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Tourists' Perceived Restoration of Chinese Rural Cultural Memory Space

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Abstract: In the face of the growing demand for stress reduction among urban residents, research on the restorative effect of cultural environments and cultural landscape is currently limited. This paper aims to explore the perceived restoration of rural cultural memory space in a Chinese cultural context and to investigate the role of situational involvement and place attachment in this respect. The results show that rural cultural memory space can directly produce restorative effects, but each perceptual dimension has internal variability. According to appraisal theory and self-regulation theory, revealing the complex pathways of tourists' perceptions of rural cultural memory space can be generated through a process of situational involvement and placing attachment to produce tourists' restorative perceptions. The research results highlight the predictors of restorative environment in the context of the Chinese vernacular culture and provide references for rural tourism landscape design.

Keywords: rural cultural memory space; tourists; restorative environment; traditional village

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1. Introduction

There is growing evidence that living in today's busy and fast-paced society, especially in a crowded, over-informed, stressful, and high-rise city, is fraught with tension, anxiety, and excessive stress [1]. According to the World Health Organization (WHO; 2021), the incidence of physical and mental diseases is increasing, and negative emotions such as anger, anxiety and depression can lead to a variety of diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and diseases of the endocrine-immune system. In this context, given the healing value and emotional soothing function of tourism [2], escaping from daily life and restoring physical and mental health has become an important motivation for the public to choose tourism and leisure activities [3–5]. Several studies have focused on the physical health of tourists, noting that the health quality of host countries is a significant factor influencing tourist decisions and destination choices [6]. However, the emotional and psychological needs of tourists also deserve attention, and the types of tourism environments and experiences that can influence tourists' psychological well-being have also been the subject of scholarly attention. Environmental psychology defines a restorative environment as one that allows people to regain their ability to resist distractions and stresses, which frees them from personal utilitarian purposes and thus promotes activities that are genuinely enjoyable [7]. Hartig further defines "recovery" as the regaining of physiological, psychological, and social capacities that have been depleted in the process of adaptation to the external environment [8]. Kaplan identified four characteristics of restorative environments: being away; fascination; extent; and compatibility [9]. In previous studies, environmental restorative effects have been associated with natural environments or natural factors [10]. Beautiful natural environments, especially natural landscapes, are often used as a resource that can produce psychological restorative effects [11]. Moreover, pocket parks in urban spaces are seen as important restorative environments [12], while

green outdoor spaces on campuses were found to balance multidimensional stress for college students [13]. However, the restorative effect of the cultural environment has been relatively little studied, and the possible psychological restorative role of cultural landscapes, especially in the Chinese cultural context, has been overlooked. Therefore, this paper focuses on the restorative effect on tourists of cultural landscapes in the context of Chinese culture.

In the ancient and long-lasting Chinese culture, memory and homesickness are always lingering and colorful engravings. Without understanding the meaning of memory and homesickness, it is also difficult to appreciate the soul and spirit of Chinese culture in its thousands of years of inheritance [14]. Previous research has emphasized the spatial and local significance of the presence of memory for the development of villages [15], but memory also has developmental significance for people. Hsiao-tung Fei once pointed out in his book Earthbound China: birth system, that "for a long time, farmers who have relied on rural life, with the countryside as their root and the homesickness as their bond, have formed an unbreakable attachment to the countryside" [16]. However, the rapid urbanization and industrialization process has made a large number of farmers acquire citizenship quickly without adequate preparation, and their sense of identity as citizens has not formed in time. As the carrier and ontology of rural culture and the root on which rural cultural memory survives [17], rural tourism sites allow urban residents who can move from a mechanical daily life to the peaceful rural world to visit the rural cultural landscape and experience rural customs through tourism and use this experience to relieve identity anxiety and seek social identity [18]. As tourism shifts from a service economy to an experience economy, memory will play a more important role in rural tourism [17].

This study observed tourists visiting Yuanjia Village in Shaanxi Province of China, a traditional village with a history of more than 1000 years, to understand the reasons for the formation of tourists' perceived restoration in rural cultural landscapes, as well as to explore the role of tourists' involvement in tourism situations and tourists' attachment to cultural landscapes in this process, in order to provide a theoretical basis and practical suggestions for the preservation of cultural heritage and support rural cultural landscape design.

2. Theoretical Basis and Research Hypotheses

2.1. Restorative Environment

Kaplan's attention restoration theory (ART) [19] is often used to study the psychological restorative effects of the environment, where the physiological or psychological health restoration benefits induced by a particular environment are referred to as environmental restorative effects [20].

ART emphasizes that, to carry out daily life efficiently, people must maintain cognitive clarity, which in turn requires "voluntary attention" to be maintained. When the environment has certain characteristics, it can encourage an individual to shift from "voluntary attention" to "involuntary attention", thus relieving attention fatigue and producing restorative benefits. Kaplan identified four characteristics of restorative environments: being away; fascination; extent; and compatibility [9]. Being away refers to the psychological and geographical distance from the usual daily environment that causes fatigue and attention loss, which changes the direction of the individual's gaze to avoid fatigue so that attention can be restored. Fascination means that, when an environment is attractive enough, people can appreciate it without trying to pay attention to it; their interest can easily be attracted, and their attention can be restored without deliberately focusing on the negative environment. Extent means that the spatial layout and composition of the environment should be rich and coherent enough to make people feel that they are in a complete world from both a temporal and a spatial perspective, to provide a long stay and a full immersion experience, thus allowing individuals to regain their concentration. Compatibility refers to the ability of the environment to meet people's pursuits and expectations; resonate with their interests and preferences; and lead to restorative effects when it matches their preferences, emotions, and motivational purposes. However, when Hartig, Huang,

and other scholars re-examined the four characteristics of restorative environments, it was found that the extent tends to be a mysterious characteristic connected with environmental preferences [21,22] and does not effectively reflect the restorative effects of the environment. Therefore, this study explored the restorative environment in terms of three characteristics: being away, fascination, and compatibility.

2.2. Rural Cultural Memory Space

Rural cultural memory is the sum of cultural identification symbols that reflect social tendencies, local emotions, and identities within a certain rural territory, shaped by local people dedicated to cultural memory by referring to the past and according to current demands. Rural cultural memory space are specific places that record, carry, and display rural cultural memories; these include monumental sites, iconic sites, cultural paths, literary texts, festival rituals, identity symbols, historical figures, and so on [23,24]. The dimension of tourists' perception of rural cultural memory space can be explained in terms of time, space, culture, and emotion perception dimensions. The time perception dimension consists of the awakening of past experiences, recalling relevant people and events, and reflecting on the continuity of life and feelings at the temporal level. The space perception dimension refers to the ability of the memory subject to recall and has a certain experience of the past, based on spatial qualities such as points, lines, and surfaces in the rural cultural memory space. The culture perception dimension refers to the cultural values and qualities carried by the rural cultural memory space. Finally, the emotion perception dimension is expressed in the emotional demand and motivation of tourists for rural cultural memory, which can trigger people's real experience and expression of rural culture and enhance their sense of belonging, pride, and cultural confidence, among others [25]. Rural cultural memory space plays an important role in memory bearing, cultural transmission, and emotional support, and is the "engine" for awakening memories.

It has been argued that there is a link between the cultural memory of traditional villages and psychological recovery and that, for quasi-urban populations who struggle to survive in the city and whose roots are in the countryside, recalling the countryside has a psychological comforting effect and a spiritual cleansing effect [26]. Participation in rural tourism is also a way for tourists to obtain restorative effects. In fact, they are touched by the scenery and evoke homesickness during the tourism experience, or else they obtain some psychological comfort by satisfying their emotional attachment to the local culture through tourism, because of their yearning and instinctive closeness to the countryside [27]. To this end, the following hypothesis was formulated in this study:

H1a–d. *The various dimensions of tourists' perceptions of rural cultural memory space have a direct, significant, and positive impact on tourists' perceived restoration.*

2.3. Situational Involvement

The concept of "involvement" originated in social psychological research [28]. Rothschild suggested that involvement refers to the motivation, arousal, and interest of an individual in a particular stimulus or situation during a recreational activity or in a related device [29]. Zaichkowsky suggested that involvement is also related to the degree to which a product is associated with an individual's intrinsic needs, interests, and values [30]. Situational involvement reflects the high level of involvement that accompanies a specific situation for a brief period of time [31]. In tourism contexts, it reflects the feeling of pleasure and enjoyment in the tourism context [32], with higher tourist interest in an activity representing higher levels of situational involvement [33].

Regarding the study of the antecedent variables of situational involvement, Hawkins concluded that the latter is influenced by the interaction of personal, product, and situational characteristics [34]. This conclusion has been confirmed by several scholars. Leng further categorized the antecedents of involvement into essential and situational factors. Essential factors include individual knowledge of the product and personal interest, while

situational factors include the product price, product risk, and stimulation [35]. In terms of essential factors, past experiences and local emotions of the memory subject carried by the rural cultural memory space may enhance individuals' knowledge and personal interest in the tourism destination. In terms of situational factors, the rural cultural memory space forms a complete context in the form of venue, text, rituals, and so on, which becomes the "engine" for awakening memories, thus stimulating tourists to enhance their situational involvement. Therefore, rural cultural memory space may have a significant positive effect on the level of situational involvement, which is the object of investigation of this study.

Moreover, it has been shown that situational involvement has a significant positive effect on perceived restoration, and the active engagement and participation of tourists make it easier for them to recover from the fatigue of daily life [36]. It is not difficult to understand that the restorative effect is the result of human–environment interaction, which is related not only to environmental characteristics, but also to tourists' psychological states. In fact, the environment may have an impact on tourists' attention recovery when individuals have a positive engagement attitude toward the environment. However, the role of situational involvement in the environmental restorative effect of rural cultural memory space needs to be proven. For this reason, the following hypotheses were proposed in this study:

H2a–d. *The various dimensions of tourists' perceptions of rural cultural memory space have a significant positive effect on the level of situational involvement.*

H3a–d. *The various dimensions of tourists' perceptions of rural cultural memory space indirectly influence perceived restoration through the mediating role of situational involvement.*

2.4. Place Attachment

The concept of place attachment is commonly employed in the fields of environmental psychology and human geography to study place emotions. It is defined as the emotional connection formed by the interaction between people and a particular place, and expresses a psychological state whereby people tend to stay in a certain place and feel comfortable and safe [37]. Williams identified place attachment as consisting of two dimensions, namely place dependence and place identity, and developed the Place Attachment Scale to gauge individuals' attachment to a place [38–40]. Lewicka argued that the two dimensions are consistent factors in the structure of place attachment and form the basis of several quantitative measures of place attachment [41]. More in detail, most scholars recognized that place attachment is a functional attachment of people to a specific place, mainly referring to the extent to which the environmental landscape, service facilities, and public resources of a place satisfy the users, while place identity is an affective attachment, that is, an emotional attachment and sense of belonging of individuals to a place based on their values [42].

Scannell and Gifford linked memories of the past and people's emotional connections to specific places [43]. In particular, they considered memories of a place and place-related memories as part of the cognitive process of place attachment. Lewicka also suggests that place attachment may arise from memory [44]. In the tourism context, Li and Nie argued that tourists' collective memory perception of cultural tourism places is a psychological attribution for place attachment and a prerequisite and basis for tourists' experience of such places [45].

At the same time, past findings suggest that place attachment also has a strong influence on the perceived restoration of the environment. If a person has positive emotional attachments to a place, including liking and familiarity, then these attached places also have restorative potential [46]. Mayfield also found that individuals were able to fully relax and had good restorative functioning in places with high levels of attachment, while attention was less likely to be restored in places with low attachment [47]. Liu also concluded that the restorative effect of the environment is related not only to the characteristics of the environment itself, but also to the active participation of the individual and that the

environment can work toward the individual's attention recovery only when the individual has a positive attitude toward it [48]. In addition, it has also been verified that situational involvement in the ancient town context has a significant, direct, and positive effect on place attachment [49]. Based on the review of previous studies, the following hypotheses were formulated in this study:

H4a–d. *The various dimensions of tourists' perceptions of rural cultural memory space have significant positive effects on tourists' place attachment.*

H5a–d. *The various dimensions of tourists' perceptions of rural cultural memory space indirectly influence perceived restoration through the mediating role of place attachment.*

H6a–d. *The various dimensions of tourists' perceptions of rural cultural memory space indirectly influence perceived restoration through the mediating role of situational involvement and place attachment.*

2.5. Theoretical Foundation

Appraisal theory is a research perspective in emotion theory on the relationship between emotion and cognition that explores how people identify their emotion on cues. Emotion psychologists who have studied the relationship between emotion and cognition from an appraisal perspective believe that appraisal is a fundamental condition for emotion production and that subtle combinations of appraisals produce discrete emotional responses. Arnold first introduced appraisal theory in 1960, thus kicking off the second generation of emotion theory. He argued that there is a cognitive factor between environmental stimuli, physiological arousal, and emotional response, and that appraisal is mainly a value judgment and control judgment of the relationship between environmental stimuli and oneself, which gives some subjective meaning to such environmental stimuli, and that differences in human perception of this meaning lead to differences in the nature and extent of their emotional activity [50]. Lazarus further proposed that, in emotional activity, appraisal is not done once, but repeatedly, and the individual's processing of stimulus information is processual and dynamic, often containing different stages of initial and secondary appraisal [51]. Bagozzi suggested self-regulation theory based on Lazarus, which suggests appraisal facilitates the generation of emotional reactions and then generates coping reactions, and that the overall process of appraisal–emotional reaction–coping reaction occurs, which explains the relationship between attitudes and intentions [52]. Meanwhile, Bagozzi pointed out that the coping response to positive emotions usually involves sharing good fortune, experience, and increased reward, sometimes accompanied by higher levels of physiological arousal and stronger attention [53]. At present, appraisal theory has become an important theoretical basis for explaining emotions and its application in tourism research has gradually increased since Hosany introduced it into the study of tourists' emotions [54]. Existing tourism studies in which factors such as tourism authenticity, destination image, and the application of appraisal theory in the study of tourists' emotions have been carried out concerning tourism authenticity and destination image [55,56].

Therefore, based on the appraisal theory and the self-regulation theory, this study constructs a model of rural cultural memory space perception (cognitive initial appraisal)–situational involvement (cognitive secondary appraisal)–place attachment (emotional response)–restorative environmental perception (coping response) (Figure 1).

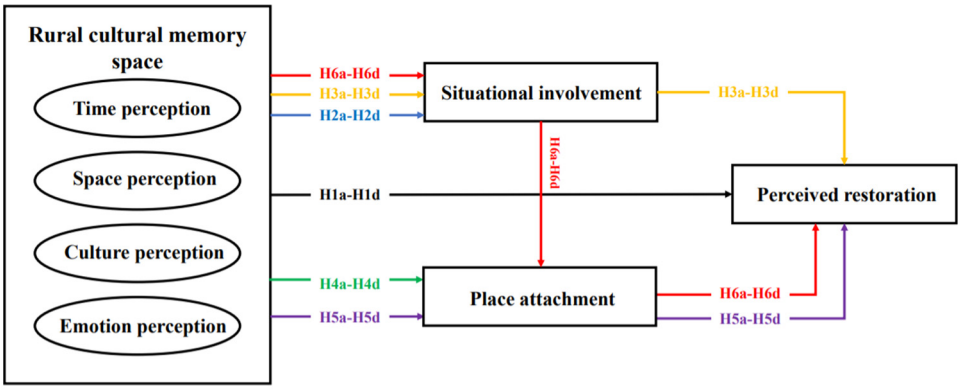

Figure 1. Conceptual model the study.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. The Case Study Method

This paper adopts the case study method proposed by Robert Yin [57]. The reason for choosing this method is that the phenomenon of restorative rural cultural memory space in the tourism context studied in this paper is difficult to separate from the context of the rural cultural memory space and tourism process, and case studies are the research method used to explore phenomena that are difficult to separate from their context [57]. At the same time, the case study method is a frequently used and very useful and much needed method in tourism research.

In this paper, a single case study of the phenomenon is selected from a specific case site and Yin believes that it is important to conduct unique case studies involving extreme, rare, critical, and/or revelatory cases [57]. This study uses a field questionnaire for data collection, which will be carried out under the implementation steps of training or skill preparation of co-investigators, development of the research protocol, conduct of pilot pre-research, and actual implementation of the research plan. This is also in line with the procedures outlined by case study methodologists that can be used in a variety of contexts. Quantitative analysis was used in the data analysis to describe the restorative effects of the rural cultural memory space in a specific context (tourism context) and to analyze the causal relationships accordingly.

3.2. Case Study Area

The case study area is Yuanjia Village, located in Xianyang City, Shaanxi Province, China (Figure 2). This village was selected as the case study area for two reasons. First, Yuanjia Village has been developing rural tourism since 2007 and is currently in a good state of development, with significant location advantages and a large market of visitor sources. Second, it was included in the second batch of selected Chinese traditional villages in 2013 and its cultural memory space is well preserved. With a history of more than 1300 years, Yuanjia Village preserves ancient residential buildings, farming settlements, markets, and several characteristic objects and activities with local cultural flavor; moreover, it has a strong cultural atmosphere, which helps to determine the perception of rural cultural memory space.

Some scholars have conducted a special study on the traditional cultural landscape of Yuanjia Village, suggesting that the cultural landscape of Yuanjia Village includes spatial layout landscape, traditional architecture landscape, and folk culture landscape. The village has a centralized spatial layout and an overall 'chessboard' layout and the spatial scale of the streets and lanes in Yuanjia Village is relatively pleasant. The traditional residential buildings in Yuanjia Village are mainly of adobe and brick construction, usually with a wooden frame as the structural framework of the house, and have a distinctly traditional northern Chinese residential style. In addition, Yuanjia Village has a rich folk cultural landscape. Traditional handicrafts in Yuanjia Village include paper-cutting, woodblock

New Year paintings, shadow puppet, clay sculpture, and embroidery. Among them, paper-cutting is a typical representative feature of the traditional folk cultural landscape of Yuanjia Village. In terms of food, Yuanjia Village has shaped its own food culture locally while inheriting the traditional food of Guanzhong [58].

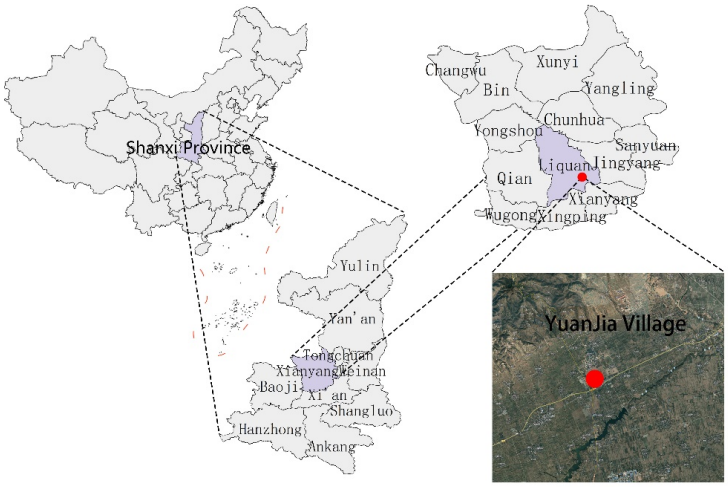

Figure 2. Location map of the study area.

During our fieldwork, we also experienced the special snacks, farmhouse stoves, old oil presses, and yellow mud walls in Yuanjia Village. The bamboo farming tools, wooden tables and chairs, and yellow earth-coloured shop decorations placed along both sides of the street, complemented by the authentic Guanzhong dialect of the shopkeepers, create the atmosphere of traditional Guanzhong life. Yuanjia Village is rich in types of folklore activities, including the famous Shaanxi opera and shadow puppets. All of these together form the traditional village cultural landscape of Yuanjia Village.

As Yuanjia Village in Shaanxi Province is rich in cultural landscape resources (Figure 3), this study uses Yuanjia Village in Shaanxi Province as a case study to explore the restorative effect of cultural landscape.

Figure 3. The overview map of the study area.

3.3. Variable Measurement

This study aimed to measure tourists' perception of cultural memory space, degree of situational involvement, place attachment, and perceived restoration of Yuanjia Village. For this purpose, the Yuanjia Village Rural Cultural Memory Space Perception Scale was designed to gauge tourists' perception of rural cultural memory space, based on the scale designed by Lv with appropriate modifications by combining the variable measures from the pre-study [25]. The degree of place attachment was tested using the Place Attachment Scale, referring to the measures developed by Kyle and William et al. [38,59]. The degree of situational involvement was gauged through the Situational Involvement Scale, which was adapted from the study by Havitz [32]. Finally, perceived restoration was assessed through the Perception of Environmental Restoration Scale, which is a modified version of the Perception of Environmental Restoration Scale (PRS) developed by Hartig and Huang [22,60], which is one of the few environmental restoration scales used by Chinese researchers. All of the above items were assessed on a five-point Likert scale from 1 = completely disagree to 5 = completely agree.

3.4. Data Collection

In this study, the process of data collection was divided into two phases. First, a pre-survey with face-to-face questionnaires was conducted in July 2021 with 104 tourists in Yuanjia Village using the initial version of a questionnaire; 104 questionnaires were collected, 93 of which were valid, with an efficiency rate of 89.4%. SPSS 26.0 software was used to test the reliability and validity of the pre-survey sample data, eliminate the substandard questions, and modify the questions that were not clearly expressed according to the questions and suggestions of the respondents, so as to ensure that the content of the options could be understood by them and finalize the official questionnaire. Second, a formal survey of the face-to-face questionnaire was conducted in Yuanjia Village in September 2021, randomly selecting tourists in the village who were willing to participate in the survey and informing respondents that there were no absolutely correct or incorrect answers to each question.

As the subjects of this study are people who have had experience of rural life, we set the question "Have you ever experienced country life?" for sample screening. People who had lived in the countryside were selected for analysis. A total of 470 questionnaires were distributed and collected and 406 valid questionnaires were obtained after eliminating invalid questionnaires, i.e., those that included missing, disordered, and illogical answers, with an efficiency rate of 85.5%. The total number of valid questionnaires was higher than 340, thereby meeting the requirements for data analysis.

Table 1 summarizes the demographic data of the respondents. A roughly equal male-to-female ratio was observed, with 44.1% male and 55.9% female respondents. In addition, 70.4% of respondents were aged 30 years and above. In terms of origin, 76.4% of the respondents were from neighboring cities such as Xianyang, Xi'an, and Weinan. Finally, in terms of current residence status, 84.2% of the respondents declared that they were living in towns.

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents.

	Item	Number of Answers	Percentage
Current area of residence			
	Cities and towns	342	84.2%
	Countryside	64	15.8%
Gender			
	Male	179	44.1%
	Female	227	55.9%

Table 1. *Cont.*

	Item	Number of Answers	Percentage
Age			
	18–29	120	29.6%
	30–45	199	49.0%
	46–59	68	16.7%
	60+	19	4.7%
Education level			
	Primary school	2	0.5%
	Junior high school	32	7.9%
	High school (including secondary school)	99	24.4%
	College and undergraduate	244	60.1%
	Master and above	29	7.1%
Current city of residence			
	Xi'an	181	44.6%
	Xianyang	102	25.1%
	Weinan	27	6.7%
	Other cities in Shaanxi	18	4.4%
	Other provinces in China	78	19.2%
Number of visits			
	1 time	93	22.9%
	2–3 times	99	24.4%
	4–5 times	50	12.3%
	More than 5 times	164	40.4%

3.5. Analytical Approach

In this paper, SPSS 26.0 and Amos 23.0 were used to perform reliability and validity tests, retrieve the descriptive statistics, and perform correlation analysis and regression analysis. The PROCESS program, developed by Hayes, was used for mediated model testing [61]. The significance level of the mediated effects was tested using the bias-corrected nonparametric percentile Bootstrap method.

3.6. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's sphericity tests were performed on all of the variables. The KMO value was higher than 0.7 and the Bartlett's sphericity test Sig. value was lower than 0.001 (with a value of 0.000 considered as significant). Hence, the sample data were suitable for factor analysis. Next, principal component analysis was employed to extract the factors, based on the following three criteria: (i) factors including only one question item were removed [62]; (ii) question items with a factor loading value lower than 0.5 after orthogonal rotation were removed; and (iii) question items with a cross loading of two factors higher than 0.4 after rotation were removed [63]. Based on these criteria for factor screening, six items (i.e., TP4, SP1, SP2, CP3, EP2, and EP5), taken from the original scale of tourists' perception of rural cultural memory space [25], were excluded as they did not meet the criteria. Finally, seven factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, with a cumulative explained variance of 70.26%, indicating that the seven factors extracted after eliminating the inappropriate question items are a good reflection of most of the information in the original data. The KMO and Bartlett's sphericity tests were performed again on the scale; the results showed that the KMO value was equal to 0.964 and the Bartlett's sphericity test Sig. value was lower than 0.001 (with 0.000 considered as significant). All of these results clearly show that the model constructed using factor analysis was feasible.

3.7. Reliability and Validity Tests of the Scale

In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient was used to test the internal consistency of the scale. Following Nunnally [64], the reliability of the questionnaire was considered

as acceptable if the Cronbach's α coefficient of each factor was higher than 0.7 and the Cronbach's α coefficient of the total scale was higher than 0.8. The internal consistency coefficient value of the overall scale was calculated using SPSS 26.0 software as equal to 0.968, i.e., higher than 0.9. The Cronbach's α coefficients of the four perception dimensions of rural cultural memory space, namely, time perception, space perception, culture perception, and emotion perception, were equal to 0.803, 0.817, 0.728, and 0.857, respectively, while the Cronbach's α coefficients of situational involvement, place attachment, and perceived restoration were equal to 0.866, 0.925, and 0.915, respectively. All of these values were higher than 0.7, thus indicating that the scale had high internal consistency and good reliability.

Convergent validity analysis was conducted on the variables to test whether the individual measures in the same dimension effectively reflected the same construct. In this study, the convergent validity of the scale was examined based on the following two criteria: first, that the standardized factor loadings of each observed variable were greater than 0.5 and reached a significant level ($p < 0.001$); second, that the average variance extraction (AVE) values were higher than 0.5 and the composite reliability (CR) values were higher than 0.8 [65,66]. The results showed that the standardized factor loadings of the four factors of time perception, space perception, culture perception, and emotion perception in the perception dimension of rural cultural memory space, as well as the observed variables contained in situational involvement, place attachment, and perceived restoration, ranged from 0.670 to 0.858, i.e., greater than 0.5. This indicates that all of the latent variables were highly representative of the topic to which they belonged. In addition, the AVE values of the abovementioned observed variables were equal to 0.578, 0.597, 0.517, 0.669, 0.584, 0.609, and 0.547, respectively, i.e., greater than 0.5, and the CR values were equal to 0.803, 0.817, 0.728, 0.857, 0.866, 0.925, and 0.915, respectively, i.e., greater than 0.7. This indicated that the scale convergent validity was ideal; the specific results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the reliability and validity analysis.

Gauge	Measurement Index	Standardized Factor Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's α
Perception of rural cultural memory space					
Time perception	TP_R1 This space makes me experience what I once knew	0.780	0.578	0.804	0.803
	TP_R2 This space reminds me of my own childhood experience	0.743			
	TP_R3 This space reminds me of the time I spent with my family and friends	0.758			
Space perception	SP_R3 I clearly know what a rural cultural memory space looks like	0.797	0.597	0.816	0.817
	SP_R4 I am clearly aware of the use of rural cultural memory space	0.761			
	SP_R5 I clearly know the location of the rural cultural memory space	0.760			
Culture perception	CP_R1 This space reflects the history, past events, and people of the village	0.700	0.517	0.763	0.728
	CP_R2 This space has more cultural charm than other spaces in the countryside	0.696			
	CP_R4 This space enhances the cultural atmosphere of rural tourism	0.760			
Emotion perception	EP_R1 This space makes me feel a strong sense of belonging	0.810	0.669	0.858	0.857
	EP_R3 This space gives me a strong sense of pride	0.858			
	EP_R4 This space makes me feel more culturally confident	0.782			

Table 2. *Cont.*

Gauge	Measurement Index	Standardized Factor Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's α
	Situational involvement				
	SI1 This space has made the tour interesting for me	0.778	0.584	0.875	0.866
	SI2 I really enjoyed the tour activities in the area	0.831			
	SI3 I believe it is right to choose this place to travel	0.772			
	SI4 I travel in this place to discover my true self	0.732			
	SI5 I would be annoyed if I did not travel to this place	0.702			
	Place attachment				
Place dependence	PD1 I like very much to feel the culture of this place	0.808	0.609	0.926	0.925
	PD2 I get more satisfaction out of visiting this place than from visiting any other	0.796			
	PD3 It is more important to relax here than in any other place	0.772			
	PD4 This is the best place for me to relax and unwind	0.726			
Place identity	PI1 This place means a lot to me	0.738			
	PI2 I am very attached to this place	0.822			
	PI3 My experience here has enriched the understanding of myself	0.788			
	PI4 I identify strongly with this place	0.790			
	Perceived restoration				
Being away	A1: I have an experience of detachment from the world	0.756	0.547	0.916	0.915
	A2: This place helps me relax my tense mood	0.714			
	A3: This place makes me feel less constrained by daily life	0.715			
Fascination	B1: This place has attractive qualities	0.729			
	B2 I can have several experiences of exploration and discovery	0.731			
	B3: This place has considerable charm	0.670			
Compatibility	C1: In this place I can enjoy doing the things I like	0.756			
	C2: I feel integrated with this place	0.802			
	C3: I like to do things that are consistent with the environment	0.775			

3.8. Validation Factor Analysis

The validation factor analysis for all variables was performed using the maximum likelihood estimation, employing AMOS 23.0 software. The resulting fit indices were as follows: χ^2 = 1341.62; df = 506; χ^2/df = 2.651; RMR = 0.031; RMSEA = 0.064; NFI = 0.864; CFI = 0.910; IFI = 0.911; RFI = 0.849; TLI = 0.900; and GFI = 0.823. All of the main fit indices were greater than, or close to, 0.9, and reached a good level; hence, the overall fit of the model was good. The arithmetic square root of the mean variance extracted for all observed variables was higher than the correlation coefficients between each variable and other latent variables (Table 3), except for the arithmetic square root of the mean variance extracted for situational involvement and place attachment (0.76 and 0.78, respectively), which were slightly lower than their correlation coefficients with perceived restoration (0.77, 0.78, and 0.84, respectively). Therefore, the differential validity of the scale was largely validated [67].

Table 3. Means, standard deviations, and correlations of variables.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Time perception	3.89	0.70	(0.76)						
Space perception	3.81	0.77	0.51 **	(0.77)					
Culture perception	3.97	0.68	0.62 **	0.56 **	(0.72)				
Emotion perception	3.72	0.74	0.61 **	0.50 **	0.67 **	(0.82)			

Table 3. *Cont.*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Situational involvement	3.88	0.66	0.56 **	0.47 **	0.67 **	0.75 **	(0.76)		
Place attachment	3.70	0.70	0.57 **	0.51 **	0.62 **	0.73 **	0.77 **	(0.78)	
Perceived restoration	3.82	0.64	0.59 **	0.49 **	0.65 **	0.72 **	0.78 **	0.84 **	(0.74)

Note: N = 406; the values in parentheses indicate the arithmetic square root of the mean variance extracted for each latent variable; ** indicates $p < 0.01$.

3.9. Sample Normality and Common Method Bias Test

The absolute values of the skewness coefficients for each observed variable ranged from 0.01 to 0.26, while the absolute values of the kurtosis coefficients ranged from 0.09 to 0.70, with absolute values lower than 1. Therefore, the samples passed the normality test. In this study, the common method bias was controlled for by measures such as anonymous measurement [68]. Harman's one-way test was used to test for the common method bias and validated factor analysis was conducted on all questions in the scale as exogenous variables, retrieving the following fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 17.597$; RMSEA = 0.202; RFI = 0.752; GFI = 0.708; and CFI = 0.627. This indicates that the data in this study were not seriously affected by the common method bias problem.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis among Variables

As shown in Table 3, the time, space, culture, and emotion perceptions of rural cultural memory space were associated with situational involvement, place attachment, and perceived restoration. All of these elements were found to have significant positive relationships; more in detail, situational involvement had significant positive relationships with place attachment and perceived restoration, and place attachment had a significant positive relationship with perceived restoration. The correlation analysis provided a preliminary basis for the subsequent hypothesis testing. As shown in Table 3, the correlation coefficients of all variables were lower than 0.8. The absence of multicollinearity was assumed if none of the correlation values between the independent variables were greater than 0.9 [69]. Based on this criterion, the absence of multicollinearity was confirmed.

4.2. Hypotheses Testing

As shown in Table 4, the mediation effect analysis was conducted using the PROCESS program developed by Hayes, based on the mediation effect test procedure summarized and generalized by Wen [70]. After controlling for demographic and trip characteristics variables such as gender, age, current residence, and the number of trips, the mediating roles of situational involvement and place attachment between the four dimensions of tourists' perception of rural cultural memory space and perceived restoration were analyzed.

4.2.1. Total Effect Test

As showed by the results of the regression analysis in Table 4, each perceptual dimension of rural cultural memory space had a significant positive predictive effect on perceived restoration.

Table 4. Results of the regression analysis between variables.

Variable	Situational Involvement				Place Attachment				Perceived Restoration				Total Effect			
	M1	**M2**	**M3**	**M4**	**M5**	**M6**	**M7**	**M8**	**M9**	**M10**	**M11**	**M12**	**M13**	**M14**	**M15**	**M16**
Current residence	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	−0.01	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.00
Gender	0.09	0.13	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.08	0.12	0.01	0.04
Age	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.04	0.06	0.03
Number of visits	0.08	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.01	−0.01	−0.01	0.00	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.05
Time perception	0.55 ***				0.19 ***				0.12 ***				0.58 ***			
Space perception		0.46 ***				0.18 ***				0.05				0.48 ***		
Culture perception			0.66 ***				0.18 ***				0.13 ***				0.64 ***	
Emotion perception				0.74 ***				0.35 ***				0.11 **				0.71 ***
Situational involvement					0.65 ***	0.68 ***	0.64 ***	0.50 ***	0.30 ***	0.33 ***	0.28 ***	0.29 ***				
Place attachment									0.54 ***	0.56 ***	0.55 ***	0.54 ***				
R	0.57	0.48	0.67	0.75	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.81	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.60	0.50	0.66	0.72
R-sq	0.33	0.23	0.45	0.57	0.63	0.63	0.62	0.66	0.76	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.36	0.25	0.43	0.52
F	38.71 ***	24.55 ***	65.06 ***	104.07 ***	112.72 ***	112.84 ***	110.28 ***	127.49 ***	178.50 ***	171.76 ***	178.27 ***	174.05 ***	45.55 ***	27.25 ***	60.72 ***	86.76 ***

Note: N = 406; ** indicates $p < 0.01$, and *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

4.2.2. Intermediation Effect Test

Partial mediation tests were conducted following Baron and Kenny [71]. As the results of the regression analysis in Table 4 show, tourists' perception of rural cultural memory space in terms of time perception, space perception, and culture perception were all significant direct predictors of both situational involvement and place attachment. Hence, hypotheses H2a–d and H4a–d were confirmed.

Situational involvement also had a significant positive effect on place attachment under different dimensions. When the four perceptual dimensions of rural cultural memory space, situational involvement, and place attachment simultaneously predicted perceived restoration, both situational involvement and place attachment had significant direct predictive effects on perceived restoration. These results indicate that the mediating effect coefficients are all significant, implying that the influence of the perceptual dimension of rural cultural memory spaces on tourists' restorative perceptions is achieved, at least in part, through situational involvement and place attachment.

The bias-corrected nonparametric percentile Bootstrap method was used to further test the reliability of the mediating effects. The results, presented in Table 5, show that the mediating effects of situational involvement and place attachment were significant in the process of influence of each of the four perception dimensions of rural cultural memory space on environmental restorative effects, with mediating effect values of 0.43 (time perception), 0.36 (space perception), 0.48 (cultural perception), and 0.52 (emotional perception). Specifically, the influence of each perception dimension of rural cultural memory space on perceived restoration was generated through three mediating chains:

(1) Time perception, space perception, culture perception, and emotion perception dimensions of rural cultural memory space → situational involvement → perceived restoration—the Bootstrap 95% confidence interval did not contain 0, indicating that the mediating role of situational involvement was significant, i.e., hypotheses H3a-H3d were confirmed.

(2) Time perception, space perception, culture perception, and emotion perception dimensions of rural cultural memory space → place attachment → perceived restoration—the Bootstrap 95% confidence interval did not contain 0, indicating that the mediating role of place attachment was significant, i.e., hypotheses H5a-H5d were confirmed.

(3) Time perception, space perception, culture perception, and emotion perception dimensions of rural cultural memory space → situational involvement → place attachment → perceived restoration—the Bootstrap 95% confidence interval did not contain 0, indicating that the chain mediation effect of situational involvement and place attachment was significant, i.e., hypotheses H6a-H6d were confirmed.

Table 5. Bootstrap analysis of the mediating effect test.

	Effect Value	Boot SE	Boot CI Lower Limit	Boot CI Cap	Relative Intermediary Effect	Absolute Intermediary Effect
Total indirect effect (time perception)	0.43	0.04	0.35	0.50	79.31%	100.00%
Time perception → Situational involvement → Perceived restoration	0.15	0.03	0.10	0.21	28.30%	35.69%
Time perception → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.09	0.02	0.05	0.14	17.44%	21.99%
Time perception → Situational involvement → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.18	0.03	0.13	0.24	33.54%	42.30%
Total indirect effect (space perception)	0.36	0.04	0.28	0.43	88.92%	100.00%
Space perception → Situational involvement → Perceived restoration	0.13	0.02	0.08	0.18	31.32%	35.23%
Space perception → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.08	0.02	0.05	0.12	20.99%	23.61%
Space perception → Situational involvement → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.15	0.02	0.10	0.20	36.60%	41.16%
Total indirect effect (culture perception)	0.48	0.04	0.41	0.56	79.64%	100.00%
Culture perception → Situational involvement → Perceived restoration	0.17	0.03	0.11	0.24	28.30%	35.53%
Culture perception → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.10	0.02	0.05	0.14	15.62%	19.61%
Culture perception → Situational involvement → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.22	0.03	0.16	0.28	35.73%	44.86%

Table 5. *Cont.*

	Effect Value	Boot SE	Boot CI Lower Limit	Boot CI Cap	Relative Intermediary Effect	Absolute Intermediary Effect
Total indirect effect (emotion perception)	0.52	0.04	0.44	0.61	84.67%	100.00%
Emotion perception → Situational involvement → Perceived restoration	0.19	0.03	0.12	0.25	30.07%	35.52%
Emotion perception → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.16	0.03	0.11	0.23	26.29%	31.05%
Emotion perception → Situational involvement → Place attachment → Perceived restoration	0.17	0.02	0.13	0.22	28.30%	33.43%

4.2.3. Direct Effects Test

Finally, following Judd and Kenny's full mediation test [72], the direct effects test was conducted. As the results of the regression analysis in Table 4 show, all perceptual dimensions are significant direct predictors of perceived environmental restoration, with the exception of tourists' spatial perception of rural cultural memory space, which is not a significant predictor of tourists' restorative perceptions, i.e., hypotheses H1a, H1c, and H1d are confirmed. It was found that space perception could not have a direct positive effect on perceived restoration, indicating that the space perception of rural cultural memory cannot directly have an environmental restorative effect, i.e., H1b was not confirmed. It should be noted that the ability of rural tourism to evoke homesickness is primarily for local tourists, whereas the case study in this paper focuses on national tourists (China), leading to the formulation and testing of the above hypothesis.

5. Conclusions and Discussion

5.1. Conclusions

This study elects traditional villages of great cultural significance and emotional value in China as environmental stimuli and, based on the appraisal theory and the self- regulation theory, draws on ART theory to construct a model of formation of tourists' perceived restoration of Chinese rural cultural memory space. It is found that rural cultural memory spaces in the Chinese cultural context have the effect of reducing individual attention fatigue and promoting restoration, while situational involvement and place attachment play a mediating role in the environmental recovery effect of rural cultural memory spaces in the tourism context. The findings of this study are as follows. First, rural cultural memory space can directly induce the perceived restoration of tourists. According to the ART theory, a restorative environment should include three elements, namely, being away, fascination, and compatibility [9,21,22]. For tourists living in the city, rural cultural memory spaces are non-habitual environments that are far away from daily life in terms of psychological and geographical distance. These spaces can easily attract people's attention and interest because of their unique cultural charm and their ability to connect with people's past memories. At the same time, owing to the homesickness of urban people who used to live in the countryside, rural cultural memory space can also meet people's emotional pursuit and expectations, thus resonating with the individual's psychological recovery. Looking at the total effect of each perceptual dimension on the perceived restoration of the rural cultural memory space, the emotional dimension was found to have a significantly stronger effect than the other dimensions. Regarding the mechanisms by which rural cultural memory space influences tourists' restorative perception, homesickness was found to provide an emotional catalytic effect that is incomparable to other dimensions. Tourists visiting traditional villages are touched by the cultural memory space of traditional villages, which evokes in them a feeling of homesickness. They will obtain some solace through tourism and satisfy their emotional attachment to local culture, thus entailing a psychological restorative effect.

Second, situational involvement and place attachment were found to play a mediating role in the restorative effect of rural cultural memory space on tourists. The rural cultural memory space can produce environmental restorative effects through two paths: deepening tourists' situational involvement or creating place attachment, and producing environ-

mental restorative effects after the dual mediating roles of situational involvement and place attachment. According to appraisal theory and self-regulation theory, the complex pathways of rural cultural memory space perception → situational involvement → place attachment → tourists' perceived restoration are revealed. This indicates that tourists can enjoy restorative effects by participating in tourism activities. Moreover, this also means that environmental restorative effects can be triggered by the generation of place attachment, because the rural cultural memory space fits with tourists' past memories. At the same time, tourists' active involvement in tourism activities will also promote the generation of place attachment. In this way, the composite state of context creation and emotional attachment makes tourists feel detached from the world and integrated with the touristic place, leading to the compatibility between tourists themselves and the tourist environment, thus promoting the recovery of tourists' attention.

Thirdly, the above conclusion that rural cultural memory space can produce environmental restorative effects can also be explained more deeply from the following perspective. Heidegger divided the state of human existence into being authentic or inauthentic [73]. "Busywork" in daily life makes people lose their sense of authenticity and sink into the condition of ordinary people or masses living an inauthentic life, which leads to the lack and exhaustion of spiritual power; therefore, human existence needs to be clarified [73]. When people lose their sense of self-authenticity because of the alienation and anxiety of daily life, they desire to seek their authentic being through travel [74]. The process of travel can be seen as an authentic way of existence, in which people stimulate themselves, realize themselves, and return to their original selves by forgetting the worldly life, so that they can truly realize that "man dwells poetically on this Earth" [75,76] At the same time, the purity, authenticity, and carefree nature of the world of childhood often have the quality of what Heidegger called "the realm of clarity" [77]. Therefore, when individuals leave the usual environment of daily life for a short time and go to the familiar rural cultural memory space of their childhood, they will approach their authentic state of existence and enjoy the feeling of "returning to the original mind", thus feeling relaxed and at ease inside. In short, the reason rural cultural memory space can produce an environmental restorative effect is that tourists can "return to their original mind" in this transient state and obtain poetic residence, existential clarity, and spiritual comfort through the "return to the hometown" of the soul.

5.2. Discussion

5.2.1. Theoretical Implications

This study contributed to the existing literature with the following theoretical aspects. Firstly, this study took the cultural environment as an entry point and broadened the research perspective on the restorative environment in the tourism context by exploring the effect of the perceived restoration of tourists on rural cultural memory space. It provides a new direction as to what kind of tourism environment can elicit tourists 'restorative perceptions and provides some inspiration for subsequent related research. As the term restorative environment was introduced by Kaplan, the natural environment and the natural elements in the environment have been the main environments that scholars have focused on to produce restorative effects on the environment, such as long stretches of grass, green trees, and rushing water [78]. Compared with the natural environment and natural factors, fewer studies exist focusing on whether the cultural environment and cultural factors in the environment can produce environmental restorative effects. Therefore, this study selected the cultural memory space of a Chinese traditional village as a stimulating environment for restorative environment research. The results show that the rural cultural memory space can lead to perceived restoration of tourists, causing them to briefly recover their attention and thus relax their mood.

Secondly, this study constructs a model of the formation path of environmental restorative effects of tourists in rural cultural memory spaces based on the appraisal theory and the self-regulation theory and promotes the validation and application of the appraisal

theory and the self-regulation theory in tourism research. While previous studies have emphasized the role of preferences and place attachments when exploring the formation paths of environmental restorative effects [79–81], few studies have focused on the role of situational involvement in the formation of tourists' perceived restoration in tourism contexts. Based on this, this study examined the model of formation of tourists' perceived restoration, considering situational involvement and place attachment as mediating variables. The rural cultural memory space can produce environmental restorative effects through two paths: deepening tourists' situational involvement or creating place attachment, and producing environmental restorative effects after the dual mediating roles of situational involvement and place attachment.

Finally, this study broadened the application of the concept of rural cultural memory space in tourism research. The concept of rural cultural memory space initially served mainly to analyze the spatial-temporal evolution process and influencing factors of rural cultural memory space [24], while later some scholars also focused on residents' perceptions and emotional attachments to rural cultural memory space [82]. However, there are fewer studies that take tourists as the main research object and fewer studies that explore the function and role of rural cultural memory space as an environmental factor for human development. This study advocates the need to focus not only on the significance of rural cultural memory at the macro level, including cultural revitalization, but also on personal needs, including the psychological restoration role that rural cultural memory can play from the perspective of the memory subject.

5.2.2. Managerial Implications

The findings of this study support the identification of practical implications. Firstly, this study provides individual developmental implications for policies developed for the transmission and preservation of rural cultural memory. The rural cultural memory space can lead to perceived restoration of tourists, causing them to briefly recover their attention and thus relax their mood. This shows that the preservation and development of rural cultural memory is of macro significance not only for rural cultural construction, but also for people's physical and mental well-being. Therefore, in the process of formulating relevant policies, it is necessary to better support the feeling of 'nostalgia' through the preservation and protection of rural cultural memory in a people-oriented manner. This provides a new perspective on the conservation of cultural memory in rural areas.

Secondly, this study provides some new thinking for the landscape design of rural tourism sites. There is a need to respect local culture and pay attention to emotional expression in the landscape design of rural tourism sites. In the process of rural tourism development and design, if landscape elements that are rich in rural memory can be designed or preserved to enable tourists to recall past experiences and specific stories, this will enable people to "remember nostalgia" and increase their attachment to the tourist place, so that they can gain greater emotional benefits. At this time, people's attachment to touristic places will no longer imply simply a functional dependence, but rather a sublimation of emotional human–ground interaction with tourist places, thus further deepening the role of rural cultural memory space for individual emotional creation and attention recovery. Therefore, the landscape design of rural tourist places needs to adhere to the concept of adaptation to local conditions and respect for local culture, retaining the cultural features that can cause people's emotional resonance, thus enriching the experience of life and the poetic expression of inner emotions in the process of landscape space construction and satisfying people's sense of belonging and identity with the people living in the local area and the events happening in the local area.

Second, this paper calls attention to the creation of a situational atmosphere for rural cultural memory. This study found that the space perception dimension of rural cultural memory space cannot generate tourists' perceived restoration directly, but only through the mediation of situational involvement or place attachment. It is only by considering the role of situational involvement and emotional catalysis of attachment that tourists can "return to

their hearts" and restorative effects can be generated. Therefore, rural tourism sites should preserve rural cultural memory space, create a rural cultural atmosphere, and highlight rural cultural heritage, while also paying attention to the static display of the atmosphere in the creation of enhanced tourist interaction, including carrying out various rural folklore activities, intangible cultural heritage dissemination activities, and other tourism activities to display rural cultural memory in a living manner. In this way, we can improve the level of tourists' situational involvement and enhance their attachment to the environment of the tourist destination, thus promoting the recovery of physical and mental health.

5.2.3. Limitations and Future Research

This study has some limitations, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Firstly, the use of one sample from only one destination may limit the reliability of data analysis. Secondly, this study uses a Likert scale to assess the restorative effects of the environment; however, the richness and complexity of tourists' emotions are difficult to measure with the scale and the paper does not explore the possible impact of economic income and social status on the results. In addition to this, this paper is only focused on local tourists with regard to the perception of restorative nature that cultural landscapes can induce in tourists.

The existence of these limitations also provides some ideas for future research. Firstly, the results of this paper can be further verified in a comparative study of several case sites. Secondly, the use of experimental research methods to measure physiological indicators such as blood pressure and heart rate through EEG can further reveal the restorative effects of the cultural environment. In addition to this, future research could analyze the reactions of international tourists to cultural landscapes in a cross-cultural context and compare the results with current research.

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