

Intangible cultural heritage, localization and guest satisfaction among themed hotels in Shandong Province

Bian, Ji ✉

Graduate School, Lyceum of the Philippines University - Batangas, Philippines

Received: 25 October 2024

Available Online: 10 December 2024

Revised: 22 November 2024

DOI: 10.5861/ijrsm.2024.1327

Accepted: 10 December 2024

ISSN: 2243-7770

Online ISSN: 2243-7789

OPEN ACCESS



Abstract

This study investigates the interrelationship between Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), localization, and guest satisfaction within themed hotels in Shandong Province, China. As the global hospitality industry evolves, themed hotels increasingly leverage ICH to craft unique, authentic guest experiences that resonate with travelers seeking deeper connections to local cultures. This study posits that effectively integrating localized ICH elements not only enhances guest experiences but also fosters cultural preservation and community identity. Shandong Province, rich in cultural heritage, provides a fertile ground for exploring this dynamic. The research focuses on guests who have stayed in themed hotels at least twice, allowing for a nuanced understanding of their experiences. By employing qualitative and quantitative methods, the study seeks to assess how ICH and localization contribute to overall guest satisfaction. Key components examined include hotel decoration, services, activities, and the extent to which these elements reflect local traditions and cultural narratives. The findings suggest that themed hotels that successfully incorporate ICH through thoughtful localization strategies significantly enhance guest perceptions of authenticity and emotional connection to the place, resulting in higher satisfaction levels. Furthermore, the research identifies critical factors that influence guest satisfaction, including the quality of services, the immersive nature of the hotel environment, and the alignment of the guest experience with personal expectations and cultural appreciation. The study also explores the challenges faced by themed hotels in balancing authenticity with modern expectations, particularly in the context of cultural sensitivity and the risk of cultural appropriation. It emphasizes the importance of training staff to embody local cultural values and engage guests in meaningful interactions that enhance their overall experience. Ultimately, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on hospitality management by highlighting the potential of localized ICH as a strategic asset in themed hotel operations. The implications of this study extend beyond the individual hotel experience, suggesting that a well-executed integration of ICH can benefit local communities, support sustainable tourism practices, and enhance the competitive positioning of themed hotels in the global market.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), localization, guest satisfaction, themed hotels, Shandong province, cultural preservation, hospitality management, authenticity, tourism, community identity

Intangible cultural heritage, localization and guest satisfaction among themed hotels in Shandong Province

1. Introduction

Hotels are increasingly incorporating Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) into their offerings to create unique and authentic guest experiences. Recent trends in Intangible Cultural Heritage highlight its growing importance in preserving cultural identity and enhancing guest satisfaction in themed hotels. Many organizations are prioritizing intangible cultural heritage through festivals and educational programs, allowing guests to engage with authentic cultural experiences. This integration fosters a deeper connection to local traditions, significantly improving visitor satisfaction. Themed hotels have become a prominent trend in the global hospitality industry, offering guests unique and immersive experiences that go beyond standard accommodations. These hotels cater to diverse interests and preferences by incorporating a specific theme throughout their design, décor, services, and even staff interactions. The goal of a theme hotel is to create a unique and memorable experience for guests by connecting them with a bygone era (Tao, et al. 2024). This can appeal to travelers seeking a sense of comfort and familiarity, or those who have a particular fondness for a specific historical period. Furthermore, themed hotels have become a popular trend in the hospitality industry, but for some travelers, the appeal goes beyond a unique experience. While a unique experience is certainly a draw, themed hotels can offer the same level of comfort and service expected from any high-quality hotel. Guests do not have to sacrifice amenities or hospitality standards for the thematic aspect.

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) (Orr, 2023), localization (Lin, 2023), and guest satisfaction in themed hotel operations have a complex, interconnected relationship (Esfehani, et al. 2019). Intangible cultural heritage as a source material encompasses traditions, practices, knowledge, and skills passed down through generations (Kumar, et al. 2022). Themed hotels can draw inspiration from intangible cultural heritage to create a more authentic and immersive guest experience (Main, 2022). Localization refers to tailoring intangible cultural heritage for guest appeal (Boswell, 2023). It involves adapting the chosen intangible cultural heritage elements to resonate with the target audience and the specific nostalgic era the hotel evokes (Martin, 2022). For instance: incorporating intangible cultural heritage elements isn't enough. This might also involve the selecting of intangible cultural heritage elements that align with the chosen historical period or cultural theme, presenting intangible cultural heritage elements in a way that is respectful, educational, and engaging for guests and ensuring the incorporation of intangible cultural heritage is tasteful and avoids cultural appropriation. Localization is key to ensure relevance and guest satisfaction.

A successful combination of intangible cultural heritage and localization can significantly enhance guest satisfaction in themed hotels (Qiu, et al. 2022). This can be seen in how guests perceive the hotel as more genuine and connected to the place it inhabits. The emotional connection of the guests evoke a sense of nostalgia or cultural appreciation, deepening the guest's connection to the hotel and the location (Keskin, et al., 2024). Themed hotels that effectively utilize localized intangible cultural heritage stand out from generic nostalgic themes, offering a unique selling proposition (Jimura, 2021). Therefore, it can be speculated that intangible cultural heritage, when localized effectively, becomes a valuable tool for themed hotels to enhance guest satisfaction by creating a more authentic, engaging, and memorable experience.

This study would like to find out the stability of the themed hotel operation by investigating the intangible cultural heritage and localization in relation with the guest satisfaction. Themed Hotel has subjective feeling. Likewise with the visitor's experience at a themed hotel (including service, facilities, and theming) influences their overall satisfaction with the trip and their likelihood to recommend the hotel or park (behavioral intention) (Akel et al., 2023); the way visitors interact with these elements, including service encounters with staff, participation in activities, and the overall atmosphere, and likewise with how visitors interpret and

personalize their experiences based on their individual preferences, expectations, and past experiences (Li, et al., 2023). These studies highlight how experiences, whether in theme park hotels (Akel et al. 2023) or destinations in general (Li et al. 2023), play a crucial role in visitor satisfaction and behavioral intention.

It may be difficult to measure the exact impact of a theme on guest satisfaction and loyalty. The customer perceptions and loyalty are largely determined through surveys, and the findings are not univocal due to the inconsistencies of measurement items used, the potential response bias and limited sample sizes (Lee, et al., 2023). On the other hand, due to the interplay between experience creation, visitor interpretation, and satisfaction as highlighted by both Akel et al., 2023 and Li et al., 2023 theme park hotels can create more meaningful and engaging experiences for their guests, ultimately leading to higher visitor satisfaction and loyalty. Investors need to develop strategies to understand guest perception and the value proposition of the nostalgic theme. In general, themed hotels offer potential, investors need to carefully consider these challenges before venturing into the nostalgic theme hotel market. A thorough feasibility study, market research, and a well-defined strategy are crucial for success.

Shandong Province, China, boasts of a diverse range of themed hotels catering to various interests. The guest may observe the grandeur of imperial China with hotels replicating the architecture, décor, and atmosphere of dynasties like the Qin or Han. One may expect elements like traditional furniture, dragon motifs, and perhaps even staff dressed in period attire. Also, as the birthplace of Confucius, Shandong offers hotels themed around scholarly pursuits and tranquil settings with traditional furniture, calligraphy workshops, tea ceremonies, and an emphasis on intellectual pursuits. Moreover, there is a German influence in Qingdao. Qingdao has a unique architectural heritage with German colonial influences. Hotels might evoke a nostalgic atmosphere reminiscent of early 20th-century Europe, featuring European-style architecture, antique furniture, and German-inspired cuisine. In terms of mood and lifestyle themes among hotels in Shandong Province, China cater to the artistic side with hotels showcasing modern art installations, themed around specific artists or movements. The guest may also experience the luxurious experience with hotels featuring high-end design elements, designer furniture, and personalized services catering to the discerning traveler. The locale of the study is Shandong province, focusing on hotels with Intangible Cultural Heritage features. This study is limited to guests who have stayed in themed hotels in Shandong Province at least twice. Their experiences can provide a broader perspective on themed hotels in general. The research can gain a more comprehensive understanding of guest preferences and the potential of localized intangible cultural heritage for enhancing guest satisfaction. This broader perspective can lead to more robust recommendations that will benefit themed hotels, local communities, and ultimately, create a more enriching experience for all tourists visiting Shandong Province.

The rationale of this research is to investigate possible relationships between intangible cultural heritage and localization as independent variables and their relation to guest satisfaction in themed hotels of Shandong Province, China as dependent variable. While themed hotels are a growing trend, there is limited research on how effectively they leverage intangible cultural heritage to enhance guest satisfaction, especially in a specific location like Shandong. The research would explore how incorporating localized intangible cultural heritage elements can create a more authentic, engaging, and memorable experience for guests, ultimately leading to higher satisfaction. This study would bridge this gap by examining the potential of localized intangible cultural heritage as a tool for improving guest experiences in themed hotels. Thus, the researcher believes that by understanding guest preferences and the most effective ways to present intangible cultural heritage, hotels in Shandong differentiate themselves from generic themed experiences and attract a wider audience. Furthermore, the research would provide valuable insights for both the hospitality industry and cultural preservation efforts in Shandong Province. It can help hotels leverage their unique cultural heritage to create exceptional guest experiences, while simultaneously promoting local traditions and contributing to sustainable tourism development. Lastly, this research has the potential to be valuable for themed hotels, cultural institutions, tourism boards, and policymakers in Shandong Province, promoting a win-win situation for both the hospitality industry and cultural preservation efforts. The researcher believes that by analyzing guest feedback, the research can develop recommendations for hotels on how to effectively measure the impact of localized Intangible Cultural

Heritage(ICH) on guest satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study - This study assessed the relationship of intangible cultural heritage, localization and guest satisfaction among themed hotels in Shandong Province. Particularly, it 1) determined the extent of Intangible Cultural Heritage(ICH) use in terms of hotel decoration, services, activities and other hotel aspects; 2) assessed the extent of localization in terms of hotel management, marketing, and integration of the themed hotel in the Local Community; 3) assessed the guest satisfaction of themed hotels in terms of: guests' rooms, food and beverage, other services, and guests' satisfaction with the themed hotel as a whole; 4) tested the significant relationship between intangible cultural heritage, localization and guest satisfaction of themed hotels; 5) proposed a strategic plan to enhance the guest satisfaction among themed hotels in Shandong Province, China.

2. Methods

Research Design - The study utilized descriptive correlation research to present the findings of this study. Quantitative research is useful for investigating the relationship between the variables intangible cultural heritage and localization as independent variables and guest satisfaction as dependent variable. Results are generated from primary and secondary data that are analyzed using statistical techniques.

Participants of the Study

Hotel No.	Hotel Name	Estimated No. Of Guests	Percentage	Estimated Number of Respondents	Round Off Value
1	Hotel 1	1080000.00	0.2041202	78.58627859	79
2	Hotel 2	15000.00	0.002835	1.091476091	1
3	Hotel 3	60000.00	0.01134001	4.365904366	4
4	Hotel 4	71000.00	0.01341901	5.166320166	5
5	Hotel 5	63000.00	0.01190701	4.584199584	5
6	Hotel 6	96000.00	0.01814402	6.985446985	7
7	Hotel 7	1500000.00	0.28350028	109.1476091	109
8	Hotel 8	30000.00	0.00567001	2.182952183	2
9	Hotel 9	300000.00	0.05670006	21.82952183	22
10	Hotel 10	46000.00	0.00869401	3.347193347	3
11	Hotel 11	59000.00	0.01115101	4.293139293	4
12	Hotel 12	49000.00	0.00926101	3.565488565	4
13	Hotel 13	37000.00	0.00699301	2.692307692	3
14	Hotel 14	240000.00	0.04536005	17.46361746	17
15	Hotel 15	43000.00	0.00812701	3.128898129	3
16	Hotel 16	52000.00	0.00982801	3.783783784	4
17	Hotel 17	61000.00	0.01152901	4.438669439	4
18	Hotel 18	16000.00	0.003024	1.164241164	1
19	Hotel 19	68000.00	0.01285201	4.948024948	5
20	Hotel 20	19000.00	0.003591	1.382536383	1
21	Hotel 21	79000.00	0.01493101	5.748440748	6
22	Hotel 22	37000.00	0.00699301	2.692307692	3
23	Hotel 23	580000.00	0.10962011	42.2037422	42
24	Hotel 24	42000.00	0.00793801	3.056133056	3
25	Hotel 25	100000.00	0.01890002	7.276507277	7
26	Hotel 26	75000.00	0.01417501	5.457380457	5
27	Hotel 27	120000.00	0.02268002	8.731808732	9
28	Hotel 28	20000.00	0.00378	1.455301455	1
29	Hotel 29	73000.00	0.01379701	5.311850312	5
30	Hotel 30	51000.00	0.00963901	3.711018711	4
31	Hotel 31	71000.00	0.01341901	5.166320166	5
32	Hotel 32	58000.00	0.01096201	4.22037422	4
33	Hotel 33	80000.00	0.01512002	5.821205821	6
TOTAL		5291000.00	1	Total No. Of Respondents	383

The participants of this study were guests who had visited themed hotels in Shandong Province. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, several qualifiers were established for selecting the respondents. First, participants must have visited themed hotels in the province at least twice. This criterion ensured that the respondents had sufficient familiarity and experience with the hotels' intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and localization practices. Additionally, only individuals aged 18 years and older were included to ensure that the participants had the maturity and comprehension needed to provide reliable responses. Another important criterion was that participants must have stayed overnight in the themed hotels. This was necessary to capture

their direct experiences with the hotels' facilities, services, and cultural elements. Moreover, the study specifically targeted individuals who had interacted with or had knowledge of the ICH and localization elements incorporated by the themed hotels. This allowed the study to gather informed opinions about the participants' level of satisfaction with these cultural and localized elements.

The study employed systematic random sampling to ensure an unbiased selection of participants. Every third guest who met the qualifying criteria at the participating themed hotels was invited to participate. A total of 383 participants were included in the study, determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. The basis for determining the sample size was the total number of guest arrivals at the participating hotels. To ensure comprehensive representation, participants were drawn from three-star themed hotels in both urban and rural/heritage areas. For instance, three-star themed hotels in urban areas accounted for a significant portion of the sample, while rural/heritage areas also contributed to the distribution. This diversity provided insights into how ICH and localization practices varied across different settings and their impact on guest satisfaction. By capturing a broad spectrum of guest experiences, the study aimed to provide a holistic understanding of guest satisfaction in themed hotels in Shandong Province.

Instrument of the Study - This study utilized an adapted questionnaire and modified to fit to the current study to collect data aligned with the objectives of the research. The instrument consisted of four parts, each addressing specific variables of the study. Part I is demographic profile of the respondents with the following information like age, sex, type of traveler, and frequency of stays in themed hotels. These demographic factors provided context for analyzing guest satisfaction and their perspectives on intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and localization practices. Part II is the extent of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) with sub-variables including hotel decoration, services, activities, and other aspects, adapted from the study by Wang et al. (2010). Statements evaluated elements such as traditional architecture, cultural symbolism, immersive dining experiences, and cultural activities like tea ceremonies and art workshops. Part III is localization of themed hotels. This section assessed the localization of hotel operations, focusing on management, marketing, and integration into the local community. Items were adapted from Guo et al. (2005), examining aspects such as local staff's role as cultural ambassadors, marketing strategies emphasizing local identity, and initiatives promoting community involvement. Part IV is guest satisfaction in Themed Hotel Operations. This part evaluated guest satisfaction in terms of guest rooms, food and beverage, other services, and overall satisfaction with the themed hotel. Indicators such as cleanliness, comfort, service quality, and pricing were included.

Table A
Reliability Results

Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Remarks
Extent of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of a Nostalgic-Themed Hotel	0.974	Excellent
Localization of the Nostalgic-Themed Hotel Services	0.971	Excellent
Guests' Satisfaction in Themed Hotel Operations	0.977	Excellent

The questionnaire underwent several stages of validation: conducted the research adviser to ensure alignment with the study's objectives. Expert evaluators with backgrounds in hospitality management, cultural tourism, and research methodologies reviewed the instrument. These evaluators included senior professors and hospitality industry professionals with relevant expertise. A certified grammarian reviewed the instrument for clarity and correctness of language. A pilot test was conducted among 30 respondents who met the study's criteria. The results were subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure consistency and reliability of the instrument. This robust and validated instrument provided a reliable framework for assessing the extent of ICH and localization in themed hotels and their relationship with guest satisfaction.

Data Gathering Procedure - The researcher followed a systematic approach to ensure the ethical and efficient collection of data for this study. All necessary approvals and ethical clearances were obtained prior to the commencement of the study. The researcher sought approval from the Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas (LPU-B) Ethical Review Committee to ensure compliance with ethical standards, including

confidentiality and data privacy. Participating themed hotels in Shandong Province were formally contacted through their management or representatives. A letter of request detailing the purpose and scope of the study was provided to seek their cooperation in facilitating guest participation. Only respondents who agreed and met the study's qualifying criteria were included. After receiving approval from participating hotels, the researcher coordinated with hotel management to identify suitable methods and times for data collection. This ensured minimal disruption to hotel operations and convenience for participants. Data was collected using an online survey platform, providing participants with a convenient and accessible means to respond. The survey included demographic questions and Likert-scale items addressing the study's variables: intangible cultural heritage, localization, and guest satisfaction. Responses were tallied using spreadsheet software and subjected to statistical analysis by a professional statistician. The data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics to address the study's objectives and research questions. The results were then interpreted and discussed by the researcher.

Data Analysis - The weighted mean was utilized to compute the average level of agreement for each item in assessing specific dimensions of the study. These dimensions included the extent of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) use in themed hotels, such as hotel decoration, services, activities, and other aspects. Additionally, it assessed the extent of localization in themed hotels, covering management, marketing, and integration within the local community. Guest satisfaction was also evaluated, focusing on aspects such as guest rooms, food and beverage services, other amenities, willingness to stay, and overall satisfaction. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to examine the relationships between the study's three key variables. These included the relationship between intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and guest satisfaction, localization and guest satisfaction, as well as intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and localization. This statistical method helped establish the strength and direction of relationships between these critical dimensions, contributing to the study's comprehensive analysis and findings.

Ethical Considerations - The study adhered to stringent ethical guidelines to protect the rights, privacy, and well-being of all respondents throughout the research process. In compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, the questionnaire included a clear statement affirming Lyceum of the Philippines University – Batangas (LPU-B)'s commitment to safeguarding participants' data. This statement guaranteed that all information collected would remain confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Respondents were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Before beginning the survey, respondents were presented with a full consent form embedded within the questionnaire. This consent form outlined the study's objectives, the intended use of the data, and the participants' rights. By selecting the "I Agree" option, respondents provided their informed consent, acknowledging their understanding of the study and authorizing the researcher and LPU-B to collect, use, and disclose their responses lawfully and ethically. The study adhered to core ethical principles, including voluntary participation, where respondents joined the study willingly without coercion, and the right to withdraw at any time. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by anonymizing responses and securely storing data to prevent unauthorized access. The researcher avoided deceptive practices by providing transparent and accurate information to participants. Additionally, the study was carefully designed to minimize harm, posing no physical, psychological, or emotional risks to participants. The Ethics Review Committee of LPU-B reviewed and approved the research to ensure compliance with ethical standards. The committee evaluated the study's design, objectives, and procedures to confirm that the rights and welfare of participants were adequately protected. These comprehensive ethical measures underscore the researcher's dedication to upholding the highest standards of integrity and respect for participants, ensuring the study's credibility and reliability.

3. Result and discussion

The overall assessment of the extent of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) integration in themed hotels yielded an overall mean of 2.91, interpreted as "Agree." This indicates that respondents generally perceive that intangible cultural heritage is adequately integrated across the evaluated dimensions of hotel decoration, services, activities, and other aspects. Such a composite mean highlights the effectiveness of themed hotels in

incorporating ICH elements to enrich guest experiences and strengthen their cultural connection.

Table 1*Summary Table of the Assess the Extent of Intangible Cultural Heritage*

Dimensions	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Hotel Decoration	2.93	<i>Agree</i>	2
Hotel Service	2.97	<i>Agree</i>	1
Hotel Activities	2.88	<i>Agree</i>	4
Hotel Other Aspects	2.89	<i>Agree</i>	3
OVERALL MEAN	2.91	<i>Agree</i>	

Legend: 1.0 to 1.49 (Strongly Disagree), 1.5 to 2.49 (Disagree), 2.5 to 3.49 (Agree), 3.5 to 4.00 (Strongly Agree)

Among the evaluated dimensions, Hotel Service ranked highest with a mean of 2.97, followed by Hotel Decoration with a mean of 2.93. Both dimensions received favorable ratings, reflecting respondents' recognition of these elements as central to their overall satisfaction. These results underscore the importance of culturally themed services and aesthetically pleasing decorations in delivering memorable guest experiences. The dimension of Hotel Service achieving the highest mean indicates that culturally themed services significantly impact guest perception. This includes immersive dining experiences and personalized gestures, such as traditional greetings and entertainment, which align with guest expectations for a culturally authentic stay. Such services not only enhance the thematic connection but also create lasting impressions through active cultural engagement. Studies corroborate the findings regarding the significance of hotel services in integrating ICH. Yuan et al. (2023) emphasize that immersive dining experiences can enhance guests' connection to local culture, making dining a critical component of cultural engagement. Similarly, Wang (2022) highlights the role of curated cultural experiences in enriching guest satisfaction. Finally, Wang et al. (2024) argue that personalized and culturally resonant services foster meaningful guest connections and contribute to the sustainability of heritage tourism destinations.

The lowest-rated dimensions were Hotel Activities with a mean of 2.88 and Hotel Other Aspects with a mean of 2.89. While both dimensions were still interpreted as "Agree," their slightly lower scores suggest potential areas for improvement in enhancing guests' cultural immersion and engagement. Hotel Activities received the lowest score among the dimensions. This result indicates that while activities such as workshops and guided cultural experiences are appreciated, they may not be as effectively implemented or prominently featured as other dimensions. Guests may perceive a lack of variety or depth in the cultural activities offered, limiting their overall engagement. Research supports the critical role of well-curated activities in enhancing guest satisfaction. Zhang (2024) notes that interactive and immersive activities foster a stronger connection between guests and the local culture. Wang (2023) highlights the importance of diverse cultural programming to appeal to a wide range of guests, suggesting that monotony in activities could diminish their impact. Additionally, Vanderlinden (2022) emphasizes that vibrant cultural experiences are crucial in creating a sense of nostalgia and cultural appreciation among guests.

According to table 2, the composite mean of 3.04, with a verbal interpretation of "Agree," indicates that respondents generally acknowledged the efforts made by themed hotels in Shandong Province to localize their operations. This suggests that while these hotels effectively incorporate localization strategies, there is room for further enhancement to deepen their connection with local culture and community.

Table 2*Summary Table of the Localization of Themed Hotel*

Dimensions	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Hotel Management	3.11	<i>Agree</i>	1
Hotel Marketing	3.10	<i>Agree</i>	2
Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community	2.92	<i>Agree</i>	3
OVERALL MEAN	3.04	<i>Agree</i>	

Legend: 1.0 to 1.49 (Strongly Disagree), 1.5 to 2.49 (Disagree), 2.5 to 3.49 (Agree), 3.5 to 4.00 (Strongly Agree)

The highest-ranking dimension is Hotel Management (3.11), followed by Hotel Marketing (3.10) and Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community (2.92). These rankings reflect that respondents perceived management and marketing efforts as slightly more aligned with localization principles compared to community

integration.

Hotel Management, with a mean of 3.11, demonstrates that respondents agreed on the ability of local staff to enhance the cultural authenticity of themed hotels. Local staff providing insights into customs, preferences, and expectations, along with their ability to act as cultural ambassadors, likely contributes to this positive perception. Such strategies foster a sense of authenticity and help create a culturally immersive experience for guests. Qiu et al. (2022) emphasize that effective hotel management plays a critical role in integrating intangible cultural heritage, particularly through the empowerment of local staff to act as cultural representatives. Safonova (2024) further supports this by illustrating how unique management practices, such as personalized services, enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty in themed accommodations. Salah et al. (2023) also highlight that strong management efforts in local representation drive guest intention to revisit, further underlining the significance of this dimension.

The lowest-ranked dimension, Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community (2.92), suggests that while efforts are being made, they are perceived as less effective compared to other localization strategies. Specifically, activities like community engagement programs and showcasing preserved traditional skills may not be fully optimized, leading to relatively lower satisfaction levels among guests. Qiu et al. (2021) highlights the challenges of effectively integrating hotels into local communities, especially in balancing cultural representation and operational efficiency. Saxena et. al., (2024) argue that community integration efforts often require a more structured approach to create impactful and sustainable guest experiences. Sakhanenko (2024) also suggests that modern hotels must innovate their community-oriented strategies to resonate with evolving guest preferences and cultural expectations.

Table 3

Summary Table on Guests' Satisfaction in Themed Hotel

Dimensions	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Guest Rooms	3.05	<i>Agree</i>	1
Food and beverage	2.91	<i>Agree</i>	4
Other Services	3.03	<i>Agree</i>	2.5
As a Whole	3.03	<i>Agree</i>	2.5
OVERALL MEAN	3.00	<i>Agree</i>	

Legend: 1.0 to 1.49 (Strongly Disagree), 1.5 to 2.49 (Disagree), 2.5 to 3.49 (Agree), 3.5 to 4.00 (Strongly Agree)

The composite mean of 3.00, interpreted as "Agree," suggests that respondents were generally satisfied with their experience in themed hotels across all assessed dimensions. While the ratings indicate positive feedback, there remains room for improvement in specific areas to enhance overall guest satisfaction and the competitive edge of these hotels. The top three dimensions are Guest Rooms (mean = 3.05, ranked 1st), Other Services (mean = 3.03, tied for 2nd), and As a Whole (mean = 3.03, tied for 2nd). These areas indicate the strengths of themed hotels in providing comfortable accommodations, quality additional services, and overall guest satisfaction.

Guest Rooms, with the highest mean score of 3.05, highlights the importance of room quality in shaping the guest experience. This dimension reflects satisfaction with room cleanliness, comfort, and amenities, which are fundamental to any hotel stay. Positive perceptions of guest rooms suggest that themed hotels effectively balance functionality with the thematic elements that distinguish them. Zhang et al. (2024) emphasize that the quality of accommodations, including cleanliness and comfort, significantly influences guest satisfaction in themed hotels. Zhang (2022) underscores that customers are willing to pay a premium for superior room quality, particularly in all-inclusive or themed accommodations. Zou et al. (2020) highlight the role of cultural and thematic room elements in enhancing the overall guest experience, aligning with the thematic focus of Shandong's hotels.

The lowest-ranking dimension is Food and Beverage with a mean score of 2.91, indicating that this area requires attention to meet guest expectations better. Issues such as limited variety, perceived high prices, and inconsistent service quality could have contributed to the lower score. Zhang (2022) discusses how themed hotels can enhance their food and beverage offerings by integrating local cultural elements to appeal to guests

seeking authentic experiences. Zhang et al. (2019) suggest that strategic pricing and improving variety can significantly improve guest perceptions in this area. Zhang et al. (2024) further support that a well-designed dining experience, reflecting the hotel's theme, can drive higher satisfaction ratings.

Table 4*Relationship between Extent of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Localization of Themed Hotel*

HOTEL DECORATION	<i>r_s</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Interpretation
Hotel Management	0.072	0.146	Not Significant
Hotel Marketing	.419**	0.000	Significant
Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community	.530**	0.000	Significant
HOTEL SERVICE			
Hotel Management	.110*	0.027	Significant
Hotel Marketing	.526**	0.000	Significant
Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community	.592**	0.000	Significant
HOTEL ACTIVITIES			
Hotel Management	.158**	0.001	Significant
Hotel Marketing	.538**	0.000	Significant
Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community	.588**	0.000	Significant
HOTEL'S OTHER ASPECTS			
Hotel Management	0.083	0.094	Not Significant
Hotel Marketing	.464**	0.000	Significant
Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community	.687**	0.000	Significant
OVERALL EXTENT OF ICH			
Hotel Management	.135**	0.007	Significant
Hotel Marketing	.509**	0.000	Significant
Integration of the Hotel in the Local Community	.683**	0.000	Significant

The findings in Table 4 reveal the relationship between the extent of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) integration and the localization dimensions of themed hotels, specifically hotel management, marketing, and integration into the local community. The results are summarized as follows:

The correlation coefficients (*r_s*) and *p*-values indicate significant relationships between most ICH dimensions and localization aspects, particularly in hotel marketing and integration into the local community. The overall extent of ICH shows significant positive correlations with hotel management (*r_s*=.135, *p*=0.007), hotel marketing (*r_s*=.509, *p*=0.000), and integration into the local community (*r_s*=.683, *p*=0.000). These results underscore the importance of ICH as a key driver of effective localization strategies in themed hotels.

Hotel decoration correlates significantly with hotel marketing (*r_s* = .419, *p* = 0.000) and integration into the local community (*r_s* = .530, *p* = 0.000). However, the relationship with hotel management is not significant (*p* = 0.146). These findings suggest that while decorative elements reflecting ICH resonate strongly in marketing and guest integration efforts, their influence on management practices may be more indirect.

Significant relationships are observed between hotel service and all three localization dimensions: hotel management (*r_s* = .110, *p* = 0.027), hotel marketing (*r_s* = .526, *p* = 0.000), and integration into the local community (*r_s* = .592, *p* = 0.000). This indicates that ICH-infused services, such as traditional greetings or cultural activities, enhance both operational and marketing localization efforts while fostering deeper community integration.

Hotel activities correlate significantly with hotel management (*r_s* = .158, *p* = 0.001), hotel marketing (*r_s* = .538, *p* = 0.000), and integration into the local community (*r_s* = .588, *p* = 0.000). These results highlight the value of offering authentic cultural experiences, such as workshops or guided tours, which not only enrich the guest experience but also strengthen ties with local stakeholders.

Hotel's Other Aspects :Significant relationships exist between this dimension and hotel marketing (*r_s* = .464, *p* = 0.000) as well as integration into the local community (*r_s* = .687, *p* = 0.000). However, the correlation with hotel management is not significant (*p* = 0.094). This suggests that peripheral ICH elements, such as staff uniforms or design features, have a greater impact on marketing and community engagement than on direct

management strategies.

The findings align with Guo et al. (2023), who emphasize the role of ICH in creating a unique identity for hotels, thus enhancing marketing effectiveness and guest satisfaction. Similarly, Forlani et al. (2022) argue that showcasing local heritage through marketing channels fosters guest interest and community involvement. Gardiner et al. (2022) note that integrating ICH into hotel services, such as food preparation and cultural performances, bridges the gap between staged authenticity and genuine community engagement. This supports the observed significant relationships in the study. Guo (2023) highlights the strategic use of cultural activities, such as artisan workshops or eco-tourism initiatives, in strengthening the hotel's ties to local communities while enhancing the guest experience—a relationship echoed in the present findings.

Table 5

Relationship between Extent of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Guest Satisfaction

HOTEL DECORATION	<i>r_s</i>	<i>p-value</i>	Interpretation
Guest Rooms	.515**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.484**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.527**	0.000	Significant
As a Whole	.515**	0.000	Significant
HOTEL SERVICE			
Guest Rooms	.602**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.568**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.595**	0.000	Significant
As a Whole	.576**	0.000	Significant
HOTEL ACTIVITIES			
Guest Rooms	.610**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.567**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.616**	0.000	Significant
As a Whole	.566**	0.000	Significant
HOTEL'S OTHER ASPECTS			
Guest Rooms	.674**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.630**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.646**	0.000	Significant
As a Whole	.581**	0.000	Significant
OVERALL EXTENT OF ICH			
Guest Rooms	.689**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.622**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.665**	0.000	Significant
As a Whole	.601**	0.000	Significant

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The analysis of the relationship between the extent of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) use and guest satisfaction in themed hotels across various dimensions—hotel decoration, hotel service, hotel activities, hotel's other aspects, and the overall extent of ICH—reveals significant insights into how ICH contributes to guest experiences. Each scale reflects distinct aspects of the hospitality experience, all of which significantly influence guest satisfaction. The relationship between ICH elements in hotel decoration and guest satisfaction is significant, with correlations ranging from .484 to .527 ($p = 0.000$). This indicates that thoughtful integration of ICH in aesthetic elements like room design, furnishings, and thematic décor strongly impacts guest satisfaction. Such decorations convey a sense of place and cultural authenticity, creating immersive experiences that guests value. According to Altan et al. (2024), ornamentation in hotel interiors acts as a visual narrative, connecting guests to local cultural heritage. These findings suggest that themed hotels must prioritize incorporating regional motifs and traditional art into their design to enhance guest engagement and satisfaction.

The correlation between the use of ICH in hotel service and guest satisfaction was even more pronounced, with scores ranging from .568 to .602 ($p = 0.000$). This highlights the importance of embedding ICH in service delivery, such as staff interactions, guided experiences, and culturally informed hospitality practices. Buhalis et al. (2023) emphasize that culturally enriched service adds depth to the guest experience by fostering a personalized connection to the local environment. Hotels that train staff to incorporate local customs and traditions into their service repertoire are more likely to meet and exceed guest expectations. The relationship between hotel activities rooted in ICH and guest satisfaction was similarly strong, with correlations ranging

from .566 to .616 ($p = 0.000$). Activities such as cultural workshops, performances, and local heritage tours allow guests to actively engage with the destination's intangible cultural elements. This aligns with Anton et al. (2023), who note that interactive cultural activities create lasting impressions by involving guests directly in the cultural narrative of the locale. Themed hotels that offer such experiences not only entertain but also educate their guests, enhancing overall satisfaction.

The correlation between ICH embedded in other aspects of the hotel (e.g., ambiance, environmental integration, and cultural storytelling) and guest satisfaction was the strongest among the scales, with values ranging from .581 to .674 ($p = 0.000$). This underscores the value of a holistic approach to incorporating ICH throughout the hotel environment. Bullock et al. (2024) highlight that consistency in cultural theming across various operational facets strengthens the guest experience by ensuring a coherent narrative. Guests appreciate when every detail of the hotel aligns with the cultural theme, creating an immersive and cohesive environment. Finally, the overall extent of ICH integration showed significant correlations with guest satisfaction, ranging from .601 to .689 ($p = 0.000$). This demonstrates that a comprehensive approach to incorporating ICH across decoration, service, activities, and other aspects significantly influences guest experiences. The strong relationship between the overall extent of ICH and satisfaction highlights the importance of maintaining a unified cultural vision throughout the themed hotel. As supported by Buhalis et al. (2023), achieving high guest satisfaction requires harmonizing all aspects of the guest experience under a culturally rich and engaging framework.

Across all scales, the integration of ICH significantly enhances guest satisfaction in themed hotels. These findings emphasize the need for themed hotels in Shandong Province to adopt a multidimensional approach to ICH, focusing on decoration, service, activities, and other aspects. By leveraging ICH as a strategic asset, hotels can differentiate themselves, appeal to culturally curious travelers, and foster deeper connections with their guests. In this section, we discuss the relationship between localization of themed hotels and guest satisfaction, as detailed in Table 6. The key sub-variables examined are hotel management, hotel marketing, and local community integration, alongside their corresponding impact on guest satisfaction. Hotel management reflects how well the operations and services are organized, including staff training, leadership, and guest service standards. The correlation between hotel management and guest satisfaction in terms of guest rooms (.102*, p -value = 0.039) and food and beverage (.106*, p -value = 0.033) is significant, though the relationship is relatively weak. The significance of these values indicates that efficient hotel management plays a critical role in enhancing guest experiences, particularly in areas like room quality and food offerings. Strong management can help ensure that the facilities meet the expectations of guests, leading to better satisfaction. However, the correlation with other services (0.093, p -value = 0.062) is not statistically significant, suggesting that other aspects of hotel management may not have the same level of influence on these services. This could be due to guests perceiving these services as supplementary or secondary to the core offerings of the hotel, such as rooms and food. The finding aligns with previous studies that emphasize the role of hotel management in enhancing guest satisfaction.

Table 6
Relationship between Localization of Themed Hotels and Guest Satisfaction

HOTEL MANAGEMENT	r_s	p -value	Interpretation
Guest Rooms	.102*	0.039	Significant
Food and beverage	.106*	0.033	Significant
Other Services	0.093	0.062	Not Significant
As a Whole	0.051	0.308	Significant
<hr/>			
HOTEL MARKETING			
Guest Rooms	.498**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.480**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.482**	0.000	Significant

As a Whole	.530**	0.000	Significant
INTEGRATION OF THE HOTEL IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY			
Guest Rooms	.695**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.616**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.716**	0.000	Significant
As a Whole	.618**	0.000	Significant
OVERALL LOCALIZATION			
Guest Rooms	.296**	0.000	Significant
Food and beverage	.274**	0.000	Significant
Other Services	.286**	0.000	Significant
As a Whole	.237**	0.000	Significant

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Hotel marketing refers to how the hotel promotes its services and integrates local cultural elements in its offerings. This factor had a weak but significant correlation with guest rooms (.102*, p-value = 0.039) and food and beverage (.106*, p-value = 0.033), showing that localized marketing efforts can impact guest satisfaction in these areas. The use of local cultural themes and authentic elements in marketing can attract guests who are looking for unique, culturally immersive experiences. The influence of marketing on other services (0.093, p-value = 0.062) was not significant, suggesting that the effectiveness of marketing strategies may be less impactful in non-core services compared to more prominent offerings like rooms and food. This could indicate that guests place more value on tangible aspects of their stay, such as the physical environment and the quality of meals, rather than on less visible services. Integration with the local community is a critical factor for the success of themed hotels, as it emphasizes authenticity and local involvement. The overall correlation between localization and guest satisfaction, as represented by the overall hotel experience (.051, p-value = 0.308), is not significant. This suggests that while the hotel may be highly localized in terms of its operational and marketing aspects, it might not have an equally strong effect on overall guest satisfaction. The analysis indicates that while hotel management and marketing have a significant, albeit weak, relationship with guest satisfaction in themed hotels in Shandong Province, the integration with the local community does not show the same level of influence. This suggests that operational and promotional efforts, especially those highlighting local cultural elements, are critical in shaping guest satisfaction. However, the lack of a strong impact from local community integration suggests that there may be a gap between cultural offerings and the tangible aspects that guests prioritize. To improve satisfaction, hotels should focus on refining their management practices and marketing strategies while carefully considering guest preferences for both cultural immersion and basic service quality.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The KRAs are identified based on the study's findings, which highlight the significant role of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in enhancing guest experiences. The areas of focus, such as hotel decoration, staff training, and guest engagement, were selected because they showed the strongest potential to create meaningful cultural connections and improve guest satisfaction. The targets are set relative to the current status of ICH integration identified in the study. For instance, the 60% target for ICH-themed decor elements reflects a moderate yet achievable increase based on existing design practices. Similarly, the 100% training completion rate for staff corresponds to the study's recommendation to fully immerse frontline employees in cultural engagement strategies.

Table 7

Strategic Plan: Enhancing Intangible Cultural Heritage Integration

Key Result Areas / Objectives	Strategies/ Activities/ Programs	Key Performance Indicators	Target	Timeline	Persons Responsible
Strategic Goal #1: More Evident Intangible Cultural Heritage					
Hotel Design: Boost	Incorporate seamless blends of traditional	Percentage of decor elements that successfully	Achieve a 60/40 ratio of traditional to	Complete initial design integration	Interior Design Manager

Intangible cultural heritage, localization and guest satisfaction among themed hotels in Shandong Province

Authenticity and Immersive Experience	and modern decor elements to create a visually engaging atmosphere.	integrate traditional and modern design(Achieve a 60/40 ratio of traditional to modern decor elements)	modern decor elements	within 9 months Ongoing monitoring and adjustments	Guest Experience Coordinator
Enhance hospitality and cultural engagement	Provide comprehensive training for all frontline staff on traditional Chinese greetings and hospitality gestures.	100% Percentage of frontline staff trained Guest satisfaction scores for staff interactions	Achieve a 100% training completion rate for frontline staff Maintain a guest satisfaction score of 90% or higher	Complete training within 3 months Ongoing monitoring and refresher sessions	Training & Development Manager Guest Experience Coordinator
	Develop a library of traditional Chinese hospitality practices for staff.	Number of traditional hospitality practices documented (at least 20) 80% Percentage of staff actively utilizing the library	Curate a library of at least 20 traditional practices Ensure 80% of staff reference the library	Finalize library within 6 months Ongoing staff training	Cultural Heritage Coordinator Guest Service Manager
	Implement a quality assurance program to monitor hospitality practice integration.	Number of quality assurance audits conducted 90% Percentage of staff meeting hospitality standards	Conduct quarterly audits Achieve a 90% compliance rate	Establish quality assurance team within 3 months Implement audit schedule within 6 months	Guest Service Manager Training & Development Manager
Enhance guest engagement through cultural experiences	Collaborate with local cultural experts to design enriched event experiences (e.g., tea tastings, guqin music workshops).	Number of enriched event experiences developed (at least 4 new enriched experiences) 70% Percentage of guests participating	Create at least 4 new enriched experiences per year Achieve a participation rate of 70% or higher	Launch first enriched event within 6 months Ongoing development	Cultural Experiences Manager Community Engagement Coordinator
	Incorporate interactive elements into existing hotel programs for deeper engagement.	Number of hotel programs with interactive cultural elements(at least 50% of existing) 85% Guest satisfaction scores for cultural engagement activities	Integrate interactive elements into at least 50% of existing programs Maintain a satisfaction score of 85% or higher	Complete program updates within 9 months Ongoing monitoring	Hotel Activities Manager Guest Experience Coordinator
	Establish a feedback mechanism to gather guest insights on cultural experiences.	60% Percentage of guests providing feedback on experiences 30% Percentage of experiences updated based on feedback	Collect feedback from at least 60% of participants Implement changes to at least 30% of experiences annually	Implement feedback system within 6 months Regular reviews	Cultural Experiences Manager Guest Experience Manager
Enhance cultural representation in hotel design	Collaborate with local experts to incorporate authentic design elements and motifs in the hotel's aesthetic.	Number of local experts engaged(at least 8) 60% Percentage of design elements reflecting local ICH	Engage at least 6 experts Ensure 60% of new design elements reflect local ICH	Complete initial design collaboration within 9 months Ongoing updates	Interior Design Manager Cultural Heritage Coordinator

Table 8
Strategic Plan for Enhancing Localization in Themed Hotels

Key Result Areas / Objectives	Strategies/ Activities/ Programs	Key Performance Indicators	Target	Timeline	Persons Responsible
Strategic Goal #2: Enhanced Localization in Guest Experiences					
Personalized Service: Elevate Guest Engagement and Satisfaction	Train receptionists and concierges on local recommendations and personalized service techniques.	Increase in guest satisfaction scores through surveys(90%).	90% satisfaction rate.	3 mos	Front Desk Manager
	Develop a comprehensive local recommendation guide for staff to use, covering dining, attractions, and experiences.	Number of guides distributed and used during guest interactions (100%) .	100% of staff trained on guide use.	3 mos	Operations Manager
	Implement a feedback system for guests to share their personalized service experiences.	Review and analyze guest feedback for continuous improvement (Monthly feedback) .	Monthly feedback analysis.	Ongoing	Guest Relations Officer
Brand Identity:	Create marketing campaigns	20% Increase in brand	20% increase	6 mos	Marketing

Bian, J.

Enhance Local Culture and Recognition	highlighting local identity and culture, showcasing unique aspects of the area.	awareness metrics measured through surveys and social media engagement.	in brand recognition.		Manager
	Collaborate with local businesses for joint promotions, enhancing both brand visibility and community ties.	5 Number of partnerships formed and promotions launched.	5 active partnerships.	6 mos	Business Development Manager
	Launch a social media campaign that features staff sharing their favorite local spots, enhancing authenticity.	30% increase of Engagement metrics on social media platforms (likes, shares, comments).	30% increase in engagement.	6 mos	Social Media Coordinator
Community Integration: Foster Strong Local Connections	Design staff uniforms that incorporate local trends and personal style, allowing staff to express individuality.	Staff engagement surveys to gauge comfort and pride in uniforms(80% positive feedback).	80% positive feedback on uniforms.	9 mos	HR Manager
	Organize community events (e.g., local fairs, cultural festivals) to foster relationships with residents and promote the hotel.	Number of community events hosted and participation rates.(4 events per year.)	4 events per year.	12 months	Event Coordinator
	Encourage staff volunteerism in local initiatives, enhancing community presence and goodwill.	200 hours per year of volunteer service contributed by staff.	200 hours per year.	12 mos	Community Liaison Officer
Staff Training: Cultivate Excellence and Empowerment	Implement ongoing training sessions focused on service excellence, cultural awareness, and local knowledge.	100% Training completion rate and post-training assessment scores.	100% of staff to complete training.	12 mos	Training Coordinator
	Gather feedback from staff on training effectiveness and areas for improvement through surveys and meetings.	Average feedback score from staff regarding training(85% satisfaction).	85% satisfaction with training.	12 mos	HR Manager
	Create a mentorship program pairing experienced staff with new hires to foster a culture of learning and support.	10 Number of mentorship pairings and feedback on the program.	10 active mentorship pairs.	12 mos	Training Coordinator

The KRAs are based on the identified gaps in localization from the study, such as insufficient personalized service and limited community integration. These areas directly impact guest satisfaction and were prioritized for improvement to strengthen the hotel's connection to the local community. Targets are set by benchmarking current practices observed during the study. For instance, the goal of hosting four community events annually aligns with the study's findings on the need for frequent community interactions. The 100% training target for staff ensures full preparation to deliver personalized local recommendations.

Table 9
Strategic Plan for Enhancing Guest Satisfaction in Themed Hotels

Key Result Areas / Objectives	Strategies/Activities/Programs	Key Performance Indicators	Target	Duration	Persons Responsible
Strategic Goal #3: Strengthen Guest Satisfaction Levels					
Hotel Guest's Room	Improve Room Decoration Style: Engage a professional interior designer to create appealing and cohesive themes for all guest rooms.	Guest Satisfaction Surveys: Conduct surveys post-stay to assess guest satisfaction specifically regarding room aesthetics.	80% Satisfaction: Aim for at least 80% of guests reporting satisfaction with room decor.	6 mos	Interior Design Team: Tasked with implementing and overseeing the redesign.
	Implement Themed Room Options: Develop unique themed rooms that reflect local culture and heritage to attract diverse guest preferences.	Number of Themed Rooms: Track the number of themed rooms available for booking(5 New Themes).	5 New Themes: Introduce at least 5 new themed room designs.	3 mos	Marketing Team: Responsible for promoting and managing themed rooms.
	Gather Guest Feedback on Decor: Use feedback forms specifically focused on room decor to gather insights from guests.	90% Feedback Collection Rate: Measure the percentage of guests providing feedback on room decor.	90% Feedback: Achieve a 90% feedback collection rate from guests.	Ongoing	Front Desk: To distribute and collect feedback forms during check-out.
Food and	Reassess Pricing Strategy:	10% Price	10% Reduction: Target	3 mos	Food & Beverage

Intangible cultural heritage, localization and guest satisfaction among themed hotels in Shandong Province

Beverage	Analyze competitors' pricing and adjust food and beverage prices to ensure competitiveness while maintaining quality.	Competitiveness: Evaluate pricing against local competitors.	a 10% reduction in prices where feasible.		Manager: To lead the pricing strategy review.
	Enhance Restaurant Ambiance: Revamp the restaurant's interior design, lighting, and music to create a more inviting atmosphere.	Ambiance Rating in Surveys: Measure guest perception of restaurant ambiance through surveys(4.5/5 Average).	4.5/5 Average: Achieve an average rating of at least 4.5 out of 5 for ambiance.	6 mos	Restaurant Manager: Responsible for overseeing enhancements.
	Introduce Local Cuisine Specials: Feature seasonal local dishes to enhance the dining experience and support local producers.	2 Number of Specials Offered: Track the number of local specials featured in the menu(2 Per Month).	2 Per Month: Introduce at least 2 new local dishes each month.	Ongoing	Chef: To develop and promote new dishes.
Other Services	Expand Service Offerings: Identify and introduce new services such as butler service, local performances, and childcare services based on guest interest.	10 Variety of Services Offered: Count the number of new services introduced(10 New Services).	10 New Services: Aim to offer at least 10 new services within six months.	6 mos	Guest Services Manager: To oversee the development and implementation of new services.
	Train Staff on New Services: Conduct training sessions to ensure all staff are knowledgeable about new offerings and can promote them effectively.	100% Staff Training Completion Rate: Measure the percentage of staff trained on new services.	100% Trained: Ensure all relevant staff are trained before the launch of new services.	3 mos	HR Department: To coordinate training efforts.
	Promote Services to Guests: Use various marketing channels to inform guests about new services and encourage utilization.	50% Service Utilization Rate: Monitor how often guests use the new services offered.	50% Usage: Aim for at least 50% of guests utilizing new services.	Ongoing	Marketing Team: To create and execute promotional campaigns.
As a Whole	Conduct Facility Audits: Perform comprehensive reviews of all hotel facilities to identify areas needing improvement.	100% Audit Completion: Track the completion of facility audits across the hotel.	100% Facilities Reviewed: Ensure all facilities are audited within the timeline.	2 mos	Facilities Manager: To lead the audit process.
	Identify Gaps in Facilities: Based on audit findings, pinpoint specific gaps in services or facilities that need addressing.	5 Number of Identified Gaps: Record the number of gaps identified through audits.	5 Gaps Identified: Target to identify at least 5 key areas for improvement.	1 mo	Facilities Team: To analyze audit results and report gaps.
	Implement Improvements: Develop a timeline and budget for implementing identified improvements to enhance overall guest experience.	75% Improvement Implementation Rate: Measure the percentage of planned improvements completed.	75% Completed: Aim to complete at least 75% of improvements within the year.	12 mos	Operations Manager: To oversee implementation of improvements.

The KRAs are derived from the study's assessment of guest satisfaction metrics, which identified key areas such as room decor, food and beverage, and overall guest experience. These areas had the greatest impact on guest satisfaction levels and were chosen for targeted improvement. Targets are based on the current satisfaction levels measured in the study. For example, the 85% satisfaction target for room decor reflects an incremental improvement over existing scores. Similarly, introducing two local dishes monthly is a feasible step to enhance the food and beverage offerings while supporting local culinary traditions.

4. Conclusion and recommendation

The extent of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) integration reflects a significant commitment to authentic cultural representation. Respondents particularly valued traditional dance performances and hands-on workshops, which enhance guest engagement and cultural immersion. Themed hotels in Shandong Province exhibit a robust commitment to localization, effectively integrating local culture through authentic experiences, community engagement, and culturally-focused marketing. The emphasis on showcasing regional heritage and offering

unique local activities resonates well with guests, enhancing overall satisfaction and differentiation in a competitive market. Guest satisfaction in themed hotels in Shandong Province is largely positive, with guests expressing strong approval of the room quality and competitive pricing, while also valuing the dining experiences and service quality, though there are opportunities to improve the variety of offerings and facility completeness. There is a relationship between the intangible cultural heritage and localization of the themed hotels except between those sub-variables: hotel management to hotel decoration and hotels' other aspects. Moreover, there is a relationship between intangible cultural heritage and guest satisfaction. Lastly, there is a relationship between localization of themed hotels and guest satisfaction except between those sub-variables: hotel management and other service of the themed hotels. The researcher has proposed a strategic plan to enhance the guest satisfaction among themed hotels in Shandong Province, China. This plan emphasizes the interconnection of three key variables: intangible cultural heritage, localization, and guest satisfaction. Each of these elements plays a critical role in distinguishing themed hotels from conventional accommodations and contributes significantly to their overall success.

The themed hotels may have partnerships with local tour operators and travel agencies. This can help create tailored itineraries for older guests and solo adventurers to improve their service to cater older ages, more cultural activities for solo adventurer to encourage visitors to stay more than 6 times in a year. The themed hotel may collaborate with local communities, cultural associations, and government agencies to create opportunities for guests to interact with locals and learn about their daily lives. This could involve visits to local markets, temples, or cultural centers. Themed hotels may collaborate with local fashion designers and textile artisans. These experts help to create a more immersive and authentic cultural experience for guests, while also empowering staff to express their individuality and cultural identity. The hotel may incorporate traditional clothing elements into the staff uniforms, such as specific colors, patterns, or accessories to create a visually striking and authentic look. Themed hotels may have partnerships with local farmers and producers. This can ensure a consistent supply of high-quality, locally sourced ingredients. The themed hotels incorporate local ingredients and traditional cooking techniques into the menu to provide authentic culinary experiences. Offer themed tasting menus or cultural dining experiences. And may develop signature cocktails and mocktails that reflect the hotel's theme. By implementing these strategies, themed hotels can enhance the overall dining experience, increase guest satisfaction, and generate additional revenue. Future researchers may consider expanding the scope of their study by exploring additional variables that could influence the impact of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) on hotel operations and guest satisfaction. Some potential variables include the specific type of intangible cultural heritage incorporated (e.g., traditional music, dance, or cuisine), the level of guest involvement in cultural activities, and the duration of the guest's stay.

5. Reference

- Akel, G., & Cakir, E. (2023). Theme park hotel experience, experiential satisfaction and behavioral intention: examination of visitors' experiences. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 6(3), 1419-1440.
- Altan, H., & Grdallı, H. (2024). Conceptual Approaches in Contemporary Hotel Interiors in Northern Cyprus: Ornamentation and Representation. *Buildings*, 14(3), 804.
- Anton Clavé, S., Carlà-Uhink, F., & Freitag, F. (2023). Theming: Modes of Representation in Theme Parks and Themed Environments. In *Key Concepts in Theme Park Studies: Understanding Tourism and Leisure Spaces* (pp. 277-307). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Boswell, R. (2023). Sensory Ecofeminism for Heritage, Tourism, and Sustainability in Mauritius. *Sustainability*, 15(13), 10426.
- Buhalis, D., & Chan, J. (2023). Traveling with pets: designing hospitality services for pet owners/parents and hotel guests. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 35(12), 4217-4237.
- Bullock, K., Di Domenico, M., Miller, G., Shirgholami, Z., & Wong, Y. (2024). Under the radar? Modern slavery and labour exploitation risks for the hotel industry. *Tourism Management*, 102, 104857.
- Esfehani, M. H., & Albrecht, J. N. (2019). Planning for intangible cultural heritage in tourism: Challenges and

- implications. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 43(7), 980-1001.
- Forlani, F., Dini, M., & Pencarelli, T. (2022). The importance of food and beverages in wellness experiences: a cross-continental analysis of tourists' perceptions. *British Food Journal*, 124(13), 520-540.
- Gardiner, S., Vada, S., Yang, E. C. L., Khoo, C., & Le, T. H. (2022). Recreating history: The evolving negotiation of staged authenticity in tourism experiences. *Tourism Management*, 91, 104515.
- Guo, X. (2023). Marketing plan of the Hotel G for 2024(Master's thesis).
- Guo, Y., & Zhu, Z. (2023). Intangible cultural heritage souvenirs: image congruity and brand influence on tourists' purchase intention. *Tourism Review*, 78(4), 1203-1216.
- Guo, Yating & Yu, Bingyan. (2005). Research on the localization development of theme hotels in China. *The Border Economy and Culture* (10), 19-20
- Jimura, T. (2021). *Cultural heritage and tourism in Japan*. Routledge.
- Keskin, E., Aktaş, F., Yayla, Ö., & Dedeoğlu, B. B. (2024). The importance of nostalgic emotions and memorable tourism experience in the cultural experience. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 25(1), 1-21.
- Kumar, G. T., & Singh, A. K. (2022). Intangible cultural heritage: knowledge classification and management.
- Lee, C. K. H., Tse, Y. K., Zhang, M., & Wang, Y. (2023). What have hosts overlooked for improving stay experience in accommodation-sharing? Empirical evidence from Airbnb customer reviews. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 35(2), 765-784.
- Li Xuan, Tao Ying & Li Shilai. (2023). Comparative study on branding of non-heritage products in the context of cultural tourism integration. *Journal of Wenshan College* (02), 39-43.
- Li, C., & He, S. (2023). Changing roles of the state in the development of long-term rental apartments under a transitional housing regime in China. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 1-25.
- Li, K., Ji, C., He, Q., & Rastegar, R. (2023). Understanding the sense-making process of visitor experience in the integrated resort setting: Investigating the role of experience-centric attributes. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 25(5), 491-505.
- Lin, X. (2023). *International Hotel Brand Translation in China: The Importance and Issues of Localization*. University of Delaware.
- Main, C. P. (2022). Encouraging community interaction and activating urban life: an alternative hotel design for twenty-first-century travellers.
- Martin, P. (2022). TS Eliot: Cities and the City. In *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Urban Literary Studies* (pp. 1767-1771). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Orr, J. (2023). *Practitioner Perspectives on Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Taylor & Francis.
- Qiu, Q., Zuo, Y., & Zhang, M. (2022). Intangible Cultural Heritage in Tourism: Research Review and Investigation of Future Agenda. *Land* 2022, 11, 139.
- Qiu, Sam. (2021). *Coupling mechanism and empirical study of intangible cultural heritage and tourism industry* (Doctoral dissertation, China University of Mining and Technology).
- Saxena, S. K., Gupta, V., & Kumar, S. (2024). Enhancing Guest Loyalty in the Hotel Industry Through Artificial Intelligence-Drive Personalization. In *New Technologies in Virtual and Hybrid Events* (pp. 335-350). IGI Global.
- Tao, C. B., Deng, B., & Sun, J. (2024). Memorable interactive experiences between hosts and guests in B&Bs and their generation process: The host perspective. *Tourism Management*, 102, 104861.
- Wang Bin (2023-05-08). Non-legacy + eating, living, traveling, entertainment and shopping. *China Culture News*, 003.
- Wang, J. (2022). More than Souvenirs--An Analysis of the Roles of Souvenirs in Enriching the Museum Visiting Experience.
- Wang, Lina & Zheng, Xiangmin. (2010). Analysis of the theme display of Chinese theme hotels. *Journal of Tourism Research* (03) 63-66
- Wang, M. Y., Li, Y. Q., Ruan, W. Q., Zhang, S. N., & Li, R. (2024). Influencing factors and formation process of cultural inheritance-based innovation at heritage tourism destinations. *Tourism Management*, 100, 104799.
-

- Yuan, J. J., Bauman, M. J., Ferns, B. H., Ebrahimzadeh, M., & Alshiha, A. A. (2023). Restaurant dining environment, restaurant formality and dining involvement in the context of memorable dining experiences (Mdes). *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 24(6), 957-984.
- Zhang Chen. (2022). Research on the Exhibition Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Master's thesis, Shandong Arts Institute).
- Zhang, Chunhui & Wu, Meizhen. (2019). Research on marketing strategy of Longquan celadon culture lodging under the threshold of intangible cultural heritage. *China Market* (06), 139-140.
doi:10.13939/j.cnki.zgsc.2019.06.139.
- Zhang, L. (2022). Customer Willingness to Pay for All-Inclusive Resorts: A Choice-Based Conjoint Analysis (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nevada, Las Vegas).
- Zhang, L. (2024). *Living in Heritage: Tulou as Vernacular Architecture, Global Asset, and Tourist Destination in Contemporary China*. Indiana University Press.
- Zhang, X., Yu, J., & Kim, H. S. (2024). Exploring customers experience and satisfaction with theme hotels: A cross-cultural analysis of hotel reviews. *SAGE Open*, 14(2), 21582440241255827.
- Zou, and Feng, (2020). The value of intangible cultural heritage in the new era of culture and tourism fusion: A case study of Shandong Changdao Fishermen's Horn. *Journal of Changchun University* (09), 81-84.