lessen its reliance on fossil fuels and its greenhouse gas emissions by utilizing renewable energy sources like wind and solar (Runa et al, 2020). The environmental impact of tourism architecture can also be reduced with the use of eco friendly design elements like the use of recycled materials and effective water management. Sustainable design not only addresses environmental concerns but also preserves cultural heritage through adaptive reuse, eco friendly construction, and reduced ecological impact.

Table 3. Sustainability as a Preservation Tool

Aspect	Description	Benefits	Impact on Cultural Identity
Eco-Friendly Practices	Use of renewable materials, passive design, and waste reduction strategies.	Reduces environmental degradation.	Ensures that cultural heritage sites are preserved in their original form.
Adaptive Reuse	Restoring and repurposing heritage buildings.	Extends building life; minimizes resource use.	Retains original cultural character while meeting modern needs.

4.2 Architects' Contribution to the Development of Cultural Identity via Tourism Architecture

Through tourism architecture, architects contribute significantly to the development of cultural identity. The task of creating buildings or other structures that represent the local culture falls to architects. They must comprehend the local community's history, customs, and cultural values in order to incorporate them into architectural designs for tourism. In addition, when creating tourism architecture, architects need to take sustainability, accessibility, and security into account. They have to make sure the building or structure is safe for visitors to use, accessible to all, and environmentally sustainable. Both visitors and local communities may have a better experience as a result (Putra et al, 2020).

4.3 Difficulties in Using Tourism Architecture to Develop Cultural Identity

Using tourism architecture to create cultural identity is not without its difficulties. Finding a balance between innovation and tradition is one difficulty. Architects must blend modern and traditional architectural aspects while creating architecture for tourism (Harvey, 2018). This can be difficult since architects have to balance the authenticity and distinctiveness of local culture with the demands and tastes of contemporary tourists.

Table 4. Challenges in Developing Cultural Identity through Tourism Architecture

Challenge	Description	Potential Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Cultural Commodification	Over-commercialization of cultural elements for profit.	Loss of authenticity.	Establish guidelines for cultural representation.
Authenticity vs. Tourist Expectations	Balancing tradition with modern comfort demands.	Dilution of cultural values.	Co-create designs with community input.
Funding and Maintenance	Limited resources for upkeep of cultural architecture.	Degradation of heritage assets.	Introduce sustainable revenue models and government support.
Weak Regulation	Inconsistent heritage protection enforcement.	Uncontrolled modifications to cultural sites.	Strengthen policy enforcement and monitoring.

Keeping tourism architecture sustainable presents another difficulty. Architects must take into account the building's effects on the environment, society, and economy when planning and constructing tourism-related structures. They have to make sure that tourism architecture doesn't harm the

environment, doesn't interfere with local people's daily life, and gives local communities long-term financial advantages (Purnawan et al, 2017).

4.4 The Government's Interest in Using Tourism Architecture to Promote Cultural Identity

Through tourism architecture, the government contributes significantly to the promotion of cultural identity. The government can encourage the development of tourism architecture that expresses cultural identity by offering financial and policy assistance. Governments can, for instance, offer subsidies or tax breaks for architectural tourism initiatives that enhance cultural identity.

Additionally, marketing initiatives and tourism promotions are another way the government can support cultural identity. In addition to educating visitors about the local cultural values, governments can use their marketing campaigns and promotional materials to showcase tourism architecture that represents cultural identity (Satria et al, 2020). Visitors may become more conscious of and interested in the local way of life as a result. Projects that integrate cultural identity into tourism architecture contribute directly to economic growth and social well being by creating jobs, stimulating local markets, and promoting traditional crafts.

Table 5. Economic and Social Benefits to Local Communities

Aspect	Description	Benefits	Impact on Cultural Identity
Economic	Increased visitor spending, creation of jobs, and promotion of traditional crafts.	Boosts local income and market opportunities.	Supports the continuation of cultural practices linked to tourism.
Social	Strengthening community pride, fostering cultural exchange between locals and tourists.	Improves social cohesion and cross-cultural understanding.	Encourages preservation of traditions for future generations.

The findings suggest that tourism architecture is not merely a physical structure but an experiential tool capable of transmitting and sustaining cultural identity. Projects that successfully embodied cultural elements often used architecture as a form of storytelling integrating symbols, spatial rituals, and traditional construction techniques to create immersive experiences for visitors. This aligns with theoretical perspectives that architecture can serve as a living cultural archive (Sardiana et al, 2020).

Sustainability emerged as a critical component, not only for environmental responsibility but also for cultural longevity. Eco friendly materials, passive design strategies, and adaptive reuse of heritage buildings were shown to reduce resource strain and preserve authenticity. However, without strong stakeholder collaboration, such initiatives risk becoming fragmented or superficial.





Figure 3. The Example of Adaptive Reuse Some Heritage Buildings in The World

Government involvement proved essential in providing policy support, incentives, and heritage protection regulations. Yet, over commercialization and the risk of diluting cultural meaning remain pressing issues. This indicates the need for a balanced approach one that respects authenticity while allowing innovation to adapt to contemporary tourism demands. Collaboration among architects, local communities, and government authorities is essential for success. However, issues such as cultural commodification, authenticity conflicts, and weak regulation remain obstacles (Widiarta, 2016).

Table 6. Stakeholder Roles in Implementation

Stakeholder	Role	Benefits	Impact on Cultural Identity
Architects	Design innovation, integration of cultural elements, technical planning.	Produces culturally relevant and functional spaces.	Translates intangible culture into tangible design.
Local Communities	Provide cultural knowledge, participate in construction, maintain traditions.	Gains ownership of tourism projects; creates livelihood opportunities.	Acts as custodian of cultural values.
Government	Policy-making, funding, heritage protection regulations.	Ensures sustainable and regulated tourism development.	Protects authenticity through formal recognition and support.

Ultimately, the research reinforces the idea that tourism architecture can be a strategic instrument for both cultural preservation and community empowerment, provided that sustainability, authenticity, and stakeholder collaboration are at the core of its design and implementation.

4.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, the following recommendations are proposed to maximize the role of tourism architecture in developing cultural identity:

- Integrate Cultural Elements from the Concept Stage**
Architects and planners should incorporate local cultural values, symbols, and traditional design elements from the earliest stages of project development to ensure authenticity and coherence.
- Apply Sustainable Design Principles**
Tourism architecture should prioritize the use of eco-friendly materials, passive climate control strategies, and adaptive reuse of existing heritage structures to protect both the environment and cultural heritage.
- Strengthen Community Involvement**
Local communities must be actively engaged as cultural custodians and contributors, ensuring that projects reflect genuine traditions and create direct economic opportunities for residents.
- Enhance Government Support and Policy Frameworks**
Governments should provide clear regulations, heritage protection laws, and financial incentives to encourage culturally grounded and sustainable tourism architecture.

e. **Promote Education and Cultural Awareness**

Tourism facilities should include interpretive spaces, exhibitions, or guided programs that help visitors understand the cultural significance of the architecture and its surrounding community.

f. **Monitor and Prevent Cultural Commodification**

Mechanisms should be in place to prevent over commercialization and to maintain a respectful balance between tourist demands and cultural authenticity.

5. Conclusion

This research confirms that tourism architecture holds significant potential as a strategic medium for developing and preserving cultural identity. When thoughtfully designed, tourism facilities can go beyond serving as physical destinations and become immersive cultural experiences that allow visitors to understand and appreciate local traditions. The study highlights that integrating local materials, traditional design elements, and climate responsive architecture not only strengthens cultural expression but also generates tangible economic and social benefits for local communities.

Sustainability plays a dual role in this process protecting the environment while safeguarding cultural assets for future generations. However, achieving this balance requires careful attention to authenticity, avoidance of over commercialization, and continuous collaboration among architects, local communities, and policymakers. Government support through policy frameworks, heritage protection laws, and financial incentives is crucial for long-term success.

In conclusion, tourism architecture that reflects and enhances cultural identity can become a powerful driver of sustainable tourism and community empowerment. To maximize its impact, future projects should prioritize cultural authenticity, apply sustainable design principles, and actively involve local communities in every stage of planning and implementation.

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