

The Role of Film Festivals in Promoting Cultural Identity of Tourism Destinations

Alexandra Lavaredas, Dora Gomes and Francisco Dias

Citur, Institut Polytechnique of Leiria, Portugal

alexandra.lavaredas@ipleiria.pt

Dora.gomes@ipleiria.pt

Francisco.dias@ipleiria.pt

Abstract: Film festivals have become increasingly important in the tourism industry, providing a unique opportunity to highlight the diverse cultural heritage of the regions where they are hosted. This study aims to explore the role of film festivals in promoting and shaping the cultural identity of tourism destinations, focusing on how they contribute to the crafting and dissemination of a destination's cultural identity. This research employs a qualitative approach, using content analysis of videos from the 17th edition of the ART&TUR Festival (2024) to evaluate how dimensions of cultural identity are reflected in tourism promotional videos. The findings from this study reveal that tourism promotion videos are strategically incorporating a variety of cultural elements to craft the identity of each destination. Film festivals, particularly those focused on tourism promotion, act as important platforms for both showcasing and preserving cultural identity. Tourism promotional videos, as key tools in cultural diplomacy, allow destinations to showcase their heritage, but they also risk reinforcing stereotypes or oversimplifying complex identities. For local communities, the study emphasizes the importance of being actively involved in the creation of tourism promotional materials, promoting cultural preservation while still embracing the economic opportunities tourism brings. The paper concludes by summarizing the key insights and offering recommendations for future research and practice in this area.

Keywords: Film festivals, Promotional videos, Tourism destination, Cultural identity, Tourism films

1. Introduction

Film festivals have evolved into influential platforms for the expression and promotion of cultural identities, offering a unique opportunity to highlight the diverse cultural heritage of the regions where they are hosted. These events go beyond the realm of cinema, serving as key instruments for positioning a destination as culturally vibrant and distinct. By showcasing local customs, traditions, and values through storytelling, films not only enhance the image of the destination but also help construct a compelling narrative around its cultural identity (Davis, 2023). As an increasingly important tool in tourism marketing, film festivals allow regions to engage a global audience, facilitating a deeper understanding and appreciation of local culture. Given their growing significance in the tourism industry, this study aims to explore the role of film festivals in promoting and shaping the cultural identity of tourism destinations, focusing on how they contribute to the crafting and dissemination of a destination's cultural identity and image.

This paper is organized into six sections. Following the introduction, the literature review provides an overview of existing research and identifies key gaps, setting the foundation for this study. The methodology section outlines the research design and approach used in the analysis. The results and discussion sections present the findings from the study, providing insights into the role of film festivals in cultural identity promotion. Finally, the paper concludes by summarizing the key insights and offering recommendations for future research and practice in this area.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Cultural Identity

Since identity is a dynamic, flexible, and constantly evolving process, compounded by the fragmentation of traditional reference frameworks that once anchored individuals and their interactions with the social world, identity becomes a "mobile celebration: continually formed and transformed in relation to the ways in which we are represented or interpellated in the cultural systems that surround us" (Hall, 2006:2).

We are represented according to our location within global economic, political, ideological and other power relations, as Brah (2006) suggests. This multiplicity of identities to which individuals belong led Smith (1991) to introduce the concept of identity collectives, highlighting gender, class, territory, ethnicity and religion as categories in which different identities find a substrate or common ground to which people feel a need to belong. Becoming part of a nation means getting represented by symbols and traditions that seek to recall established values, a collective heritage and cultural connection, thereby strengthening the sense of common identity. It is

from this context that the concept of national identity emerges, which, through the prism of a collective personality and a unique culture, gives its members a sense of definition and place in the world (Smith, 1991).

According to Smith (1991), the symbols and traditions provided by the various systems in which citizens are embedded serve to remind of the established values of a given collective entity. For the author, this is how the different members remember their common heritage and cultural connection. This cultural connection can be described as dynamic group identifications that emerge as shared locations of speaking, acting, and producing and is constructed in social interaction (Collier, 2005). Therefore, cultural identity involves the expression and negotiation of social affiliations by group members within specific contexts (Collier, 2005), shaped by contextual structures and public discourses that create representations and individual judgements (Collier, 2005, 2009).

Cultural identity refers to the emotional and physical connection an individual has to a specific culture, which shapes their choices, behaviors, religion, skills, language, and preferences in ways that align with those of others in the same cultural group. This shared identity allows members of the group to recognize each other as part of the same community. Cultural identities are evident in daily life. Members of a culturally distinct group employ similar skills, art forms, symbols, languages, and share common perspectives, ideas, and interpretations which collectively distinguish members of the same culture (Yeo & Cao, 2021). Within this scope, the Cultural Identity Theory examines how individuals express their cultural identities across diverse social contexts and how these identities—both personal and collective—are negotiated, sustained, and occasionally challenged through communication. It suggests that identities are not static attributes but are instead constructed, maintained, and conveyed through social interactions, shaped by cultural norms and power relations. This perspective emphasizes identity as an evolving, communicative process, highlighting its fluidity and sensitivity to contextual influences (Collier, 2005).

2.2 Branding the Identity of a Tourism Destination

Identity of a place becomes even more relevant when we come across the touristic needs of a destination. The increasing search for tourism products and services has led to a pressing need for tourism destinations to differentiate themselves and let tourists know of their existence (Qu et al., 2011). Yet, to keep the reality in accordance with expectations, tourism destinations have to showcase their unique identities, to also stand out among numerous similar offerings. This differentiation centres on the clear identification and promotion of the tourism destination's identity, transforming it into a distinct brand that resonates with potential tourists. Destination branding, therefore, becomes an essential strategy for enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of a tourism destination (Qu et al., 2011), and encapsulates its vision, promise, and meaning, guiding how it is perceived by visitors and other stakeholders (Kah et al., 2020).

Branding is a strategic approach that uses a range of markers—such as names, symbols, logos, slogans, and colour schemes—to distinguish a product or service from others (Kotler, 1997; Tasci & Gartner, 2009). In the context of tourism, branding encompasses the development of a destination's unique identity, which is constructed from various elements such as history, culture, natural landscapes, and local values (Cai, 2002). This identity represents a set of unique attributes and associations that collectively shape how a tourism destination is perceived in the global market (Kah et al., 2020). Destination branding is not only about creating a logo or visual identity but also about embedding deeper socio-cultural elements that convey the essence of the tourism destination to its audience. These elements must reflect the destination's social identity, community values, and sustainability efforts, which are crucial for making a destination recognisable and attractive to tourists.

2.2.1 Films as tools to brand the identity of a tourism destination

To effectively promote tourism destination brands, visual and narrative tools such as films and promotional videos have become indispensable. These mediums not only capture the attention of potential visitors but also offer an immersive, multi-sensory experience that extends beyond simple visual representation. For the community, films enable local filmmakers to present stories that resonate with their cultural heritage, thereby reinforcing a sense of community identity (Hsu & Huang, 2020). Through cinematic storytelling, films and videos can authentically convey the cultural essence and symbolic values of a tourism destination, building a deep connection with the audience (Riley et al., 1998).

Film locations can be turned into "icons" by associating them with specific concepts, themes, or emotions that go beyond the inherent characteristics of the place itself (Riley et al., 1998). Physical film location attributes encompass a range of elements that contribute to a destination's unique appeal, including natural attractions like scenic landscapes, mountains, diverse flora and fauna, wildlife, beaches, islands, waterfalls, and rivers; modern architectural landmarks, such as skyscrapers, sculptures, innovative architectural styles, and high-tech

buildings, add to the visual and experiential allure of a location; cultural attractions, featuring historical sites, monuments, museums, religious landmarks; and expressions of local culture, such as traditional foods, festivals, attire, and handicrafts, which collectively convey the essence of the destination's identity (Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Rahman et. al, 2019). By highlighting these elements, films can create a memorable "visual image" of the destination, which helps to establish it as a symbol of cultural heritage and tradition (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; Beeton, 2016).

Films and videos that promote tourism destination identities rely on several key elements of branding to communicate the destination's unique attributes. These elements include natural attractions, cultural landmarks, historical sites, local lifestyle, and the social environment (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Through the strategic use of audiovisual techniques, filmmakers highlight these aspects, weaving them into the narrative to represent the destination's identity in an emotionally compelling way. Films are also instrumental in showcasing the cultural richness of a tourism destination, as they provide an authentic representation of local customs, traditions, and everyday life. The cultural identity of a destination, expressed through its geography, traditions, and behaviours, is a key element of its brand (Berrozpe et al., 2017). Films can highlight these cultural elements, from local festivals to traditional cuisine and attire, offering viewers a glimpse into the destination's lifestyle and inviting them to experience it first-hand.

Beyond the visual elements, narration and music in films and promotional videos further contribute to building the destination's identity. Filieri et al. (2021) highlight that narrative message in short tourism videos provide interpretative descriptions that enrich the visual content, offering insights into the destination's culture, history, and values. Music, as Cohen (2001) argues, plays a significant role in shaping the emotional experience of the viewer, since it enhances the visual content by conveying moods, emotions, and nostalgia, which contribute to the viewer's overall perception of the tourism destination. By showcasing the destination's natural beauty, cultural heritage, and local lifestyle, films help to establish a destination as an iconic place that attracts tourists through both its tangible and symbolic qualities.

Film festivals are one of the places where tourism films have the most visibility facilitate cross-cultural dialogue, encouraging greater understanding and appreciation of local customs, traditions, and values (Duvignau, 2019). While film festivals have the potential to enhance cultural identity, several challenges must be addressed. One concern is the commercialization of culture, which can lead to the dilution of authentic cultural expressions (Maitland & Bianchini, 2017). As festivals grow in popularity, there is a risk that local narratives may be overshadowed by mainstream representations that cater to broader audiences. Therefore, it is important to understand how identity is being portrayed at films and learn the best practices to keep films as a tool not only to showcase the cultural values of a destination, but also to attract new visitors and improve community representation and sense of pride.

3. Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach, employing content analysis of videos from the 17th edition of the ART&Tur Festival (2024). Data was collected from 42 films that were selected as finalists at ART&Tur festival (17th edition, 2024). Given the subject in study and time constraints only films promoting tourism destinations, with less than 5 minutes of length have been selected for analysis. On total, the sample comprised 16 films.

As far as content analysis is concerned, the films were visualized in two moments: a first viewing, as a leisure viewer, which allowed the authors to gather initial impressions; a second moment to verify if the dimensions of analysis proposed in table 1 were present in the videos and a third moment to count how many times each dimension of cultural identity was reflected in the tourism promotional videos. A careful observation of the film was conducted, in order to list the visual and linguistic elements that directly allude to the elements under analysis. Data analysis consisted of relative frequencies distribution for items examination and was carried out with Microsoft Excel.

Table 1: Dimensions of analysis by author

Dimensions of analysis	Authors
Logo, design, or symbol; Tourism destination name; Colours and visual palette	Kotler, 1997; Tasci & Gartner, 2009
Iconic sites – only built heritage/architecture	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Cai, 2002; Rahman et. al, 2019
Representations of cultural practices	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Cai, 2002; Rahman et. al, 2019

Dimensions of analysis	Authors
Traditional attire and dress	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Rahman et. al, 2019
Use of local materials	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Rahman et. al, 2019
Local cuisine	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Rahman et. al, 2019
Local people and lifestyles	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Rahman et. al, 2019
Local music or sounds	Filieri et al. (2021) and Cohen (2001)
Traditional musical instruments	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Rahman et. al, 2019
Languages or accents	Filieri et al. (2021) and Cohen (2001)
Traditional tales	Aitcheson & Reeves, 1998; Rahman et. al, 2019

4. Results

After carefully analyzing the videos and paying attention to the cultural elements in each of them, the following branding characteristics were identified in the tourism promotion videos: “tourism destination name”, “logo, design, or symbol”, “colors and visual palette”, “language or accents”, “message conveyed”, “iconic sites”, “cultural practices”, “local music and other sounds”, “traditional attire and dress”, “local people and lifestyle”, “local cuisine” and “art”.

Each of these branding characteristics appeared in at least one of the selected tourism promotional videos.

Table 2: Dimensions present in the films under analysis

Number	Project Title	Duration	Tourism destination name	Logo, design, or symbol	Colors and visual palette	Landscapes	Iconic sites – only built	Representations of	Traditional attire and	Use of local materials	Local cuisine	Local people and	Local music or sounds	Traditional musical	Languages or accents	Tradicional tales	Desporto e Animação	Art	Written message
1	It's only 3 days	00:03:54	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x			x	x	x
2	Grand Train Tour of Switzerland. The Ride of a Lifetime	00:03:45	x	x		x	x					x			x				x
3	Sweden (not Switzerland)	00:01:53	x	x	x	x						x					x	x	x
4	It's to Celebrate	00:02:15	x			x	x			x	x							x	x
5	Covilhã, have time for yourself	00:01:46	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x					x
6	For Sure, they are from the north.	00:01:48	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x
7	Far From The World - A Bleu Evasion Story	00:01:36	x			x	x	x									x		x
8	Peru Wow	00:01:39	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x					x		x

Number	Project Title	Duration	Tourism destination name	Logo, design, or symbol	Colors and visual palette	Landscapes	Iconic sites – only built	Representations of	Traditional attire and	Use of local materials	Local cuisine	Local people and	Local music or sounds	Traditional musical	Languages or accents	Traditional tales	Desporto e Animação	Art	Written message
9	Valley of Cambra, with great delight.	00:02:46	x			x	x	x		x	x	x					x	x	x
10	Operation 4	00:03:32	x			x	x	x	x		x	x	x				x		x
11	Bydgoszcz- More Beautiful Than You Think	00:02:03	x	x		x	x	x				x						x	x
12	Make your own movie	00:03:15	x			x	x	x	x		x	x					x	x	x
13	Coimbra, the right place	00:03:23	x			x	x	x				x	x	x				x	x
14	Greenland's Authentic Intelligence	00:02:15	x			x	x	x			x	x					x	x	x
15	You hit the bull's eye - Castelo Branco	00:04:11	x	x		x	x	x			x	x		x			x	x	x
16	Sintra, a land of timeless beauty	00:02:12	x	x		x	x					x		x					x

4.1 Tourism Destination Name

All tourism destinations have their name appearing on the screen, written or spoken.

4.2 Logo, Design, or Symbol

Only 50% of the films show the national flag or any other symbol that represent the tourism destination. The fact that only half of the film locations promote it on the screen lead us to assume that visitors don't associate the national symbol with the image they have of the tourism destination. Other destination attributes seem to be more important to attract tourism.

4.3 Colors and Visual Palette

Only one film (from Sweden Tourism Destination) seemed to have picked a palette of colors in accordance to the country national flag.

4.4 Language or Accents

None of the destinations featured in the films have English as their native language. Nevertheless, English seems to be the preferred linguistic code to communicate. If the name of the destinations seems to be of major importance to reinforce the identity of the tourism destination, the native language is less important. When it comes to cultural identity of tourism destinations the dimension 'languages of accents' seem to have minor importance, since the trend is to use a code that is understood by the majority of visitors. Although it is justified by the need to promote one destination worldwide (being English global language), this type of attitudes

speculates a start of the depravity of an identity, by taking the relevance of the mere pronunciation and typical sentences from the places being promoted.

It is worth mentioning that 90% of the films are either spoken in English or in the tourism destination native language but have subtitles in English. Switzerland seems to be very proud of their native languages since apart from English, also have some notes in French and German. Films narrated in local languages with subtitles in English not only provide cultural authenticity and understanding but also helps to preserve and promote these languages. This approach makes it possible for attendees to connect with the nuances of the language and expressions.

4.5 Message Conveyed

From the 16 tourism destinations analyzed, 11 have a message written in English. Only four have preferred to write in the destination native language (Portuguese or French). The most common messages shared by the tourism destination in analysis are:

- Give a sense of being in the right place: 'it's easy to like', 'right place',
- Call for action: 'you need', 'sign the agreement', 'make your own movie', with 31,5% of the tourism destinations mentioning the word visit directly.
- Give a feeling that there is more to discover: 'A lot to discover', 'more beautiful than you think', 'of a different nation'
- Go beyond mundane life: 'to celebrate', 'a place of dreams and magic'
- Sense of pleasure: 'with great delight', 'wow', or,
- Associate with relaxing ('loin du monde', 'relax').

As per words spoken in the films that is word mentioning, 'saudade' appears in 25% of the films that feature the tourism destination Portugal, a very Portuguese word, without direct translation in any other language.

4.6 Iconic Sites

The films prominently feature a variety of iconic sites, with the most frequently depicted being cities (including rooftops, aerial views, and landscapes), historical villages or centers, manor houses, churches or convents, and walkways. Other notable sites include palaces, bridges, modern buildings, theatres or opera houses, ruins, fortresses, castles, libraries, and museums. Additionally, less prominent landmarks such as wine cellars, roads, train stations, geodesic landmarks, historical centers, fish-scale house walls, traditional houses, historical military and civilian buildings, universities, and cave paintings also make appearances. Aerial views of cities, urban landscapes, and historical centers dominate the visuals, followed by manor houses and religious buildings. Walkways are well-represented, highlighting the significance of outdoor and nature-related activities in tourism destinations. These walkways enhance the natural landscape, offering opportunities for healthy and nature-centered tourism.

In addition, palaces are frequently showcased, alongside both modern and ancient bridges, illustrating that cultural identity in tourism destinations is shaped not only by historical landmarks but also by contemporary architecture. The representation of theatres and other entertainment venues further suggests that leisure and amusement are important elements of a destination's appeal. The inclusion of ruins, fortresses, castles, and cultural institutions such as libraries and museums underscore the role of cultural heritage in tourism promotion. These landmarks not only provide a glimpse into the past but also contribute to a destination's ongoing cultural identity.

4.7 Representations of Cultural Practices

This category is represented through various elements, including handicrafts such as tile-making, painting, clay molding, gold filigree, lacework, stained glass craftsmanship, and gilded woodwork. It also encompasses celebrations, such as popular festivals, folklore events, Carnival, medieval festivities, and diverse forms of dance, both traditional and modern. Additionally, it highlights musical expression, featuring instruments like the Portuguese guitar, classical guitar, xylophone, accordion, and piano. Professional activities are also depicted, including fishing and cattle farming, offering a glimpse into traditional livelihoods.

Cultural practices are prominently featured in destination representations, often highlighting traditional activities such as fishing or cattle herding. However, these practices are frequently presented in a commercialized and curated manner, focusing more on creating visually appealing scenes than on depicting authentic, lived experiences. This approach can obscure the true essence of local traditions and the everyday

lives of residents, emphasizing spectacle over substance. As a result, cultural and traditional elements may be romanticized or simplified, portraying an idealized image that may not fully reflect the genuine cultural identity of the destination.

In this dimension, handicrafts and related activities lead the category, followed by music and dance celebrations, both religious and profane, ancient or modern. This includes playing musical instruments, like the classical and Portuguese guitar, the piano, the xylophone and the accordion, among other traditional devices.

4.7.1 Local music and other sounds

All videos have music playing while displaying the images. Nevertheless, instrumental popular music and other traditional music, like Fado or popular singing are shown. This tells us that music plays an important role in showcasing the identity of the destination, but tradition accommodates new trends.

4.7.2 Traditional attire and dress

The videos feature various images of traditional attire and dress, including fishermen and their wives in customary costumes, individuals dressed in local attire dancing or celebrating nature, and scenes from markets showcasing traditional clothing. Notable examples include a woman in traditional dress engaged in lacework and musicians adorned in local costumes. Traditional attire and dress are frequently depicted alongside music and dance, often in the context of showcasing ancient professions and handicrafts, highlighting their cultural and historical significance. Yet again, scenes are embellished to create a more cinematic image, sometimes overshadowing the deeper history of the destination.

4.8 Local People and Lifestyles

The films showcase various aspects of local people and lifestyles, depicting convivial moments such as gatherings in open-air hot tubs, on rooftops, at the beach, in coffee shops, and at traditional celebrations, as well as scenes of people playing cards, enjoying lakes and swimming pools, dancing in discos, and watching fireworks. People of all ages and roles appear, including celebrities, families, children, elderly individuals, university students in local costumes, a Portuguese woman from the north, and smiling individuals, alongside more personal moments like a mother and child painting a boat or groups sharing meals. Relaxation is portrayed through activities such as reading and playing outdoors, walking along marinas, and enjoying gardens with pets. Rural and everyday life are captured with images of picnics, clothes drying on lines, fishermen at work, and Coimbra's student houses, offering a glimpse into authentic lifestyles.

Conviviality and social gatherings are key elements in the films, appearing in various forms such as beach meetups, coffee shop interactions, and traditional games or celebrations. These gatherings predominantly feature older individuals and families, emphasizing close-knit, intergenerational connections. Hospitality is also a significant theme, with smiling faces frequently depicted, conveying warmth and openness. Native celebrities play a prominent role in the films, shaping local self-perception and fostering national pride. Additionally, some destinations link their identity to a sense of freedom and relaxation, portrayed through images of people enjoying outdoor activities like playing with pets or reading in public gardens. The films highlight various lifestyles, particularly those rooted in the countryside and open-air activities, where individuals feel more connected to nature, often gathering together to celebrate.

4.9 Local Cuisine

The films showcase various aspects of 'local cuisine,' including traditional products such as fish, olive oil, wine, and cheese, all of which are highlighted multiple times. Meals and cooking scenes are also prominently featured, with a focus on traditional dishes and local markets. The films highlight cooking ingredients like herbs, mushrooms, parsley, and sausage, and showcase the restaurant setting, often featuring chefs preparing local dishes. There are also moments capturing children and celebrities enjoying traditional pastries, as well as shrimp being transported from the fish market to the restaurant. A wine barrel is also shown, reinforcing the importance of local products in the culinary identity of the destination.

Gastronomy is present in 62,5% of the films, with a dominance of local products which appear being cooked or in a set meal.

4.10 Art

The films feature several notable items related to 'art,' including paintings and sculptures, which appear multiple times, as well as museums showcasing these art forms. Wall paintings, statues, and stained-glass windows are

also highlighted, contributing to the cultural richness of the destinations. Additionally, gilded woodwork, fashion, precious stones, and decorative tiles are showcased, further emphasizing the artistic heritage and craftsmanship integral to the identity of the places depicted.

Around 62,5% of the tourism destinations display different forms of art. Sculpture and painting are the most celebrated form of art. Either they appear on the screen in open air or inside museums. This dimension should be included when assessing the cultural identity. It is a form of people to express the feelings and ideas. It can be considered as a complement of the dimension 'representations of cultural practices'.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

Film festivals, particularly those focused on tourism promotion, act as important platforms for both showcasing and preserving cultural identity. They serve as microcosms of a region's heritage, offering a stage for local narratives, artistic expressions, and social issues. The findings from this study reveal that tourism promotion videos from the ART&Tur Festival (2024) strategically incorporate a variety of cultural elements to craft the identity of each destination. By showcasing films that depict local customs, values, and social issues, these events enhance the visibility of cultural identities on an international stage (Ishmael, 2017). Film festivals contribute to foster cultural identity that resonates with both residents and visitors. By attracting visitors interested in diverse narratives, film festivals create a sense of belonging among local communities (Davis, 2023).

Among the most prominent elements are iconic sites such as historical centers, manor houses, and religious buildings, which are consistently highlighted as central to the destination's identity. These iconic sites, often shown through aerial views or close-ups of architectural details, create a visual connection to the cultural heritage of the region. Additionally, modern infrastructure, such as bridges and theaters, plays an equally important role in portraying a dynamic blend of tradition and contemporary culture, signaling to viewers that the destination is not only historically rich but also evolving and welcoming to new forms of tourism. This representation of both the ancient and modern suggests that the identity of these destinations is shaped by a complex interplay of history and modernity, offering a multifaceted experience to potential visitors.

In addition to physical landmarks, the videos also emphasize cultural practices as vital components of the destination's identity. Handicrafts are showcased, reflecting a deep connection to local traditions and craftsmanship. Music and dance further enrich the cultural tapestry with instruments playing a significant role in representing local culture. These cultural practices are not only presented as static traditions but are often accompanied by celebrations, festivals, and gatherings that involve local people of all ages. This portrayal of conviviality and intergenerational interaction, particularly through scenes of family gatherings, social celebrations, and traditional activities, underscores the importance of community and social life in shaping the character of the destination. Furthermore, the presence of native celebrities in the videos plays a crucial role in fostering national pride and reinforcing a sense of identity, as they are seen as symbols of local authenticity and pride.

However, it is important to contextualize these representations through the lens of Cultural Identity Theory (CIT), which emphasizes the role of social context and power dynamics in shaping cultural identity (Collier, 2005). In tourism videos, the portrayal of a destination's culture is often influenced by the tourism industry, which has a vested interest in presenting an appealing, accessible, and sometimes idealized image. This can lead to power imbalances, where the voices of local communities may be minimized or redefined in favor of a narrative that aligns with tourists' expectations. To overcome this issue, local community may contribute to the film script.

5.1 Theoretical implications

This study has significant theoretical implications for the understanding of cultural identity in tourism media, particularly through the lens of Cultural Identity Theory (CIT). Tourism videos often highlight specific cultural elements—such as music, food, and attire—while downplaying others, creating a performative culture tailored to tourists' expectations. This selective portrayal reflects the ongoing negotiation of identity, where local communities may feel pressure to adapt or perform certain cultural traits to align with the tourism narrative.

Additionally, this study contributes to theories of cultural diplomacy and globalization by exploring how tourism media acts as a platform for local cultures to be presented on the global stage. Tourism videos, as key tools in cultural diplomacy, allow destinations to showcase their heritage, but they also risk reinforcing stereotypes or oversimplifying complex identities. Tourism videos, while preserving cultural elements, often reframe them for marketability, potentially altering their original meanings. This research deepens our understanding of how

cultural identity is both protected and transformed in the face of globalization, highlighting the intricate relationship between local culture, tourism industries, and global audiences.

5.2 Practical Implications

The core appeal of tourism films lies in their ability to present the identity of the destination as culturally attractive and unique. By focusing on specific cultural features, tourism films position these elements as differentiators that make the destination appealing. Film makers can use the cultural identity of a destination to create a sense of uniqueness and exclusivity, encouraging viewers to seek experiences that seem both authentic and distinctive.

For tourism marketers, understanding this is essential for creating respectful, nuanced portrayals that honor the diversity and authenticity of the culture they are promoting. A respectful approach enhances the visitor experience, fosters pride in the host community and creates a more positive, sustainable relationship between visitors and the visited region. By carefully balancing the presentation of traditional and modern aspects of a destination, marketers can create more inclusive, authentic representations that reflect the dynamic nature of local cultures. This also includes avoiding the oversimplification or stereotyping of cultural practices, which could alienate local populations or mislead tourists about the true cultural landscape.

For local communities, the study emphasizes the importance of being actively involved in the creation of tourism promotional materials. This ensures that their culture is accurately and respectfully represented, and that any adaptations made for the tourism market do not result in the loss of cultural integrity. Lastly, cultural policymakers can use the insights from this research to foster collaborations between local stakeholders and the tourism industry, promoting cultural preservation while still embracing the economic opportunities tourism brings. This approach can enhance cultural diplomacy and contribute to a more sustainable and ethical tourism industry.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

This study may not fully represent the diversity of approaches used by the global tourism industry in showcasing cultural identity. Since the sample is limited to videos from a particular festival and year, the findings may not be generalizable to all tourism promotional materials or global contexts. Future research could expand the scope by examining tourism videos from a broader range of festivals, countries, and promotional platforms, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural identity is communicated in contemporary tourism marketing.

While the study focuses on specific cultural elements, the interpretation of these elements may vary depending on the researcher's perspective and cultural background. Future studies could incorporate a more diverse range of perspectives, including those of local community members, to ensure that cultural representations are not only authentic but also inclusive of multiple viewpoints. It is suggested to evaluate a new dimension for promotional tourism videos—identity stereotyping—to understand the extent to which community practices, cultures, and values are being exploited and commercialized to create a visually appealing scene. Additionally, future research could investigate the long-term impact of tourism videos on local communities, exploring how continuous exposure to specific cultural portrayals influences local identity and tourism behavior.

Acknowledgement

Funded by project FAST, Agenda ATT | PRR

References

- Baloglu, S. and McCleary, K. (1999) 'A model of destination image formation', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26, pp. 868–897.
- Berrozpe, A., Campo, S. and Yagüe, M. J. (2017) 'Understanding the identity of Ibiza, Spain', *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 34(8), pp. 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2016.1272525>
- Brah, A. (2006). Diferença, diversidade, diferenciação. *Cadernos pagu* (26), 329-376.
- Cai, L. A. (2002) 'Cooperative branding for rural destinations', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(3), pp. 720–742. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(01\)00080-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(01)00080-9)
- Cohen, A. J. (2001) 'Music as a source of emotion in film', in P. N. Juslin and J. A. Sloboda (eds.) *Music and emotion: Theory and research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 249–272.
- Collier, M. J. (2005) 'Context, privilege, and contingent cultural identifications in South African group interview discourses', *Western Journal of Communication*, 69(4), pp. 295–318. doi: 10.1080/10570310500305141

- Collier, M. J. (2009) 'Contextual negotiation of cultural identifications and relationships: Interview discourse with Palestinian, Israeli, and Palestinian/Israeli young women in a U.S. peace-building program', *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 24, pp. 344–368. doi: 10.1080/17513050903177292
- Davis, L. (2023) 'Cultural identity in cinema: A study of the Montreal World Film Festival'.
- Duvignau, A. (2019) 'The role of film festivals in cultural exchange', *Cultural Studies Review*, 25(2), pp. 1–15.
- Filieri, R., Lin, Z., Pino, G., Alguezaui, S. and Inversini, A. (2021) 'The role of visual cues in eWOM on consumers' behavioral intention and decisions', *Journal of Business Research*, 135, pp. 663–675. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.06.055>
- Hall, S. (2006). The centrality of culture: notes on the cultural revolutions of our time. In: THOMPSON, Kenneth (ed.). *Media and cultural regulation*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: The Open University; SAGE Publications, 1997. (Cap. 5). Disponível em http://www.gpef.fe.usp.br/teses/agenda_2011_02.pdf. [6 outubro 2024]
- Hsu, C. H. C. and Huang, S. (2020) 'The impact of film festivals on cultural identity', *Journal of Travel Research*, 59(7), pp. 1192–1205.
- Kah, J. A., Shin, H. J. and Lee, S. H. (2020) 'Traveler sensoryscape experiences and the formation of destination identity', *Tourism Geographies*, 24(2–3), pp. 475–494. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2020.1765015>
- Kotler, P. (1997) *Marketing management: Analysis, planning, implementation, and control* (9th ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Maitland, R. and Bianchini, F. (2017) 'Cultural events and urban change: The case of film festivals', *European Planning Studies*, 25(6), pp. 1033–1050.
- Qu, H., Kim, L. H. and Im, H. (2011) 'A model of destination branding: Integrating the concepts of the branding and destination image', *Tourism Management*, 32, pp. 465–476. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.03.014>
- Rahman, N., Md. Dawam, Z. and Chan, J. K. L. (2019) 'The characteristics of film products to induce tourism', *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Environment Management*, 4, pp. 84–99. <https://doi.org/10.35631/JTHEM.416007>
- Riley, R., Baker, D. and Van Doren, C. S. (1998) 'Movie-induced tourism', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 25(4), pp. 919–935. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(98\)00045-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(98)00045-0)
- Smith, A.D. (1991) *National Identity*. Penguin Books, London
- Tasci, A. and Gartner, W. (2009) 'A Practical Framework for Destination Branding', in *Bridging Tourism Theory and Practice*, 1, pp. 149–158. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S2042-1443\(2009\)0000001013](https://doi.org/10.1108/S2042-1443(2009)0000001013)
- Yeo, A. and Cao, F. (2021) 'A Creative Research Process for a Modern African Graphic Design Identity. The Case of Ivory Coast', *Art and Design Review*, 9, pp. 210–231. <https://doi.org/10.4236/adr.2021.92017>