

## Article

# The Effect of Pro-Environmental Destination Image on Resident Environmental Citizenship Behavior: The Mediating Roles of Satisfaction and Pride

Jian Cao <sup>1</sup>, Hongliang Qiu <sup>2,3,4,\*</sup> , Alastair M. Morrison <sup>5</sup> and Yingzhi Guo <sup>6,\*</sup><sup>1</sup> School of Tourism and Foreign Languages, Tourism College of Zhejiang, Hangzhou 311231, China<sup>2</sup> Postdoctoral Station of Business Administration, Fudan University, Shanghai 200433, China<sup>3</sup> School of Business Administration, Tourism College of Zhejiang, Hangzhou 311231, China<sup>4</sup> Zhejiang Academy of Culture & Tourism Development, Hangzhou 311231, China<sup>5</sup> School of Management and Marketing, Greenwich Business School, University of Greenwich, Old Royal Naval College, Park Row, London SE10 9LS, UK<sup>6</sup> Department of Tourism, Fudan University, Shanghai 200433, China

\* Correspondence: qiu hongliang1127@163.com (H.Q.); yingzhig@fudan.edu.cn (Y.G.)

**Abstract:** Despite the lengthy history of the research on destination image from various perspectives, how pro-environmental destination image promotes resident environmental citizenship behavior remains underexplored. Grounded in the cognition–affect–behavior (CAB) model, this research investigated the translation of pro-environmental destination image into resident environmental citizenship behavior via satisfaction and pride. Data were collected using an intercept survey approach from a tourism village recognized as one of the best in the world by UNWTO. The results indicated that a pro-environmental destination image has a positive impact on resident environmental citizenship behavior in the private and public domains. Furthermore, resident satisfaction and pride serve as mediators between pro-environmental destination image and resident environmental citizenship behavior. This research contributes to the literature on resident environmental citizenship behavior by considering the role of pro-environmental destination image. The findings provide practical implications for fostering environmental citizenship behavior through the presentation of pro-environmental images to residents and eliciting their positive emotions.

**Keywords:** pro-environmental destination image; resident environmental citizenship behavior; resident satisfaction; resident pride; cognition–affect–behavior (CAB) model; rural tourism



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## 1. Introduction

The substantial growth of tourism presents an increasing challenge to balancing economic prosperity with environmental conservation [1,2]. This trend is garnering increasing attention from academia to research positive environmental behaviors [3]. Environmental citizenship behavior, as an extra-role behavior, is vital for destination sustainability and directly related to behaviors involved in tourism activities [4]. These behaviors have received attention from the perspective of tourists [4,5]. Yet, the perspective of another key stakeholder group, namely residents, has been neglected [6]. For residents, a destination is not merely a getaway, but also a place to make a living, raise families, and interact with others [7]. Resident environmental citizenship behavior, equally crucial for preserving the destination environment [8], represents resident voluntary efforts to benefit the destination and community in environmental terms [6]. To achieve environmental sustainability in destinations, resident environmental citizenship behavior is as essential as that of visitors. Thus, the overlooking of the resident perspective highlights the need to investigate the factors shaping resident environmental citizenship behavior.

The theory of place image suggests that people's perceptions of a place influence their behaviors related to that place [9]. In tourism, people's overall impression of a destination's

commitment to environmental protection is conceptualized as a pro-environmental destination image [10]. The formation of this image is based on one's knowledge and evaluation of a destination's efforts regarding environmental protection. The literature in environmental psychology and consumer behavior emphasizes the criticality of pro-environmental image in understanding sustainable consumer behaviors [11,12]. Recent studies in hospitality have also indicated that a pro-environmental image is one of the fundamental components for understanding consumers' positive environmental behaviors [13,14]. However, the current tourism literature focuses on the relationship between the overall destination image and environmental behaviors from the tourist perspective [8]. Very limited attention has been paid to explaining how resident pro-environmental destination image affects sustainable behaviors, particularly environmental citizenship behavior [6]. Considering the critical role of a pro-environmental image, this research regards a pro-environmental destination image as an essential driver of resident environmental citizenship behavior.

In tourism research, there is an emphasis on the role of the external environment as a motivator of people's behaviors [15], such as on how the perceptions of destination image trigger behaviors [16]. However, the cognitive aspects of destinations often evoke people's emotions [17]. As per the cognition–affect–behavior (CAB) model, an individual's decision-making process starts with cognition (such as personal perceptions), which influences affect (e.g., emotions), ultimately leading to behaviors [18]. That is, one's emotions bridge the connection between perception and actions. Hence, the affective aspect may better explain how people's perception translates into behavior. Due to the diversity of human emotions (such as hedonic and pro-social dimensions), there are various factors influencing people's decision making. Thus, this research focused on the hedonic dimension of satisfaction and the pro-social dimension of pride as the types of emotions influencing individual environmental behaviors [19,20]. Satisfaction, defined as the level of contentment with a product or experience, plays a crucial role as an emotional precursor to individual environmental behaviors [21]. In tourism, various elements in a well-designed and maintained landscape, such as esthetic appeal, functionality, and personal connections to the environment, can enhance personal contentment [17]. According to previous tourism research, resident overall satisfaction with the community can be enhanced to increase willingness to adopt responsible behaviors [22]. When a destination demonstrates a commitment to conserving the ecological environment (i.e., pro-environmental destination image), residents will experience satisfaction with the community, thereby potentially increasing their likelihood of adopting environmental citizenship behaviors.

Other positive emotions, including pride, are found to stimulate favorable environmental behaviors [23,24]. Pride differs from satisfaction by exhibiting an altruistic tendency [19]. However, this altruistic dimension of pride has received insufficient attention in tourism research [25]. In a broader social context, pride drives individuals to uphold and protect important values and achievements [26], including the valued aspects of regional identity, such as protecting the cultural and natural landscapes of a region. Along with this, pride forms the basis of identity establishment. In psychology, pride arises when individuals feel their actions align with their beliefs and normative views [23]. As a self-reflective positive emotion, pride facilitates the comprehension of individual altruistic behaviors [27]. The literature in organizational behavior research suggests that pride elicits citizenship behaviors among employees and customers [28–30]. Likewise, if a destination demonstrates a commitment to environmental sustainability, residents feel proud to live in such a place. To maintain these positive emotions, residents may engage in pro-social actions to preserve environmental integrity. However, few studies integrate satisfaction and pride into the same framework to comprehend this image–behavior nexus. Hence, this research posits that resident satisfaction and pride facilitate how pro-environmental destination image leads to resident environmental citizenship behavior within the CAB framework.

This research drew on the CAB model to examine the influence of pro-environmental destination image on resident environmental citizenship behavior, integrating resident satisfaction and pride. The specific objectives were to (1) explore the formation of private

and public environmental citizenship behaviors within the CAB framework from the resident perspective; (2) examine the direct impact of pro-environmental destination image on resident environmental citizenship behavior; and (3) determine whether resident satisfaction and pride mediate the image–behavior association. By integrating personal cognitive and emotional factors, the findings contribute to enriching the literature on environmental citizenship behavior by identifying pro-environmental destination image as a predictor. They also reveal how resident perceptions translate into sustainable behaviors through personal satisfaction and pride.

The remainder of this research paper is structured as follows: It begins with an overview of the CAB model and presents relevant hypotheses in Section 2. The research methodology and results are presented in Sections 3 and 4, respectively. Subsequently, a detailed discussion of the empirical results and theoretical and practical implications is provided in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 presents potential limitations and directions for future research.

## 2. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

### 2.1. Cognition–Affect–Behavior Model

The CAB model explains how individual behavior is affected by cognitive and affective attributes [31]. An individual’s decision-making process involves cognitive processing (e.g., personal beliefs and perceptions) that activates affective responses (positive or negative emotions). Ultimately, people’s behaviors are formed based on cognitive and emotional reactions [32]. Built on the premise of people–environment interaction [33], the CAB model is considered a robust paradigm for processing diverse environmental cues [34]. This model has been employed to explain various consumer behaviors in the hospitality and tourism literature, including the post-consumption behaviors of restaurant customers, resident intentions to support local tourism, tourist energy-saving behaviors, and customer intentions to participate in hotel’s green initiatives [18,34–36]. For example, Kuo et al. integrated the CAB model with social capital theory to examine the associations between resident social capital and intentions to support local festival tourism mediated by place identity [18]. Zheng et al. explored the formation of energy-saving behaviors and loyalty within the CAB framework [36]. The findings of these previous empirical studies validate the effectiveness of this model in explaining individual pro-social behaviors.

In this research, pro-environmental destination image was viewed as resident cognitive responses to the destination (C), and resident satisfaction and pride as affective reactions (A), while environmental citizenship behavior was regarded as the behavioral outcomes (B). Pro-environmental destination image is a cognitive cue for eliciting positive environmental behaviors, as it represents people’s overall perceptions and favorable impressions of a destination in conserving the environment [37]. Satisfaction and pride are two important types of individual positive emotions that are closely related to people’s behaviors [25,38]. Particularly, these two types of emotional responses function as antecedents to pro-social behaviors [39]. Thus, resident satisfaction and pride are identified as affective components to explore how pro-environmental destination image and resident emotional responses work together to provoke environmental citizenship behavior underpinned by the CAB model.

### 2.2. Hypotheses Development

#### 2.2.1. Cognition: Pro-Environmental Destination Image

Destination image has been conceptualized as an individual’s overarching impression of a particular destination generated by an amalgamation of destination features and subjective evaluations [10]. Pro-environmental destination image, as a derivative concept of destination image, describes people’s general perceptions about a destination regarding its environmental efforts [37]. In the hospitality and tourism literature, some researchers interchangeably use other terms, such as green image, ecological image, environmental image, or environmentally friendly image [10,12,40,41]. Although destination image has been conceptualized in various ways in the literature [42], researchers tend to view this

notion holistically due to its complexity [16,36]. Accordingly, this research considers pro-environmental destination image as an overall concept.

As the CAB model indicates, individuals' affective responses toward a given object will not be evoked unless they have a primary cognitive understanding of this object in the first place [31]. A positive cognitive impression of a destination's caring for the environment (i.e., pro-environmental destination image) will directly influence people's positive emotional reactions. Evidence from the literature suggests that a hotel's favorable image regarding environmental protection plays a key role in satisfying the demands of guests [43,44]. For example, a hotel's green image was found to be one of the key antecedents of experiential satisfaction [44]. Similarly, tourism research has established that destination image is a vital stimulus of visitors' emotional experiences [45,46], including satisfaction [45–47]. However, the understanding of whether resident pro-environmental destination image satisfies destination residents is still limited. Accordingly, this research proposed the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1).** *Pro-environmental destination image directly and positively affects resident satisfaction.*

According to the appraisal theory of emotions, external stimuli offer cognitive objects for the arousal of emotions, while environmental cues are the information sources on which an individual's emotional responses rely [48]. In tourism research, it has been confirmed that destination image is a vital stimulus of visitors' emotional experiences [49]. There is little empirical evidence supporting the link between destination image and pride. However, the marketing literature sheds some light on the understanding of this relationship. For example, Jørgensen et al. found that a contested city image significantly influences citizen's sense of pride [50]. This study illustrated that previous negative images of the city substantially decreased citizens' feelings of pride, while a well-implemented image shift won their pride back. In tourism, residents are provided with a destination image for their cognitive evaluation, which determines their affective reactions. Their evaluation (favorable or unfavorable) of the destination image evokes corresponding affects (positive or negative emotions). Thus, it is argued that when the destination demonstrates a favorable image via its environmental commitment or sustainable practices, residents feel proud of living in such a destination. Consequently, the hypothesis was as follows:

**Hypothesis 2 (H2).** *Pro-environmental destination image directly and positively affects resident pride.*

#### 2.2.2. Affect: Resident Satisfaction and Pride

Satisfaction can be understood as an affective outcome when there is a discrepancy between expectations and actual performance [51]. In tourism research, satisfaction refers to visitors' comprehensive assessments of the overall experience during travel to a destination [52,53]. Tourism is a sector involving multiple stakeholders [22]. Thus, the sense of satisfaction not only applies to tourists but also to another key stakeholder group, i.e., residents. In this research, resident satisfaction is defined as resident overall evaluation and perceptions of the destination quality. The evidence in tourism research shows that tourist satisfaction can generate positive individual behaviors [54]. Prior studies suggest that when residents feel satisfied with their communities, they tend to show more support for tourism development which is considered as favorable for the destination [55]. For example, a systematic review of citizenship behavior documents that consumer satisfaction is a critical predictor of citizenship behavior [56]. This rationale has also been supported by previous studies in tourism [21,54]. For instance, scholars have confirmed that satisfaction predicts travelers' environmental behavior in a positive manner [21]. From a resident perspective, when residents feel a strong and positive sense of satisfaction with a place, they may adopt extra-role behaviors to protect the environment, such as environmental citizenship behavior. Therefore, it was hypothesized the following:

**Hypothesis 3 (H3).** *Resident satisfaction directly and positively affects private environmental citizenship behavior.*

**Hypothesis 4 (H4).** *Resident satisfaction directly and positively affects public environmental citizenship behavior.*

As Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions posits, positive emotions broaden people's cognitive patterns to allow for new ways of thinking and adaptive behaviors [57]. Pride is considered as one of the main components of positive emotions [57]. This is defined as a positive emotion experienced by individuals when they achieve socially desired outcomes [58]. As a particular form of self-conscious emotion, pride is closely intertwined with identity and social status [26]. Back in the early 18th century, with the diminishing of old court hierarchies and the emergence of the "polite society", the social shift allowed for local gentry to engage in landscape design, reflecting their elevated status, shared identity, and distinction from lower classes. This trend reinforced the association between landscape design and civic pride among the elite [59]. As an inherent sentiment of human beings, pride can impact and reinforce individual behaviors that align with social norms, promoting the development of an identity that is coherent with these norms [60]. It has been noted that visitors' positive emotional experiences at Chinese red tourism sites (destinations featuring patriotism) trigger a sense of identity and pride, which influence their behavioral intentions [61].

Research in organizational behavior indicates that employees who feel proud of their organizations tend to develop strong senses of appreciation and belonging to them, which inspire them to adopt citizenship behaviors [30]. Similarly, the marketing literature has documented the effect of pride on citizenship behavior [62] and evidence in tourism research also supports this assertion. For example, the findings of a meta-analysis on the effects of positive emotions demonstrated that pride played a critical role in driving people's sustainable behaviors [23]. Therefore, when residents take pride in living in environments that they perceive as superior to others, they are inclined to engage in extra-role behaviors to preserve these environments. Accordingly, this research proposed the following:

**Hypothesis 5 (H5).** *Resident pride directly and positively affects private environmental citizenship behavior.*

**Hypothesis 6 (H6).** *Resident pride directly and positively affects public environmental citizenship behavior.*

### 2.2.3. Behavior: Environmental Citizenship Behavior

In this research, environmental citizenship behavior is resident discretionary behaviors that improve the environment without being rewarded or beyond the destination's expectations [5,6]. Resident environmental citizenship behavior is strongly associated with the sustainability of destinations [6]. The previous literature indicates that multiple constructs (e.g., perceived environmental corporate social responsibility, personal normative attributes, and green travel involvement) are connected with individual environmental citizenship behavior [5,6,63]. However, the effect of pro-environmental destination image on individual environmental citizenship behavior has received very little consideration. From the resident point of view, the impressions of a pro-environmental destination image are the result of a series of cognitive processes, including the evaluation and reasoning of the place they live in, as well as comparisons with other destinations [64]. This prompts them to adjust behaviors in response to the environmental conditions of the destination. When the environment is considered to be desirable, residents act in an eco-friendly manner to adapt to their surroundings. A number of previous studies in tourism and hospitality indicate that destination image has a substantial impact on individual behaviors and behavioral intentions [44,65,66]. For instance, guest pro-environmental images of green hotels

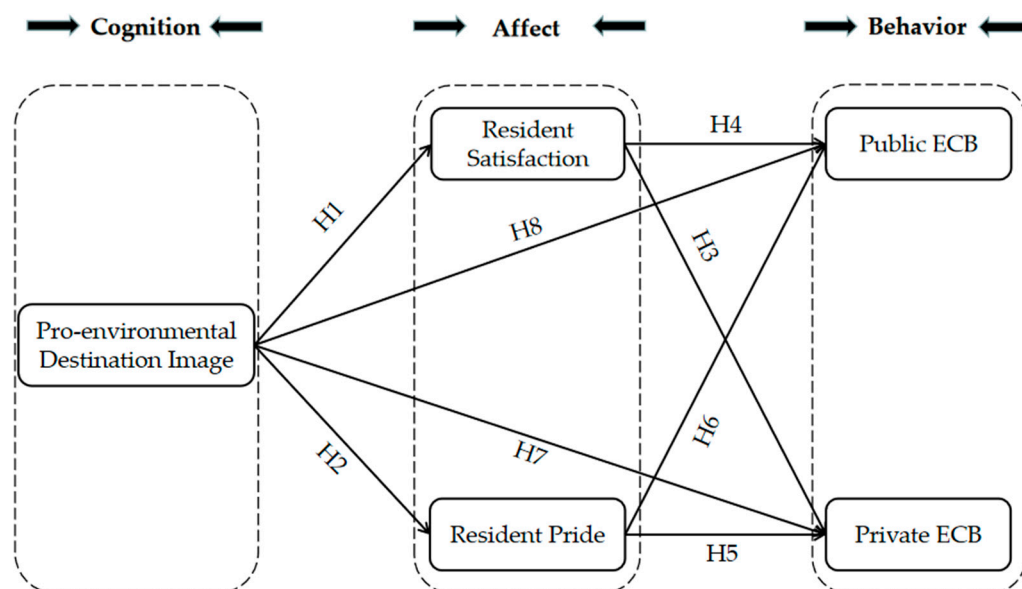


significantly impact green switching intentions [44]. Researchers also report that when customers perceive an environmentally friendly image at the hotel they stay in, they will display more willingness to pay extra [40]. Based on the above discussion and evidence, it is argued that pro-environmental destination image influences resident environmental citizenship behavior:

**Hypothesis 7 (H7).** *Pro-environmental destination image directly and positively affects private environmental citizenship behavior.*

**Hypothesis 8 (H8).** *Pro-environmental destination image directly and positively affects public environmental citizenship behavior.*

In light of the preceding discussion and the literature review, this research adopted the CAB model to examine how resident environmental citizenship behavior is formed under the influences of cognition and affect. The proposed conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The proposed conceptual model. Note: ECB = environmental citizenship behavior.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Measurement

Five-point Likert scales (1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree) were adopted as measurements. Pro-environmental destination image was measured by the three items from the scale developed by Su et al. and Zheng et al. [36,67]. Resident satisfaction was evaluated by the scale with three items developed by Su et al. [22]. Pride was based on the scales developed by Liu et al. and Gouthier et al. [68,69]. The scales with six items developed by D'Arco and Marino were applied to measure resident private and public environmental citizenship behaviors [63]. Based on the specific research setting, the items were appropriately modified (see Table 1). Table S1 presents the detailed measurements of all the variables used in this research.

**Table 1.** Measurement items.

Construct	Item	Source
Pro-environmental Destination Image (PEDI)	PEDI1	[35,66]
	PEDI2	
	PEDI3	
Resident Satisfaction (RS)	RS1	[22]
	RS2	
	RS3	
Resident Pride (RP)	RP1	[67,68]
	RP2	
	RP3	
	RP4	
Private-sphere ECB (PRECB)	PRECB1	[62]
	PRECB2	
	PRECB3	
Public-sphere ECB (PUECB)	PUECB1	[62]
	PUECB2	
	PUECB3	

### 3.2. Pretest of Measurements

The initial draft of the questionnaire was prepared in English and then translated into Chinese. The draft was translated back into English for accuracy verification [70]. Three scholars specialized in tourism research and three destination managers were invited to assess the validity [71]. Sixty residents living in the study site were recruited for the pilot survey to test the reliability and validity of the scales. The results suggested that Cronbach's alphas were above the recommended cutoff value of 0.70, while the standard factor loadings were higher than 0.50, implying that reliabilities and validity were in acceptable ranges [72].

### 3.3. Data Collection

Yucun Village, a well-known rural destination in southern China, was selected for data collection. The abundant ore resources made mining and cement production the pillar industries of the village in the 1980s. The village's economy grew, but at the cost of severe environmental disruption, including vegetation deterioration, and air and water pollution, affecting villagers' quality of life and health. These issues prompted the village to pursue a path of sustainable development. In the 2000s, as the provincial government emphasized building a green economy, Yucun Village decided to close all the mines and cement factories, replacing them with a more sustainable alternative, i.e., developing rural tourism. Ecological rehabilitation projects were implemented to restore the mountains, roads were refurbished, and tourism-related facilities such as agritainment and restaurants were encouraged. Figure 2 displays how the destination encourages residents and tourists to use green transportation.



**Figure 2.** The photograph on the left illustrates the new energy charging stations in the village, while the one on the right shows residents and tourists renting e-bicycles for short-distance trips.

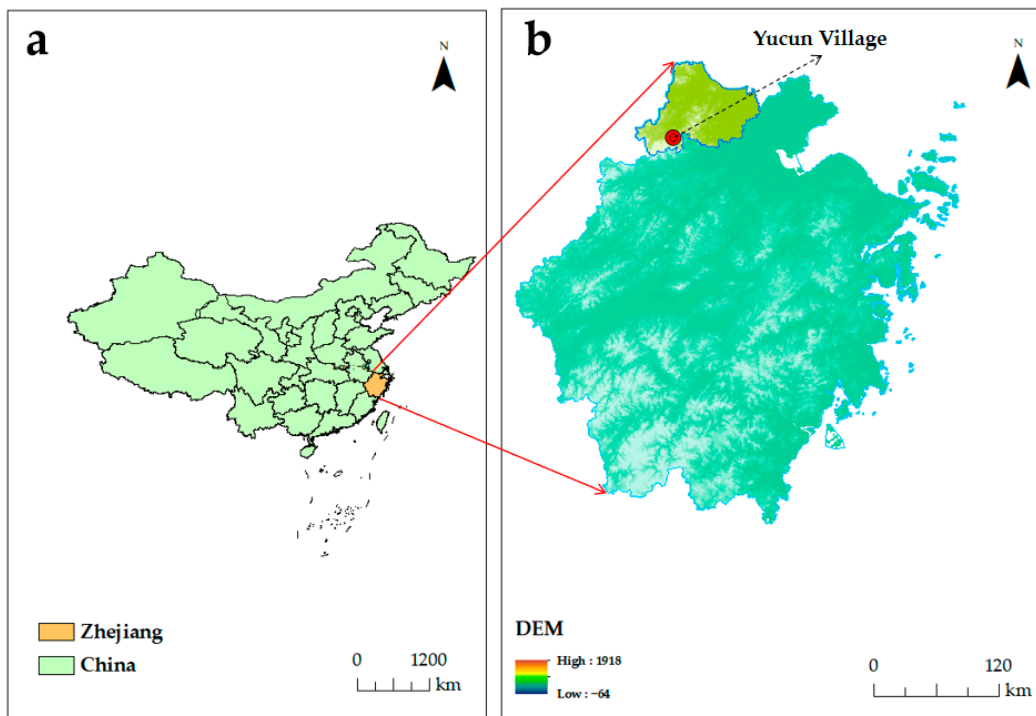
In terms of income, the village's collective economic income grew from 910,000 yuan to over 22 million yuan from 2005 to 2023, and villagers' per capita disposable income increased from 8732 yuan to over 71,000 yuan during the same period [73]. The local government's statistic shows that the carbon emissions per unit GDP are 0.14 tons per 10,000 yuan, far lower than the national average of 1.54 tons per 10,000 yuan. Moreover, as Figure 3 demonstrates, data from the village's innovative green coin system show that within the composition of a virtual carbon coin, sustainable practices account for a significant 64.1% (including waste sorting, green transportation, and tree planting), and over 95% of the population has accumulated more than 60 green coins [74]. This indicates that a vast majority of villagers actively participate in carbon reduction and environmental protection practices. Table S2 provides detailed data and information on the pro-environmental efforts undertaken by the village and its residents.



**Figure 3.** The photograph on the left illustrates the composition of the green coin in the village's real-time data system, while the one on the right shows the percentage of the residents owning green coins. Sustainable practices illustrated in Figure 2 can earn credit points in the green coin system. Note: The pie chart on the right photograph indicates the percentages of the residents owning green coins. For example, 5% of residents own 0–60 coins; 10% of them own 60–80 coins.

These achievements stem from sustainable practices implemented by the local government and villagers, including household waste classification, building new energy vehicle charging stations, and conducting green electricity transactions (purchasing photovoltaic and wind power electricity from other provinces). This village is hailed as the birthplace of the “Two Mountains Theory”, emphasizing the importance of addressing environmental issues alongside economic development, and a successful example of red tourism development in the country. Now, the village is recognized as a National Key Rural Tourism Village by China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism and as one of the best tourism villages by UNWTO [75] due to its efforts in green development. Its success reflects the country's broader shift towards eco-progress, making it a model for sustainable rural development. Thus, it was decided to conduct the field survey in this village destination. Figure 4 shows the geographical location of Yucun.





**Figure 4.** (a) The geographical location of Zhejiang Province in the People’s Republic of China; (b) the geographical location of the study site (Yucun Village) in Huzhou, Zhejiang Province.

Three groups of one researcher and one assistant conducted the field survey with the convenience sampling approach. The respondents were provided with a brief introduction and instructions before completing the questionnaires. If people showed reluctance or did not qualify as local residents, the researchers approached the next available participant. A total of 380 questionnaires were collected with 351 valid responses, showing an effective completion rate of 92.37%. According to previous research, 351 valid responses are sufficient since the number is higher than the minimum size of 160 (ten times the total number of all the items) [76]. The participants demonstrated a balanced gender ratio (50.4% male and 49.6% female), while their demographic profile is illustrated in Table 2. The values of univariate skewness statistics (−0.554 to 0.06) and kurtosis statistics (−0.830 to 0.156) fell within acceptable ranges [77,78].

**Table 2.** Profile of the survey participants.

Variable	Category	n	(%)
Gender	Male	177	50.4
	Female	174	49.6
Age	<25	60	17.1
	25–34	64	18.2
	35–44	63	17.9
	45–59	83	23.6
	≥60	81	23.1
Education	Less than high school/technical school	126	35.9
	High school/technical school	95	27.1
	Diploma education	61	17.4
	Undergraduate degree	62	17.7
	Graduate degree and above	7	2.0

Note: *n* = 351.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Common Method Bias Analysis

For studies based on a field survey, it is necessary to conduct a common method bias (CMB) test, especially when data are gathered from the same source [79]. SPSS was used to perform Harman's single-factor test. According to the results, no single factor accounted for a covariance of over 50%, with the first factor explaining 39.315% of the total variance [80]. Then, confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine whether a common latent factor could explain all of the variance. The proposed model was superior to the common factor model ( $\Delta\chi^2(10) = 1132.139, p < 0.001$ ). As a result, it suggested that CMB was not a prevalent issue for this research [81].

### 4.2. Measurement Model Analysis

To examine the measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was executed in AMOS [82]. The results indicated that the measurement model fit the data well;  $\chi^2/df$ , RMR, and RMSEA were 1.514, 0.018, and 0.038, respectively, and GFI, NFI, IFI, TLI, CFI, and SRMR were 0.951, 0.951, 0.983, 0.978, 0.983, and 0.039, respectively.

The overall reliability of the scale was 0.896. As Table 3 shows, Cronbach's alphas varied from 0.796 to 0.885, while the composite reliability ranged from 0.804 to 0.885, suggesting that the measurement model had acceptable internal reliability. The average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.578 to 0.669, composite reliability from 0.804 to 0.885, and the standardized factor loadings from 11.898 to 16.630. These results implied that there was satisfactory convergent validity [83,84]. The square root of each construct's AVE was compared with the correlations between corresponding latent construct validity to determine the discriminant validity [83]. Based on the results in Table 4, there was sufficient discriminant validity. Thus, the measurement model proved to be reliable and valid.

**Table 3.** Results of the measurement model.

Construct	Loading	t-Values	CR	AVE	Cronbach's Alphas
PEDI			0.856	0.664	0.853
PEDI1	0.826	15.764			
PEDI2	0.811	15.543			
PEDI3	0.807	—			
RS			0.806	0.582	0.800
RS1	0.766	11.931			
RS2	0.830	12.342			
RS3	0.686	—			
RP			0.885	0.659	0.885
RP1	0.785	15.944			
RP2	0.812	16.630			
RP3	0.836	17.231			
RP4	0.813	—			
PRECB			0.858	0.669	0.844
PRECB1	0.845	14.488			
PRECB2	0.884	14.754			
PRECB3	0.716	—			
PUECB			0.804	0.578	0.796
PUECB1	0.832	12.965			
PUECB2	0.714	11.898			
PUECB3	0.730	—			

Note: PEDI = pro-environmental destination image; RS = resident satisfaction; RP = resident pride; PRECB = private environmental citizenship behavior; PUECB = public environmental citizenship behavior.

**Table 4.** Results of discriminant validity.

Construct	PEDI	RS	RP	PRECB	PUECB
PEDI	[0.815]				
RS	0.458	[0.763]			
RP	0.399	0.531	[0.812]		
PRECB	0.468	0.503	0.403	[0.818]	
PUECB	0.549	0.461	0.463	0.490	[0.760]

Note: PEDI = pro-environmental destination image; RS = resident satisfaction; RP = resident pride; PRECB = private environmental citizenship behavior; PUECB = public environmental citizenship behavior.

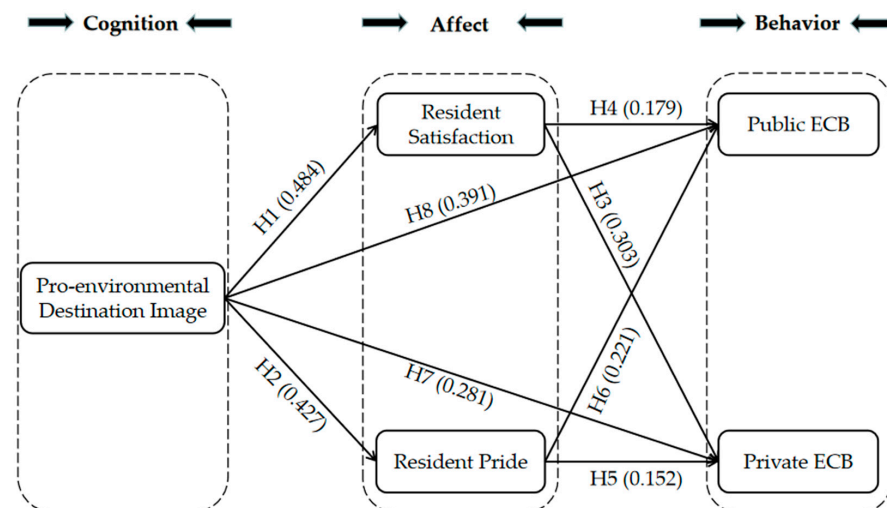
**4.3. Structural Model Analysis**

Prior to examining the direct hypotheses with structural equation modeling (SEM), confirmatory factor analysis was employed to evaluate the measurement model fit, as well as the validity and reliability of the variables [85]. As the fit indices suggested ( $\chi^2/df = 2.036$ , RMR = 0.035, RMSEA = 0.054, GFI = 0.937, NFI = 0.933, IFI = 0.965, TLI = 0.956, CFI = 0.965, and SRMR = 0.081), the proposed model fit well. Table 5 shows that all eight hypotheses were confirmed. The pro-environmental destination image (PEDI) had positive effects on RS and RP ( $\beta_{PEDI \rightarrow RS} = 0.484, p < 0.001$ ;  $\beta_{PEDI \rightarrow RP} = 0.427, p < 0.001$ ), which supported H1 and H2. Likewise, the other six direct hypotheses (H3 to H8) were also confirmed. The results revealed differences in the effects of resident satisfaction and resident pride on the private and public environmental citizenship behaviors of residents. Particularly, resident satisfaction had a more significant impact on private environmental citizenship behavior, whereas pride played a more influential role in encouraging public environmental citizenship behavior. Figure 5 displays the AMOS results.

**Table 5.** Structural model assessment and hypothesis test results.

Hypotheses	Path	Standardized Coefficient	t-Value	Results
H1	PEDI → RS	0.484	7.099 ***	Supported
H2	PEDI → RP	0.427	6.942 ***	Supported
H3	RS → PRECB	0.303	4.349 ***	Supported
H4	RS → PUECB	0.179	2.645 **	Supported
H5	RP → PRECB	0.152	2.515 *	Supported
H6	RP → PUECB	0.221	3.545 ***	Supported
H7	PEDI → PRECB	0.281	3.842 ***	Supported
H8	PEDI → PUECB	0.391	5.116 ***	Supported

Note: \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ . PEDI = pro-environmental destination image; RS = resident satisfaction; RP = resident pride; PRECB = private environmental citizenship behavior; PUECB = public environmental citizenship behavior.



**Figure 5.** AMOS output results of the proposed model.

#### 4.4. Mediating Effect Analysis

Several methods exist for examining the mediation effect, such as the causal steps method, the Sobel test, and the bootstrapping approach. The causal steps method was developed by Baron and Kenny and extensively used in previous studies [86]. However, this approach has two limitations. First, simulation studies have shown that it is one of the least powerful methods for detecting mediation effects [87,88]. Second, it does not estimate the magnitude of the mediation effect [89], which makes it incompatible with frameworks that involve inconsistent mediation [90]. The Sobel test, which is often combined with the causal steps approach [91], assumes a normal sampling distribution of the indirect effect. However, the sampling distribution of  $ab$  tends to be asymmetric and non-normal [92]. Therefore, bootstrapping is preferable to the Sobel test as it avoids a high Type I error rate because of the violation of normality [93]. A large number of recent studies have adopted the bootstrapping approach to examine the mediating effect [94,95].

Using AMOS's bootstrapping analysis with 5000 iterations and a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval [96], a significant mediating effect was found of PEDI on PRECB via RS ( $\beta = 0.139$ ; CI = [0.073, 0.225];  $p < 0.001$ ) (see Table 6). Similarly, the results also confirmed the specific indirect paths as follows: PEDI→RP→PRECB ( $\beta = 0.061$ ; CI = [0.013, 0.123];  $p < 0.05$ ), PEDI→RS→PUECB ( $\beta = 0.083$ ; CI = [0.023, 0.160];  $p < 0.01$ ), and PEDI→RP→PUECB ( $\beta = 0.090$ ; CI = [0.035, 0.158];  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 6.** Mediation test results.

Mediating Hypothesized Path	Indirect Effects	Lower	Upper	p-Value	Results
PEDI→RS→PRECB	0.139	0.073	0.225	0.000	Supported
PEDI→RP→PRECB	0.061	0.013	0.123	0.015	Supported
PEDI→RS→PUECB	0.083	0.023	0.160	0.007	Supported
PEDI→RP→PUECB	0.090	0.035	0.158	0.001	Supported

Note: PEDI = pro-environmental destination image; RS = resident satisfaction; RP = resident pride; PRECB = private environmental citizenship behavior; PUECB = public environmental citizenship behavior.

#### 4.5. Explanatory Power of the Conceptual Model

The model's explanatory ability was evaluated using the  $R^2$  values of its main endogenous variables, where the thresholds of 0.25, 0.09, and 0.01 indicated large, medium, and small effects, respectively [97,98]. The findings from the squared multiple correlations revealed that the structural model accounted for 0.235, 0.183, 0.331, and 0.392 of the variances for RS, RP, PRECB, and PUECB, respectively. These outcomes indicated that the model demonstrated substantial explanatory power with significant effects [94].

## 5. Conclusions, Discussion, and Implications

### 5.1. Conclusions and Discussion

As resident extra-role activities in environmental conservation, environmental citizenship behavior represents a crucial component of environmental sustainability at the destination level [6]. Given the significance of resident cognitive and affective attributes in the development of individual behaviors, this research employed the CAB model to investigate the relationships between pro-environmental destination image, resident satisfaction and pride, and resident environmental citizenship behavior. The empirical results supported all the proposed hypotheses.

The empirical findings suggested that pro-environmental destination image had a direct and positive impact on resident satisfaction, which confirmed the first hypothesis (H1). Previous studies in the literature demonstrate that the satisfaction of hotel guests increases when seeing more efforts put into saving energy and conserving the environment [43,44]. The results confirmed the positive correlation between a pro-environment image and satisfaction from the perspective of destination residents in tourism. Moreover, the current literature has validated that a favorable destination image elicits positive



emotions (such as satisfaction) in a variety of contexts [47,99,100]. However, prior studies have mainly focused on the general destination image. This research took a step further by considering a pro-environmental destination image and establishing a significant link between pro-environmental destination image and satisfaction from a resident perspective. Also, the results confirmed pro-environmental destination image as a critical determinant of residents' sense of pride, implying that H2 was supported. Echoing the findings in the marketing literature [50], this research provided empirical evidence supporting the impact of the specific destination image (i.e., pro-environmental destination image) on a particular self-conscious emotion (i.e., pride) in tourism.

Furthermore, by examining the relationship between resident emotions and their behaviors, the current research revealed that resident satisfaction and pride are positively associated with environmental citizenship behavior in private and public domains. H3–H6 were supported accordingly. Disparities were observed in how resident satisfaction and resident pride affected private and public environmental citizenship behaviors. Specifically, the impact of resident satisfaction on private environmental citizenship behavior was stronger compared to resident pride. Conversely, resident pride played a more prominent role in promoting public environmental citizenship behavior than resident satisfaction. The effect of satisfaction on individual behavioral responses has been investigated in earlier tourism research [21,54]. He et al. reported that tourist satisfaction positively affected sustainable environmental acts [21]. These results offered additional evidence of this link from the standpoint of the residents. The greater effect of satisfaction in prompting private environmental citizenship behavior also supported the idea that satisfaction can be treated as a hedonic emotion [20]. Pride, as the second affective component in the CAB model, was also found to shape individual behaviors, which aligns with previous research in multiple settings [30,62], including the tourism domain [23]. Furthermore, psychological researchers have noted that pride is more closely related to one's self-esteem and can be characterized as a pro-social emotion [19]. The stronger impact of pride on resident public environmental citizenship behavior validated the pro-sociality of pride and confirmed that resident pride was also an important determinant of environmental citizenship behavior, particularly the behavior in the public domain.

Lastly, the connection between pro-environmental destination image and resident environmental citizenship behavior was probed in the private and public spheres. The results validated this image–behavior nexus, implying that H7 and H8 were supported. Although the extensive literature has shown that individual behaviors are influenced by destination image [44,66], how destination image, particularly the specific pro-environmental destination image, impacts people's sustainable environmental behaviors remains underexplored. The literature has documented that consumer-perceived pro-environmental images were strong predictors of eco-friendly behaviors [40,44]. The results of this research are consistent with these previous findings and confirm the role of pro-environmental image in destinations. This suggests that a destination's commitment to environmental preservation will inspire the local residents to join the efforts towards a shared goal, i.e., the sustainability of the destination's ecosystem.

## 5.2. Theoretical Contributions

Grounded in the CAB model, this study investigated how resident environmental citizenship behavior was shaped by taking resident cognitive and affective variables into account. The findings make the following contributions to the tourism literature.

The present research explored how pro-environmental destination image serves as a cognitive antecedent influencing resident environmental citizenship behavior based on the CAB model. Unlike prior studies which emphasized how destination image affects an individual's decision-making processes [8], this research focused on the specific pro-environmental destination image from a resident perspective. A positive causal link was found between pro-environmental destination image and resident environmental citizenship behavior. That is, if a destination has established a favorable pro-environmental

image, residents in the community are likely to take citizenship actions to maintain such an environment for themselves and future generations. In addition, environmental citizenship behavior, an emerging topic in an organizational context [4], has received little attention in tourism research, particularly from the resident standpoint. Thus, this research enhances the understanding of pro-environmental destination image and its effects on the formation of resident environmental citizenship behavior in tourism.

The findings extend the tourism literature by investigating resident satisfaction and pride as the mediators of the relationships between pro-environmental destination image and resident public and private environmental citizenship behaviors. Previous research has confirmed the mediating roles of satisfaction and pride in connecting individual cognitive factors and environmental behaviors [21,30]. However, few studies have simultaneously considered this pair of emotions and explored their impact on resident behaviors. The findings indicate that satisfaction and pride influence resident environmental citizenship behavior differently. The role of satisfaction in stimulating private environmental citizenship behavior is more prominent, while pride is more likely to provoke public environmental citizenship behavior. This reflects the hedonic nature of satisfaction and the pro-social nature of pride in fostering different types of individual behaviors [19,20]. The different routes to environmental citizenship behavior mediated by satisfaction and pride deepen the understanding of the role of positive emotions in developing individual behaviors.

### 5.3. Managerial Implications

By examining the roles of resident satisfaction and pride, this study offered several practical implications for destinations to promote resident environmental citizenship behavior. The positive effect of pro-environmental destination image in stimulating resident sustainable behaviors was confirmed. Previous research focuses on the notion of overall destination image [47,101]. The attention to specific destination images, such as pro-environmental destination images, is insufficient. Therefore, apart from building a positive image concerning tourism-related services (such as accommodation and catering), destinations should ensure that environmental integrity and environmental commitment efforts are visible to residents. Residents can be invited as volunteers and ambassadors to facilitate the implementation of environmental initiatives in public areas. As exemplified in this research, Yucun Village established a village history museum dedicated to showcasing the history, culture, and heritage of the villages, particularly its evolution from a heavily polluted place to a famous rural destination. Villagers volunteer at the museum, sharing the village's stories with locals and visitors. Furthermore, the village has transformed previously closed mine pits into mining heritage sites, reinforcing the village's dedication to creating a healthy environment for current and future generations. Similarly, the local government and the destination must encourage residents to behave more responsibly, such as saving on household energy use and household waste recycling and classification. Moreover, elements showing their environmental commitment should be added in promotional videos to convey a positive environmental image, such as blue skies, clean water, and harmony between humans and nature. With these efforts, residents can feel and see that the destination cares about the environment and may act in a more responsible manner in the private and public spheres.

Furthermore, the direct path from resident positive emotions to environmental citizenship behavior underlined the importance of satisfaction and pride among residents. The results indicated that satisfaction was more likely to motivate residents to engage in private environmental citizenship behavior, while pride tended to encourage their involvement in public environmental citizenship behavior. In this regard, destinations need to prioritize the strategies based on the emotional benefits they offer to residents [13]. Given the hedonic attribute of satisfaction, strategies should be implemented to help residents realize that their eco-friendly actions contribute to environmental sustainability. Consequently, the hedonic benefits they receive, such as a cleaner and healthier environment, may enhance their awareness of resource conservation and environmental protection. In Yucun Village,

the growth of rural tourism has not only improved villagers' environmental awareness but also enhanced the village infrastructure. For instance, leisure greenways and trails were built along the riverbanks and mountains, providing additional leisure spaces for the residents. The local government also advocates and subsidizes a landscaped courtyard initiative, encouraging every household to plant flowers and trees in their courtyards. This initiative has created a significantly improved living environment for the locals, increasing their overall sense of satisfaction.

Lastly, since resident pride originates from identification with the community or the destination, strategies related to the community's unique identities should be implemented to boost resident pride. It is suggested to highlight and promote the uniqueness of the local culture, resources, and heritage through hosting cultural events, showcasing local heritage, educational programs, as well as environmental conservation initiatives. For example, China's "Two Mountains Theory" originated from Yucun Village. This concept describes the need to tackle both the immediate environmental degradation (the "mountain in front") and the longer-term sustainable development goals (the "mountain in the distance"). Due to the success of this village, it is widely recognized as a typical example of this sustainable development strategy. Many villages across the country have visited the village to learn from the "Yucun Village Experience". This recognition and prestige brought by the village's pro-environmental commitment make the residents feel proud of living and working in the village. They willingly embrace their responsibilities to protect the environment, foster a sense of ownership, and deepen their connection with the community. In addition, as part of the village, residents should be encouraged to be engaged in local tourism development to stimulate their pride. The destination can further encourage the locals to engage in the decision-making processes regarding tourism development. Those who positively contribute to tourism should be acknowledged through awards or incentives or by publicly celebrating their achievements. If residents feel included and valued, they will take pride in their community.

## 6. Limitations and Future Research Directions

There are several limitations in this research that need to be addressed in future work. First, this research explored the formation of environmental citizenship behavior from a resident perspective. Future research should consider more diverse populations and other stakeholders (e.g., destination employees and small businesses) for understanding the differences in the behaviors of the various groups of stakeholders. Moreover, the survey was conducted in a rural destination renowned for its commitment to sustainable development. The development experience in this destination provides useful guidance for sustainable development for other rural destinations nationwide. However, the conceptual model based on the case of Yucun Village may not necessarily be universally applicable to other rural destinations. Thus, conducting additional case studies in less well-known destinations will better cross-validate the generalizability and robustness of the conceptual model proposed in this research.

Second, this study applied the structural equation modeling technique to conduct the empirical analysis, and more diverse methods are suggested in future tourism research, such as the fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis [102], qualitative methodologies [103], as well as experimental studies [104,105]. Furthermore, while the aforementioned research methods in tourism are popular and applicable, discrepancies still may arise between the reported and actual behaviors. Previous behavioral research in tourism has also relied on secondary data to understand individual decision-making processes [106]. Therefore, adopting a micro-economic perspective that collects specific data from institutions and agencies presents another promising option for future research.

Finally, other cognitive attributes and affective factors of residents could be integrated into the theoretical framework in future studies, which would allow for a deeper understanding of resident involvement in the sustainability of destination management.

**Supplementary Materials:** The following supporting information can be downloaded at: <https://www.mdpi.com/article/10.3390/land13071075/s1>, Table S1: Detailed measurements of all variables and literature sources; Table S2: Overview and pro-environmental efforts of Yucun Village and its residents.

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