



Evaluating the Impact of Residents' Social Capital on Host-Tourist Interactions: The Mediating Role of Place Identity

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of residents' social capital on host-tourist interactions, with a focus on the mediating role of place identity. Conducted in Luxor City, Egypt, the research examines how social norms, trust, and networks, as dimensions of social capital, shape interactions between residents and tourists. The study further explores the impact of social capital on place identity and the latter's role in enhancing these interactions. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 393 residents, and data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings reveal that social norms and networks indirectly influence host-tourist interactions through place identity, while social trust directly fosters these interactions. The results highlight the critical role of place identity in mediating the effects of social capital, offering theoretical and practical implications for sustainable tourism development.

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KEYWORDS

Social Capital, Place Identity, Host-Tourist Interactions

تقييم تأثير رأس المال الاجتماعي للسكان المحليين على التفاعلات مع السائحين: الدور الوسيط للهوية المكانية

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الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف تأثير رأس المال الاجتماعي للسكان المحليين على التفاعلات مع السياح، مع التركيز على الدور الوسيط للهوية المكانية. تم إجراء الدراسة في مدينة الأقصر بمصر، حيث تم تحليل تأثير المعايير الاجتماعية والثقة والشبكات، باعتبارها أبعاداً لرأس المال الاجتماعي، على هذه التفاعلات. كما تناولت الدراسة دور رأس المال الاجتماعي في تشكيل الهوية المكانية، وأثرها في تعزيز التفاعل بين السكان والسياح. شملت الدراسة توزيع استبيان على 393 من سكان المدينة، وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام نمذجة المعادلات الهيكلية (SEM). أظهرت النتائج أن المعايير الاجتماعية والشبكات تؤثر بشكل غير مباشر على التفاعلات مع السياح من خلال الهوية المكانية، في حين أن الثقة الاجتماعية لها تأثير مباشر على هذه التفاعلات. تؤكد الدراسة على الدور المحوري للهوية المكانية كعامل وسيط، وتقدم العديد من التوصيات النظرية والتطبيقية.

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Introduction

The word “capital” has been utilized in tourism literature with different types, definitions, and scales. Prior studies demonstrated four classifications of capital that contribute to community development significantly. These types are social, human, financial, and natural capital, and this classification is widely used by tourism academics. Social capital has proven to be of utmost importance in tourism studies because of its application in different contexts (Zhou et al., 2017).

Social capital can be illustrated by the relationships and interactions that occur between people or people and systems. It is not a modern concept, and it has been employed by academics across several fields such as sociology, economic development, and politics (Reimer et al., 2008; Tripathi, 2023). Each community is characterized by its social capital, which includes social networks, norms, and trust. It is evident that residents’ social capital has a substantial impact on their behaviour and attitudes toward the tourism industry. Thus, prior studies confirmed that residents’ social capital could be a powerful tool for supporting tourism growth (Zhu et al., 2021).

Tourism is an activity which basically relies on human interactions across several cultures. Tourists move from their countries to different destinations, which creates different types of host-tourist interactions (Lehto et al., 2020). In this manner, Fan (2017) argued that interactions between residents and tourists are inevitable, and it affects tourists’ experience and residents’ support for tourism activities. Host-tourist interactions are affected by cultural differences which determine the outcomes of these interactions. As disparities escalate, it will be more likely to have conflicts and misunderstandings between both sides (Reisinger and Turner, 1998).

Consequently, prior studies confirmed that studying residents’ responses towards tourists through social interactions is a critical topic because it has a significant impact on the destination image (Woosnam et al., 2020).

This study aims to investigate the relationship between residents’ social capital and host-tourist interactions in Luxor City in Egypt. This study illustrates the joint effect of place identity and social capital on host-tourist interactions.

Proshansky (1978, p. 155) postulated that place identity includes “ideas, beliefs, preferences, feelings, values, goals, and behavioral tendencies and skills” that are connected to an individual’s physical environment and contribute to shaping a resident self-identity. Lai et al., (2021) illustrated that the physical environment for a resident includes spaces, places, and his own properties that combine together to provide him with social, cultural, and psychological needs. Furthermore, Wang et al., (2019) assured that understanding residents’ place identity contributes to defining their attitudes and behaviour towards tourists. Previous research has addressed social capital, host-tourist interactions, and place identity in different settings and contexts. Researchers have examined the impact of social capital on the following variables: residents’ support for festivals, customers’ purchase intention, life satisfaction, and supportive attitude to tourism development (Zou et al., 2018; Ghahtarani et al., 2020; Kuo et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2021). Regarding host-tourist interactions, prior studies

focused on examining their power dynamics, and their impact on tourism development, and understanding these interactions through implicit stereotypes (Eusébio et al., 2018; Tse and Tung, 2023; Zhang and Xu, 2023). Lastly, literature illustrated the relationship between place identity and the following variables; residents' intention to invite friends, performance of tourism entrepreneurs, tourists' heritage spatial perceptions, internal place branding, and user satisfaction in waterfronts (Hallak et al., 2012; Mueller and Schade, 2012; Lai et al., 2021; Isa et al., 2022; Zou et al., 2023).

Based on the prior discourse or argument, it is evident that the interrelationships between social capital, host-tourist interactions, and place identity have yet to be investigated. In line with this, Eusébio et al., (2018) argued that the majority of previous studies were conducted in developed countries, and there is not sufficient analysis about factors that affect residents' attitudes towards tourists. Therefore, this study has three objectives to fill these gaps. The first objective is to examine the impact of a resident's social capital on host-tourist interactions. The second is to determine the impact of residents' social capital on place identity. Finally, it analyzes the mediating role of place identity between residents' social capital and host-tourist interactions in Luxor City in Egypt.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Social Capital

Social relations are an indispensable matter in every human society. It is impossible for individuals to live isolated from each other. Social contact is considered an effective tool to learn and explore different aspects of people (Bridge, 2014). In this regard, Hanifan (1916) presented the first theoretical contribution to social capital over a century ago. However, it gained considerable attention four decades ago, especially in the following fields: organizational behavior, politics, and finance. Moreover, social capital is widely used to present practical implications for societal problems, personal relationships, and group dynamics (Tripathi, 2023).

There is a great debate between researchers about the exact definition of social capital. It could have several meanings according to the nature of the field which addresses social capital (Durante et al., 2023). Putnam et al. (1994) stated that social capital could be explained through three critical pillars that exist in every social organization: trust, norms, and networks. According to Grafton (2005), social capital is a concept that includes norms and social networks that enhance cooperation and communication between individuals and groups. Pawar (2006) demonstrated that the most prominent definitions of social capital include cooperation, networks, norms, values, trust, and social interactions.

For the purpose of this study, social capital will be examined through three key dimensions: social norms, social trust, and social networks. These dimensions were selected based on their relevance to the study context, as they collectively shape the interactions between residents and tourists in a given destination. Social norms establish behavioral expectations, social trust fosters cooperation and mutual understanding, and social networks facilitate communication and collective action.

Together, these elements provide a comprehensive framework for assessing the role of social capital in host-tourist interactions.

Regarding the most important dimensions of social capital, Coleman (1990) assured that norms represent patterns of behavior that determine the accepted or rejected actions in a specific society. Norms are considered unwritten rules that define collective or individual actions in a specific situation. Although they are neither legal nor officially enforced, norms can be more powerful than formal laws in some societies. In this regard, Pilatin et al. (2023) illustrated that the power of social norms differs from one society to another according to their traditions and customs.

Trust is considered a key driver for making cooperation between individuals easier and more effective (Fukuyama, 2001). The existence of higher levels of trust results in coordinating collective action toward any problems (Tye & Williams, 2003).

Social networks could be divided into formal and informal structures, encompassing interactions between individuals or groups (Coleman, 1994). Formal networks include institutional relationships, professional organizations, and community associations, which facilitate structured cooperation and resource sharing. In contrast, informal networks rely on personal connections, friendships, and familial ties that foster spontaneous collective action (Putnam, 2000). Powerful networks increase trust between individuals and support collective action by providing platforms for communication, strengthening social cohesion, and enhancing mutual assistance (Baum & Ziersch, 2003).

Moreover, Granovetter (1983) highlighted the role of strong and weak ties in social networks, emphasizing that weak ties—such as acquaintances—are essential for spreading information and linking different social groups. Similarly, Woolcock (2001) argued that social capital functions through bonding (close-knit relationships) and bridging (connections across diverse groups), both of which enhance trust and collective efforts toward shared goals.

1.2 Host-Tourist Interactions

Host-tourist interactions are cross-cultural communications because they happen between different people from several cultural environments (Yu and Lee 2014). It is believed that tourism social interactions are based on local community and tourists, which makes these interactions reciprocal and bidirectional. Host-tourist interactions include various experiences for tourists because of the traditions, customs, and rituals of each community. Residents' behaviour toward tourists defines the destination image and the expected future of tourism development in the community (Fan et al., 2017; Kour et al., 2021).

Host-tourist interactions are characterized by being normally brief, not frequent, not similar, and non-repetitive (Reisinger and Turner, 2003; Eusébio and Carneiro, 2012; Kastenholz et al., 2015). Reisinger and Turner (2003) stated that the outcomes of social interactions between residents and tourists may be positive or negative. The positive outcomes can be reducing cultural differences between both parties and enhancing learning about each other (Luo et al., 2015; Su et al., 2016). However, prior

studies illustrated that social encounters between residents and tourists can result in negative outcomes because of inappropriate attitudes such as hostility, disrespect, harassment, and poor hospitality (Griffiths and Sharpley, 2012; Kastenholz et al., 2013; Sharpely, 2014; Everingham, 2015; Kirillova et al., 2015; Eusébio et al., 2018; Strzelecka and Okulicz-Kozaryn, 2018). Literature confirmed that the association between place and identity extends back to five decades ago (Zhuang & Zhang, 2011). Stryker and Burke (2000) demonstrated that identity reflects how individuals react toward different situations and manage their social relationships in different societies. Moreover, identity is believed to be a critical element that affects individuals' attitudes and perceptions about their peers (Stets & Burke, 2000). A place is a setting that has significant meaning to individuals based on their feelings, experiences, relationships, and ideas. Place includes the physical environment with its activities and social interactions (Stedman et al., 2004).

Consequently, Bott et al. (2003) agreed with Breakwell (1986) that place identity is the combination of physical and non-physical dimensions that develop a powerful bond between people and place. In a similar vein, Relph (1997) emphasized that place identity is formed through an individual's emotional and cognitive connections to their surroundings, reinforcing a sense of belonging and attachment. Likewise, Twigger-Ross & Uzzell (1996) argued that place identity serves as a psychological framework through which individuals interpret their experiences, influencing their behaviors and social interactions.

When a person has a positive feeling toward the society he belongs to, he is more likely to develop a strong place identity toward his community, resulting in better attitudes and collective action with his peers (Kuo et al., 2021).

Hypotheses Development

3.1 Social Capital and Host-tourist Interactions

Aldrich and Meyer (2015) and Lin (2017) argued that social capital is widely used to manage different interpersonal relationships inside societies. It is used to examine and explain the daily interactions that happen between residents or residents and tourists. Social capital is not only responsible for achieving mutual understanding between individuals, but also it enables individuals to achieve common goals and economic gains (Kwon and Adler, 2014; Rahayu et al., 2023). In this regard, Glaeser et al., (2001) and Puspitaningrum and Lubis (2018) asserted that individuals are in desperate need of social capital to manage and control their relationships in their daily lives. Moreover, social capital has proven to be of significant importance to all parties of social interactions because residents and tourists consider it as an investment for their own benefits.

Tourists generally prefer to deal with residents in a friendly atmosphere which is characterized by being hospitable, responsible, and emotionally convenient for both sides rather than dealing in regular commercial activities (Kastenholz et al., 2013; Sharpley, 2014). In tourism literature, host-tourist interactions are widely recognized to play a critical role in developing mutual understanding between tourists and

residents. These interactions could result in positive outcomes such as reducing cultural differences, distrust and negative attitudes such as harassment. On the contrary, host-tourist interactions may lead to negative outcomes such as hostility, distrust, cultural conflict, and disrespect. It is believed that the outcomes of these interactions cannot be easily predicted, and it is significantly affected by the frequency of happening (Fan et al., 2017; Xiong et al., 2021). Also, Bimonte and Punzo (2016) agreed with Chen et al., (2020) that supporting and developing host-tourist interactions is considered of utmost importance for the prosperity of community-based tourism. Based on the previous argument, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1a: Social norms have a significant effect on host-tourist interactions.

H1b: Social trust has a significant effect on host-tourist interactions.

H1c: Social networks have a significant effect on host-tourist interactions.

3.2 Social capital and place identity

Bryden and Hart (2004) proposed that the relationship between social capital and place identity is critical to understanding the process of community development. Residents who have higher levels of trust towards their fellow community members and governmental officials are expected to feel more positive about belonging to their communities (Liao, 2014; Kuo et al., 2021). In addition, residents who are committed to the norms of their society are expected to appreciate their place identity, which results in enhancing belonging to their societies (Charles, 2012). Moreover, Lee (2005) demonstrated that social networks represent a major element in supporting the relationship between social capital and place identity, which affects residents' support for tourism development.

The literature highlighted the interchange between social capital and place identity. On one hand, it is believed that residents' collective action within their societies relies on the shared identity they have; henceforth, social networks, norms, and trust promote residents' place identity (Light, 2015). On the other hand, social capital is generated excessively in societies that have higher levels of shared identity (Holtkamp and Weaver, 2018).

Social capital is a three-dimensional construct, and literature provided evidence that it has a positive impact on place identity in several contexts such as supporting tourism development and tourism festivals. Kuo et al., (2021) argued that social networks, social norms, and social trust are considered significant prerequisites to place identity. Based on the previous discussion, the following hypotheses are developed:

H2a: Social norms have a significant effect on place identity.

H2b: Social trust has a significant effect on place identity.

H2c: Social networks have a significant effect on place identity.

3.3 Place identity and host-tourist interactions

Prior studies have given great consideration to residents' perceptions of tourism's impacts on their communities. A significant part of tourism impacts is generated from tourists' daily interactions with residents in streets, shops, heritage places, transportation, hotels, and restaurants (Gu and Ryan, 2008). Tajfel (1978) demonstrated that social identity theory explains how individuals establish several relationships within groups, and these relationships are used to distinguish themselves from outsiders. Henceforth, Bragg (1996) assured that relationships between individuals who share a place identity affect their ideas, attitudes, and emotions toward tourists. In this regard, it is obvious that the place identity of residents can influence their attitudes within their societies towards tourists (Pretty et al., 2003). In addition, Davis (2016) considers place identity as a key driver for managing relationships with tourists within tourism-based communities. Therefore, this study believes that the relationship between place identity and host-tourism interactions needs further investigation through the following hypothesis:

H3: Place identity has a significant effect on host-tourist interactions.

3.4 Social capital, host-tourist interactions, and place identity as a mediating variable

According to Proshansky et al. (1995), place identity is considered to have a critical connection between social capital and host-tourist interactions because it creates a sense of meaning and purpose in residents' lives, emotions, and relationships. In other words, it simply reflects the connection between all that happens in a specific place and its people (Ujang & Zakariya, 2015). Place identity also plays a significant role in shaping social behaviors, as residents with a stronger sense of place tend to be more engaged in community interactions and exhibit greater openness toward visitors (Lewicka, 2011).

Moreover, Hernández et al. (2007) emphasized that place identity contributes to social cohesion and collective behavior, strengthening residents' emotional attachment to their surroundings, which in turn enhances their willingness to interact positively with tourists. This alignment between social capital and place identity fosters a welcoming environment, facilitating meaningful exchanges between hosts and visitors.

Consequently, based on the aforementioned interrelationships between the three variables, this study argues that place identity mediates the relationship between social capital and host-tourist interaction through the following hypothesis:

H4c: Place identity mediates the relationship between social networks and host-tourist interactions.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Model

The conceptual framework of this study figure 1 suggests that social capital (norms, trust, and networks) positively influences place identity, which in turn enhances the

quality of host-tourist interactions. In this way, place identity serves as a mediator between social capital (norms, trust, and networks) and host-tourist interactions, explaining how residents' social networks, trust, and shared norms shape their interactions with tourists.

The relationships in the model are tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) to assess the direct and indirect effects of the variables.

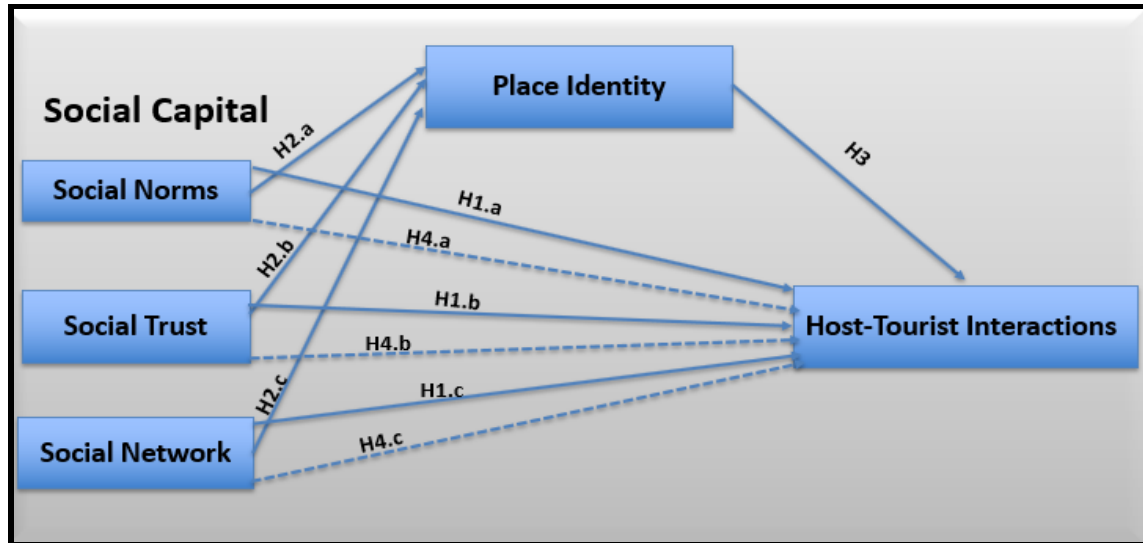


Fig. 1. The Study Conceptual model

4.2 Sample and Data Collection

This research followed a quantitative approach, gathering data from the local population of Luxor, particularly those involved in tourism-related activities, such as working in the tourism sector or living near popular tourist sites. The data collection was done using a self-administered questionnaire distributed through various community channels to ensure a representative sample. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on those with relevant experience in the tourism industry.

A pilot study with 30 residents helped test the clarity of the questionnaire, resulting in minor revisions before the final distribution. The final questionnaire was divided into two sections: the first collected demographic data (age, gender, education level, and length of residence), while the second focused on key variables. Social capital was assessed through three dimensions: norms, trust, and networks, asking about community cooperation, trust in others, and social interactions. Place identity focused on residents' emotional and symbolic connection to Luxor City, and the host-tourist interaction section measured residents' willingness to engage with tourists.

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed, with 393 completed forms returned, resulting in a response rate of 78.6%. The sample was deemed representative of Luxor's population, and the sample size was determined following the standard practices for sample size estimation in open communities (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

4.3 Instrumentation and Measurement

The study used a structured questionnaire to measure key constructs: social capital, place identity, and host-tourist interactions. Each construct was assessed using established scales from the literature to ensure reliability and validity. Social capital was measured with a multi-dimensional scale, covering three dimensions: norms, trust, and networks. Norms were assessed with a 3-item scale from Kuo et al., (2021), focusing on shared community values. Trust was measured using a 3-item scale from Jones (2021) and Kuo et al., (2021), capturing both interpersonal and institutional trust. Network was evaluated with a 3-item scale by Park et al., (2012) and Liu et al. (2014), assessing the strength and diversity of social connections.

Place identity was measured using a 4-item scale from Palmer et al., (2013) and Zou et al., (2023), focusing on residents' emotional and symbolic attachment to their place of residence. Host-tourist interaction was assessed using a 4-item scale (Stylidis, 2020; Xiong et al., 2021), which measures residents' willingness to engage positively with tourists, such as offering recommendations and establishing connections. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), to capture the intensity of respondents' perceptions.

4.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS for preliminary statistical procedures and WarpPLS 7 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement model. The factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) were examined to ensure convergent validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated by comparing the square roots of the AVE for each construct with the correlations between constructs. Additionally, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) was calculated to further confirm the absence of multicollinearity between the constructs. The model fit was assessed using several key indices, including Average Path Coefficient (APC), Average R-squared (ARS), Average Block VIF (AVIF), and Tenenhaus GoF (GoF). These indices provided insights into the overall fit of the model, the strength of the relationships between variables, and the explanatory power of the model.

5. Results

5.1 Participants' Profile

According to Table 1, the study included a total of 393 participants, with a nearly even gender distribution: 198 males (50.4%) and 195 females (49.6%). Regarding age, the majority of participants (186, 47.3%) were less than 25 years old, followed by 162 participants (41.2%) aged 25 to less than 35 years. A smaller proportion of participants were between the ages of 35 and less than 45 years (28, 7.1%) or above 45 years (17, 4.3%).

In terms of educational background, most participants (291, 74.0%) held a bachelor’s degree, while 63 participants (16.0%) had a postgraduate degree. A smaller number had completed high school (36, 9.2%) or only elementary school (3, 0.8%). As for the years of living in Luxor City, 172 participants (43.8%) had lived there for less than one year, 99 participants (25.2%) had been residents for one to less than five years, 105 participants (26.7%) had lived in Luxor for five to less than ten years, and a minority (17, 4.3%) had resided there for ten to fifteen years.

Table 1. Participant’s profile (N = 393).

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	198	50.4
	Female	195	49.6
Age	Less than 25	186	47.3
	25 :< 35years	162	41.2
	35: <45years	28	7.1
	45: >50 years	17	4.3
Educational Level	Elementary school	3	.8
	High school	36	9.2
	Bachelors’ Degree	291	74.0
	Postgraduate Degree	63	16.0
Years of living in Luxor	Below 1Y	172	43.8
	1 to below 5Y	99	25.2
	5 to below 10Y	105	26.7
	10Y to 15	17	4.3

5.2 Descriptive Statistics for the study variables

The findings in Table 2 highlight strong social capital among Luxor residents, particularly in norms (M = 4.24, SD = 0.809) and tacit understanding (M = 4.63, SD = 1.04). Community volunteering (M = 4.11, SD = 1.02) and trust in local honesty (M = 4.10, SD = 1.05) further illustrate positive community traits, though trust across cultural differences remains moderate (M = 3.51, SD = 1.18).

Networking among residents reflects moderate engagement (M = 3.63, SD = 0.998). While friendships and interactions with neighbors are valued, harmony within the community shows room for improvement (M = 3.25, SD = 1.59). Similarly, place identity is moderately strong (M = 3.63, SD = 0.818), with participants recognizing Luxor’s importance (M = 4.01, SD = 1.09) but displaying less enthusiasm for promoting the city (M = 3.23, SD = 1.48).

Host-tourist interactions in Table 1 are positive overall (M = 3.63, SD = 0.818), with participants showing a high willingness to assist tourists (M = 4.32, SD = 0.868). However, deeper engagement, such as forming friendships, scored lower (M = 3.45,

SD = 1.37). These results suggest a community with strong social ties and opportunities to enhance harmony, cultural pride, and meaningful tourist connections.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean	SD
Social capital	3.86	.564
Norms	4.24	.809
I have a tacit understanding (unspoken agreement) with local residents.	4.63	1.04
People in Luxor city are cooperative in resolving conflict issues by themselves.	3.98	.796
Residents in Luxor city like to participate in Volunteer tasks to serve the community.	4.11	1.02
Trust	3.71	.945
Most people in Luxor city are honest and can be trusted.	4.10	1.05
When I have difficulties, my neighbors are always willing to help me.	3.50	1.33
I trust people who don't share my cultural, racial, or ethnic background.	3.51	1.18
Network	3.63	.998
I like to have interactions with neighbors.	3.87	1.05
I have many friends from Luxor city.	3.77	1.03
We have harmonious relationships among residents in Luxor city.	3.25	1.59
Place identity	3.63	.818
Luxor city is of great importance to me.	4.01	1.09
I think Luxor city and I are closely related.	3.83	.765
I think Luxor city has many characteristics, and I am willing to introduce it to others.	3.23	1.48
I think residents' customs and traditions reflect the local culture of Luxor city.	3.47	1.46
Host-Tourist interaction	3.63	.818
I like to interact with tourists.	3.51	1.29
I will try to make friends with tourists.	3.45	1.37
I will try to have positive interactions with tourists.	3.75	1.13
I will help tourists by recommendations about what to do in Luxor City.	4.32	.868

* Mean score; low: "1.00 to 2.33, average (moderate): 2.34 to 3.66, high: 3.67 to 5.00"

5.3 Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability analysis presented in Table 3 indicates strong support for the measurement model across all constructs. The Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the recommended thresholds of 0.70 and 0.60, respectively, confirming strong internal consistency (Manley et al., 2021). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for most constructs is above 0.50, with Place Identity showing an AVE of 0.593, which is acceptable and meets the standard for convergent validity (Hair Jr et al., 2020).

Factor loadings are also strong, ranging from 0.70 to 0.88 across the items for each construct, supporting the reliability of the individual indicators. Furthermore, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are all below the critical threshold of 5, indicating that multicollinearity is not an issue (Hair Jr et al., 2020).

Overall, the constructs demonstrate high reliability and validity, with no significant issues regarding convergent validity, internal consistency, or multicollinearity. These results confirm that the measurement model is robust and suitable for further analysis.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability

Variables	Factor Loading	VIF	Composite Reliability	Cronbach alpha	Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social Norms		1.610	0.815	0.656	0.602
Norms1	0.83***				
Norms2	0.84***				
Norms3	0.72***				
Social Trust		1.644	0.795	0.605	0.572
Trust1	0.83***				
Trust2	0.76***				
Trust3	0.75***				
Social Network		1.536	0.815	0.656	0.602
Network 1	0.88***				
Network 2	0.75***				
Network 3	0.80***				
Place Identity		1.435	0.793	0.651	0.593
Place 1	0.70***				
Place 2	0.71***				
Place 3	0.77***				
Place 4	0.83***				
Host-Tourist interaction		1.249	0.911	0.868	0.719
HTI 1	0.81***				
HTI 2	0.71***				
HTI 3	0.77***				
HTI 4	0.83***				

Additionally, a test for discriminant validity was conducted. As shown in Table 4, the square roots of the AVE values for each construct exceed the correlations with other constructs, confirming that each construct is distinct. This supports the overall reliability and validity of the model, in line with the guidelines outlined by Hair Jr. et al., (2020).

Table 4. Discriminant validity results.

	Social Norms	Social Trust	Social Network	Place Identity	Host- Tourist Interaction
Social Norms	<u>0.776</u>	0.586	0.387	0.232	0.177
Social Trust	0.586	<u>0.756</u>	0.410	0.193	0.064
Social Network	0.387	0.410	<u>0.755</u>	0.465	0.295
Place Identity	0.232	0.193	0.465	<u>0.770</u>	0.416
Host- Tourist Interaction	0.177	0.064	0.295	0.416	<u>0.848</u>

Note: Square roots of average variances extracted (AVEs) shown on diagonal.

Moreover, the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) for validity was also examined (see Table 5). The results show that all values are below the threshold of 0.85, which confirms that there is no significant multicollinearity between the constructs. This further supports the discriminant validity of the model.

Table 5. HTMT for validity.

	Social Norms	Social Trust	Social Network	Place Identity	Host-Tourist Interaction
Social Norms					
Social Trust	0.799				
Social Network	0.661	0.718			
Place Identity	0.426	0.364	0.817		
Host-Tourist Interaction	0.269	0.100	0.461	0.699	

5.4 Model Fit and Quality Indices for the Research Model

The table provides an overview of the model fit indices for the structural equation model analysis using Warp PLS. The Average Path Coefficient (APC) of 0.192 ($p < 0.001$) confirms significant relationships within the model, while the Average R-squared (ARS) value of 0.185 suggests that the model explains a moderate portion of the variance. Similarly, the Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS) value of 0.178 indicates moderate explanatory power while accounting for model complexity. The Average Block VIF (AVIF) of 1.273 and Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF) of 1.495 show no multicollinearity concerns, as they are well below the acceptable threshold. The Tenenhaus GoF (GoF) value of 0.331 indicates a medium model fit, which is considered satisfactory. The Sympton's Paradox Ratio (SPR) of 0.714 suggests minimal risk of paradoxical results, and the R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR) of 0.856, while slightly lower than the ideal of 1, still indicates reasonable explanatory power. Lastly, the Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR) of 1.000 shows there are no suppression issues in the model. In general, these results demonstrate that the model exhibits significant relationships, a good fit, no multicollinearity or suppression issues, and moderate explanatory power.

Table 6. The model fit results

Index	Value	Threshold	Comment
Average Path Coefficient (APC)	0.192	$p < 0.001$	Indicates significant relationships within the model.
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.185	$p < 0.001$	Reflects moderate explanatory power; explains a portion of the variance.
Average Adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.178	$p < 0.001$	Similar to ARS but accounts for model complexity; moderate explanatory power.
Average Block VIF (AVIF)	1.273	≤ 5 , ideally ≤ 3.3	No multicollinearity concerns, as the value is well below the acceptable threshold.
Average Full Collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.495	≤ 5 , ideally ≤ 3.3	No serious multicollinearity issues; within acceptable range.
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.331	Small ≥ 0.1 , Medium ≥ 0.25 , Large ≥ 0.36	Indicates a medium fit of the model, which is adequate.
Sympson's Paradox Ratio (SPR)	0.714	≥ 0.7 , ideally = 1	Acceptable ratio, indicating a minimal risk of paradoxical results.
R-squared Contribution Ratio (RSCR)	0.856	≥ 0.9 , ideally = 1	The ratio is slightly below the ideal, indicating some potential for improvement in the model's contribution to explanatory power.
Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR)	1.000	≥ 0.7	The SSR is perfect, indicating no suppression issues in the model.

5.5 The Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

The results presented in Table 7 provide a detailed analysis of the hypothesized relationships between social norms, social trust, and social networks, and their influence on host-tourist interactions and place identity. These findings, including the standardized estimates (β values), can be interpreted as follows:

The study reveals that the effect of social norms on host-tourist interactions (H1.a) was not statistically significant, with a low β value of 0.035, a t-value of 0.729, and a non-significant p-value of 0.231. This indicates that social norms do not directly influence host-tourist interactions. In contrast, the impact of social trust on host-tourist interactions (H1.b) was significant, with a β value of 0.226, a t-value of 4.913, and a p-value of less than 0.001, highlighting the important role of social trust in fostering positive interactions between hosts and tourists. However, the effect of social networks on host-tourist interactions (H1.c) was not significant, with a β value of

0.060, a t-value of 1.277, and a p-value of 0.105, suggesting that social networks do not have a direct impact in this context.

Regarding the influence of these factors on place identity, the findings show that social norms have a clear positive effect (H2.a), with a β value of 0.212, a t-value of 4.511, and a p-value of less than 0.001. This confirms the role of social norms in shaping place identity. In contrast, social trust did not have a significant impact on place identity (H2.b), with a β value of 0.049, a t-value of 1.021, and a non-significant p-value of 0.153. However, social networks demonstrated a strong and positive effect on place identity (H2.c), with a β value of 0.398, a t-value of 8.844, and a p-value of less than 0.001, emphasizing the critical role of social networks in strengthening place identity.

The relationship between place identity and host-tourist interactions (H3) was highly significant, with a β value of 0.368, a t-value of 8.000, and a p-value of less than 0.001. This finding highlights the central role of place identity in enhancing host-tourist interactions.

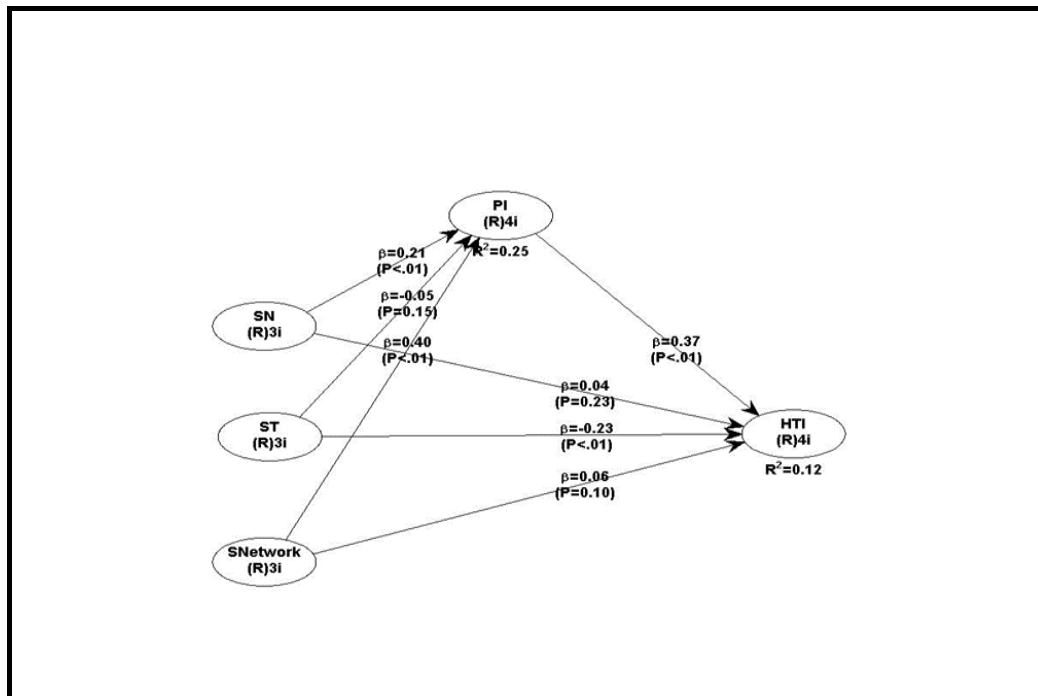
In terms of indirect effects mediated by place identity, the results show that the impact of social norms on host-tourist interactions through place identity (H4.a) was significant, with a β value of 0.078, a t-value of 2.364, and a p-value of 0.010. This suggests that place identity serves as an effective mediator in this relationship. On the other hand, the indirect effect of social trust on host-tourist interactions via place identity (H4.b) was not supported, with a β value of 0.018, a t-value of 0.529, and a non-significant p-value of 0.298. However, the indirect effect of social networks on host-tourist interactions through place identity (H4.c) was significant, with a β value of 0.147, a t-value of 4.455, and a p-value of less than 0.001, highlighting the mediating role of place identity in this pathway.

In conclusion, the results show that social norms and social networks don't directly influence host-tourist interactions but do play a role through their impact on place identity. Social trust, on the other hand, has a direct positive effect on interactions but doesn't significantly affect place identity. The findings highlight the importance of place identity as a mediator, suggesting that fostering a strong sense of community and connection to the place can improve host-tourist interactions. The unexpected results regarding social trust highlight the need for further exploration to better understand its role in shaping these dynamics.

Table 7. Results of Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Hypothesized Paths	Std-Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P-value	Decision
H1.a	Social norms → Host-tourist interactions	0.035	0.048	0.729	0.231	Rejected
H1.b	Social trust → Host-tourist interactions	0.226	0.046	4.913	<0.001	Accepted

Hypothesis	Hypothesized Paths	Std-Estimate	S.E.	t-value	P-value	Decision
H1.c	Social networks → Host-tourist interactions	0.060	0.047	1.277	0.105	Rejected
H2.a	Social norms→ Place Identity	0.212	0.047	4.511	<0.001	Accepted
H2.b	Social trust → Place Identity	0.049	0.048	1.021	0.153	Rejected
H2.c	Social networks → Place Identity	0.398	0.045	8.844	<0.001	Accepted
H3	Place Identity --> Host-tourist interactions	0.368	0.046	8.000	<0.001	Accepted
H4.a	Social norms -->Place Identity --> Host-tourist interactions	0.078	0.033	2.364	0.010	Accepted
H4.b	Social trust -->Place Identity --> Host-tourist interactions	0.018	0.034	0.529	0.298	Rejected
H4.c	Social networks -->Place Identity --> Host-tourist interactions	0.147	0.033	4.455	<0.001	Accepted



SN: Social Norms , ST: Social Trust , SNetwork: Social Network, PI: place Identity , HTI: Host-Tourist Interaction

Fig. (2): Path estimates for the research model

6. Discussion

The study's findings shed light on the complex interrelationships between social norms, social trust, and social networks, and their influence on host-tourist interactions and place identity. These findings resonate with previous research, offering nuanced insights into these dynamics.

The results indicate that social norms do not directly influence host-tourist interactions, as reflected in the non-significant relationship (H1.a). This aligns with Yu and Lee (2014), who suggested that while norms shape general societal behaviors, their direct impact on transient, culturally diverse interactions such as those in tourism may be limited. Similarly, Kastenholz et al. (2013) noted that norms often guide structured, long-term relationships rather than short-term encounters like host-tourist interactions.

In contrast, social trust demonstrated a significant positive impact on host-tourist interactions (H1.b), highlighting its crucial role in fostering mutual understanding and reducing cultural barriers. This finding is consistent with Fan et al. (2017), who emphasized the importance of trust in enhancing the quality of interactions between residents and tourists. Furthermore, Kastenholz et al. (2013) argued that trust creates a hospitable environment, mitigating potential conflicts and promoting positive engagement.

Interestingly, the study found that social networks do not have a direct impact on host-tourist interactions (H1.c). Baum and Ziersch (2003) argued that the role of networks in fostering collaboration and trust is more evident in cohesive, long-term community settings than in dynamic, tourism-specific interactions. This might explain the non-significance observed in the study.

Regarding the influence of social norms, trust, and networks on place identity, the findings show that social norms significantly contribute to shaping place identity (H2.a). This is supported by Charles (2012), who highlighted that shared norms strengthen community bonds and foster a sense of belonging. Pilatin et al. (2023) also noted that norms serve as anchors, tying residents' identities to their locale through cultural continuity. On the other hand, social trust did not significantly influence place identity (H2.b), consistent with Reimer et al. (2008), who posited that trust, while vital for interpersonal relations, may not directly shape collective identity without complementary factors such as shared goals.

Social networks, however, had a strong positive impact on place identity (H2.c), reflecting findings by Lee et al. (2005) and Light (2015), who emphasized the role of networks in fostering shared experiences and emotional attachment to a place. These studies confirm that networks enhance the connection between individuals and their environment, solidifying place identity.

The study also confirmed a significant positive relationship between place identity and host-tourist interactions (H3). Proshansky (1978) and Davis (2016) argued that a strong sense of place identity not only shapes residents' self-concept but also enhances

their willingness to engage positively with tourists. This assures the importance of place identity in fostering high-quality interactions between residents and visitors.

Finally, the mediation role of place identity in the relationships between social norms and host-tourist interactions (H4.a) and between social networks and host-tourist interactions (H4.c) was significant, affirming the bridging role of place identity. Ujang and Zakariya (2015) highlighted that place identity acts as a critical link, connecting social capital elements with external interactions. However, the non-significance of trust in this mediated pathway (H4.b) aligns with Glaeser et al. (2002), who argued that trust primarily influences direct interpersonal relationships rather than collective identity formation.

Overall, the study highlights the pivotal role of place identity as a mediator and highlights the nuanced contributions of social capital dimensions to host-tourist interactions. These findings emphasize the importance of fostering strong community bonds and shared identities to enhance the tourism experience.

7. Implications and Future Research

The findings of this study hold significant implications for both academic research and practical applications in the tourism industry. These implications are particularly relevant for enhancing host-tourist interactions and fostering sustainable tourism development.

From a theoretical perspective, the study deepens our understanding of how social capital dimensions—social norms, trust, and networks—shape tourism dynamics. It demonstrates the crucial role of place identity as a mediating construct that bridges community attributes with tourism interactions. This insight contributes to frameworks like Proshansky's (1978) theory of place identity and confirms its relevance in contemporary tourism settings. While social norms and networks strongly influence place identity, their direct impact on host-tourist interactions is limited. This highlights the need for a contextual understanding of social capital's effects, adding depth to previous work such as that of Lee et al. (2005) and Light (2015).

On a practical level, the findings offer actionable strategies for tourism development. Strengthening social networks within communities is vital for fostering a shared sense of identity, which indirectly enhances host-tourist interactions. Policymakers can achieve this by promoting local events, creating platforms for resident-tourist engagement, and supporting initiatives that celebrate shared cultural and environmental values. These steps are in line with Davis (2016), who emphasized the role of cultural festivals in building place attachment and improving tourism dynamics.

Promoting a strong sense of place identity is another critical area. Tourism practitioners and destination managers should highlight the unique attributes of a destination that resonate with residents, fostering pride and attachment to their locale. This strategy not only strengthens community bonds but also enhances visitors' experiences, contributing to positive perceptions of the destination. These efforts are

supported by Ujang and Zakariya (2015), who noted that place identity creates meaning and purpose for residents, which reflects in their interactions with tourists.

Building social trust is equally important. Transparent governance, safety measures, and inclusive tourism policies can create a welcoming environment for both residents and visitors. Social trust directly improves host-tourist interactions, as demonstrated in the study, and aligns with the findings of Fan et al. (2017), who highlighted trust as a driver of mutual understanding and cultural exchange in tourism settings.

For policymakers, the study reveals the importance of integrating social capital into community-based tourism strategies. Initiatives that codify and celebrate shared social norms can promote harmony in host-tourist relationships. Encouraging community participation in tourism planning can further enhance residents' sense of belonging and commitment to the development of their local tourism industry. This is consistent with the recommendations of Zhu et al. (2021), who emphasized participatory governance as a tool for enhancing social capital.

This study provides valuable insights into host-tourist dynamics in Luxor, but several limitations should be noted. First, the focus on a single location limits generalizability. Future studies could compare multiple destinations, particularly urban vs. rural settings, to see how factors like culture and infrastructure impact these relationships. Second, the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as social desirability bias. Future research could use mixed methods, such as interviews or observations, to obtain a more accurate understanding.

Additionally, this study captures only a snapshot in time. Longitudinal research would offer insights into how host-tourist interactions evolve with changes in tourism patterns or policies. The study also does not account for economic, political, or environmental factors that could influence residents' attitudes. Future research could explore how these external elements interact with the social dynamics studied here. Lastly, the focus on social trust, networks, norms, and place identity leaves out other psychological and cultural factors that may affect interactions. Future work could examine how personal experiences or cultural values shape residents' perceptions. In conclusion, future research could broaden the scope, include longitudinal studies, and explore additional influencing factors to offer a more comprehensive understanding of how tourism impacts communities over time

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