

ORIGINAL

Revalorization of Traditions and Cultural Tourism: A Case Study in Jipijapa, Ecuador from the Perspective of Innovation

Revalorización de las tradiciones y turismo cultural: un estudio de caso en Jipijapa, Ecuador desde la perspectiva de la innovación

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: cultural tourism as a form of alternative tourism shows significant growth in the 21st century, in which more and more heritage places are saturated by the increase in the number of tourists. The objective of this study is to analyze the revaluation of ancestral traditions and their impact on cultural tourism in Jipijapa, Ecuador. The aim is to identify the innovative actions implemented to preserve and promote ancestral traditions in this locality.

Method: a descriptive-exploratory research is carried out using a mixed methodology that included documentary analysis, interviews with key actors in the tourism and cultural sector, and surveys of the inhabitants of the Jipijapa community

Results: the results reveal that the revaluation of ancestral traditions has been driven by innovative actions, such as the creation of cultural festivals, the promotion of thematic tourist routes and the implementation of training workshops for the local community.

Conclusions: these actions have strengthened cultural tourism in Jipijapa, generating greater interest on the part of visitors and greater recognition of local cultural identity, highlighting the importance of revaluing ancestral traditions to enhance cultural tourism to guarantee sustainable development and the preservation of local cultural identity.

Keywords: Revaluation; Traditions; Cultural Tourism; Innovative Actions; Preservation.

RESUMEN

Introducción: el turismo cultural como una forma de turismo alternativo evidencia un crecimiento significativo en el siglo XXI, en que cada vez más los lugares patrimoniales que, se ven saturados por el aumento en el número de turistas. El objetivo de este estudio es analizar la revalorización de las tradiciones ancestrales y su impacto en el turismo cultural en Jipijapa, Ecuador. Se pretende identificar las acciones innovadoras implementadas para preservar y promover las tradiciones ancestrales en esta localidad.

Método: se realiza una investigación descriptiva-exploratoria utilizando una metodología mixta que incluyó análisis documental, entrevistas a actores clave del sector turístico y cultural, y encuestas a los habitantes de la comunidad de Jipijapa.

Resultados: los resultados revelan que la revalorización de las tradiciones ancestrales ha sido impulsada por acciones innovadoras, como la creación de festivales culturales, la promoción de rutas turísticas temáticas y la implementación de talleres de capacitación para la comunidad local.

Conclusiones: estas acciones han fortalecido el turismo cultural en Jipijapa, generando mayor interés por parte de los visitantes y un mayor reconocimiento de la identidad cultural local, destacando la importancia de revalorizar las tradiciones ancestrales para potenciar el turismo cultural para garantizar un desarrollo sostenible y la preservación de la identidad cultural local.

Palabras clave: Revalorización; Tradiciones; Turismo Cultural; Acciones Innovadoras; Preservación.

INTRODUCTION

The revaluation of cultural tourism and ancestral traditions is a crucial process for strengthening identity and promoting sustainable development within the Jipijapa community. Over time, many cultural expressions have gradually weakened due to modernity, migration, and a lack of intergenerational transmission, resulting in the loss of elements of identity and a decline in the town's tourist appeal. Recognizing the importance of these traditions and promoting their preservation enriches the culture, reinforces the sense of community belonging, and enhances the consolidation of sustainable cultural tourism. Culture, as an intangible yet highly influential aspect of human behavior, determines how individuals respond to situations. In this sense, the traditions, customs, and beliefs of a society are part of its cultural identity. However, many of these traditions and customs have been lost over time due to modernity, migration, and a lack of interest in passing them on to new generations.

Ancestral traditions are a fundamental part of a people's identity, representing the history, values, and beliefs of previous generations. However, in Jipijapa, many of these traditions have been lost over time to modernity, migration, and a lack of interest among new generations.

The loss of these ancestral traditions harms cultural identity and, consequently, impacts cultural tourism in Jipijapa, as young people are unaware of their ancestral heritage and adopt foreign identities. It is thus necessary to preserve these traditions to keep cultural identity alive and strengthen cultural tourism within the community.

In this context, various authors have highlighted the importance of preserving ancestral traditions and promoting their value in the community. For example,⁽¹⁾ mention that the loss of cultural identity can lead to the vulnerability of a people and the adoption of foreign ideologies. On the other hand,⁽²⁾ highlights the importance of the union between native languages and cultures and the media to promote new social representations.

The main objective of this study is to analyze the revaluation of ancestral traditions and cultural tourism in Jipijapa, Ecuador. To this end, the following research questions are posed: Why is it essential to preserve and promote ancestral traditions in Jipijapa? What are the motivations behind the revaluation of traditions and cultural tourism in the community? What innovative actions are being implemented to preserve and promote these traditions? And what is the impact of the revaluation of ancestral traditions on cultural tourism and local identity?

The study aims to contribute to cultural enrichment and the strengthening of local identity in Jipijapa by analyzing the importance of preserving and promoting ancestral traditions, the motivations behind the revaluation of traditions and cultural tourism, and the innovative actions taken to protect and promote these traditions. It is hoped that the results obtained can be applied in other communities facing similar challenges in maintaining their cultural identity.

Theoretical framework

1. Cultural tourism and intangible heritage

Cultural tourism has become increasingly important in the last decade as a strategy for diversifying tourism offerings and preserving local identity. ⁽³⁾ argues that cultural tourism should not be understood only as visiting monuments or historical sites, but as interacting with living manifestations of communities, which gives it an experiential and participatory character. This approach connects directly with the concept of intangible cultural heritage, understood as a set of practices, representations, and expressions transmitted from generation to generation that give meaning to collective identity.⁽⁴⁾

⁽⁵⁾ in a comprehensive review of the literature, they highlight that tourism based on intangible heritage is a growing field that generates multiple benefits, including cultural preservation, a stronger sense of belonging, and local economic development. However, they also warn of risks, such as the excessive commercialization of traditions or their loss of authenticity in response to market demands.

In this regard, ⁽⁶⁾ has emphasized the importance of articulating safeguarding policies that integrate communities into the management of their own heritage. Cultural tourism, by integrating itself into this dynamic, has the potential to become an engine of sustainable development as long as it strikes a balance between conservation, intergenerational transmission, and the generation of economic and social benefits for

the stakeholders involved.

2. Innovation in cultural tourism

Innovation has been identified as a cross-cutting element for strengthening competitiveness in tourist destinations. ⁽³⁾ argue that innovation in tourism is not limited to the creation of new products; in a broader field, it encompasses the transformation of processes, the application of digital technologies, and the generation of meaningful experiences that differentiate destinations.

In the field of cultural tourism, ⁽¹⁾ introduce the concept of innovation based on cultural heritage, which refers to the ability of destinations to reinterpret traditions and transform them into attractive and sustainable tourist experiences. For example, incorporating technological elements, such as mobile applications or virtual tours, can help spread traditions without compromising their essence.

⁽⁷⁾ meanwhile, point out that social innovations in tourism are particularly relevant for local communities, as they allow heritage to be linked to objectives of inclusion, social cohesion, and sustainability. This type of innovation is not limited to technology; it includes forms of participatory governance and the creation of tourism products co-designed by the community and visitors. Added to this is the contribution of ⁽⁸⁾, which shows that mobile technology and digital interaction are transforming the way tourists perceive and experience cultural destinations, creating a hybrid landscape between the physical and virtual.

In this way, innovation in cultural tourism is presented as an indispensable component in responding to the challenges of a competitive global market, while providing opportunities to preserve and promote local traditions.

3. Cultural tourism in Latin American contexts

In Latin America, cultural tourism has positioned itself as a strategic alternative to the limitations of sun and beach tourism. ⁽⁹⁾ found that the perceived value of Ecuadorian heritage sites is associated both with the authenticity of practices and with the recognition granted by international bodies such as UNESCO. This dual local and global value shapes a narrative that attracts both domestic and international visitors.

Likewise, ⁽²⁾ shows that the traditional cuisine of Manabí in Ecuador is a tourist resource with great potential, as it combines elements of cultural identity with the ability to attract visitors interested in authentic experiences. This finding is especially relevant in the case of Jipijapa, where heritage cuisine is a vital part of the local tradition.

However, the region also faces significant challenges. ⁽¹⁰⁾ warn that heritage conservation policies in Ecuadorian cities such as Cuenca still have weaknesses, which limit the comprehensive management of cultural assets. These limitations are repeated in other Latin American countries, where a lack of resources, weak inter-institutional coordination, and the absence of sustainable plans jeopardize the continuity of traditions.

In the face of these difficulties, innovation appears as a strategic opportunity. ⁽¹¹⁾ Identify that tourism entrepreneurship, when linked to cultural heritage, can boost local economies and generate new jobs, especially in post-pandemic contexts. Similarly, ⁽¹²⁾ argues that community-based tourism geared towards the Sustainable Development Goals is a catalyst for combating poverty and promoting inclusive growth in rural communities.

4. Revaluation of traditions and innovative actions

Revaluing local traditions means recognizing their importance in cultural expressions and, in turn, as strategic resources for sustainable tourism development. ⁽¹³⁾ argues that innovations in heritage tourism should be aimed at strengthening the participation of local actors, as they are the ones who guarantee the authenticity and sustainability of initiatives. Along the same lines, ⁽¹⁴⁾ emphasizes that multi-stakeholder governance is essential for achieving an equitable distribution of benefits and responsibilities in cultural tourism.

Innovative actions linked to the revaluation of traditions encompass the creation of thematic heritage routes, the incorporation of immersive experiences, and the digitization of traditional knowledge, all of which are disseminated through online platforms. According to ⁽¹²⁾, these initiatives contribute to strengthening cultural identity and projecting the image of a destination in an increasingly competitive global market.

In the case of Jipijapa, Ecuador, these perspectives are particularly relevant, as the city has a rich cultural heritage of artisanal, gastronomic, and festive traditions that can be revitalized through innovative strategies. The challenge is to design projects that strike a balance between preserving authenticity and adapting to the demands of the contemporary tourism market.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of revaluing traditions and cultural tourism in Jipijapa, Ecuador. The design was non-experimental, descriptive, and cross-sectional, allowing for the analysis of perceptions, motivations, and cultural practices at a single point in time. This methodological strategy is

justified by the need to triangulate statistical information with the narratives and experiences of local actors, thereby enriching the understanding of the study's object.

The reference population consisted of the 71 083 inhabitants of Jipijapa, according to the INEC National Population and Housing Census⁽¹⁵⁾, of whom 56,59 % reside in urban areas. From this population, a simple random probability sample was applied, with a 95 % confidence level and a 5 % margin of error, yielding a representative sample of 386 people.

The sample consisted of 188 men and 198 women, aged between 40 and 65, as well as two representatives from cultural organizations and two community leaders involved in preserving local traditions. The inclusion of these key actors allowed for a contrast between the community's vision and that of cultural managers and social leaders, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings.

Techniques and instruments

Two main techniques were used for data collection:

1. Structured surveys: administered to 382 community residents. The questionnaire was designed with closed-ended questions and Likert scales to measure perceptions of cultural revaluation and tourism. The instrument achieved a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0,963, demonstrating high internal reliability and psychometric consistency.
2. Semi-structured interviews: conducted with five community residents, two representatives of cultural organizations, and two community leaders, selected through intentional sampling of actors with direct experience in cultural preservation and promotion processes. The interviews provided insight into motivations, challenges, and innovative actions related to the preservation of local traditions.

Analysis procedure

Quantitative data were processed using SPSS v.25 software, applying descriptive statistical techniques (frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency). This analysis allowed us to identify general patterns in the population's perceptions.

Qualitative data obtained from the interviews were processed using content analysis techniques. A system of emerging categories was designed around three axes: (i) motivations for cultural revaluation, (ii) practices and traditions at risk, and (iii) innovative actions implemented or proposed. This triangulation between quantitative and qualitative methods provided a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Ethical considerations and limitations

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of informed consent, voluntariness, and participant confidentiality. The information collected was used exclusively for academic and research purposes.

As limitations, it is recognized that the sample focused on people aged 40 to 65, which restricts the representation of perceptions in younger groups. Likewise, the study focused on the canton of Jipijapa, which limits the generalization of the results to other Ecuadorian contexts. However, the findings provide a solid basis for future comparative research in the region.

Case study context: Jipijapa, Ecuador

The canton of Jipijapa, situated in the southern part of the province of Manabí, on Ecuador's coast, provides an ideal setting for examining the relationship between local traditions and cultural tourism. With a population of 71 083 inhabitants, of whom 56,59 % live in urban areas⁽¹⁵⁾, Jipijapa is organized territorially into three urban parishes (Dr. Miguel Moran Lucio, San Lorenzo, and Manuel Inocencio Parrales y Guale) and seven rural parishes (El Anegado, Pedro Pablo Gómez, Julcuy, La Unión, Membrillal, La América, and Puerto Cayo). Its strategic location, bordered by the Pacific Ocean and culturally and economically dynamic cantons such as Montecristi and Portoviejo, gives it a remarkable wealth of social and productive exchanges.

Historically known as the "Sultana del Café" (Coffee Queen) and the "Villa de Oro" (Golden Town), Jipijapa boasts a rich cultural heritage that integrates ancestral practices from the pre-Columbian cultures of Machalilla, Valdivia, and Manteña, as well as Spanish colonial and Afro-descendant influences. This historical diversity has given rise to hybrid cultural expressions that are manifested in gastronomy, crafts, religious and community festivities, and the oral transmission of knowledge. Among the most emblematic elements are the artisanal production of toquilla straw hats, coffee production, and patron saint festivities that still draw community participation.

However, globalization, migration, and generational changes have affected the practice and transmission of specific traditions, putting intangible heritage at risk of loss. This phenomenon, documented in several Latin American territories ^(5,10), is also reflected in Jipijapa, where new social dynamics have weakened the intergenerational transmission of customs. Added to this is the limited public investment in cultural safeguarding and promotion programs, which has reduced the scope of preservation policies in the territory.

Despite these limitations, there has been a renewed interest in revaluing local culture as a tourist resource in recent years. Community initiatives, cultural festivals, educational programs, and experiential tourism proposals have emerged as innovative actions aimed at strengthening local identity and diversifying the tourist offer. This scenario makes Jipijapa a relevant case study for understanding how the revaluation of traditions, supported by innovation, can contribute to the sustainable development of cultural tourism in local Latin American contexts.

RESULTS

1. Actions implemented for cultural preservation

During the period 2022-2024, a set of strategic actions aimed at the preservation and innovative promotion of ancestral traditions were implemented in Jipijapa, with the aim of strengthening local identity and boosting cultural tourism. These actions can be grouped into seven areas:

- 1. Research and documentation: historical records, oral testimonies from elders, and community archives were collected, making it possible to identify traditions at risk of disappearing.
- 2. Creation of a cultural center: inaugurated as a reference space, it included a library, archive, and workshops for learning music, dance, gastronomy, and traditional crafts.
- 3. Educational programs: in schools and colleges, with guided tours, cooking classes, and student participation in festivals.
- 4. Use of technology: through a mobile app, website, and social media that disseminated multimedia resources on local heritage.
- 5. Inter-institutional partnerships: with universities, municipalities, and cultural organizations that provided funding and expertise.
- 6. Community participation: formation of committees and associations that promoted the direct involvement of the population in cultural preservation.
- 7. Sustainable cultural tourism: through heritage routes, visits to craft workshops, and experiential activities, linking culture and economic development.

These pillars constitute the framework for evaluating the impact of cultural revitalization strategies in Jipijapa.

2. Qualitative results: perceptions and motivations

Content analysis of the interviews revealed three main interpretive axes:

- Community appreciation: participants highlighted the importance of keeping customs alive, repeatedly mentioning traditional cuisine, religious festivities, and crafts as symbols of identity.
- Youth participation: there was a growing interest among younger generations in workshops, cultural events, and social media outreach. The community perceives this involvement as a sign of cultural continuity.
- Sustainability factors: some interviewees pointed out that the permanence of these actions depends on government support, institutional management, and media visibility. Lack of funding was identified as the main obstacle to the continuity of the programs.

In general, the qualitative discourse reflects a positive and participatory climate toward cultural revitalization, but it also reveals tensions related to dependence on external resources and the need for greater political support.

3. Quantitative results

3.1. Cultural activities and citizen participation

Table 1 shows the evolution of the frequency with which the community participated in cultural activities related to ancestral traditions.

Table 1. Cultural activities			
Category	2022	2023	2024
0-10 %	175	138	35
11-25 %	118	106	102
26-50 %	56	85	132
More than 50 %	21	45	108
Not sure	12	8	5

The results show a sustained increase in the upper ranges. The percentage of people who reported participating in more than 50 % of activities rose from 21 cases in 2022 to 108 in 2024, representing growth of over 400 %. In contrast, the low participation range (0-10 %) fell dramatically from 175 to 35 people. This indicates a strengthening of community involvement in cultural activities.

3.2. Visitors to cultural events and promotion centers

Table 2 shows the number of visitors to cultural events and community centers.

Table 2. Visitors to cultural events			
Category	2022	2023	2024
Less than 100	129	103	63
100-500	119	134	132
501-1000	87	77	125
More than 1,000	32	55	53
Not sure	15	13	9

The number of visitors in the lowest range (less than 100 per year) decreased from 129 in 2022 to 63 in 2024, while the highest attendance ranges consolidated. In particular, the category of 501 to 1000 visitors went from 87 in 2022 to 125 in 2024. These data reflect greater external visibility of ancestral traditions, linking cultural revitalization with sustainable tourism dynamics.

3.3. Student participation in educational programs

Table 3 shows student participation in educational programs linked to traditions.

Table 3. Students in educational programs			
Category	2022	2023	2024
0-10 %	192	167	27
11-25 %	122	118	64
26-50 %	45	59	173
More than 50 %	12	30	115
Not sure	11	8	3

The results show a structural change; in 2022, most students were in the 0-10 % range (192 cases), while in 2024, most were concentrated in the 26-50 % (173) and over 50 % (115) ranges. This represents a significant shift from indifference to active involvement, confirming the role of the school as a driver of cultural transmission.

3.4. Sale of artisanal products

Table 4 shows the evolution in the sale of authentic handicrafts.

Table 4. Sale of handicrafts			
Category	2022	2023	2024
0-10 %	196	143	41
11-25 %	139	102	68
26-50 %	28	82	164
More than 50 %	9	49	105
Not sure	10	6	4

There has been a notable increase in the higher ranges; the over 50 % category rose from 9 cases in 2022 to 105 in 2024. Conversely, the lowest ranges (0-10 %) decreased from 196 to 41. This suggests that the craft market has established itself as an economic driver, closely linked to cultural revaluation.

3.5. Identification with ancestral traditions

Table 5 shows the evolution of self-perception of cultural identity.

Table 5. People who identify with traditions			
Category	2022	2023	2024
0-10 %	187	118	23
11-25 %	146	109	66
26-50 %	30	96	155
More than 50 %	14	55	133
I'm not sure	5	4	5

The data is compelling; while in 2022 most respondents were in the 0-10 % range (187 cases), in 2024 the 26-50 % (155) and over 50 % (133) ranges predominated. This means that self-identification with cultural roots increased exponentially, in parallel with the strengthening of cultural practices in everyday life.

4. Visual summary of the evolution (2022-2024)

Figure 1 summarizes the growth of the “more than 50 %” ranges in all the variables analyzed.

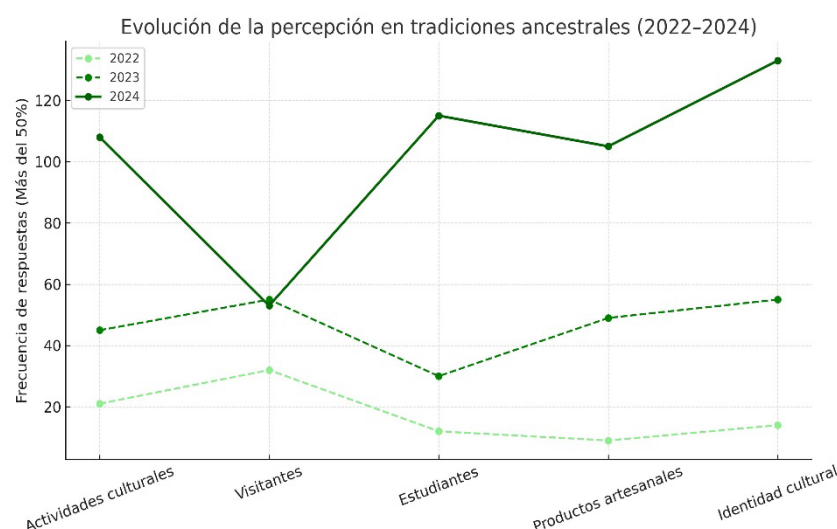


Figure 1. Evolution of perception in ancestral traditions (2022-2024)

The trend shows a common upward pattern; cultural activities, student participation, craft sales, and cultural identity grew steadily, while attendance at events remained stable with a slight decline in 2024. This visualization confirms that cultural revitalization in Jipijapa is reflected in specific actions and also in structural changes in community participation.

5. Strengths and weaknesses identified

The comprehensive analysis identifies strengths such as:

- Increased community participation.
- The resurgence of traditional practices in everyday life.
- The incorporation of young people and students into educational programs.
- The consolidation of the artisan market as a means of cultural sustainability.

Among the weaknesses, the following stand out:

- The lack of consistent government support.
- The dependence on community initiatives and external partnerships to sustain activities.
- The need for greater institutional outreach to ensure sustainability over time.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in this study on the revaluation of traditions and cultural tourism in Jipijapa confirm that social and community innovation applied to intangible heritage can be a driver of sustainable development and a strategic tool for strengthening cultural identity. This finding aligns with the literature, which highlights that innovation in the tourism sector is oriented towards product diversification and also towards the co-creation of experiences that foster a sense of community belonging.⁽³⁾ In Jipijapa, the creation of a cultural center, the implementation of educational programs, the use of digital tools, and the promotion of participatory activities

have revitalized ancestral practices, transforming them into meaningful tourist experiences that align with international trends in cultural tourism.

Several studies have highlighted that cultural tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors in tourism, promoting not only visits to historical sites but also direct interaction with intangible expressions, such as gastronomy, music, and crafts.⁽⁴⁾ The results of this study reveal a similar trend in Jipijapa, where visitor participation in cultural events and craft workshops has increased significantly, indicating that local traditions are being recognized as a high-value tourist attraction. This finding aligns with the research of ⁽⁹⁾, who demonstrated that the perceived value of heritage destinations, such as Quito, is closely related to the authenticity of cultural experiences.

Likewise, recent literature on intangible cultural heritage highlights the need to integrate innovation as a cross-cutting theme in the preservation and enhancement of heritage.^(1,5) In the case of Jipijapa, the actions implemented, such as the development of digital platforms and dissemination on social networks, confirm that innovation is not limited to tangible products but can also be applied to cultural transmission processes. This aspect aligns with the approaches of ⁽¹³⁾, who argue that creativity and innovation based on cultural heritage are essential for ensuring the relevance and attractiveness of heritage destinations.

The role of education in this process is also fundamental. The incorporation of school programs on ancestral traditions in Jipijapa aligns with the perspective of the UNESCO Chair in Heritage Conservation, which emphasizes the importance of training and awareness-raising as means to link culture and sustainable development.⁽⁶⁾ The active participation of students in workshops, festivals, and cultural practices, as observed in the results of this study, confirms that the intergenerational transmission of cultural values can be strengthened through formal educational spaces, ensuring the continuity of traditions and their incorporation into the daily life of the community.

The findings are also in line with research that addresses social innovation as a key factor in community destinations. ⁽⁷⁾ points out that social innovation models make it possible to overcome structural barriers and harness the potential of local communities to manage their cultural resources autonomously. The experience of Jipijapa reflects this approach, as it was the community actors themselves who led the preservation and promotion processes, despite the limited intervention of public authorities. However, this same condition reveals a weakness: the long-term sustainability of initiatives may be compromised without solid institutional support, which coincides with what ⁽¹⁰⁾ point out regarding the fragility of heritage policies that overlook the role of communities.

Another relevant aspect is the link between cultural identity and tourism. Research by ⁽²⁾ shows that local cuisine can become a major tourist attraction, as it conveys cultural values and symbols of identity. In Jipijapa, the promotion of artisanal products and the revival of culinary knowledge led to a significant increase in demand, reinforcing the thesis that gastronomy and cultural expressions are strategic resources in the configuration of tourist destinations. This aligns with the observations made by ⁽¹⁶⁾ in Popayán, where religious celebrations are capable of segmenting and attracting different types of tourists based on the symbolic richness of traditional practices.

From a Latin American perspective, the discussion on cultural tourism must also consider the structural challenges facing the region. ⁽¹¹⁾ highlights that tourism entrepreneurship in Latin America faces financial constraints, a lack of infrastructure, and weak coordination with public policies. This same pattern is observed in Jipijapa, where the lack of government support was identified as one of the main weaknesses for cultural preservation. Despite this, the results show that the community has developed resilience and capacity for innovation, aligning with the approaches of ⁽¹²⁾, which argues that community tourism can be a catalyst for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals linked to poverty reduction and the creation of decent employment.

A comparison with international studies reinforces the idea that the dynamics observed in Jipijapa are part of broader trends. Recent research indicates that heritage destinations that manage to integrate creativity, innovation, and community participation are more successful in generating value for residents and visitors.^(1,8) The case study illustrates precisely how the community has become a protagonist in cultural reevaluation, enabling it to reposition its traditions in response to the effects of globalization and cultural homogenization.

In summary, the discussion of the findings shows that the Jipijapa experience is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather part of a global debate on how to preserve and revitalize intangible cultural heritage from innovative and sustainable perspectives. The literature reviewed supports the idea that innovation, education, community participation, and sustainable cultural tourism are essential to the continuity of traditions. However, there remains a need for greater institutional support to ensure long-term sustainability. Thus, this study provides empirical evidence that validates the theoretical trends identified in the literature and offers a replicable model for other communities seeking to articulate tradition, identity, and innovation within the framework of cultural tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that the reevaluation of ancestral traditions in Jipijapa, Ecuador, is a dynamic

process that integrates cultural, social, educational, and economic dimensions, resulting in a significant impact on the strengthening of local identity and the development of cultural tourism. The results show that the actions implemented, including the creation of a cultural center, the incorporation of educational programs, the use of digital technologies, the formation of inter-institutional alliances, and the promotion of sustainable cultural tourism, have generated a sustained increase in community participation, external recognition, and self-perception of cultural identity.

Likewise, it was found that the involvement of new generations and the revitalization of the artisan market are key factors for the sustainability of this process. However, weaknesses persist associated with the lack of government support, dependence on community resources, and the need to strengthen public policies that support these initiatives structurally and permanently. Consequently, it is concluded that the Jipijapa experience offers a replicable model for other Latin American communities, provided that it is accompanied by solid coordination between civil society, educational institutions, the tourism sector, and the state, to ensure that cultural preservation becomes an engine of sustainable and inclusive development.

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