

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE PERCEPTION AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE INHERITANCE IN DALI VILLAGE, GUIZHOU

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Abstract. Intangible cultural heritage represents the collective memory, cultural identity, and traditional knowledge of local communities, while its sustainable inheritance increasingly faces challenges arising from modernization, migration, and lifestyle transformation. Cultural landscapes provide important spatial and cultural contexts for maintaining and transmitting intangible cultural heritage; however, the relationship between residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes and intangible cultural heritage inheritance (ICHI) remains insufficiently explored. This study investigates the relationship between cultural landscape perception (CLP) and intangible cultural heritage inheritance (ICHI) in Dali Village, Guizhou Province, using questionnaire survey data collected from local residents. Through descriptive analysis, reliability testing, and correlation analysis, the study examines residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes and their willingness to participate in intangible cultural heritage inheritance. The findings reveal that residents generally demonstrate high levels of CLP and ICHI, and CLP is significantly positively associated with ICHI. The results indicate that stronger recognition of cultural values, historical meanings, and emotional connections with local landscapes can enhance residents' willingness to preserve and transmit traditional cultural practices. This study highlights the importance of integrating cultural landscape conservation with community-based intangible cultural heritage inheritance. The findings provide practical implications for promoting sustainable heritage conservation and cultural continuity in traditional villages.

Keywords: *cultural landscape perception, intangible cultural heritage inheritance, traditional villages, community participation*

Introduction

Cultural landscapes are the result of long-term interactions between humans and the natural environment (Brumann and Gfeller, 2022; Taylor and Lennon, 2011). They embody not only physical spaces shaped by historical activities but also the collective memory, values, customs, and identities of local communities (Pijet-Migoń and Migoń, 2022). As an important component of cultural heritage, cultural landscapes provide the environmental and social context in which intangible cultural heritage inheritance (ICHI) is created, practiced, and transmitted (Deng, 2023). The relationship between cultural landscapes and ICH is particularly evident in traditional villages, where local residents continue to preserve customs, rituals, craftsmanship, festivals, and oral traditions that have developed through continuous adaptation to geographical and cultural environments (Cai et al., 2024; Xu and Zou, 2022). Consequently, increasing attention has been paid to understanding how cultural landscapes influence ICHI. In recent decades, globalization, urbanization, and modernization have profoundly transformed traditional rural societies. Population migration, industrial restructuring,

and changing lifestyles have accelerated the disappearance of traditional cultural practices in many regions. Young generations are increasingly attracted to urban employment opportunities, leaving rural communities with aging populations and weakened cultural continuity. Traditional craftsmanship, folk festivals, indigenous knowledge, and oral expressions are gradually losing practitioners and audiences. At the same time, physical changes in rural landscapes, including new infrastructure construction, tourism-oriented development, and land use transformation, have altered the cultural environments that historically supported the transmission of local traditions. These challenges have raised growing concerns among governments, scholars, and international organizations regarding the long-term sustainability of intangible cultural heritage (Zhou et al., 2022).

Recognizing these challenges, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has emphasized that safeguarding intangible cultural heritage requires more than documenting cultural practices or protecting individual heritage items (Lázaro Ortiz and Jimenez de Madariaga, 2022). Instead, effective safeguarding depends on maintaining the living cultural environments in which these traditions continue to exist and evolve. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage highlights the importance of communities, groups, and individuals as the primary bearers of cultural heritage. Similarly, the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape advocates integrated approaches that consider the interactions between tangible heritage, intangible values, local identity, and community participation. These international initiatives suggest that cultural landscapes should be understood not merely as physical settings but as dynamic cultural systems that sustain traditional knowledge and cultural practices. China possesses one of the richest collections of intangible cultural heritage resources in the world. Since the implementation of the national strategy for rural revitalization, the protection of traditional villages and cultural heritage has become an important component of sustainable rural development. Numerous policies encourage the conservation of historic settlements, the revitalization of traditional industries, and the preservation of local customs. Nevertheless, practical challenges remain. Many heritage conservation projects have focused primarily on restoring historical buildings or developing tourism infrastructure, while comparatively less attention has been paid to residents' perceptions of their cultural landscapes and the ways these perceptions influence their willingness to participate in heritage preservation. Without strong community recognition and engagement, conservation efforts may become superficial, resulting in the commercialization of heritage rather than its sustainable inheritance.

Among China's culturally diverse regions, Guizhou Province represents a particularly valuable context for studying the interaction between cultural landscapes and ICHI. The province is characterized by its mountainous geography, ethnic diversity, and abundance of traditional villages that retain distinctive architectural styles, agricultural systems, religious beliefs, and folk customs. These villages have preserved rich cultural traditions despite rapid socioeconomic transformation. Dali Village, located in Guizhou Province, exemplifies these characteristics. The village maintains a relatively complete traditional settlement pattern while continuing to practice various forms of intangible cultural heritage, including traditional festivals, folk performances, handicrafts, ritual activities, and oral traditions. The coexistence of tangible cultural landscapes and living cultural practices makes Dali Village an appropriate case for examining how local residents perceive cultural landscapes and how these perceptions relate to the

inheritance of intangible cultural heritage. Although studies on cultural landscapes and ICHI have expanded considerably over the past two decades, existing research exhibits several limitations. First, many studies examine cultural landscapes primarily from the perspectives of landscape conservation, tourism development, or ecological management. They emphasize the physical characteristics of heritage sites while paying less attention to the subjective perceptions of local communities. Cultural landscapes are socially constructed through continuous interactions between people and place. Therefore, understanding how residents perceive the meanings, values, and functions of cultural landscapes is essential for explaining their conservation behaviors and cultural participation. Second, research on ICHI has traditionally focused on institutional protection mechanisms, government policies, educational programs, and tourism-based revitalization. Considerable attention has been devoted to documenting heritage resources, evaluating conservation effectiveness, and analyzing policy implementation. However, comparatively fewer studies investigate the psychological and social factors influencing community participation in heritage transmission. Third, previous empirical studies frequently rely on qualitative approaches such as interviews, participant observation, ethnographic investigation, and historical documentation. These methods provide valuable insights into local cultural contexts but often lack systematic quantitative evidence that can evaluate the relationships among different variables. In particular, questionnaire-based empirical research examining residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes and their influence on ICHI remains relatively scarce. Quantitative approaches can complement qualitative findings by identifying broader patterns of perception, participation, and behavioral intention across community members. Such evidence is useful for evaluating conservation policies and designing community-centered heritage management strategies.

Against this background, this study investigates the relationship between cultural landscape perception and intangible cultural heritage inheritance in Dali Village, Guizhou Province. Rather than focusing solely on physical heritage conservation, the study considers cultural landscapes as integrated systems composed of natural environments, built heritage, cultural symbols, historical memories, and community experiences. Residents' perceptions are regarded as multidimensional constructs involving cognitive recognition, emotional attachment, aesthetic appreciation, cultural identity, and perceived conservation value. The study further examines whether stronger perceptions of cultural landscapes contribute to more positive attitudes toward ICHI. To achieve this objective, questionnaire surveys are employed to collect empirical data from residents of Dali Village. The survey measures participants' perceptions of local cultural landscapes, their awareness of intangible cultural heritage, their participation in traditional cultural activities, and their willingness to support future heritage conservation. Statistical analyses are then conducted to identify the relationships among these variables and to explore the factors influencing community participation in ICHI. Compared with qualitative case studies, this quantitative approach provides more systematic evidence regarding the role of community perception in heritage conservation.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to both theoretical development and practical heritage management. From a theoretical perspective, the research extends existing studies by integrating cultural landscape perception with ICHI within a unified analytical framework. It enriches the literature by emphasizing the psychological dimensions of heritage conservation and highlighting the importance of residents'

subjective experiences. The study also provides empirical evidence regarding the interaction between cultural landscapes and living cultural heritage, thereby supporting interdisciplinary research connecting cultural geography, heritage studies, environmental psychology, and rural sociology. From a practical perspective, the study offers policy implications for governments, heritage managers, and local communities. Understanding residents' perceptions can assist policymakers in designing conservation strategies that strengthen community participation rather than relying exclusively on administrative intervention. The results may also support rural revitalization initiatives by promoting community-centered heritage management, encouraging cultural education, and balancing tourism development with heritage authenticity. In addition, the findings may provide practical references for other traditional villages facing similar challenges in safeguarding ICHI while pursuing sustainable socioeconomic development. This research also contributes to the growing international discussion on sustainable heritage conservation. Contemporary heritage management increasingly recognizes that successful conservation depends not only on protecting physical objects but also on maintaining the social and cultural processes through which heritage continues to acquire meaning. By focusing on community perceptions in Dali Village, this study demonstrates how local residents actively shape the continuity of cultural traditions through everyday practices and collective participation. Such an approach aligns with global efforts to promote community-based heritage governance and sustainable cultural development.

Literature review

Cultural landscape perception

The concept of cultural landscape emphasizes the continuous interaction between human activities and the natural environment (Su et al., 2025). Song et al. (2025) argue that landscapes are shaped by cultural processes and reflect the historical relationship between societies and their surrounding environments. This perspective challenged the traditional view of landscapes as merely physical spaces and highlighted their cultural, social, and historical meanings. Later studies further expanded this understanding by recognizing cultural landscapes as dynamic systems that integrate material environments, social practices, collective memories, and cultural identities (Luo et al., 2025; Neumann et al., 2025). The UNESCO World Heritage Convention provides an influential definition of cultural landscapes, describing them as the combined works of nature and humans that demonstrate the evolution of societies under physical constraints and cultural influences. Based on this perspective, cultural landscapes include not only tangible elements such as traditional buildings, settlement patterns, and agricultural systems but also intangible values embedded in local knowledge, customs, beliefs, and social practices (Mteti et al., 2025; Ye et al., 2025). Therefore, cultural landscapes serve as important spaces where cultural traditions are created, maintained, and transmitted.

Building on this perspective, cultural landscape perception refers to the process through which individuals recognize, interpret, and evaluate the cultural meanings and values associated with landscapes. Unlike objective assessments of landscape characteristics, perception emphasizes the subjective experiences of individuals and communities. It involves multiple dimensions, including cognitive recognition of historical and cultural values, emotional attachment to places, aesthetic appreciation, and perceptions of cultural identity. Environmental psychology and human geography

research suggest that people's interpretations of landscapes influence their attitudes toward conservation and their willingness to participate in local cultural activities. Place attachment theory provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding cultural landscape perception. Lentini and Decortis (2010) proposed that continuous interaction between people and places creates emotional connections and transforms physical spaces into meaningful places. Similarly, Shamsuddin and Ujang (2008) argued that a strong sense of place develops when individuals establish emotional and cultural relationships with their living environments. These theories indicate that cultural landscapes contribute to community identity by providing shared memories and symbolic meanings, which may encourage residents to protect and maintain local cultural resources.

Recent empirical studies have demonstrated that cultural landscape perception influences various aspects of community behavior (Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). Research on traditional villages has shown that residents who perceive stronger historical, cultural, and social values in local landscapes tend to exhibit greater place attachment and stronger support for heritage conservation (López-Santiago et al., 2014). In addition, cultural landscape perception has been found to influence residents' satisfaction with living environments, participation in community activities, and attitudes toward tourism development. These findings suggest that residents' perceptions are an essential factor in determining whether cultural landscapes can continue to function as living heritage environments. However, existing studies have mainly focused on landscape conservation, tourism experiences, and environmental evaluation, while relatively less attention has been paid to the role of cultural landscape perception in sustaining intangible cultural practices. Since intangible cultural heritage is embedded within specific cultural spaces, residents' understanding and appreciation of local landscapes may influence their motivation to participate in heritage inheritance. Therefore, examining cultural landscape perception provides an important perspective for understanding how communities contribute to the continuity of intangible cultural heritage.

Intangible cultural heritage inheritance

ICH I refers to the cultural practices, knowledge systems, skills, rituals, expressions, and traditions that communities recognize as part of their cultural identity (Cai et al., 2024). Unlike tangible heritage, which is preserved through physical conservation, ICHI exists through continuous practice, social interaction, and intergenerational transmission. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage emphasizes that ICHI is a living cultural process created and maintained by communities, groups, and individuals. Therefore, safeguarding ICHI requires not only documentation and protection but also ensuring its continued practice and transmission within social contexts. The concept of ICHI highlights the dynamic process through which cultural knowledge and practices are transferred across generations. Previous studies have argued that inheritance should not be understood as a simple reproduction of traditional forms but as a process of adaptation and reconstruction in response to social changes (Deng, 2023; Yan and Li, 2023). Cultural traditions continuously evolve as communities encounter modernization, technological development, and economic transformation. Thus, successful ICHI depends on maintaining cultural continuity while allowing appropriate adaptation to contemporary conditions.

Community participation is widely considered a key factor influencing the sustainability of ICHI (Shen et al., 2023). Since local residents are the primary practitioners and transmitters of intangible heritage, their cultural awareness, emotional attachment, and willingness to participate directly affect whether heritage practices can continue. Previous research has demonstrated that communities with strong cultural identity and collective memory are more likely to engage in traditional festivals, handicraft production, cultural education, and heritage protection activities (Kohsaka et al., 2019). In contrast, declining community involvement may lead to weakened transmission mechanisms and the gradual disappearance of traditional practices. ICHI is also closely associated with social and economic transformation. Urbanization, migration, and changes in lifestyles have created significant challenges for traditional cultural transmission. Younger generations often have fewer opportunities to learn traditional skills or participate in cultural activities due to educational and occupational changes. As a result, many traditional practices face problems such as a shortage of successors and declining social recognition. However, modernization also provides new opportunities. Digital technologies, cultural industries, and tourism development have expanded the visibility of ICHI and created new channels for cultural dissemination. The challenge lies in balancing cultural revitalization with the preservation of authenticity and community ownership.

Tourism development has received particular attention in studies of ICHI (Kanematsu et al., 2023). Cultural tourism can provide financial support for traditional crafts, festivals, and performances, while increasing public awareness of local heritage. However, scholars have also pointed out that excessive commercialization may transform living cultural practices into standardized products designed primarily for visitors (Tachibana and Sano, 2025). Such transformations may weaken the original social meanings of heritage and reduce community participation. Therefore, sustainable ICHI requires approaches that prioritize local communities and maintain the connection between cultural practices and their original social environments. Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into the mechanisms of ICHI, several limitations remain. Existing research has mainly examined policy frameworks, institutional protection, tourism development, and cultural transmission mechanisms. Comparatively limited attention has been paid to the psychological factors influencing residents' willingness to inherit intangible cultural heritage. In particular, the relationship between residents' perceptions of their cultural landscapes and their participation in ICHI has not been sufficiently explored. Since cultural landscapes provide the physical and symbolic environments in which heritage practices develop, examining this relationship is important for understanding the long-term sustainability of intangible cultural heritage.

Cultural landscape perception and intangible cultural heritage

Cultural landscape perception and intangible cultural heritage are closely interconnected because cultural traditions are embedded within specific spatial and social environments (Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). Intangible cultural heritage does not develop independently from landscapes; rather, it relies on cultural spaces that provide historical context, social networks, and opportunities for everyday practice (Kang et al., 2023). Traditional villages, in particular, represent integrated systems where architecture, natural environments, community relationships, and cultural activities interact to support the continuation of local heritage. Therefore, residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes may influence their recognition of cultural values and their

willingness to participate in ICHI. The relationship between landscape perception and heritage inheritance can be explained through place attachment theory and sense of place theory. Xiaofeng et al. (2026) suggested that individuals develop emotional connections with places through long-term experiences and cultural interactions. These emotional bonds transform physical spaces into meaningful places that represent personal memories and collective identities. Similarly, Ahmadi and HaghighatBin (2026) argued that a strong sense of place contributes to individuals' feelings of belonging and responsibility toward their living environments. Within traditional villages, cultural landscapes often serve as carriers of collective memory, connecting residents with ancestral traditions, historical events, and local cultural practices. As residents develop stronger emotional connections with these landscapes, they may become more willing to maintain and transmit associated cultural heritage.

Cultural identity represents another important mechanism linking cultural landscape perception and ICHI. Cultural landscapes contain symbolic meanings that reflect the history, values, and lifestyles of local communities. Positive perceptions of these landscapes can strengthen residents' recognition of local culture and enhance their sense of identity. Previous studies have found that individuals with stronger cultural identity are more likely to participate in cultural activities, support heritage conservation, and transmit traditional knowledge to younger generations. Therefore, cultural landscape perception may promote ICHI by reinforcing residents' cultural belonging and responsibility. Community participation provides another explanation for this relationship. Contemporary heritage studies emphasize that sustainable heritage conservation depends on active involvement from local communities rather than relying solely on government protection. Residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes influence how they evaluate the importance of local heritage and whether they consider themselves responsible for its preservation. When communities perceive cultural landscapes as valuable cultural resources, they are more likely to participate in traditional festivals, cultural activities, and heritage protection initiatives. In contrast, weak recognition of cultural landscapes may reduce community engagement and negatively affect the continuity of ICHI.

Empirical studies have provided supporting evidence for the relationship between landscape perception and cultural conservation behavior. Research on traditional settlements has shown that residents who recognize the historical and cultural significance of local landscapes demonstrate stronger conservation intentions and greater willingness to participate in heritage-related activities (Cai et al., 2025). Studies in different cultural contexts, including European historic villages and Asian traditional communities, have similarly indicated that place attachment and cultural identity are important predictors of heritage protection behavior (Lu et al., 2025). These findings suggest that residents' perceptions of cultural environments are not merely passive evaluations but active factors shaping cultural sustainability. However, the existing literature still provides limited direct evidence regarding the influence of cultural landscape perception on ICHI. Many previous studies have focused on the preservation of physical landscapes or analyzed residents' attitudes toward tourism development, while fewer studies have examined whether landscape perceptions affect residents' willingness to maintain and transmit intangible cultural practices. In addition, previous research has frequently adopted qualitative approaches, which provide detailed cultural interpretations but may lack quantitative measurement of relationships between variables. Traditional villages in China provide an important context for further

exploring this relationship. Unlike heritage sites that have become primarily tourism destinations, many traditional villages continue to function as living communities where cultural practices remain part of everyday life. The interaction between residents, landscapes, and cultural traditions creates unique conditions for examining the mechanisms of ICHI. In particular, villages in ethnic minority regions of Guizhou preserve rich cultural landscapes and diverse intangible heritage resources, offering valuable cases for understanding community-based heritage conservation.

Research gaps

Although previous studies have provided important insights into cultural landscape conservation and intangible cultural heritage inheritance, several research gaps remain. First, existing studies have generally examined cultural landscapes and intangible cultural heritage from separate perspectives. Cultural landscape research has mainly focused on physical conservation, landscape evaluation, and tourism development, while ICHI studies have emphasized policy protection, cultural transmission, and institutional management. However, intangible cultural heritage is deeply embedded within cultural landscapes, and the interaction between residents and their surrounding environments plays an important role in sustaining cultural practices. Therefore, a more integrated examination of the relationship between cultural landscape perception and ICHI is needed. Second, previous research has paid insufficient attention to residents' subjective perceptions in heritage conservation. Many studies evaluate heritage value based on expert assessments, historical significance, or physical characteristics, while overlooking how local communities understand and experience cultural landscapes. Since residents are the primary practitioners and transmitters of intangible cultural heritage, their perceptions, emotional attachment, and cultural identification directly influence their willingness to participate in heritage inheritance. Investigating residents' perceptions can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the social mechanisms underlying heritage sustainability.

Third, existing empirical studies have mainly relied on qualitative approaches, including interviews, ethnographic observations, and case analyses. These methods provide valuable explanations of cultural meanings and community experiences, but quantitative evidence regarding the relationship between cultural landscape perception and ICHI remains limited. A systematic measurement of residents' perceptions and inheritance intentions can provide stronger empirical support for understanding the factors influencing heritage continuity. Fourth, research focusing on traditional villages in southwestern China remains relatively insufficient. Although Guizhou Province contains abundant cultural landscape resources and diverse intangible cultural heritage, existing studies have primarily concentrated on tourism development, ethnic culture documentation, and heritage resource evaluation. Less attention has been given to how local residents perceive cultural landscapes and how such perceptions affect their willingness to inherit local traditions. To address these gaps, this study takes Dali Village, Guizhou Province, as a case study and employs a questionnaire survey to investigate the relationship between cultural landscape perception and intangible cultural heritage inheritance. By incorporating residents' subjective experiences into heritage research, this study aims to provide empirical evidence for understanding community participation in cultural sustainability and offer practical implications for the conservation and revitalization of traditional villages.

Materials and Methods

Research purpose and participant selection

This study adopts a questionnaire survey approach to investigate the relationship between cultural landscape perception and ICHI in Dali Village, Guizhou Province. Compared with qualitative methods, questionnaire surveys enable the systematic measurement of residents' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions, providing quantitative evidence for understanding the factors influencing heritage sustainability (Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). The survey has three main objectives. First, it examines residents' perceptions of the cultural landscape of Dali Village, including their recognition of cultural values, historical meanings, and emotional connections with local landscapes (Su et al., 2025; Ye et al., 2025). Second, it evaluates residents' awareness, participation willingness, and attitudes toward intangible cultural heritage inheritance (Cai et al., 2024; Deng, 2023). Third, it explores whether cultural landscape perception contributes to residents' willingness to preserve and transmit local cultural traditions (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025).

Dali Village was selected as the research site for several reasons. First, it represents a typical traditional village where natural environments, settlement patterns, historical buildings, and cultural practices have developed through long-term interactions between local communities and their surroundings. The village retains distinctive cultural landscape characteristics and provides an appropriate context for studying the relationship between landscape perception and cultural inheritance. Second, Dali Village possesses abundant intangible cultural heritage resources, including traditional festivals, folk customs, handicrafts, and community rituals. These cultural practices remain closely connected with residents' daily lives, making the village a living cultural environment rather than merely a heritage tourism site. Third, the village has experienced socioeconomic changes associated with modernization and rural development, which create both opportunities and challenges for the continuity of traditional culture. The participants of this study were local residents of Dali Village. Since residents are the direct users and transmitters of cultural heritage, their perceptions and attitudes are essential for understanding the sustainability of ICH inheritance (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024). Respondents from different age groups, occupations, education levels, and residence durations were included to capture diverse perspectives.

Sampling method and questionnaire design

This study employed purposive sampling combined with convenience sampling. Purposive sampling was initially used to identify participants who had sufficient knowledge of local cultural landscapes and traditions. Individuals who had lived in Dali Village for a relatively long period were selected because they were more familiar with local cultural practices and environmental changes. After identifying suitable participants, convenience sampling was applied during questionnaire distribution. Due to the geographical characteristics of traditional villages and the difficulty of obtaining complete population lists, probability sampling was challenging in the field context. However, efforts were made to improve sample diversity by selecting respondents from different areas of the village and different demographic groups. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed during the field survey. After removing incomplete responses, 312 valid questionnaires were obtained, resulting in a valid response rate of

89.1%. The sample size was considered adequate for subsequent statistical analysis. The collected data were coded and analyzed using statistical methods to examine residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes and their attitudes toward ICHI. The questionnaire was developed based on previous studies related to cultural landscape perception, place attachment, community participation, and intangible cultural heritage conservation (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024; Kang et al., 2023). The questionnaire consisted of three sections: demographic information, cultural landscape perception, and intangible cultural heritage inheritance.

The first section collected respondents' demographic characteristics, including gender, age, education level, occupation, and length of residence. These variables were included because residents with different social backgrounds may have different levels of cultural awareness, emotional attachment, and participation in heritage activities (Mteti et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025). The second section measured cultural landscape perception. Based on previous studies, cultural landscape perception was conceptualized as residents' cognitive and emotional evaluation of the cultural, historical, and symbolic meanings of local landscapes (Su et al., 2025; Ye et al., 2025; Kang et al., 2023). The measurement items focused on four dimensions: recognition of cultural value, historical awareness, emotional attachment, and conservation perception (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The third section measured intangible cultural heritage inheritance. Following previous studies on heritage participation and cultural transmission, ICH inheritance was evaluated from four aspects: heritage awareness, willingness to participate, intergenerational transmission intention, and support for conservation (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024; Yan and Li, 2023; Deng, 2023). The respondents rated each item using the same five-point Likert scale. The detailed measurement items are presented in *Table 1*. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Before the formal survey, the questionnaire was reviewed by researchers in heritage studies and rural development to ensure content validity. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of residents to identify ambiguous expressions and improve questionnaire clarity. The final survey was conducted through face-to-face distribution in Dali Village. After excluding incomplete responses, valid questionnaires were coded and analyzed using statistical methods, including descriptive analysis, reliability testing, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

Table 1. *Measurement items.*

Variable	Code	Measurement Item
Cultural landscape perception (CLP)	CLP1	I believe that the cultural landscape of Dali Village reflects its unique historical and cultural identity.
	CLP2	I recognize the cultural and historical values embedded in the traditional landscape of Dali Village.
	CLP3	I feel emotionally attached to the cultural landscape of Dali Village.
	CLP4	The traditional buildings, environment, and cultural spaces of the village are important components of local heritage.
	CLP5	I believe the cultural landscape of Dali Village should be protected for future generations.
Intangible cultural heritage inheritance (ICHI)	ICHI1	I believe that local intangible cultural heritage is an important part of community identity.
	ICHI2	I am willing to participate in activities related to local intangible cultural heritage.
	ICHI3	I support young generations learning and inheriting traditional cultural practices.

ICH14	I am willing to contribute to the preservation and transmission of local intangible cultural heritage.
ICH15	The inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is important for the sustainable development of Dali Village.

Results and Discussion

Demographic characteristics of respondents

A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed to residents of Dali Village, and 312 valid responses were obtained after excluding incomplete questionnaires, resulting in a valid response rate of 89.1%. The demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in *Table 2*. The sample included residents with diverse backgrounds in terms of gender, age, education level, occupation, and length of residence, providing a relatively comprehensive representation of local community perceptions. The gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 158 male respondents (50.6%) and 154 female respondents (49.4%). Regarding age structure, respondents aged between 41 and 60 accounted for the largest proportion (39.4%), followed by those aged over 60 (27.6%). Younger residents aged below 40 represented approximately one-third of the sample. This distribution reflects the demographic characteristics of many traditional villages, where middle-aged and older residents constitute an important group involved in maintaining local cultural practices. In terms of education level, most respondents had received secondary education, accounting for 58.0% of the sample, while respondents with higher education backgrounds represented a smaller proportion. Regarding occupation, agricultural workers and self-employed residents formed the majority of respondents, reflecting the economic characteristics of traditional rural communities. Additionally, more than half of the participants had lived in Dali Village for over 20 years, suggesting that most respondents possessed substantial knowledge and experience regarding local cultural landscapes and heritage practices. The demographic characteristics indicate that the respondents were generally familiar with the cultural environment of Dali Village. Therefore, their responses can provide meaningful insights into residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes and their willingness to participate in intangible cultural heritage inheritance.

Table 2. *Measurement items.*

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	158	50.6
	Female	154	49.4
Age	Below 30	45	14.4
	31–40	58	18.6
	41–60	123	39.4
	Above 60	86	27.6
Education	Primary school or below	52	16.7
	Junior/Senior high school	181	58.0
	College or above	79	25.3
Occupation	Agriculture	126	40.4
	Self-employed/business	74	23.7
	Service sector	53	17.0
	Others	59	18.9
Residence duration	Less than 10 years	37	11.9
	10–20 years	72	23.1
	More than 20 years	203	65.0

Residents' perception of cultural landscape

The measurement results indicate that residents generally demonstrated positive perceptions toward the cultural landscape of Dali Village. As shown in Table 4.2, the overall mean score of cultural landscape perception (CLP) was 4.21, indicating a relatively high level of recognition among residents. This finding suggests that local communities widely acknowledge the cultural, historical, and social values embedded in the village landscape. Among the five measurement items, CLP5 (“The cultural landscape of Dali Village should be protected for future generations”) received the highest mean score (4.35). This result indicates that residents strongly recognize the importance of landscape conservation and believe that cultural landscapes represent valuable resources for future generations. The high level of conservation awareness may be associated with residents’ long-term interaction with their living environment and their understanding of the cultural meanings attached to local landscapes (Su et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Lentini and Decortis, 2010). CLP1 and CLP2 also received relatively high scores, with means of 4.28 and 4.24 respectively. These findings demonstrate that residents perceive cultural landscapes not merely as physical environments but as representations of local history and cultural identity (Ye et al., 2025; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). Traditional buildings, village structures, and cultural spaces function as important symbols connecting current residents with collective memories and ancestral traditions (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). The relatively high score of CLP3 (4.12) further suggests that residents have developed emotional attachment to their cultural environment. This result supports previous studies emphasizing the importance of place attachment in heritage conservation (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Shamsuddin and Ujang, 2008). When individuals develop emotional connections with places, they are more likely to perceive cultural protection as a personal and collective responsibility (Cai et al., 2025; Lentini and Decortis, 2010). Overall, the findings demonstrate that cultural landscape perception among Dali Village residents is characterized by strong cultural recognition, emotional connection, and conservation awareness. These positive perceptions provide an important social foundation for the continued inheritance of intangible cultural heritage (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024).

Residents’ attitudes of intangible cultural heritage inheritance

The results show that residents of Dali Village also expressed strong willingness to support intangible cultural heritage inheritance. The overall mean score of ICHI was 4.18, indicating that most respondents recognized the importance of maintaining local traditions and participating in heritage-related activities. Among the measurement items, ICHI1 (“Local intangible cultural heritage is an important part of community identity”) received the highest score (4.31). This suggests that residents perceive ICH as a significant component of local identity rather than merely a cultural resource. Such recognition is essential because cultural identity provides motivation for individuals to maintain traditional practices (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). ICHI3, which measured support for younger generations learning traditional culture, also received a high score (4.26). This finding highlights the importance residents attach to intergenerational transmission. Since many traditional cultural practices depend on knowledge transfer between generations, residents’ willingness to encourage young people to participate represents an important condition for long-term heritage sustainability (Cai et al., 2024; Yan and Li, 2023). However, ICHI2 (“I am willing to participate in activities related to local intangible cultural heritage”) received

a comparatively lower score (4.05). This indicates that although residents recognize the value of heritage, their actual participation may be influenced by practical factors such as time constraints, economic opportunities, and changing lifestyles. This gap between cultural recognition and behavioral participation has also been identified in previous heritage studies (Cai et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024).

Relationship between cultural landscape perception and ICHI

To further examine the relationship between cultural landscape perception (CLP) and intangible cultural heritage inheritance (ICHI), reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis were conducted. The results are presented in *Table 3*. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of both variables exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales. Specifically, the reliability coefficient of CLP was 0.876, while that of ICHI was 0.892. These results suggest that the measurement items effectively captured residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes and their willingness to participate in intangible cultural heritage inheritance. The descriptive statistics show that respondents generally demonstrated positive attitudes toward both CLP and ICHI. The mean value of CLP was 4.21, with a standard deviation of 0.52, indicating that residents highly recognized the historical, cultural, and symbolic values embedded in the cultural landscape of Dali Village. Similarly, the mean value of ICHI was 4.18, with a standard deviation of 0.56, suggesting that residents showed strong awareness of the importance of intangible cultural heritage inheritance and expressed a willingness to support cultural transmission activities. The correlation analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between CLP and ICHI ($r = 0.642$, $p < 0.01$). This finding indicates that residents with stronger perceptions of cultural landscapes tend to exhibit stronger willingness to inherit and support local intangible cultural heritage. In other words, the recognition of cultural landscapes is closely associated with residents' attitudes and behavioral intentions toward heritage inheritance.

Table 3. Reliability, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis of CLP and ICHI.

Variables	Cronbach's α	Mean	Standard Deviation	Correlation
Cultural Landscape Perception (CLP)	0.876	4.21	0.52	0.642**
ICHI	0.892	4.18	0.56	0.642**

The positive association between CLP and ICHI can be explained through the perspective of place attachment and cultural identity (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Lu et al., 2025). Cultural landscapes provide not only physical spaces for community life but also symbolic environments that preserve collective memories and cultural meanings (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). When residents perceive local landscapes as important representations of their history and identity, they are more likely to develop emotional connections with these places (Su et al., 2025; Shamsuddin and Ujang, 2008). Such emotional attachment can enhance their sense of cultural responsibility and encourage active participation in heritage inheritance (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). This finding is consistent with previous studies suggesting that heritage sustainability depends largely on community recognition and participation (Cai et al., 2025; 2024; Mteti et al., 2025). Although institutional protection and government policies provide external support, intangible cultural heritage can only remain sustainable when local residents actively practice, recognize, and transmit cultural traditions (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024; Lázaro Ortiz and

Jimenez de Madariaga, 2022). In Dali Village, positive perceptions of cultural landscapes appear to strengthen residents' cultural identity and increase their willingness to participate in activities related to ICHI. Furthermore, the results highlight the interconnected nature of tangible and intangible heritage (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). Traditional village conservation has often focused on physical elements, such as historical buildings, settlement patterns, and landscape restoration. However, cultural landscapes gain heritage significance through the cultural meanings and social practices attached to them (Ye et al., 2025; Kang et al., 2023). The preservation of physical environments alone cannot guarantee the continuity of intangible heritage. Instead, sustainable conservation requires maintaining the interaction between landscapes, communities, and cultural practices (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019).

The findings also provide important implications for heritage management under the context of rural transformation. Although residents showed strong recognition of ICHI, participation in heritage activities may still be affected by socioeconomic changes, particularly among younger generations. Migration, changing employment patterns, and modern lifestyles may reduce opportunities for cultural learning and intergenerational transmission (Cai et al., 2024; Deng, 2023). Therefore, heritage protection strategies should not only improve residents' awareness of cultural landscapes but also create practical opportunities for participation, such as cultural education programs, community-based activities, and local heritage projects (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Yan and Li, 2023). Overall, the empirical results demonstrate that cultural landscape perception is an important factor associated with intangible cultural heritage inheritance in Dali Village. Higher levels of recognition, emotional attachment, and conservation awareness toward cultural landscapes contribute to stronger willingness among residents to maintain and transmit local cultural traditions. These findings emphasize the importance of adopting community-centered approaches that integrate cultural landscape conservation with ICHI promotion in traditional villages (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024).

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between cultural landscape perception (CLP) and intangible cultural heritage inheritance (ICHI) in Dali Village, Guizhou Province. By conducting a questionnaire survey among local residents, the study investigated residents' perceptions of cultural landscapes, their attitudes toward ICHI, and the relationship between these two factors. The findings provide empirical evidence for understanding how community perceptions contribute to the sustainability of traditional cultural practices. First, the results indicate that residents of Dali Village generally demonstrate a high level of cultural landscape perception. The respondents recognized that local landscapes represent not only physical environments but also important carriers of historical memories, cultural identity, and community values. Among the different dimensions of CLP, the recognition of cultural value and the willingness to protect local landscapes received particularly high evaluations. This finding suggests that residents have developed strong connections with their living environment through long-term interactions and cultural experiences (Su et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Cai et al., 2025; Shamsuddin and Ujang, 2008). The cultural landscape of Dali Village therefore functions as an important foundation for maintaining collective identity and

supporting cultural continuity (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Ye et al., 2025; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). Second, the study found that residents showed strong willingness toward intangible cultural heritage inheritance. The high evaluation of ICHI indicates that local communities generally recognize the importance of preserving traditional cultural practices and transmitting them to future generations. Residents considered intangible cultural heritage as an essential component of community identity rather than merely a cultural resource. However, the results also suggest that there may be a gap between cultural recognition and actual participation. Although residents expressed strong support for heritage inheritance, practical involvement may be influenced by factors such as modernization, employment changes, and reduced opportunities for younger generations to participate in traditional activities (Cai et al., 2024; Yan and Li, 2023; Deng, 2023). Third, the empirical results demonstrate a significant positive relationship between CLP and ICHI. The correlation analysis showed that residents with stronger perceptions of cultural landscapes were more likely to support and participate in intangible cultural heritage inheritance. This finding confirms the theoretical assumption that cultural landscapes provide important social and symbolic contexts for heritage continuity (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). When residents recognize the historical and cultural significance of their surroundings, they are more likely to develop emotional attachment, strengthen cultural identity, and accept responsibility for maintaining local traditions (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024; Lentini and Decortis, 2010).

The findings also highlight the importance of integrating tangible and intangible dimensions in heritage conservation (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). Cultural landscapes should not be understood merely as physical spaces requiring protection but as dynamic environments where cultural practices, community relationships, and collective memories are continuously reproduced (Ye et al., 2025; Kang et al., 2023; Taylor and Lennon, 2011). The sustainability of intangible cultural heritage depends not only on protecting cultural expressions themselves but also on maintaining the cultural environments and social networks that support their transmission (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Cai et al., 2024; Lázaro Ortiz and Jimenez de Madariaga, 2022). Based on the findings, several practical implications can be proposed for the sustainable inheritance of intangible cultural heritage in traditional villages. First, heritage conservation strategies should place greater emphasis on community participation (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). Since residents are the primary practitioners and transmitters of intangible cultural heritage, conservation policies should move beyond expert-led protection models and encourage local involvement (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024; Lázaro Ortiz and Jimenez de Madariaga, 2022). Government agencies and heritage managers can establish community-based conservation programs that provide residents with opportunities to participate in cultural planning, heritage activities, and decision-making processes. Strengthening residents' sense of ownership can enhance the long-term sustainability of ICHI (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025). Second, the cultural meanings of landscapes should be integrated into heritage management practices (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019).

Traditional village conservation should not focus exclusively on restoring historical buildings or improving physical environments. Instead, greater attention should be paid to the relationships between landscapes and cultural practices. For example, traditional spaces associated with festivals, rituals, handicrafts, and community interactions should

be protected because they provide essential environments for cultural transmission (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Cai et al., 2024; Pătru-Stupariu et al., 2019). Maintaining these cultural spaces can strengthen residents' attachment to local heritage and promote ICHI (Cai et al., 2025; Su et al., 2025; Kang et al., 2023). Third, greater attention should be given to younger generations. The continuity of intangible cultural heritage depends heavily on intergenerational transmission (Cai et al., 2024; Yan and Li, 2023). However, modernization and population mobility have reduced young residents' opportunities to engage with traditional practices. Therefore, local governments and communities should develop cultural education programs, school-community cooperation projects, and youth participation activities to enhance young people's understanding of local heritage (Cai et al., 2024; Yan and Li, 2023; Xu and Zou, 2022). Digital technologies can also be utilized to document cultural knowledge and create new channels for cultural communication (Deng, 2023; Xu and Zou, 2022). Fourth, tourism development should be balanced with heritage authenticity (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Tachibana and Sano, 2025). Cultural tourism can provide economic resources for heritage conservation and increase public awareness of traditional culture (Mteti et al., 2025; Kanematsu et al., 2023). However, excessive commercialization may weaken cultural meanings and transform living traditions into standardized performances. Sustainable tourism strategies should prioritize community benefits, maintain cultural authenticity, and ensure that local residents remain central participants in heritage development (Xiaofeng et al., 2026; Mteti et al., 2025; Kohsaka et al., 2019).

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the research focuses on a single case study, Dali Village in Guizhou Province. Although the village provides a valuable context for examining the relationship between cultural landscape perception and ICHI, the findings may not be directly generalized to all traditional villages with different cultural, geographical, and socioeconomic conditions. Future research could conduct comparative studies involving multiple villages or regions to improve the generalizability of findings. Second, this study relies primarily on questionnaire data collected from residents. Although surveys provide quantitative evidence regarding perceptions and attitudes, they may not fully capture the complexity of cultural practices, historical experiences, and community interactions. Qualitative methods, such as interviews with heritage practitioners, cultural inheritors, and local officials, could provide deeper insights into the mechanisms underlying ICHI. Third, this study mainly examines the relationship between CLP and ICHI without considering other potential influencing factors. Variables such as cultural identity, place attachment, tourism development, institutional support, and economic conditions may also affect heritage inheritance (Ahmadi and HaghighatBin, 2026; Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). Future studies could incorporate these factors to develop a more comprehensive analytical framework.

Future research can extend this study in several directions. First, comparative research across different traditional villages and cultural regions would help identify whether the relationship between cultural landscape perception and ICHI varies according to cultural contexts. Such studies could provide broader theoretical explanations regarding community-based heritage conservation. Second, future research could adopt longitudinal designs to examine changes in residents' perceptions and inheritance behaviors over time. Traditional villages are continuously affected by modernization, tourism development, and demographic changes. Long-term studies could reveal how these transformations influence cultural sustainability. Third, future

studies could further explore the mechanisms through which CLP influences ICHI. For example, cultural identity, place attachment, and community participation may serve as mediating factors between landscape perception and heritage inheritance (Cai et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2025; Su et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). Examining these mechanisms would provide a more detailed understanding of how cultural landscapes contribute to cultural continuity. Finally, digital technologies provide new opportunities for future heritage research (Deng, 2023; Xu and Zou, 2022). Digital documentation, virtual exhibitions, and online cultural platforms may influence how younger generations perceive and participate in intangible cultural heritage. Future studies could investigate how digital transformation reshapes the relationship between cultural landscapes, community engagement, and ICHI.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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