

A Study on the Role of Ancient Villages' Cultural and Tourism Industries in Promoting Rural Revitalization: A Case Study of Songyang, Lishui

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Abstract: With the deep implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, ancient village cultural tourism has emerged as an essential driver of rural economic and cultural revival, becoming a focal point for academics. This study takes Songyang County in Lishui City, Zhejiang Province, as a case study and explores the multifaceted role of ancient village cultural tourism in promoting rural revitalization from the perspective of unique historical culture and tourism resources. The article thoroughly analyzes the historical and cultural origins of ancient villages in Songyang County, revealing their deep-rooted connections to traditional architecture, folk culture, and agrarian civilization, as well as their significant value in cultural protection and inheritance. Based on field research and case studies, it elaborates on the practical effects of the ancient village cultural tourism industry in optimizing the local economic structure, increasing residents' income, improving infrastructure, and enhancing community identity. Furthermore, the study discusses the positive role of cultural tourism in revitalizing local traditional culture and promoting sustainable rural development. Drawing on long-term development plans within the framework of rural revitalization, the article proposes strategies to promote the healthy development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages. These strategies include building multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, strengthening cultural heritage protection and management, innovating cultural tourism product design, and enhancing the value of the industrial chain

Keywords: Rural Revitalization; Ancient Village; Cultural Tourism Industry; Economic Structure; Cultural Heritage

1. Introduction

In the 2022 government report, the Chinese government clearly proposed to "comprehensively promote rural revitalization," summarizing the phased achievements of this initiative and providing clear guidance for the overall layout and development direction of the "three rural issues" in the new era. The "Opinions on Key Work for Comprehensively Promoting Rural Revitalization in 2023" further suggested promoting the high-quality development of rural industries, encompassing a comprehensive expansion of living service areas such as dining and shopping, cultural sports, tourism and leisure, elderly care and childcare, and information intermediary services. In 2023, the "Notice from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on Promoting the Deep Integration of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism" pointed out that fostering the deep integration of intangible cultural heritage and tourism not only aids in the systematic protection of intangible heritage but also promotes the high-quality development of the tourism industry, thereby meeting the growing spiritual and cultural needs of the people.

Zhejiang Province boasts a rich resource of ancient villages, with over 432 traditional villages at the provincial level and above. In terms of ancient village protection, Zhejiang has invested substantial funds, with the provincial government allocating 3.4 billion yuan by the end of 2022, driving more than 13 billion yuan from social capital and other sources. As a result, many historically and culturally significant villages on the verge of decline have been revitalized.

Songyang County has adopted a unique approach to traditional village development, avoiding blindly following the development models of other regions. Instead, it has

allocated resources based on the specific characteristics of each village. Xu [1] suggests that Songyang uses a "building acupuncture" approach, focusing on small-scale public space construction and employing micro-interventions to gradually revitalize entire villages. Zhang et al. [2] argue that this approach breaks the constraints of traditional village development and provides a valuable reference for contemporary rural construction in China. Songyang has more than 100 well-preserved ancient villages, 75 of which are recognized as national-level traditional villages. Ge et al. [3] found that Songyang's traditional villages are widely distributed across the county's mountainous and plains areas. These villages can be divided into two types based on geography: mountainous villages (about 90%) and plains villages. Mountainous villages are primarily located around the Songgu Plains.

This study adopts a comprehensive approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods such as field surveys, case studies, and data analysis. By employing an interdisciplinary research perspective that incorporates finance, sociology, and other disciplines, the paper explores the benefits of the cultural tourism industry in rural revitalization. Comparative analysis is used to identify the weaknesses of the cultural tourism industry within the rural revitalization strategy and to find improvement strategies. Additionally, a literature analysis method is employed to summarize and evaluate the historical development and benefits of ancient village cultural tourism industries, forming a theoretical framework and practical pathway for promoting rural revitalization through cultural tourism.

2. Literature Review

The development of ancient village cultural tourism industries holds a prominent position in the rural revitalization strategy. Zhang [4] points out that rural memory is a core element of rural revitalization, capable of uniting people and shaping the spiritual culture of the countryside. However, with the increasing outflow of population from rural areas, rural memory is gradually fading and faces the risk of marginalization. Ancient villages, defined as natural villages established before the Republic of China that retain their historical

evolution, village site selection, architectural style, and folk customs, serve as carriers of local culture and history. Luo [5] notes that the rise of the digital economy has driven the development of digital cultural tourism, becoming a new engine for rural tourism development.

The development of the cultural tourism industry, from the perspective of rural revitalization, needs to adapt to the context of the new era. As people's demand for spiritual and cultural experiences grows, tourism forms that rely solely on natural landscapes or traditional sightseeing can no longer meet market demands. Long [6] proposes that only by deeply integrating cultural and tourism resources can the competitiveness of the cultural tourism industry be enhanced, which not only drives urban economic development but also improves a city's overall competitiveness and influence. Ye [7] proposes Both rural specialty industries and cultural tourism industries are facing development bottlenecks; they need to transition to an experience-based model within the context of the experience economy, achieving mutual promotion through innovative experience methods.

Figure 1 illustrates the publication trend over the years for research related to "ancient villages." According to CNKI data, since 2017, the number of papers on this topic has fluctuated annually, with the highest count recorded in 2017 at 928 publications. The study reveals that the number of publications on rural revitalization has shown an overall declining trend, although it remains strongly correlated with the years. Figure 2 presents the publication trend over time for the theme of "rural revitalization." Based on CNKI data, literature related to rural revitalization began to appear in 2017 and peaked in 2022 with a total of 47,787 publications. The overall trend indicates a yearly increase in the number of publications on rural revitalization, also showing a strong correlation with the years. As for the academic research on ancient villages, data from Baidu Scholar show that "cultural heritage" is a core theme associated with research on ancient villages, indicating a close connection between ancient villages and cultural heritage development. Other research hotspots include "new rural construction," "historical culture," and "intangible cultural

heritage."

Regarding the related themes in academic research on "rural revitalization," Baidu Scholar analysis shows a strong connection between "New Era" and "rural revitalization," indicating a high alignment between rural revitalization and the developmental direction of the New Era. Other key research topics include "agricultural and rural development," "revitalization strategies," and "comprehensively building a moderately prosperous society." Concerning the penetration of "ancient villages" across different academic disciplines, research reveals that "ancient villages" span a wide range of fields with a high disciplinary penetration rate. Under the rural revitalization strategy, the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages has emerged as a significant driver of China's rural economy, signaling that it will become a new force for economic growth with promising development prospects. Regarding the disciplinary penetration of "rural revitalization," this topic also spans a broad range of academic fields and demonstrates a high rate of disciplinary penetration. As a critical strategy for China's economic development, rural revitalization effectively addresses the "three rural issues" and provides strong momentum for China's economic growth.

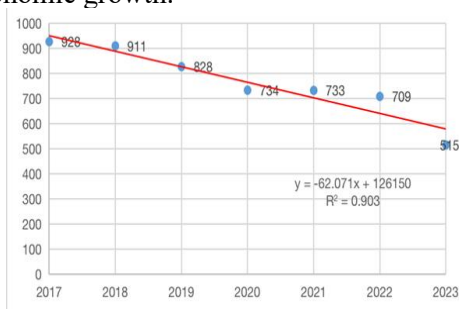


Figure 1. Trends in the Publication of Articles on the Topic of “Ancient villages” Over the Years

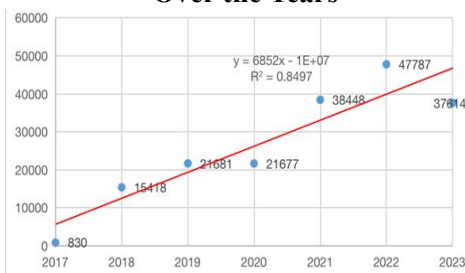


Figure 2. Trends in The Publication of Articles on the Topic of “Rural Revitalization” Over the Years

This study employs a comprehensive research approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods, utilizing field research, case analysis, and data analysis to thoroughly investigate the role of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages in promoting rural revitalization. It also applies interdisciplinary analytical methods, incorporating knowledge from finance and sociology to construct a model for analyzing the benefits of the cultural tourism industry, leading to relevant conclusions and recommendations. By conducting comparative analyses of the benefits of rural cultural tourism industries in different regions, the study reveals shortcomings in the role of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages within the rural revitalization strategy and seeks pathways and strategies for improvement. A literature analysis method is used to review research findings on the benefits of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages and its development in rural revitalization, establishing a theoretical framework that clarifies the mechanisms through which the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages promotes rural revitalization, thereby forming a complete research system.

3. Analysis of Questionnaire Results

This study is based on an online questionnaire survey conducted in August 2024, with a sample size of 100 responses. The demographic information of the respondents shows that 34.78% are male and 65.22% are female, with an average age concentrated between 15 and 25 years. Among these, the 15-20 age group accounts for 28.26%, while the 21-25 age group represents 53.26%.

The survey results regarding the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages are as follows:

Support for the Cultural Tourism Industry: The support rates for different types of cultural tourism industries among respondents are as follows: cultural displays and performances (70.65%), ancient building preservation and restoration (58.7%), cultural heritage display and education (55.43%), local specialty food and handicrafts (51.09%), and tourism services and facilities (31.52%). The results indicate that cultural displays and performances received the highest support rate, reflecting their importance in the cultural tourism

industry of ancient villages.

Positive Impacts of the Cultural Tourism Industry on Rural Revitalization: Respondents believe that the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages has multiple positive impacts on rural revitalization, including cultural inheritance and preservation (84.78%), driving local economic development (83.7%), enhancing local visibility and image (42.39%), increasing employment and income (32.61%), and improving residents' quality of life (31.52%). The data suggest that cultural inheritance and economic development are the main contributions of the cultural tourism industry to rural revitalization.

Challenges and Negative Impacts Facing the Cultural Tourism Industry: Respondents identified several challenges and potential negative impacts of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages: commercialization and distortion of culture (71.28%), overdevelopment of ancient building resources (68.09%), consumption of land resources and increased environmental pressure (53.19%), difficulty in balancing preservation and development (51.06%), and widening urban-rural gaps (10.64%). It is evident that cultural commercialization and resource overdevelopment are major risks in the development of the cultural tourism industry.

Challenges to Sustainable Development of the Cultural Tourism Industry and Countermeasures: Respondents pointed out that the sustainable development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages needs to focus on the following areas: implementing environmentally friendly measures and energy-saving strategies (79.79%), promoting local sustainable agriculture and handicraft production (76.6%), strengthening ecological protection and resource recycling (58.51%), and limiting visitor numbers and managing flow (32.98%). Clearly, environmental protection and local industry development are key to achieving sustainable development in the cultural tourism industry.

Role of the Cultural Tourism Industry in Cultural Protection and Inheritance: Respondents believe that the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages plays the following roles in cultural protection and inheritance: promoting cultural inheritance and dissemination (84.04%), helping the younger

generation understand traditional culture (67.02%), raising awareness of cultural heritage protection (60.64%), and enhancing community cohesion through cultural festivals and display activities (48.94%). The results indicate that the cultural tourism industry has a significant impact on promoting cultural inheritance and dissemination.

Respondents hold a positive attitude toward the development direction of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages and place great importance on its role in rural revitalization, cultural protection, and economic development. However, they express concerns about cultural commercialization and overdevelopment, believing that these factors will hinder the sustainable development of the cultural tourism industry. Therefore, to promote the healthy development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages, it is essential to balance protection and development in policy formulation, strengthen cultural preservation, optimize the industrial structure, and improve management mechanisms to ensure the long-term stable role of the cultural tourism industry in the rural revitalization strategy. These research conclusions provide valuable empirical evidence for local governments and relevant departments in formulating development strategies.

4. Case Analysis

4.1 Scene Analysis

This study focuses on Songyang County in Lishui as a case study to explore the development model of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages and its role in rural revitalization. Songyang County boasts a favorable geographical location and a unique ecological environment. It is situated in the southwestern part of Zhejiang Province, adjacent to Liandu District, Longquan City, Yunhe County, Suichang County, and Wuyi County in Jinhua City. The county covers a total area of 1,406 square kilometers and has a permanent population of 204,880. Surrounded by mountains, Songyang features the Songgu Basin at its core, with an overall terrain that is higher in the west and lower in the east. It belongs to the Oujiang River basin, with the main tributary, the Songyin Stream, running through it. The county governs 11 townships,

5 towns, and 3 subdistricts, encompassing 203 administrative villages and 782 natural villages. The region has a diverse ethnic distribution, with 30 ethnic groups residing there, including the largest Hakka community in Zhejiang Province, located in Banqiao She Autonomous Township. Known as the "Last Secret Realm of Jiangnan," this title was first proposed by Ru Xiaomin in 2013 in National Geographic. This name reflects Songyang's unique mountain and water resources and pastoral scenery, preserving the classical charm of Jiangnan while showcasing a rich historical and cultural atmosphere.

The natural landscapes and cultural heritage of Songyang complement each other beautifully. The majestic Maoshan and Dushan mountains, along with the surrounding peaks of the Songgu Plain, as well as the Ruoliao Primitive Forest Scenic Area and Songyin Stream, provide a remarkable backdrop for ancient villages. The high mountain villages are often shrouded in mist, echoing the poetic description by Shen Hui in the Song Dynasty: "Only this Peach Blossom Land, with no other worries." This environment provides ideal conditions for research on the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages.

The development of the cultural tourism industry in Songyang's ancient villages has a history of over ten years. Since being designated as a demonstration county for the protection and development of traditional villages in China in 2014, Songyang has gradually established a model for the protection and development of ancient villages. In 2015, it became the only traditional village protection and utilization experimental area in the country. In 2016, it was selected as a pilot county for the "Save Old Houses Action" project. Songyang employs a "multi-entity participation" model for the restoration of ancient buildings, with 50

% of the restoration funds subsidized by the China Cultural Heritage Protection Foundation, 20-30% provided by the county government, and the remaining portion raised by local villagers. This model encourages villagers to invest in restoration efforts, enhancing their initiative and sense of ownership in the protection of ancient villages, thus ensuring the sustainability and long-term effectiveness of preservation outcomes.

The development model of Songyang's

cultural tourism industry features notable characteristics and achievements. Through a "building acupuncture" approach of micro-interventions, small public spaces are transformed to gradually revitalize the entire village. This strategy not only avoids the destruction of the original charm of ancient villages through large-scale development but also achieves a dynamic balance between protection and development. The development model of Songyang's cultural tourism industry emphasizes the integration of cultural heritage with the natural environment, demonstrating high sustainability and a significant exemplary effect in the context of rural revitalization.

In the process of protecting and developing the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages, Songyang has formed a unique development model centered on cultural heritage protection and driven by the integration of culture and tourism. In the future, further deepening of multi-entity collaboration mechanisms could enhance the cultural connotations and experiential depth of tourism products, achieving high-quality development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages and providing theoretical support and practical pathways for the integration of cultural heritage protection with tourism industry development in other regions.

4.2 SWOT Analysis

Based on a literature review and questionnaire research, this study conducts a SWOT analysis of the cultural tourism industry in Songyang County, revealing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (see Table 1).

Songyang County's internal strengths primarily lie in its rich historical and cultural resources and beautiful natural environment. According to data from the Songyang County Cultural, Sports, and Tourism Bureau, the county has over 100 ancient villages, with 75 recognized as national-level traditional ancient villages, ranking among the top in the country. Songyang, located in the southwestern mountainous region of Zhejiang, features typical villages like Chenjiapu, built against the mountains and surrounded on three sides by peaks, blending cultural and natural landscapes. The Songyang government provides financial and policy support for the protection of ancient villages and the development of the cultural tourism industry.

The Songyang Cultural, Sports, and Tourism Bureau notes that the total investment for the Wayaolou cultural tourism complex project is 540 million yuan, demonstrating the government's strong emphasis on the protection and development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages. Additionally, Songyang promotes the development of the cultural tourism industry through the integration of various business formats, including the homestay economy, ecological agriculture, and cultural creative industries. According to data from the Songyang County Statistical Bureau, 526 homestays have been established in the county, generating an annual operating income of 170 million yuan. However, significant internal weaknesses also exist, including lagging infrastructure development, inconvenient transportation, poor accommodation conditions, a lack of professional talent (in areas such as tourism planning, marketing, and cultural inheritance), product homogeneity, and weak participation awareness among villagers. These factors contribute to a lack of sustainable momentum in the development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages [4,5].

The external environment offers policy support and opportunities for consumer upgrades in Songyang's cultural tourism

industry. With the deepening implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, national support for the rural cultural tourism industry continues to strengthen, providing favorable conditions for Songyang's development (Opinions on Key Work for Comprehensively Promoting Rural Revitalization in 2023, 2023). The trend of consumer upgrades also brings broad market prospects for the cultural tourism industry [6]. Furthermore, the application of digital technology promotes the intelligent transformation of the cultural tourism industry, enhancing management and service levels [7]. The potential for regional cooperation also provides development space for Songyang to co-create cultural tourism brands and specialty product routes with neighboring areas. However, external threats still exist: competition in the rural cultural tourism industry nationwide is becoming increasingly fierce, posing challenges to Songyang from projects in other regions. Natural disasters (such as mountain floods and landslides) pose safety threats to ancient villages, and conflicts between cultural preservation and commercial development could lead to excessive commercialization and distortion of cultural resources [3]. Additionally, the influx of large numbers of tourists may place significant pressure on the ecological environment and infrastructure of ancient villages [2].

Table 1. SWOT Analysis about Songyang Ancient Village Cultural Tourism Industry

Internal	S (Strengths)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Abundant historical and cultural resources -Beautiful natural environment -Policy support and funding investment -Diversified tourism formats
	W (Weaknesses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relatively underdeveloped infrastructure - Shortage of professional talent - Serious product homogeneity - Low participation rate among villagers
External	O (Opportunities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-depth implementation of the rural revitalization strategy - Upgrading of tourism consumption - Application of digital technology - Regional cooperation and collaborative development
	T (Threats)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intensified market competition - Uncontrollable factors such as natural disasters - Conflicts between cultural preservation and commercial development - Impact of tourist behavior on the environment of ancient villages

The development of the cultural tourism industry in Songyang County's ancient villages benefits from strengths such as cultural resources, government support, and diversification of business formats. However,

weaknesses such as inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of professional talent, and product homogeneity urgently need to be addressed. National policy support and upgrading consumer preferences create vast opportunities

for the cultural tourism industry, but intensified market competition and conflicts between cultural preservation and development remain potential threats to sustainable development. Future development strategies should focus on improving infrastructure, attracting professional talent, innovating cultural tourism products, and enhancing villagers' participation [1]. By optimizing policy utilization, promoting regional cooperation, and exploring differentiated development pathways, it is essential to ensure the long-term, stable, and high-quality development of the cultural tourism industry in Songyang's ancient villages within the rural revitalization strategy.



Figure 3. Chenjiapu Village



Figure 4. Goodluck Cliffs Art Festival

4.3 The Role of the Cultural Tourism Industry in Songyang's Ancient Villages in Promoting Rural Revitalization

Songyang County has vigorously developed the cultural tourism industry in its ancient villages, expanding the traditional agricultural model into a new industry model that integrates leisure agriculture and sightseeing agriculture. Through various forms, such as homestays, handicrafts, and cultural creative product shops in mountain villages, more employment opportunities and income sources have been provided for local residents. Taking Chenjiapu Village in Sidou Township as an example, since the opening of the "Most Beautiful Bookstore," the Chenjiapu Village

Pioneer Bookstore, in 2018, the village has gradually become a new landmark in Songyang's ancient villages, driving local economic revival. Despite the ongoing impact of the pandemic, Chenjiapu Village received 300,000 visitors in 2021, generating a total operational income exceeding 17 million yuan across various business types. Among these, the Xianfeng Bookstore achieved an annual revenue of approximately 2.5 million yuan, with a single-day peak revenue surpassing 50,000 yuan. This demonstrates the strong vitality of cultural consumption in rural revitalization (see Figures 3 and 4).

Songyang County has leveraged the unique resources of its villages to create various "special workshops," achieving a comprehensive development model that integrates primary, secondary, and tertiary industries, forming a system of "integrated production, supply, and sales." Workshops such as the rice wine workshop in Shantou Village, the tofu workshop in Caizhai Village, the tea oil workshop in Hengzhang Village, and the brown sugar workshop in Xing Village not only produce specialty agricultural products but also promote the synergistic development of ecological agriculture, rural tourism, and specialty agricultural products by providing third-sector services such as tours, learning experiences, and interactive activities. The main use of traditional houses has shifted from being residential and agricultural spaces to commercial use by tourists, influenced by the commercialization of the countryside driven by economic factors [8].

In terms of cultural heritage, the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages provides an important platform for the protection and promotion of local culture. By hosting folk activities, showcasing intangible cultural heritage, and restoring ancient buildings, local culture is integrated into tourism products, allowing visitors to experience a rich cultural ambiance during their travels. Songyang Gaoqiang, one of the oldest theatrical forms in Zhejiang Province, is an important symbol of Songyang culture. The "Bamboo Forest Theater" in Housha Village, Zhuyuan Township, is one of the main venues for Gaoqiang performances, constructed entirely from natural bamboo to create a unique "dome" structure, vividly showcasing the harmonious coexistence of Songyang's natural

landscape and local art.

Moreover, the development of the cultural tourism industry in Songyang has facilitated the exchange and integration of different cultures and regions. According to the official website of the Songyang County Government, the county has signed contracts with 81 artists, established 65 art studios, and built two public art museums covering various categories such as fine arts, traditional crafts, literary creation, and cultural design. Songyang has hosted multiple art festivals and exhibitions, such as the Gudrak Cliff Art Festival in Chenjiapu Village, Sidou Township, in July 2024, and the "Bamboo Also" Earth Art Festival in Hengkeng Village, Yecun Township, in 2023. These cultural events not only enrich Songyang's cultural life but also effectively boost tourism growth and enhance the county's cultural influence.

Socially, the development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages has strengthened cooperation among villagers and enhanced community cohesion, attracting many migrant workers to return. Increasingly, young entrepreneurs are returning to their hometowns to participate in the cultural tourism industry, driving rural revitalization. For example, in Zhuxia Village of Xinxing Town, a young woman named Xia Hongyan returned from Hangzhou to open a Douyin account called "Zhuxia," capturing market opportunities through short videos to start her entrepreneurial journey. Ye Dabo from Pingtian Village in Sidou Township returned from Hangzhou in 2014 and established the "Cloud above Pingtian" homestay at an altitude of 610 meters, realizing a transformation from a "city dream" to a "rural dream." The return of these young entrepreneurs injects new vitality into the cultural tourism industry of ancient villages and serves as an important driving force for rural revitalization.

Through a diversified development model of the cultural tourism industry, Songyang County has achieved an organic integration of cultural protection, ecological development, and economic benefits in its rural revitalization efforts. Looking ahead, it should continue to promote the deep integration of culture and tourism, expand the cultural industry chain, and deepen the mutual promotion of art and rural areas, enhancing the cultural content and

market appeal of cultural tourism products. Additionally, further improvements in infrastructure and service levels are needed to attract more young talent back to the region, fostering rural revitalization and sustainable development while providing a practical example for the protection and development of ancient villages in other regions across the country.

4.4 Existing Issues

(1) Homogeneity of Villages and Products: Although Songyang County's cultural tourism industry in ancient villages strives to retain the original characteristics of the villages during development, there is a lack of differentiation in cultural features among the various villages. Iconic attractions like the Pioneer Bookstore in Chenjiapu Village and the Jiuceng Yunshui Art Museum in Shanlong Village, while recognizable, share a similar overall style, and their cultural positioning is not sufficiently clear. This has prevented the formation of a unique "IP" effect, making it difficult to stimulate repeat consumer desire among tourists. Current tourism projects primarily focus on one-time consumption patterns centered on "sightseeing, viewing, eating, and lodging," resulting in a scarcity of "return visitors" and stable long-term consumption patterns. The tourism demographics exhibit seasonal fluctuations, hindering continuous revenue growth. This limitation makes it challenging for villagers to achieve long-term economic benefits, restricting the sustainable development of the cultural tourism industry.

(2) Conflict between Resource Protection and Development: The development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages faces deep-seated contradictions between resource protection and commercial development. In some villages, traditional cultural heritage has been damaged due to excessive commercialization. In pursuit of economic benefits, some developers tend to engage in large-scale construction and renovation, leading to tourism activities being overly concentrated in specific villages. This not only destroys the original ecological and cultural landscape but may also disrupt villagers' daily lives, causing the disintegration of traditional community structures and tensions in social relationships among villagers. On the other hand, while strict cultural heritage protection

measures can maintain the historical appearance of ancient villages, they limit the scale of development, resulting in a lack of diverse business formats and insufficient income sources, making it difficult to achieve a balance between economic benefits and cultural preservation. For example, in Shanlong Natural Village, while maintaining its original appearance, the tourism industry is constrained by spatial limitations and service formats, resulting in only minimal income increases for villagers and insufficient overall economic improvement through industry development.

(3) **Insufficient Infrastructure and Supporting Services:** Some ancient villages, due to their remote geographical locations, have poor accessibility, which directly impacts tourists' travel experiences. Although Songyang has increased infrastructure construction in ancient villages in recent years, overall supporting services remain inadequate. Areas like Sandu Township and Sidou Township possess rich tourism resources but suffer from narrow roads and a lack of parking spaces. This issue becomes particularly severe during holidays or art festivals, leading to traffic congestion and parking difficulties that significantly affect the tourist experience. To alleviate traffic pressure, local authorities have implemented traffic restrictions and transfer measures, which, while enhancing safety, have somewhat reduced the convenience of travel for tourists. Additionally, the construction of supporting facilities such as walking paths, viewing platforms, rest areas, and dining services within the villages is not sufficiently developed, leading to overall service levels that fail to meet the increasing demands of visitors and severely restricting the overall quality of development in the cultural tourism industry of ancient villages.

4.5 Development Suggestions

(1) **Diversify Tourism Products and Enhance Village "Personality":** Each village should further explore its cultural "personality" based on existing featured attractions, developing differentiated competitive advantages through the expansion of cultural connotations and product diversity. Firstly, introducing educational tourism projects in collaboration with various educational institutions can help develop cultural experience activities with

educational attributes. For example, the Daxin Tea Garden in Xinxing Town has initiated a "Tea Culture" research project, while the Tofu Workshop in Dadongba Town has developed an "Agricultural Product Production" study course. This "school-local cooperation" model can effectively tap into ancient village cultural resources, integrate culture into education, and achieve cultural transmission, while enhancing the villages' visibility, boosting local employment, and optimizing the Industry-University-Research Service System [9]. This approach can convert one-time consumption models into economic sources for long-term cooperative projects.

By integrating the resources of various villages, a systematic touring route for Songyang's ancient villages can be created to enhance the visitor experience. For instance, Xikeng Village in Sidou Township features a 24 Solar Terms Museum, Pingtian Village promotes the "Cloud above Pingtian" brand, and Chenjiapu Village stands out with its Pioneer Bookstore and Feijiao Cultural Space. By consolidating these resources into diverse themed tourism routes, visitors can enjoy exclusive cultural tourism experiences, thereby better showcasing the uniqueness of the ancient villages and promoting Songyang culture. Innovative facilities like hotels, museums, and studios can be developed to enhance local culture, offer memorable experiences for visitors, and serve as incubators for rural tourism and cultural industries [10].

Based on survey results, selecting distinctive ancient villages to regularly host cultural events such as art festivals and music festivals can attract participation from artists and musicians. Through popular forms like festive celebrations and musical performances, ancient villages can present a new cultural image to the public. These festive activities not only enhance the cultural atmosphere of the villages but also broaden the development paths of the cultural tourism industry, attracting higher-quality tourists.

(2) **Establish a Comprehensive Planning and Management Mechanism:** To effectively coordinate the contradictions between resource protection and development in ancient villages, it is recommended to formulate a systematic "Comprehensive Plan for the Protection and Development of Ancient Villages" and establish a dedicated management agency to

achieve a balance of multiple interests. This plan should clarify the functional zoning of each village, delineating core protection areas and development buffer zones, and implementing a zoning management strategy. The core protection zone should adopt strict protection measures to ensure the integrity of cultural heritage and ecological resources, while the buffer zone can accommodate moderate cultural tourism development, introducing low-impact ecological tourism projects, controlling the scale and density of development, and preventing excessive commercialization from eroding the cultural essence of the villages.

At the same time, an ecological tourism model and visitor flow management system should be promoted to prevent environmental and cultural resource damage caused by overcrowding. The management process should emphasize the participation and benefit-sharing of villagers, ensuring they can gain tangible benefits from the development of the cultural tourism industry, and avoiding social structure imbalances or harm to villagers' interests due to tourism development. Furthermore, through education on cultural and environmental protection, awareness of ecological preservation among tourists and villagers should be raised to jointly maintain the cultural and natural environment of ancient villages, achieving sustainable development.

(3) Optimize Infrastructure Construction and Enhance Visitor Experience: To further improve the infrastructure level and supporting service capabilities of Songyang's ancient villages, priority should be given to optimizing the transportation network and improving road conditions to remote ancient villages, especially during holidays. Direct tourism shuttle buses should be established to ensure convenience for tourists. Additionally, sufficient parking lots should be added around major attractions, with temporary parking areas and shuttle services planned to address traffic congestion caused by a lack of parking spaces.

In terms of infrastructure within the villages, improvements should be made to walking paths, viewing platforms, and resting areas to enhance visitor comfort. Dining service areas should focus on characterization and diversity to meet the various dietary needs of tourists. Tourist information centers should provide

comprehensive consultation and guiding services, as well as establish a feedback mechanism to promptly understand visitor needs and continuously improve service quality. Moreover, introducing a smart tourism management system can leverage information technology to optimize visitor flow management, provide real-time tourism information and personalized services, and enhance overall management efficiency. Through these measures, the accessibility and tourism reception capacity of Songyang's ancient villages can be significantly improved, enhancing the visitor experience and promoting the healthy development of the cultural tourism industry.

5. Conclusions

This article explores the mechanism by which the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages contributes to rural revitalization. The study indicates that by deeply excavating and protecting the cultural and natural resources of ancient villages, Songyang County has effectively promoted local economic development, facilitated cultural transmission, and fostered social revitalization. The rise of the cultural tourism industry has not only driven regional economic growth and job creation but has also enhanced villagers' cultural identity and sense of participation. However, the current cultural tourism industry in ancient villages still faces numerous challenges, such as significant homogeneity among villages and products, prominent conflicts between resource protection and development, and inadequate infrastructure.

To address these issues, the following strategies are recommended: First, deepen the shaping of village cultural "personality," enrich the tourism product system, and strengthen the cultural IP effect to avoid the tendency toward product homogeneity. Second, develop a comprehensive planning and management mechanism to balance resource protection and development, promoting the synergistic development of cultural heritage and economic benefits. Third, optimize infrastructure construction to improve transportation accessibility and service levels, enhancing visitor experiences and overall tourism capacity. Through these measures, sustainable development of the cultural tourism industry in ancient villages can be

achieved, further advancing the implementation of rural revitalization strategies.

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