

Article

Integrating Locals' Importance–Performance Perception of Community Resilience into Sustainable Indigenous Tourism Management

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Abstract: Community resilience and capacity building are key elements in sustainable Indigenous tourism (SIT) and local development, specifically as factors affecting locals' participation in and communities' resilience perceptions toward SIT. This study aimed to establish an evaluation framework for SIT in Taiwan based on the aspect of community resilience, using an importance–performance analysis (IPA). We quantitatively surveyed 506 local residents in two touristic townships inhabited by Indigenous tribes: Datong Township in Yilan County and Fengbin Township in Hualien County. Our empirical results reveal a significant gap between the perceived importance and performance of community resilience in SIT. Moreover, the following strategies were prioritized by respondents to enhance local capacity building for SIT: “assisting in building green landscape in the community”, “assisting in creating tribal landscape based on local traditional culture”, and “planning cultural activities based on local traditional knowledge”. Finally, participants who (1) had a higher educational level, (2) lived in the Datong Township, (3) had better attitudes toward job opportunities in sustainable tourism, and (4) had higher perceptions of community resilience were more likely to participate in SIT. Our outcomes synthesize the theoretical constructs and policy implications for community resilience in SIT management that benefit local Indigenous communities.

Keywords: capacity building; local participation; policy incentives; integrated perspective; community resilience; sustainable development



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1. Introduction

The tourism industry in the modern world significantly contributes to the global economy. In developing countries, it has been an important component of economic development strategies since the 1960s. The tourism sector shows this function by increasing employment opportunities and income levels [1–3] and boosting the local economy through tourism products [4]. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) orientated tourist destinations to local communities and invited people to travel following the principles of sustainable tourism in 2017. It highlights the sustainability trinity, which aims to balance the economy, society, and environment [2,5]. Moreover, researchers argue that sustainable tourism development requires simultaneously satisfying the needs of tourists, businesses, and local communities and environmental protection [6].

Indigenous tourism is a popular recreation activity nowadays that showcases ethnic distinctiveness and provides pleasurable environments and authentic experiences to attract tourists visiting Indigenous areas [7–10]. It is a recreation process that combines cultural

and natural resources and is commonly regarded as cultural tourism [11], niche or special interest tourism [12], and serious tourism [13]. Indigenous tourism is the activities in which Indigenous tribe involve their culture to serve as an experience of the tourism attraction directly [14]. In recent decades, Indigenous tourism has become an important strategy for governments to improve backwardness and poverty in Indigenous areas. Studies indicated that promoting tourism development could bring significant positive benefits to the communities by increasing employment and income, building infrastructure, revitalizing their culture, and protecting the environment [15]. However, it also leads to numerous negative impacts, including ecological damage [16], lifestyle disruption, privacy invasion [17,18], and even cultural commercialization [19]. In Taiwan, Indigenous people, in addition to focusing on producing safe and healthy agricultural products for tourism development, have also designed ecological and experiential activities to attract tourists by combining their cultures, beautiful scenery, traditional festivals, and handicrafts in recent years [10,13,20–22].

Resilience brings novel insights and allows communities to adapt to their changing environment [23]. Recently, the resilience concept has been broadly used in tourism studies [24–30]. Community resilience identifies the ability of communities in tourism destinations to perceive and cope with both short- and long-term structural changes [24]. Community resilience involves the community resources by community members to adapt to change with impacts or disturbances and thus is a key factor in social sustainability [31]. Lew et al. [32] considered resilience as adaptation and proposed resilience indicators in tourism, including building community capacity for change, creating new environmental knowledge, improving living conditions and employment, and supporting social collaboration. Marshall and Marshall [33] proposed a model for defining and quantifying four dimensions of community resilience for anglers facing changing environments.

To achieve the goal of sustainable Indigenous tourism (SIT), the awareness and attitude of tribal people facing tourism transformation and how to improve their ability become key elements for the transformation of the Indigenous tourism industry. To fill these research gaps, this study aimed to establish an evaluation framework of sustainable Indigenous tourism management (SITM) by combining sustainable tourism, Indigenous ingredients, and community resilience to examine local support for and behavior in sustainable tourism. Under the proposed evaluation framework, the following four issues: “perception of Indigenous tourism transformation”, “ability to learn, reorganize and plan”, “ability to extend Indigenous tourism program”, and “interest in preparing for transforming tourism” were considered essential for SIT operation. This study applied an importance–performance analysis (IPA) [34] to identify the factors affecting communities’ participation in SITM based on demographics, development factors of SITM, and perceptions of SITM through the regression method. This study was conducted in Datong Township in Yilan County and Fengbin Township in Hualien County, Taiwan. By using the IPA model, we examined the relative importance of indicators related to SITM and the residents’ participation behavior and the performance of these indicators, as well as provided appropriate implementation strategies on SITM in Taiwan.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Sustainable Tourism and Indigenous Tourism

The UNWTO determined that before the COVID-19 epidemic, 1.4 billion tourists traveled the world in 2018 [35]. In 2022, over 900 million tourists traveled internationally, double those in 2021, though still 37% fewer than in 2019 [2]. Therefore, tourism development is usually considered a powerful tool to improve the livelihoods in remote communities and provide more employment opportunities. In the early years, there were many definitions of sustainable tourism development [36]. Sustainable tourism is not limited to promoting environmental protection; it also emphasizes tourists’ support for the social and cultural preservation and local economy of destinations. Sustainable tourism development requires the understanding of the local needs and stakeholders’ participation with strong political

leadership, which ensures broad participation and social networks. As the process of tourism development addresses effective planning and implementation with stakeholders' participation, collaboration, and partnership, through the integration and coordination of their needs and concerns, could improve the community's quality of life and tourist satisfaction, the tourism industry obtains fair profits, and the environmental protection.

The United States has the most significant number of published papers, while Taiwan ranked 10th from 2014 to 2018, showing that Taiwan has gradually attached greater importance to sustainable tourism development in recent years [37]. Furthermore, the goals of sustainable tourism development also require continuing education of sustainable practice concepts for all stakeholders, including tourism operators, local communities, consumers, and other stakeholders, to develop innovative services for sustainable consumption practices such as green tourism and environment-friendly tourism, and to attract environmentally conscious consumers [38]. However, some scholars have criticized the fact that it is not feasible to achieve the goal of sustainable development through tourism [39]. Despite tourism bringing economic growth, it also has negative impacts, such as tourism activities leading to excessive energy consumption and causing environmental consequences, particularly focusing on the contribution of aviation to climate change [40]. In addition, the rapid growth of tourism has resulted in tourist destinations in the world suffering from over-tourism for a long time [41,42].

Indigenous tourism is a global phenomenon that started from people's pursuit of exoticism and authentic experiences, and it involves complex and multi-layered issues [9]. It displays ethnic characteristics and attracts tourists' attention through cross-cultural experiences and pleasant environments [8]. Therefore, Indigenous tourism covers different aspects, which are cultural tourism, that is, tourists could interact with aboriginal people and Indigenous culture [11], or contact with the four Hs, that is, habitat, heritage, history, and handicrafts [43], niche or special interests tourism [12], and serious tourism, that is, tourists could go deep into Indigenous related things and satisfy in serious leisure focusing on protecting their culture and improving their economic benefits [13]. Another characteristic of Indigenous tourism is that it is directly participated in and controlled by tribal people, with their culture as the essence of the attraction [14]. Zeppel [44] described Indigenous tourism as "tourism enterprises controlled by Indigenous people", including "culture-based attractions and other tourist-oriented facilities or services" (p. 60), and Indigenous tourism products as the attraction features including "Aboriginal people; Aboriginal spirituality or the dreaming; Aboriginal bushcraft skills; Aboriginal cultural practices; and Aboriginal artifacts" [45] (p. 124). Therefore, most Indigenous attractions display aboriginal culture, traditional customs and ceremonies, handicrafts, and activities with ethnic characteristics. Tourists could learn about local people's lifestyles and understand the differences and authenticities through contact with locals, another factor attracting tourists. Therefore, Indigenous tourism is based on the identification of aboriginal land and culture, the linkage of aboriginal culture, values, and traditions, focusing on the display of aboriginal culture and knowledge, sightseeing aboriginal heritage and history, and selling aboriginal handicrafts [7,10,14,44,45]. Indigenous tourism has received considerable attention and strategy from governments to improve backwardness and poverty in Indigenous areas. Promoting tourism development in remote areas brought significant benefits to the destination communities, such as increasing employment and income, building infrastructure, revitalizing their culture, and protecting the environment [15,46]. When tourist flows exceed carrying capacity, there can also be negative impacts on biodiversity [16]. Moreover, because of an overemphasis on economic revitalization and modern facility building in tourism development, the traditional values and rituals have gradually disappeared and even have been over-commercialized, resulting in adverse effects such as cultural commercialization [19]. In addition, tourism activities break taboos, causing the utilization norms of natural resources in traditional areas to disappear and ecosystems to face threats of overexploitation [20]. Finally, in the case of Taiwan, the "Indigenous cultural image"

recognized by the Han people has led some Indigenous communities to gradually lose their cultural characteristics and even impact their national identity and autonomy.

2.2. Community Resilience

Community resilience [47] is described as “the ability of communities to absorb external changes and stresses while maintaining the sustainability of their livelihoods” [47,48] and can also identify the ability of socio–ecological systems to cope with and adapt to change [48,49]. Community resilience is also referred to as transformability, which is the capacity to create untried beginnings and evolve a new way of living [50,51]. However, a resilient social–ecological system can buffer changes and disturbances through self-organization, learning, and adaptation [52]. In the face of changes and disturbances, whether the system can undergo a transformation and an acceptance of change are closely related to whether the system is resilient [53]. In addition to ecology research, the resilience concept has been broadly used in disaster management and community development and has recently been a focus of tourism research [24–30]. For the goals of economic development and quality of life in nature-based conservation, the tourism industry also plays an important role in all sustainable development features [29,54,55]. Recently, there have been some studies on theoretical resilience models and frameworks to analyze how the situation of tourism declines and rejuvenates. They proposed resilience indicators in tourism, including building community capacity for environmental change, creating new knowledge systems, improving employment, and supporting social collaboration [32].

Community resources, referred to as community capitals, are strategically invested in collective endeavors to focus on the community objectives and improve the quality of life [56,57] in the community [58]. Lin and Lee [59] used the above resilience concept to research the adaptive behavior of earthquake disaster management affecting community residents. They evaluated risk perception, learned earthquake knowledge, learned the ability to prevent earthquakes, and created a platform for community earthquake disaster management. Tsai et al. [60] also indicated that the residents perceived tourism impacts more, including economic, social–cultural, and environmental impacts and their communities were more resilient. Therefore, the capacity of humans to perceive changes and plan for the future is also an important factor in adaptive capacity and community resilience. This study, according to Marshall and Marshalls’ findings, conducted the conceptual framework in sustainable Indigenous tourism into four dimensions: (1) perception of Indigenous tourism transformation, (2) ability to learn, reorganize and plan, (3) ability to extend Indigenous tourism program, and (4) interest in preparing for transforming tourism. Our findings would give suggestions for Indigenous tourism development toward more sustainability and serve as a reference for policy-making.

2.3. An Application of IPA on Sustainable Tourism

The application of IPA aims to evaluate products provided by enterprises from the perspective of customers [34], and IPA has become an increasingly popular method in tourism and hospitality research for its simple and easy application [61]. It is commonly used to distinguish the differences in stakeholders’ thinking between the importance of specific issues and their actual performance of how well they are being managed [61,62]. Although IPA has been widely applied in the field of tourism, some research on sustainable tourism remains lacking. Sever [63] analyzed IPA and determined that it can help stakeholders understand and suggest management strategies in the decision-making on tourism development regarding tourist satisfaction. Sörensson and von Friedrichs [64] employed IPA to evaluate the indicators of social and environmental sustainability and to identify the essentials in one particular tourist destination; the results concluded that the two groups’ opinions vary considerably. Zhang and Chan [65] also used IPA to discuss the dimensions of nature-based tourism in Hong Kong based on locals’ and tourists’ perspectives. They indicated that it is essential to balance the tourist and the local needs in seeking sustainability of nature-based tourism.

Additionally, to examine the residents' perceptions of sustainable tourism initiatives (STIs), Boley, et al. [66] conducted an IPA framework under resident attitudes towards STIs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Noticeably, they all agreed that they should concentrate their efforts on "increasing residents' quality of life", "protecting water quality", and "ensuring tourism development does not exceed the country's resources". Recently, Lee and Jan [67] concluded that residents' perceptions involve different factors across stages; thus, managers should adopt appropriate development strategies in various development stages, and suggest the managers should be concerned about the social carrying capacity threshold in the development and consolidation stages and monitor local environmental conservation issues [67]. Most recently, Wu, et al. [68] extended IPA into the adverse-impact and serious-level analysis to estimate the sustainability issues from the aspect of residents in tourism development in Macau; they identify residents' attitudes as a reference to the strategic tourism plans for the future. To sum up, this study aims to establish an evaluation framework for SIT in Taiwan based on the aspect of community resilience using an IPA framework.

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Area

Yilan and Hualien Counties are located in eastern Taiwan, which has beautiful landscapes and diverse ethnic people. Based on the Tourism Statistics Database of the Taiwan Tourism Bureau, over 527 thousand and 801 thousand tourists visited Yilan and Hualien Counties in 2020, respectively [69]. Taiwan's government released the "Tourism 2020—Taiwan Sustainable Tourism Development Plan" in 2020 under the concept of SIT development to promote and boost tourism development and the upgrading and transformation of the tourism industry. To achieve sustainability, the government continues to plan relevant promotion programs in the Taiwan Tourism 2030 Taiwan Tourism Policy White Paper [70]. The Indigenous areas of Yilan and Hualien Counties, with abundant cultures among Indigenous groups and natural resources, have the characteristics and advantages of developing Indigenous tourism, experiencing tourism, and sightseeing, which are important areas to promote Indigenous tourism.

Our study sites included Fengbin Township in Hualien County and Datong Township in Yilan County, with populations of 4300 and 5700 in 2022, respectively [71,72]. The first site is Datong Township, which consists of 10 villages located in the southwest of Yilan County. It has beautiful scenery, quiet environments, and rich biological resources. Many well-known domestic sightseeing spots are located in this area, such as Taiping Mountain Forest Recreation Area, Renze Hot Spring, Cuifeng Lake, Qilan Shenmu Area, and Mingchi Forest Recreation Area. The residents include the Atayal tribe. The main economic activities of the residents are agriculture, with vegetables, fruit trees, and tea trees. Considering the current tourism status and the potential for tourism development in Datong Township, the surveys were conducted in only five villages, including Nanshan Village, Songluo Village, Yingshi Village, Leshui Village, and Hanxi Village, with a population of 3760 in 2022 [72]. The second site, Fengbin Township, is located in the southeast of Hualien County, leaning against the coastal mountains and facing the Pacific Ocean. It is also a famous domestic destination. The terrain of Fengbin Township is long and narrow, surrounded by mountains and sea. From north to south, there are five villages: Jiqi Village, Xinshe Village, Fengbin Village, Gangkou Village, and Jingpu Village. The residents include the Amis, Kavalan, and Sakilaya tribes. Their primary livelihoods are agriculture and fishing; however, in recent years, tourism has been vigorously developed (Figure 1).

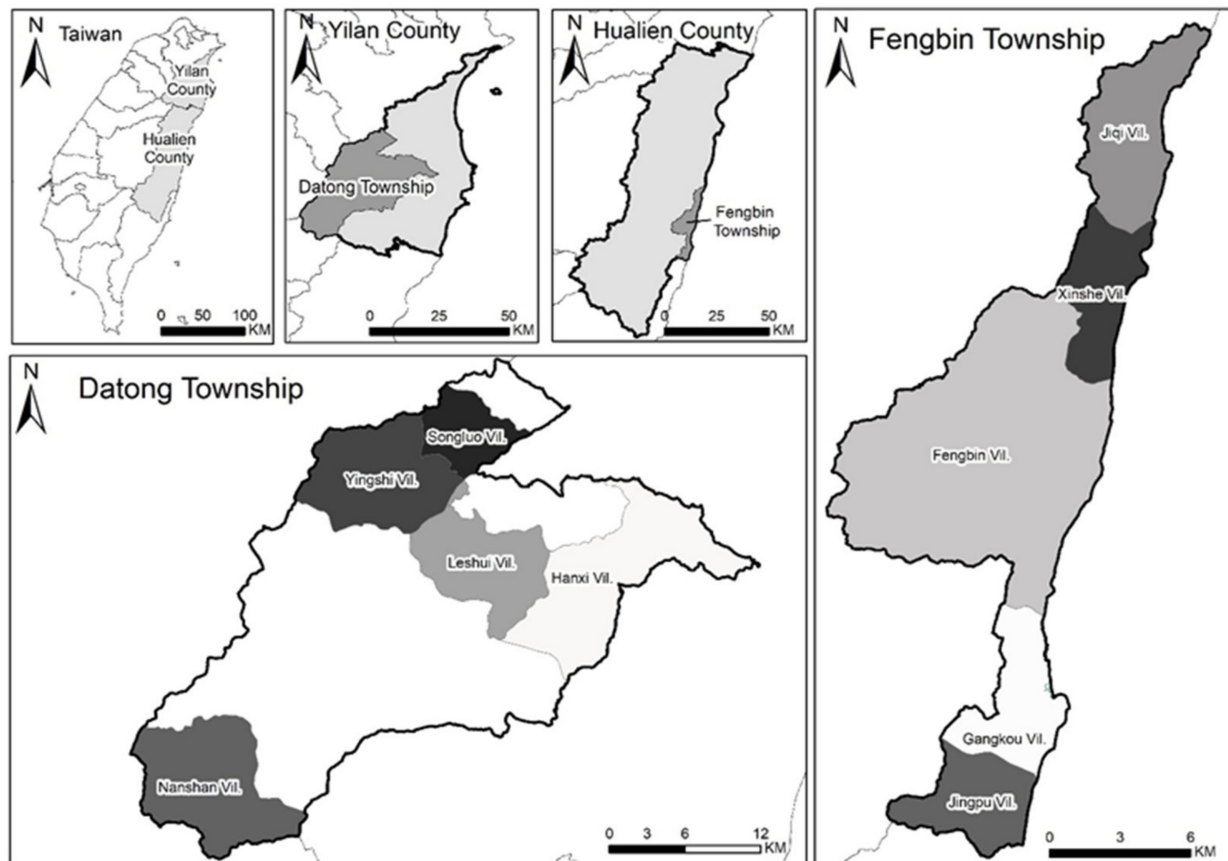


Figure 1. Location maps of the study areas in Yilan and Hualien, Taiwan.

3.2. Research Method

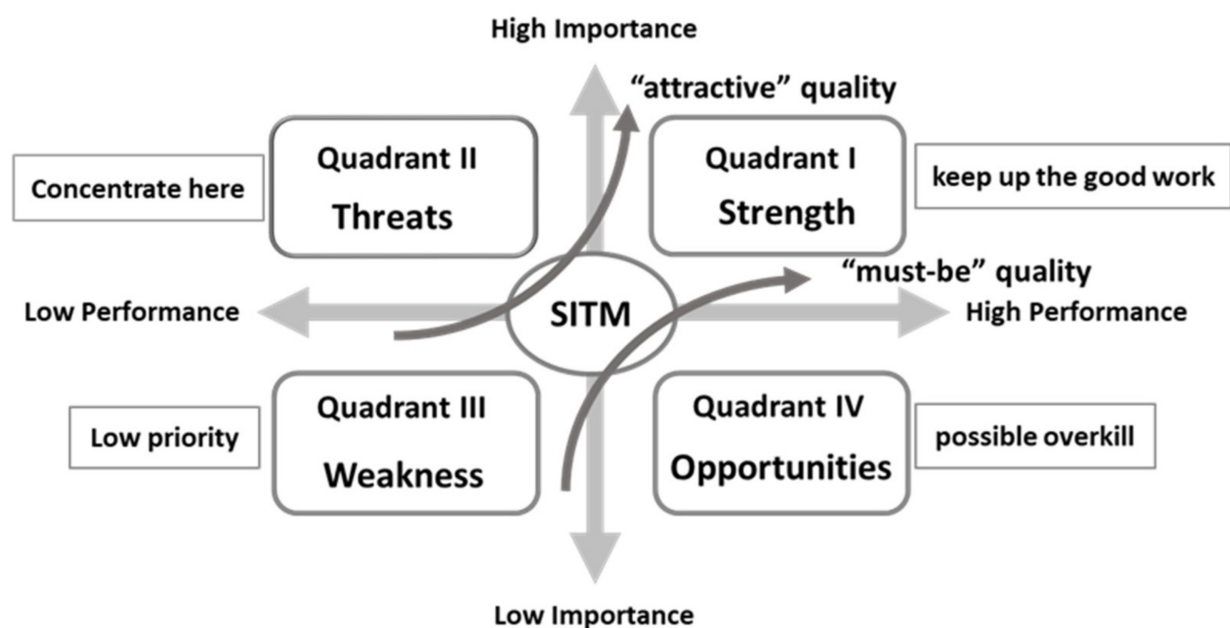
IPA is a useful methodology for evaluating satisfaction and is widely used in empirical research in many fields, such as ecosystem services [73–75], sustainable forest management [76], human–wildlife conflict management [77,78], adaptive waste management [79,80], and earthquake disaster management [59]. It is an ideal tool for measuring the quality of products/services because of its easy-to-use and easy-to-understand presentation of data graphics [81]. It has been widely used in tourism research over the years [61,62,66]. The approach allows a quick understanding of the gaps between the respondents’ cognition of each issue’s important performance and actual performance, as well as reasons for poor performance, which eventually helps to develop effective strategies to address these performance gaps.

This study used the IPA to evaluate the perceived importance of SITM by local residents and their perceptions of the performance of the current SITM. We combined the community resilience framework and sustainable tourism to define a total of four aspects, including “perception of Indigenous tourism transformation”, “ability to learn, reorganize and plan”, “ability to extend Indigenous tourism program”, and “interest in preparing for transforming tourism”, with eight indicators as Table 1. The respondents were asked to rate each indicator of “importance” and “performance”. Importance indicates the respondents’ perception and emphasis regarding SITM indicators, while performance refers to the actual performance of these indicators. The original values of the indicators collected by the survey were averaged according to the classification. They were then changed to coordinate values with the Z-score, with importance as the horizontal axis and performance as the vertical axis.

Table 1. Indicators of SITM solutions.

Aspects	Code	Indicators (Abbreviations)	References
Perception of Indigenous tourism transformation	I1	Assists in building green landscapes in the village	[10,82]
	I2	Assists in creating tribal landscape based on local traditional culture	[10,82]
Ability to learn, reorganize, and plan	I3	Marketing and tour guide skill workshop	[82]
	I4	Proposal writing and historical inventory workshop	
Ability to extend Indigenous tourism program	I5	Recruit young people on a volunteer platform to help develop the village	[10]
	I6	Planning traditional knowledge and cultural activities	
Interest in preparing for transforming tourism	I7	Connect with farmers and merchants to create secondary income	[10,21]
	I8	Connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route	[10,21]

The following explains the meanings of the four IPA quadrants: Quadrant I, “Keep up the good work”, indicates that both importance and performance are high, and the indicators falling in this quadrant should be continually maintained (strength). Quadrant II, “Concentrate here”, shows low performance despite being perceived by respondents as of higher importance (threats). Indicators falling in this quadrant should focus on improvement and invest more resources. Quadrant III, “Low priority”, means the indicators are of low importance and performance (weakness). Indicators belonging to this quadrant usually imply that they are not urgent and have low priority for improvement. Finally, quadrant IV, “Possible overkill”, refers to low importance but high performance (opportunities). The rated indicators imply resources may have been overinvested [34,59,76–80] (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** The importance–performance analysis matrix (Adapted from Martilla and James [34] and Oh [61]).

3.3. Research Design

This explorative study focused on residents’ perspectives on SITM. Hence, we developed a questionnaire regarding the literature review and focus group interviews of 17 local stakeholders in our study site, as well as findings gleaned from a pre-test survey of sustainable Indigenous tourism. A total of eight indicators were developed based on empirical studies focusing on sustainable Indigenous tourism, community capitals, and community resilience theories and included in the questionnaire (Table 1).

From the literature review, the critical factors driving tourists to travel to the tribes are the rich culture, ethnic characteristics, beautiful and natural scenery for tourists’ sight-seeing, cross-culture experience, and connectedness to nature [8,10,45,82,83]. Moreover,

improving the tribal landscape and maintaining wildlife habitats and natural resources are important factors in attracting tourists [82]. Regarding the perception of Indigenous tourism transformation: (code I1) Assists in building green landscapes in the village, and (code I2) Assists in creating tribal landscapes based on local traditional culture. In order to meet tourists' needs, the tribal villages need to assist in building green landscapes with nature and culture to enhance tourism development [10,82]. In terms of the ability to learn, reorganize, and plan: (code I3) Marketing and tour guide skill workshop and (code I4) Proposal writing and historical inventory workshop. One of the government's strategies in supporting tourism industry stakeholders to maintain sustainability was through providing training programs such as tour guides to enhance their capacity. Tourism authorities can promote local cultural tourism and preserve Indigenous knowledge by passing it to the younger generations. Moreover, cultural co-learning classes could make the community more resilient. Therefore, the tribe can request assistance from the government, such as granting funds, training courses, and counseling tourism development to help them in tourism sustainability. Thirdly, regarding the ability to extend Indigenous tourism (code I5), Recruit young people on volunteer platforms to help develop the village. The results of our interviews with relevant stakeholders who were involved in Indigenous tourism in the villages indicated assistance from young people to help develop the villages. A cultural encounter with locals through volunteer tourism is far more genuine than that experienced by visitors to traditional attractions, especially encouraging youth to stay and help the community. Code I6: Planning traditional knowledge and cultural activities. Culture is the root of tourism that makes the community more resilient. The authenticity of understanding and learning something from Indigenous peoples' daily lives were important criteria for evaluating the quality of the tourists' experiences; therefore, tribes can offer tourists real aboriginal cultural experiences [10]. Finally, in terms of interest in preparing for transforming tourism: (code 7) Connect with farmers and merchants to create secondary income, and (code 8) Connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route. The key stakeholders proposed these two ideals to boost tourism development. Meanwhile, the literature review showed that tourism resources could combine neighborhoods to offer complete recreation services [21], and tourists enjoyed the mix of Indigenous tourism experiences and they also prefer tourism supplies such as dining, shopping, lodging, and recreations packaged with Indigenous culture [10] (Table 1).

The formal questionnaire includes the residents' attitudes and cognition of risk and opinion on sustainable tourism, the cognition of residents to the importance and performance of sustainable tourism, and the respondents' socioeconomic background data. Face-to-face interviews in the form of a formal survey were conducted with 506 non-randomly selected respondents between February and August 2022.

3.4. Evaluation Framework

We established an evaluation framework of SITM based on the theories of sustainable tourism, community resilience, community capitals, and locals' perspectives. The evaluation framework included four aspects: "perception of Indigenous tourism transformation", "ability to learn, reorganize and plan", "ability to extend Indigenous tourism program", and "interest in preparing for transforming tourism" [10,33,39,57]. Within the above aspects of SITM, we posited eight corresponding indicators, which included "building a green landscape" [10,82], "creating a tribal landscape" [10,82], "marketing and tour guide skill", "proposal writing and historical inventory" [82], "recruiting young people", "planning cultural activities" [10], "creating secondary income" [10,21], and "creating an indigenous tourism route" [10,21] (see Table 1 and Figure 3). Under the IPA evaluation framework with solid theoretical constructs, this study examined the matrix of the I-P levels of the SITM to identify differences in perceptions of all indicators on the overall respondents and residents who wanted to change/and who did not want to change [34,59,76–81]. Finally, we estimated the factors that affect locals' participation behaviors in SITM based on the demographics, their perceptions, and attitudes toward SITM (i.e., tourism increases job

opportunities for locals [15,17], preservation of Indigenous culture, and developing cultural activities helps improve tourism development.

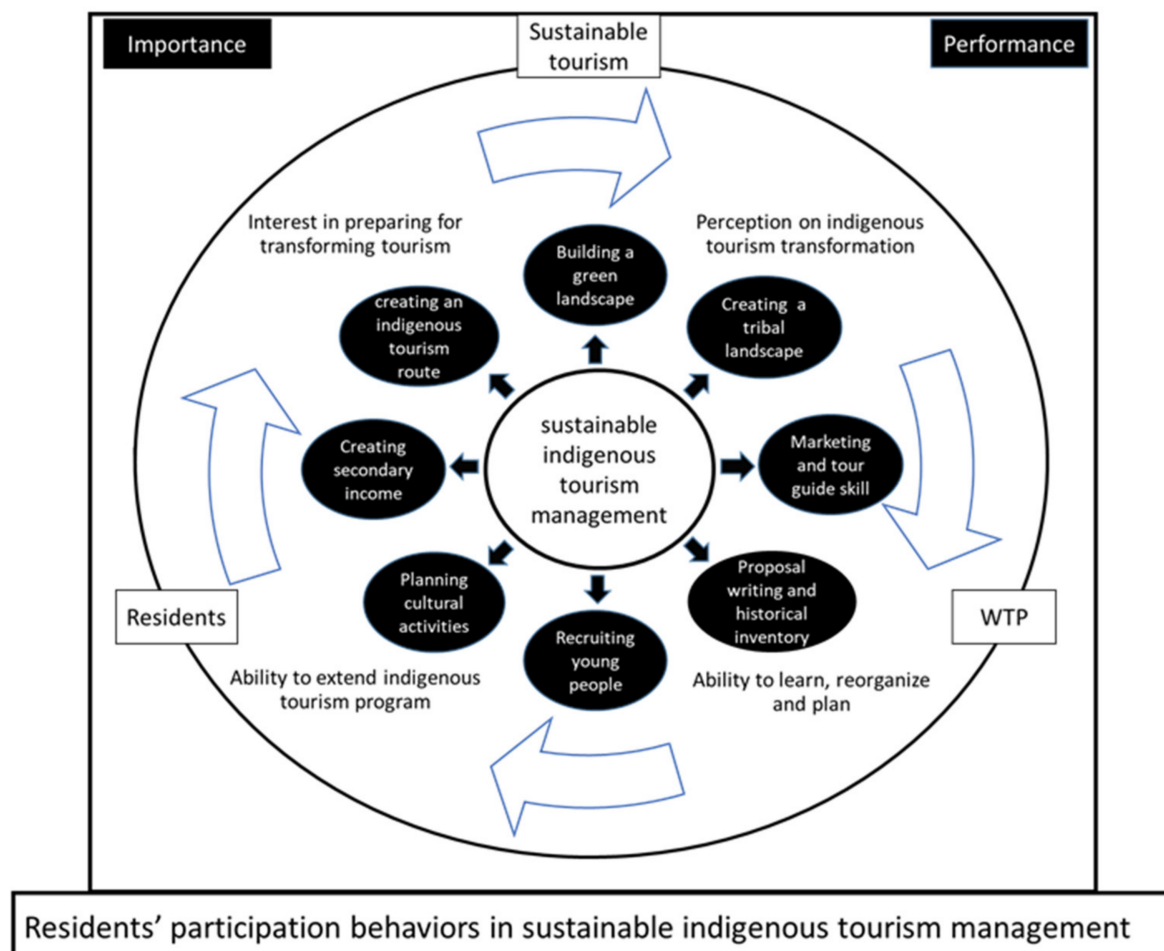


Figure 3. The evaluation framework of IPA for SITM in Indigenous areas.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Respondents' Social Backgrounds and Their Perceptions and Attitudes toward SIT

We collected and analyzed 506 samples in total, with 220 (43.5%) of them from Datong Township and 286 (56.5%) from Fengbin Township. The descriptive analysis of local residents' demographic variables, perceptions, and attitudes toward sustainable Indigenous tourism are shown in Table 2. The proportion of females (52.4%, $n = 265$) was higher than males (47.6%, $n = 241$), while the number of residents who want to change (74.9%, $n = 379$) was greater than that of residents who do not want to change (25.1%, $n = 127$). More than half of respondents (51.0%, $n = 258$) had an average age of over 50 years old, as well as a majority of residents (66.8%, $n = 338$) were educated at a high school level or lower. Over half of the respondents (54.7%, $n = 227$) reported a personal income of less than 955 USD per month, whereas only a minimal number of respondents (6.2%, $n = 31$) reported an income of 1910 USD or more per month. Over 75% of the respondents agreed that the domestic tourism pattern was changing and tourism could increase job opportunities for locals, while only 36.2% participated in Indigenous tourism. Moreover, 69.2% of respondents also thought tourism could increase local business opportunities, and over 50% agreed that preserving Indigenous culture, developing cultural activities, and conserving the natural environment and wildlife habitat were suitable for tourism development (Table 2).

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of respondents.

Characteristics	All Residents		Residents Who Want to Change		Residents Who Do Not Want to Change		Pearson Value	χ2 Value
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
Number	506	100	379	74.9	127	25.1	0.261	3.84
Male	241	47.6	183	48.3	58	45.7		
Female	265	52.4	196	51.7	69	54.3		
Single	131	25.9	109	28.8	22	17.3	6.485	3.84
Married	375	74.1	270	71.2	105	82.7		
Age (years old)							16.1	9.488
20–29 years old	73	14.4	62	16.4	11	8.7		
30–39 years old	88	17.4	69	18.2	19	15.0		
40–49 years old	87	17.2	72	19.0	15	11.8		
50–59 years old	112	22.1	82	21.6	30	23.6		
Over 60 years old	146	28.9	94	24.8	52	40.9		
Educational level								
Senior high school and below	338	66.8	240	63.3	98	77.2	8.217	3.841
University or college and above	168	33.2	139	36.7	29	22.8		
Monthly income (USD)								
Less than 955	277	54.7	189	49.9	88	69.3	11.369	3.84
Above 955	229	45.3	190	50.1	39	30.7		
Years residence								
Under 39 years	288	56.9	232	61.2	56	44.1	12.485	3.84
Over 40 years	216	43.1	147	38.8	71	55.9		
Township							8.647	3.84
Datong	220	43.5	179	47.2	41	32.3		
Fengbin	286	56.5	200	52.8	86	67.7		
SIT perceptions and attitudes								
Domestic tourism pattern is changing (Yes)	385	76.1	320	84.4	65	51.2	57.806	3.84
Participating in tourism (Yes)	183	36.2	154	40.6	29	22.8	13.053	3.84
Tourism increases job opportunities for locals (Yes)	382	75.5	307	81.0	75	59.1	24.767	3.84
Tourism increases locals' incomes (Yes)	353	69.8	283	74.5	70	55.1	17.239	3.84
Tourism increases local business opportunities (Yes)	350	69.2	285	75.2	65	51.2	25.729	3.84
Preservation of Indigenous culture and developing cultural activities help improve tourism development (Yes)	279	55.1	230	60.7	49	38.6	18.788	3.84
Conservation of natural environment and wildlife habitat helps improve tourism development (Yes)	262	51.8	218	57.5	44	34.6	19.934	3.84

In recent decades, Indigenous tourism has been one of the effective strategies for governments to improve the poverty of Indigenous areas. Researchers indicated that tourism could bring significant positive benefits to destination communities in remote areas, including employment and income growth, culture revitalization, and environmental protection [15]. Our result was similar to the existing literature, with about 70% of residents agreeing that tourism brings more job opportunities to residents and increases their income. In addition, over 50% of residents also stated that preserving their culture, conserving natural resources, and protecting wildlife habitats are necessary for tourism development [46].

4.2. Matrices of I-P Levels of SITM Solutions

The outcomes revealed that local residents calculated higher importance scores than performance scores of all indicators for the SITM approach. All participants were categorized according to their perceptions of the current tourism situation and divided into two groups: those who wanted to change and those who did not want to change for analysis. The results showed that all respondents of residents and respondents of residents who wanted to change assigned a high level of importance to all SITM solutions, with overall mean scores of 4.23 and 4.42, respectively (Table 3).

Table 3. The paired-sample t-test of SITM solutions.

Code	Indicator	Importance Mean (Rank)	Performance Mean (Rank)	Difference (I-P)	T-Value	Sig. (2-Tailed)
All residents (<i>n</i> = 506)						
I1	Assist in building green landscapes in the village	4.41 (1)	3.40 (1)	1.01	19.58	<0.0001
I2	Assist in creating tribal landscapes based on local traditional culture	4.41 (1)	3.37 (2)	1.04	19.07	<0.0001
I3	Marketing and tour guide skill workshop	4.13 (7)	2.91 (7)	1.22	21.62	<0.0001
I4	Proposal writing and historical inventory workshop	4.09 (8)	2.87 (8)	1.22	20.97	<0.0001
I5	Recruit young people on a volunteer platform to help develop the village	4.24	2.96	1.28	21.37	<0.0001
I6	Planning traditional knowledge and cultural activities	4.39 (3)	3.33 (3)	1.06	20.34	<0.0001
I7	Connect with farmers and merchants to create secondary income	4.25	3.06	1.19	21.03	<0.0001
I8	Connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route	4.22 (6)	2.93 (6)	1.92	22.02	<0.0001
	Overall mean	4.23	3.10			
Residents who wanted to change (<i>n</i> = 379)						
I1	Assist in building green landscapes in the village	4.50 (3)	3.38 (1)	1.12	18.56	<0.0001
I2	Assist in creating tribal landscapes based on local traditional culture	4.54 (1)	3.36 (2)	1.18	17.84	<0.0001
I3	Marketing and tour guide skill workshop	4.31 (7)	2.91 (6)	1.40	21.42	<0.0001
I4	Proposal writing and historical inventory workshop	4.26 (8)	2.84 (8)	1.42	20.65	<0.0001
I5	Recruit young people on a volunteer platform to help develop the village	4.40 (6)	2.95	1.45	21.09	<0.0001
I6	Planning traditional knowledge and cultural activities	4.51 (2)	3.33 (3)	1.18	19.07	<0.0001
I7	Connect with farmers and merchants to create secondary income	4.41	3.07	1.34	19.95	<0.0001
I8	Connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route	4.41	2.91 (6)	1.50	21.96	<0.0001
	Overall mean	4.42	3.09			
Residents who did not want to change (<i>n</i> = 127)						
I1	Assist in building green landscapes in the village	4.14 (1)	3.46 (1)	0.68	7.29	<0.0001
I2	Assist in creating tribal landscapes based on local traditional culture	4.03 (3)	3.40 (2)	0.63	7.68	<0.0001
I3	Marketing and tour guide skill workshop	3.60 (8)	2.92 (8)	0.68	7.00	<0.0001
I4	Proposal writing and historical inventory workshop	3.61 (7)	2.95 (7)	0.66	6.92	<0.0001
I5	Recruit young people on a volunteer platform to help develop the village	3.76	3.00	0.76	6.98	<0.0001
I6	Planning traditional knowledge and cultural activities	4.06 (2)	3.33 (3)	0.73	7.94	<0.0001
I7	Connect with farmers and merchants to create secondary income	3.77	3.02	0.75	8.00	<0.0001
I8	Connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route	3.67 (6)	2.98 (6)	0.69	7.00	<0.0001
	Overall mean	3.83	3.13			

All participants rated the indicators “assist building green landscape in the village” (code I1) and “assist creating tribal landscape based on local traditional culture” (code I2) as the most critical indicators in the ranking, followed by indicator “planning traditional knowledge cultural activities” (code I6) as the third most important one among all indicators. Moreover, they also were the highest performance indicators among all SITM solutions (Table 3). The results showed that residents agree that creating/maintaining a good environment and cultural-based activities, including traditional practices and knowledge, to meet tourists’ needs were important tasks for sustainable Indigenous tourism development. From the literature reviews, in addition to enjoying the Indigenous area’s peaceful scenery, those were important driving forces for tourists traveling in the tribe to have a clean and tidy environment and wonderful crossing-cultural experiences [10,21]. In contrast, the indicators “connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route” (Code 8), “marketing and tour guide skill workshop” (Code I3), and “Proposal writing and historical inventory workshop” (Code I4) were the three least important and lowest performance indicators for all respondents rating, implying that the above three items might have satisfied by residents or have not yet reached the need due to tourism development.

The results also showed that those who wanted changes rated the indicators “assist creating tribal landscape based on local traditional culture” (code I2), “planning traditional knowledge cultural activities” (code I6), and “assist building green landscape in the village” (code I1) as the top three most critical indicators, with means of 4.54, 4.51 and 4.50, respectively. They also gave these indicators the highest performance rating. The first ranking was the indicator “assist building green landscape in the village” (code I1, the mean was 3.38), followed by “assist creating tribal landscape based on local traditional culture” (code I2, the mean was 3.36) and “planning traditional knowledge cultural activities” (code I6; the mean was 3.3). In contrast, the indicator “proposal writing and historical inventory workshop” (code I4) was ranked at the lowest importance and performance level, with means of 4.26 and 2.84, respectively. The indicators “marketing and tour guide skill workshop” (code I3) and “recruit young people on volunteer platform to help develop the village” (code I5) were both considered by respondents of residents who wanted to change as being relatively unimportant, while “marketing and tour guide skill workshop” (code I3) and “connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route” (code 8) were both performing poorly, both means were 2.91. In this group, the I-P gaps of 8 indicator values were between 1.12 and 1.50, higher than all residents’ detected results (1.01 to 1.29) (Table 3).

A performance gap analysis was performed to measure the difference between respondents’ level of satisfaction with certain indicators and their perceived importance. The gap was quantified by subtracting the mean performance score of a strategy from its respective mean importance score. A larger I-P gap indicates a greater underperformance of the attribute. Paired t-tests were employed to assess if there were significant variances between the means, with significance set at 0.05. Results from the gap analysis revealed the widest I-P gaps for the indicators “connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route” and “recruit young people on volunteer platform to help develop the village” for all respondents; the means were 1.29 and 1.28, respectively. Breaking it down further, “connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route” had the largest gap among all indicators for the group of residents who wanted to change, with a mean of 1.50, while “recruit young people on volunteer platform to help develop the village” had the widest gap for the group of residents who did not want to change, with a mean of 0.76.

The above results showed that residents who wanted to change and residents who did not want to change showed the same trend in the ranking of the importance of the eight indicators; the averages were 4.42 and 3.83, respectively, with a difference of 0.59, but there was still a gap in details with two groups. For example, both of them valued the tribal environment, but compared with the residents who did not want to change, the residents who wanted to change put more emphasis on building a landscape based on local traditional culture. The reason might be that the group who wanted to change was willing to invest in tourism while being more concerned about cultural elements.

According to the literature, the tribal landscape and wildlife resources are important factors in attracting tourists [83]. Moreover, creating a clean and good environment for tourists is also an essential factor in the successful development of tourism [21]. For residents who want to stay the same, assisting in greening could make the community environment better for living. For residents who want to change, assisting the community in creating landscapes based on their culture will contribute to tourism development because much of the literature points out that cross-cultural experiences and pleasant environments are the main driving forces for tourists' willingness to go into Indigenous villages [10,21].

In addition, residents who wanted to change considered that it was more important to create an Indigenous tourism route with different tribes than to recruit young people through volunteer platforms, which was slightly different from the views of residents who did not want to change. This means that residents who wanted to change were concerned about cross-industry alliance issues by creating new cooperation opportunities with nearby tribe villages to provide tourists with more comprehensive and innovative services to meet tourists' needs as well as enhance tourism sustainability. Noticeably, in the ranking of the performance of the eight indicators, the averages of residents who did not want to change were higher than those who wanted to change; the values were 3.13 and 3.09, respectively. This implies that they were not satisfied with the current situation regarding SITM solutions.

4.3. IPA of Residents' Perceptions toward SITM Solutions

The SITM solutions were analyzed and summarized, and data from all the interviewees who wanted to change and who did not want to change are shown and compared in Figure 4. Based on the views expressed by all respondents who wanted to change or who want to stay in current situation groups, indicators I1 "assist building green landscape in the village" (code I1), "assist creating tribal landscape based on local traditional culture" (code I2), and "planning traditional knowledge cultural activities" (code I6) were all located in quadrant I. This means that these findings were perceived as very important and showed a high level of satisfaction with their performance. Thus, tourism managers should "keep up the good work" with regard to these SITM indicators with continuing programs.

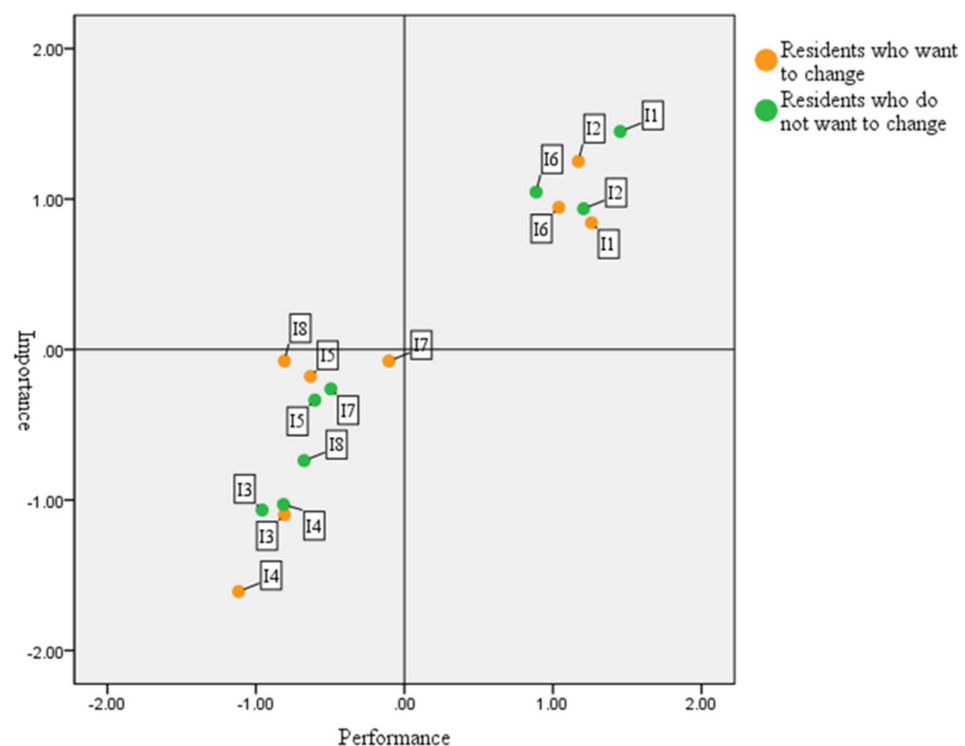


Figure 4. Importance–performance grid for Indigenous tourism management attributes between the residents who have two different tourism cognition.

The other indicators such as “marketing and tour guide skill workshop” (code I3), “proposal writing and historical inventory workshop” (code I4), “recruit young people on volunteer platform to help develop the village” (code I5), “connect with farmers and merchants to create secondary income” (code I7), and “connect different tribes to create an Indigenous tourism route” (code I8) were assigned to quadrant III by all the interviews who wanted to change and who did not want to change groups, and these solutions are “Low Priority”. Noteworthy, the I-P levels of the eight indicators corresponding to SITM solutions by residents who wanted to change and who did not want to change had similar thoughts and opinions (Figure 4).

Indigenous tourism displays ethnic characteristics and attracts tourists’ attention through cross-cultural experiences and pleasant environments [8,11,21,22,45]. In addition, Wu et al. [10] identified that people enjoy Indigenous tourism for three main reasons: enjoying nature and a simple lifestyle, participating in Indigenous activities, experiencing the ethnic culture, and finally, gaining happiness and enrichment. In addition, to achieve the sustainability goal, tourism development must be based on environmental protection, tourists’ support for social and cultural preservation, and the local economy of destinations [7,13]. This explains why when residents are more willing to cope with change through learning to enhance their abilities, planning, and reorganization to face a new outside situation, they will become resilient [32,49,52]. The results showed that all residents valued the landscapes of villages, not only in greening landscapes but also in creating culture-based landscapes. Moreover, they also prioritized culture-based experiences; thus, planning traditional knowledge and cultural activities was essential.

4.4. Residents’ Participation Behaviors in SITM

A logistic regression model (LRM), under the binary choice theory, was employed to identify factors affecting residents’ participation behavior in SITM. Residents’ WTP in SITM was set as the dependent variable. Independent variables consist of respondents’ demographic characteristics (i.e., residential area and education level) and perception and behavior towards SITM (i.e., tourism increases job opportunities for locals, preservation of Indigenous culture, and developing cultural activities help improve tourism development). Two sets of probit and logit regression models were constructed and compared (Table 4) with the same dependent and independent variables. However, only the mean importance was included as an independent variable in Model I of each model, while only the mean performance was included in Model II. The goodness of fit (GOF) of both models was determined using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and log-likelihood ratio (LLR). Both AIC and LLR values were at acceptable levels, indicating that our modeling of residents’ participation behavior in SITM provided good results within the LRM’s specification. The results reveal that those who were more likely to participate in SITM programs were residents who (1) lived in the Datong township, (2) had upper secondary school and above, (3) agreed that traditional festival is the most distinctive, (4) agreed that ethnic food is the most distinctive, (5) agreed that tourism increases job opportunities for locals, and (6) agreed that preserving Indigenous culture and developing cultural activities help improving tourism development.

Table 4. Results of residents' perception toward SITM and their participation behavior.

Variable Names	Logit Model				Probit Model			
	Importance on Indigenous Tourism (Model I)		Performance on Indigenous Tourism (Model II)		Importance on Indigenous Tourism (Model I)		Performance on Indigenous Tourism (Model II)	
	Coeff.	Std. Error	Coeff.	Std. Error	Coeff.	Std. Error	Coeff.	Std. Error
Constant	−3.37 ***	0.70	0.06	0.57	−1.96 ***	0.41	0.06	0.33
Areas (1 represents Datong, otherwise is 0)	0.53 **	0.26	0.84 ***	0.25	0.29 *	0.15	0.47 ***	0.14
Education (1 represents the upper secondary school and above, otherwise is 0)	0.91 ***	0.24	1.04 ***	0.24	0.51 ***	0.14	0.59 ***	0.14
Community Ecology Tour Guide Interpretation is the most distinctive (1 means yes, otherwise is 0)	−0.38	0.35	−0.34	0.34	−0.23	0.20	−0.21	0.19
Traditional festival is the most distinctive (1 means yes, otherwise is 0)	−0.70 *	0.38	−0.65 *	0.37	−0.42 *	0.22	−0.40 *	0.22
Ethnic food is the most distinctive (1 means yes, otherwise is 0)	−0.85 **	0.34	−0.79 **	0.32	−0.53 ***	0.195	−0.50 ***	0.19
Tourism increases job opportunities for locals (1 means yes, otherwise is 0)	0.44 *	0.26	0.73 ***	0.25	0.26 *	0.15	0.43 ***	0.15
Preservation of Indigenous culture and developing cultural activities help improve tourism development (1 means yes, otherwise is 0)	0.62 *	0.33	0.65 **	0.32	0.35 *	0.19	0.38 **	0.19
Conservation of natural environment and wildlife habitat helps improve tourism development (1 means yes, otherwise is 0)	0.14	0.33	0.41	0.31	0.05	0.19	0.21	0.18
Overall importance mean	0.85 ***	0.17	−	−	0.51 ***	0.10	−	−
Overall performance mean	−	−	−0.16	0.15	−	−	−0.08	0.09
McFadden Pseudo R-squared	0.18		0.14		0.18		0.14	
Log likelihood ratio (LLR)	102.41		77.65		102.38		77.07	
Chi-squared value					$\chi^2(0.01,8) = 20.09$			

Note: ***, **, * ==> Significance at 1%, 5%, 10% level.

5. Conclusions and Policy Implication

This study successfully established an IPA model under communities' I-P aspects of community resilience for SIT (Table 1 and Figure 4). The empirical outcomes confirm that SIT is appropriate for the future development of tourism under the aspects of perception of Indigenous tourism transformation, ability to learn, reorganize, and plan to extend the Indigenous tourism program, and interest in preparing for transforming tourism in eastern Taiwan. This research has shown both theoretical and empirical implications for the community resilience of SIT by an IPA model and discusses key factors affecting the perceived I-P indicators of a SITM system. Second, we examined the I-P matrix of the SIT to identify the differences in perceptions of the eight indicators of SIT among the entire cohort and whether people would like to select the alternative SIT or not based on demonstrably sound theoretical constructions. Finally, our research determined the factors influencing communities' participation in SITM based on their demographics, perceptions of, and behavior toward SIT, substantiating the goodness of fit (GOF) of our model specification.

The government should focus on community efforts to increase awareness of sustainable tourism, community resilience, and alternative program choices. The results indicated that the residents consider green or tribal culture landscapes in the village to be a contribution to tourism development. Since these indicators belong to quadrant I (Keeping up the good work, it is suggested that the local government should continue supporting the villages with environmental and cultural incentives and capacity-building projects, such as providing seedlings for community landscaping, offering courses on planting, breeding, pruning, pest controlling, plant arranging, etc. to enhance residents' abilities. Moreover, to cultivate environmental responsibility from an early age, residents could cooperate with tribal primary and secondary schools to integrate environmental education and practices into the school curriculum. In addition, since our respondents also expressed

the need to improve their marketing and proposal writing abilities, it is recommended that they make an inventory of marketing methods that are insufficient/intended to be developed and ask for assistance from the local government to provide education and training of relevant skills. Moreover, conducting workshops to brainstorm tribal stories and utilizing the governments' official website to promote their stories and tourism services could help boost their existing tourism platforms. Furthermore, to encourage young locals to stay in the village or young outsiders to come, the local government could support and counsel youth entrepreneurship in tribal tourism development to enable them to devote themselves to the community. Finally, for sustainable tourism development, a balance in environmental and sociocultural aspects is not enough since economic development also needs to be achieved. We suggest creating more cooperation opportunities for tribal industries, making an inventory of the characteristic products of farmers and merchants in the community, and promoting cross-industry alliances through tourism activities such as markets and ecological tours to create more consumption.

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