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# Visiting Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Sites: From Value Cognition to Attitude and Intention

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**Abstract:** Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has recently become an important area of tourism development for many countries that are home to such cultural resources. Within this context, the value of an ICH site has often been used to guide tourism development and policy making. In addition, community residents' attitude and perception of ICH contribute to tourism development. In this study, we used the traditional firing technology of Longquan celadon in Zhejiang Province, China, as a case study to understand the relationships between value recognition and attitude along with the intention to visit the heritage site. We surveyed 368 residents and conducted path analysis to test such relationships. Findings revealed significant positive correlations between residents' cognition of ICH value, their attitudes and travel intentions. Among them, attitudes played a mediating role in the formation of value cognition to travel intention. These findings offer insights into ICH-related tourism development, particularly regarding tourism product design, marketing and post-development evaluation, as well as the conservation of ICH sites.

**Keywords:** intangible cultural heritage; value cognition; attitude; tourism intention; path analysis

## 1. Introduction

An enduring lack of social exposure and scholarly attention to intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has resulted in losses of government and community property due to ICH destruction. However, the inclusion of cultural practices and expressions of intangible heritage on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO's) Convention's Lists has recently drastically improved the survival status of ICH, and associated tourism has begun to attract researchers' interest [1–10]. Tourism development has promoted the safeguarding and development of ICH to a certain extent, with some governments beginning to turn to ICH as a steady source of income. Many heritage sites have created tourism products in the name of restoring ICH, which may violate the authenticity of heritage itself, and poses a risk of over-commercialization. Academics are currently most interested in the preservation and safeguarding of ICH craftsmanship and aesthetics. Therefore, the question of how to vitalize ICH tourism warrants discussion. In terms of the sustainable development of ICH tourism, it is necessary to find a balance between ICH and non-heritage tourism development, where related tourism products reflect value while meeting tourists' emotional needs. ICH value can thus become a focus of product development [11]. Meanwhile, residents—who play essential roles in ICH promotion—can improve the quality of ICH products through their cognition, attitudes and tourism intentions.

Under this background, this paper examines the relationship between residents' value cognition around ICH tourism, and the formation of tourism intentions to promote sustainable ICH tourism development. Most research on tourist destinations has naturally focused on tourists; however, the invisibility, portability and complexity of ICH require visitors to spend more energy, money and time on understanding the connotations of ICH. Accordingly, to improve the accuracy of relevant research, residents from a local heritage city and neighboring areas with the same type of ICH were selected as respondents. This research project consists of two main steps: First, we reconstruct the ICH value system to study residents' ICH-related value cognition; and second, we delineate the formation mechanism behind residents' tourism intentions within a value cognition–emotional attitude–tourism intentional framework. Our findings contribute to tourism theory and practice. Theoretically, this study redefines the value cognition system and integrates it with tourism intention, offering a new starting point for the study of tourism behavior. Additionally, by applying problem-solving strategies on the basis of cognition [12] and the value–attitude–behavior model [13] to ICH tourism, the processes underlying tourism intention are clarified using established theories. From a practical standpoint, ICH tourism products based upon residents' value judgments are more connotative and aligned with residents' preferences. Combining such products with residents' attitudes and behavioral intentions can better promote the sustainable development of ICH tourism. Furthermore, ICH research can provide useful insight for tourism and other economic fields; such knowledge can then be translated into popular educational tools for residents, thus providing spiritual inspiration. We chose a form of ceramic art, namely the traditional firing technology of Longquan celadon (TFTLC), as our research object, and used questionnaires to gather relevant information from residents of the local city and a neighboring city that shared the same type of ICH.

## 2. Literature Review

The first ICH-related document was drafted in 1971, followed by the establishment of the first international normative instrument on the safeguarding of traditional culture and folklore in 1989, and a new program on 'Intangible Cultural Heritage'. UNESCO finally adopted the International Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (i.e., the Convention) in 2003 [14]. UNESCO offers a comprehensive definition of ICH that encompasses oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festival events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, or knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts inherited from one's ancestors and passed on to one's descendants. Consensus around the safeguarding of ICH has led to many studies regarding its identification, protection and inheritance [1–3,7–9]. Scholars have recently integrated ICH protection with the development of digital communications in an attempt to present ICH via social media or other network practices [6,10,15]. The sustainable development of ICH tourism has also gradually captured scholars' attention [4,5].

In the context of ICH tourism development, value can serve as a focal point in guiding decision making [11]. The World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO's) first study on tourism and ICH proposed that ICH assets can be developed as tourism products using several approaches. Examples include: Creating cultural spaces or purpose-built facilities as venues to exhibit cultural heritage, merging or bundling tourist attractions to create themed sets to enhance appeal, developing new tourism routes or heritage networks, using existing circuits or reviving heritage networks, such as pilgrimage routes, and/or using or reviving festivals and events [16]. These products imbue tangible objects with core cultural values, therefore benefiting host communities and meeting tourists' needs while offering education and entertainment. Some researchers have suggested that the outstanding universal value of heritage should be maintained in world heritage conservation planning [17]. Understanding the value of ICH in tourism development requires urgent attention, and inspired this study.

Much of the research on ICH tourism has taken community residents in heritage sites as the primary subjects [4,5]. Besides ICH, many scholars have emphasized interactions between local communities and heritage sites. According to these studies, residents' attitudes and perceptions are

important for the sustainable development of heritage tourism; structural equation modeling (SEM) has often been adopted to identify correlations between these factors [18–22]. In terms of tourism development in heritage sites, residents seem to offer greater contributions than tourists. Community participation in heritage site governance can increase trust and public consensus, reveal tourism strategies to meet local needs, and contribute to destination sustainability [18]. Our study thus has a robust theoretical basis for taking residents as the research object.

In accordance with most ICH research, our literature review begins by exploring residents' cognition of ICH value, and next considers the relationship between ICH value and tourism intention, the impacts of emotional attitudes on behavior and the path of value cognition–emotional attitude–tourism intention. We then put forth our research hypotheses and design questionnaires to present a systematic study of the sustainable development of ICH tourism.

### 2.1. ICH Value and Tourism Intention

As ICH relies on tangible carriers to transform tourism resources into products, most scholars have focused on tangible places (e.g., heritage sites and museums) when studying heritage tourism. Similarly, products are closely related to 'places'. Existential tourism has made it possible to unveil identity sources dissociated with local places, which can link authenticity with the original spirit of a place [23]. Therefore it is logical to study tourism development by discussing the value of ICH.

Some scholars consider value the most abstract social cognition, which spurs attitude and behavior. Homer and Kahle [13] proposed the value–attitude–behavior (VAB) hierarchy and applied it to the study of natural foods' consumption. The value scale associated with the VAB hierarchy is divided into extrinsic and intrinsic value, derived from two schools of axiological thought in philosophy, which are, objectivity doctrines and subjectivity doctrines. Objectivity doctrines posit that the world exists in itself. Conversely, subjective theories hold that reality exists in knowers' perceptions and intellections, such that reality is relative rather than absolute. External values are hence based on the knowledge of an object, such as a goal experience or situation; internal values refer to expectation-oriented intentions that are internally directed. Internal and external values both exert significant positive effects on tourism intention [24]. Although VAB and corresponding value dimension theories have been widely used in research on behavioral patterns in ecological behavior, tourism destinations and other areas [25,26], the value of tourism products cannot be described solely on the basis of internal and external value.

Williams and Soutar's [27] view differs from the belief that value is analogous to social cognition in the VAB hierarchy; they contended that value is a personal perception, and perceived value has a significant positive influence on behavioral intention. According to Williams and Soutar's [27] study of value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions in an adventure tourism context, identified value dimensions include functional value, value for money, emotional value, social value and novelty value. These propositions are more in line with the times than prior value dimensions, and hence more suitable for tourism research. Other scholars also agreed that value is based on personal perceptions under the influence of culture. Therefore, Williams and Soutar's [27] designed scales were also used in other research. Some scholars [28–30] continue to support the view that "value is social cognition", and their scales are more specific. For example, Kim and Thapa [29] incorporated quality, emotional, price and social value in a study of nature-based tourism. Hapsari [30] believed that value can explain consumer behavior such as purchase intention, and thus employed educational value to explore tourist loyalty in educational theme parks.

Conceptually, cognition refers to an information-processing view of an individual's psychological functions, of which perception is a part [31]. However, in research involving the 'value perception' perspective, the dimensions used to assess value are more specific than in work that focuses on 'value cognition'.

Overall, tourism researchers should consider value in a broader sense [27], and more accurate terms should be applied when discussing heritage-related values (e.g., beliefs and interests, ideas and

ideologies) [9]. In this paper, we take tourists' cognition of the value of ICH as a starting point, and then summarize historical, social, economic, aesthetic, educational and other values of TFTLC based on a review of the literature to build a foundation for ongoing tourism development.

## 2.2. Effects of Emotion on Behavior

Many studies have confirmed that emotional experiences influence tourists' decisions in various ways [32,33]. For example, emotions can shape individuals' tourism motivations and chosen destinations or tourism products [34,35]. In the consumption stage, tourists' emotions often change over the course of a trip [36]. In later stages of consumption, visitors' emotions and affect can influence their tourism consumption satisfaction, destination attachment and loyalty [37–39]. Scholars have discussed diverse ways to evaluate emotions. For example, Prayag and et al. [40] noted that the psychology literature tends to espouse two main theoretical approaches: dimensional (valence-based) and categorical (emotion-specificity). The dimensional approach applies labels such as positive–negative and pleasure–awakening to conceptualize emotions, whereas the categorical approach frames emotions using various states, such as pleasure, happiness and excitement or fear, regret and disappointment. In a study of tourists' emotional experiences, Rahmani and colleagues [41] applied Plutchik's [42] theory of psychoevolutionary synthesis wherein emotions are divided into eight categories: anticipation, joy, sadness, anger, fear, trust, disgust and surprise. The concept of place attachment has also been used to examine how positive emotions and cognitive connections inform travelers' destination loyalty [39].

Attitude is generally understood as an evaluative judgment about a given object, which can be favorable, unfavorable, or neutral [43]. Judgments can change following an exposure to information and serve as a determinant of intention [44]. Scholars have also used numerous scales to measure attitudes. For example, Manca and Fornara [45] employed bipolar scales to measure respondents' attitudes based on the following adjectives: good–bad, appropriate–inappropriate, right–wrong, pleasant–unpleasant, boring–funny, harmful–beneficial and useful–useless. Prajitmutita and his co-authors [46] used satisfaction to measure customers' attitudes towards a product or service based on their degree of pleasure and fulfilment.

Although emotion and attitude have been defined uniquely in various studies, the correlation between these constructs is complex; no uniform classification or indicators thereof have been proposed to determine these constructs' influences upon tourists' behavior. Some authors [47] have found that people with greater emotional well-being are more likely to express positive attitudes towards purchasing sustainable products. Other researchers [48] have found that emotion has a positive influence on tourism attitude, whereas attitude has a partial mediating effect on emotion. Respondents may use a series of positive, negative, or mixed emotional words to express their attitudes towards value perceptions of tourism products during interviews [49]. Therefore, in this study, we combined emotion with attitude to create the notion of 'emotional attitude', which represents residents' attitudes towards ICH with respect to emotions. 'Emotional attitude' is measured using 'Unpleasant–Pleasant' and 'Boring–Arousing' as indicators, echoing the anchors used in previous studies to measure emotion and attitude.

## 2.3. The Path of Value Cognition–Emotional Attitude–Tourism Intention

The concept of cognition, as used in tourism research, refers to tourists' responses to mass information in the external tourism environment, and alludes to their future expectations to a certain extent [50]. Before Homer and Kahle [13] proposed the VAB hierarchy, Newell and Simon [12] characterized cognition in information processing in terms of how the human brain handles information, laying the foundation for the cognition–attitude–behavior model (CAB). Mehrabian and Russell [51] proposed the stimulus–organism–response (SOR) model shortly thereafter, in which S denotes environmental stimuli, O denotes the emotional responses of arousal, pleasure and dominance and R denotes consumer behavior.

Later, Donovan and Rossiter [52] further validated and modified the SOR model, contending that consumers exhibit two primary emotional states (i.e., pleasure and arousal), which are significant mediators of intended shopping behaviors within a store.

Since then, many studies have confirmed the relationships between cognition, emotion and behavior, or between cognition, attitude and behavior. For instance, Smith and Sherman [53] conducted a study on store image and mood using the SOR framework, and identified associations between customers' cognition, attitudes and behavior. Eroglu, Machleit and Davis [54] identified atmospheric cues in online stores that can influence shoppers' emotions, cognitive states and ultimate shopping outcomes. Billiot and Rodriguez [55] noted that cognitive flexibility theory explained how, after consumers have acquired and transferred knowledge, they are inspired to put such knowledge into practice. The authors also used cognitive flexibility theory to study parents' cognition, attitudes and behavior under the influence of hypermedia and hypertext when allowing their children to participate in football games [55]. Kaplan and Prato [56] reviewed cognition, emotions and overt behavior associated with cyclists and motorists sharing the road. Given the similarity between emotion and attitude, in this study, we use the term 'emotional attitude' to represent residents' pleasure and arousal. The cognition–emotion–behavior hierarchy and CAB model have been widely applied in consumer behavior research, and are feasible for studies of tourism intention as well.

A discussion of the relationship between ICH value and tourism intention, the effects of emotional attitudes on behavior, and the path of value cognition–emotional attitude–tourism, ground our research framework. The preceding literature review confirms the potential of assessing ICH tourism intention by taking residents' value cognition as the starting point, and their attitudes as a supplement.

### 3. Research Design

#### 3.1. Study Case and Research Object

Among the heritage domains defined by the Convention in 2003, performing arts, festival events and traditional craftsmanship possess high displayability and experiential value, showing promise to be developed into ICH tourism products. These ICH domains also comprise a large proportion of the Convention's "List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding". Therefore, it is of practical significance to promote such domains via sustainable tourism development. In terms of ICH case selection, TFTLC is the only ceramic project included in UNESCO's "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity", representative of a traditional form of ICH craftsmanship. The long history of TFTLC has resulted in valuable heritage sites and cultural relics. The practicality and artistic expression inherent to this craft demonstrate historical value, social and economic value and aesthetic value; TFTLC combines local cultural characteristics and national value cognition with educational and spiritual values. TFTLC also has high tourism development value. Under the backdrop of sustainable tourism development, this craft is therefore applicable to safeguarding ICH in the same domain.

TFTLC refers to the entire celadon production process, including all related tools (e.g., kilns), and a series of complex procedures such as clay mining, crushing, panning, wedging, shaping, casting, decorating, firing and glazing. Each stage requires precise control, and the unique color of the glaze reveals the ceramic's intricate craftsmanship. This complex production process exemplifies the challenges related to the cultural inheritance of celadon. The history and production of TFTLC also requires foreign tourists to devote great energy, money and time to understand its connotations. Because residents are already impressed by and familiar with this ICH, studying their reactions can inform ICH-related tourism development. The intangibility and portability of ICH can also reveal more about the social value, education and spiritual value of tourism development than simple measures of economic growth. A higher tourism conversion rate makes a study of the formation mechanism behind residents' and surrounding inhabitants' cognitive paths more realistic. Therefore, this study focuses on



residents of Lishui, where the heritage site is located, and residents of Wenzhou, a neighboring city with the same type of ICH.

### 3.2. Questionnaire Design

A two-part questionnaire was designed to gather tourists' thoughts on TFTLC. The first section consisted of respondents' demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age, education level, occupation, monthly income and place of residence). In the second section, three types of measurement indicators (i.e., value cognition, emotional attitude and tourism intention) were constructed, as shown in Table 1. The questionnaire was mainly structured on the path of value cognition–emotional attitude–tourism intention, beginning with ICH values and then exploring the formation mechanism of ICH tourism intention on the basis of respondents' rational cognition and perceptions. When establishing the cognitive dimension, we refined multiple value cognition dimensions based on the value characteristics of TFTLC, adding emotional attitude as a mediator variable. Items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 3 = generally agree; 5 = strongly agree).

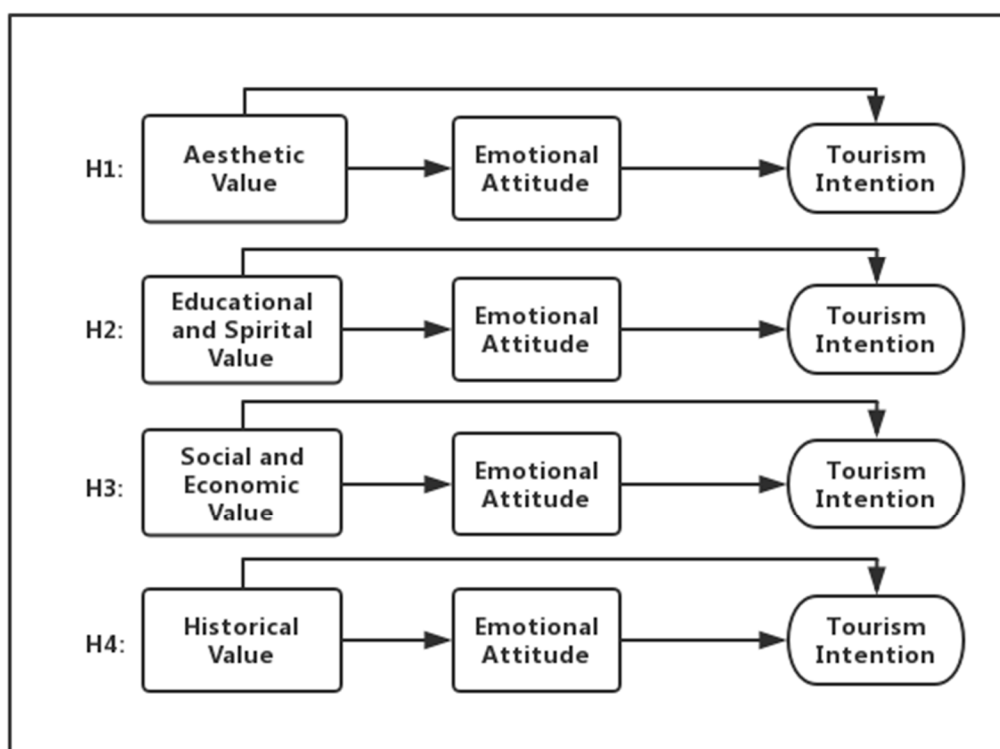
**Table 1.** Measurement indicators for elements of traditional firing technique for Longquan celadon.

Level 1 Indicator	Level 2 Indicator	Level 3 Indicator
Value cognition	Aesthetic value	Artistic appeal; regional uniqueness; art element integration; aesthetic characteristics; artistic authenticity; completeness of artistic forms
	Educational and spiritual value	Triggers spiritual resonance; reflects community or national spirit; offers inspirational and practical value; serves as political, cultural, and/or social institutional symbol
	Social and economic value	Employment opportunities; participation of community residents; commodity's added value; service value
	Historical value	Ruins and historical relics; historical reputation; particularity; historical heritage
Emotional attitude	Emotional attitude	Unpleasant–Pleasant; Boring–Arousing
Tourism intention	Tourism intention	Tourism intention

TFTLC is a well-known tourist brand in Longquan. Tourist destination brands have been found to follow an attributes–interests–value path [57], such that tourists are 'value-driven' as they seek experiences that can meet their needs, which are based on what they value and how they experienced such value before [58]. The value assessment system used in this study partially refers to Ji's [59] ICH scale. We labeled 'value cognition' as a Level 1 indicator, which included four Level 2 indicators: 'aesthetic value', 'educational and spiritual value', 'social and economic value', 'historical value', and 18 Level 3 indicators (e.g., 'artistic appeal'). We also labeled 'emotional attitude' and 'tourism intention' as Level 1 indicators, using the dimensions of Unpleasant–Pleasant and Boring–Arousing to measure 'emotional attitude' (Table 1). Indicator definitions are provided in Appendix A (Table A1).

### 3.3. Research Hypotheses

According to the literature review and research design, we postulated that residents' value cognition around TFTLC would positively influence their tourism intentions. Specifically, emotional attitude was expected to play a mediating role in the relationship between the four value cognition indicators and tourism intention. Hypotheses H1, H2, H3 and H4 are proposed as follows, and depicted in Figure 1:



**Figure 1.** Hypotheses in the proposed value cognition–emotional attitude–tourism intention model.

**Hypothesis 1 (H1).** *Aesthetic value has a positive and significant effect on tourism intention; emotional attitude mediates the effect of aesthetic value on tourism intention.*

**Hypothesis 2 (H2).** *Educational and spiritual value has a positive and significant effect on tourism intention; emotional attitude mediates the effect of educational and spiritual value on tourism intention.*

**Hypothesis 3 (H3).** *Social and economic value has a positive and significant effect on tourism intention; emotional attitude mediates the effect of social and economic value on tourism intention.*

**Hypothesis 4 (H4).** *Historical value has a positive and significant effect on tourism intention; emotional attitude mediates the effect of historical value on tourism intention.*

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Demographic and Statistical Analysis of Respondents

The study, which lasted more than one month, was conducted in December 2017 and October 2019 in Lishui and Wenzhou (i.e., the city where TFTLC originated and a neighboring city, respectively). The survey was performed in a region known for ICH to ensure that information about residents' visit intentions would be practical, while reducing the researchers' workload. In total, 467 questionnaires were collected during the survey period, 368 of which were valid (effective response rate: 78.8%). Of the 368 respondents (Table 2), 49.5% were permanent residents of Lishui, and 50.5% were permanent residents of Wenzhou. Slightly less than half (47.8%) of these respondents were men; the remaining respondents were women. Individuals between 18 and 25 years old dominated the sample, accounting for 33.2%. The same proportion had completed undergraduate education. The respondents' income level was rather low, with 36.4% of the sample earning a monthly income below 3000 yuan (ca 428 USD). Only one respondent crafted Longquan celadon.

**Table 2.** Respondents' demographic profile.

Item	Demographics	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Item	Demographics	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	176	47.8	Age	<18	59	16.0
	Female	192	52.2		18–25	122	33.2
Educational level	<College diploma	122	33.2		26–30	104	28.3
	College diploma	81	22.0		31–40	53	14.4
	bachelor degree	152	41.3	41–50	20	5.4	
	≥Master degree	13	3.5	>50	10	2.7	
Monthly Income (¥)	<3000	134	36.4	City	Lishui	182	49.5
	3000–5000	101	27.4		Wenzhou	186	50.5
	5001–10,000	93	25.3	Occupation	Craftsman of Longquan celadon	5	1.4
	>10,000	40	10.9		Other	363	98.6

## 4.2. Data Processing and Analysis

### 4.2.1. Item Analysis

We used IBM SPSS Statistics 25 to perform item analysis and test whether our proposed scale could be effective in distinguishing residents' extent of value cognition, emotional attitudes and tourism intentions around TFTLC. We chose two samples from 368 valid data points, classifying the highest 27% of scores as the high group, and the lowest 27% of scores as the low group. Within these groups, 27% of respondents scored below 84 points, and 27% scored above 99 points. Independent-sample t-test results showed that the distribution of average scores among the high and low groups was significantly different, with significance values at 0.00 ( $<0.05$ ) (Table 3). Therefore, our scale was sufficiently valid in distinguishing differences in respondents' value cognition, emotional attitudes and tourism intentions. Our findings from item analysis were thus appropriate for subsequent investigation.

### 4.2.2. General Description and Factor Analysis

We also used SPSS 25 to measure scale reliability and validity. The total Cronbach's alpha value was 0.911, indicating high stability and internal consistency along with a small standard error. Among Cronbach's alpha values for each subscale, the score which was related to emotional attitude was only 0.639; this result may be due to a low number of questions [60], but it is acceptable for a subscale [61]. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) score of the cognition scale was 0.903, indicating a level of sampling adequacy suitable for factor analysis.

We next used principal component analysis (PCA) and the maximum variance method to extract four common factors from the 18 value items: aesthetic value, educational and spiritual value, social and economic value and historical value. The total factor loading was 60.376%, being within an acceptable range and close to ideal. The results of factor analysis revealed that the factor loading of each item was above 0.5, meeting the initial research thresholds (see Tables 4 and 5).

### 4.2.3. Data Processing and Correlation Analysis

After examining the reliability and validity of the scale, to prepare for the correlation test and path analysis, six Level 3 indicators of aesthetic value (e.g., artistic appeal), four Level 3 indicators of educational and spiritual value (e.g., inspirational and practical value), four Level 3 indicators of social and economic value (e.g., added value of the commodity) and four Level 3 indicators of historical value (e.g., historical heritage) were averaged to serve as the scores for four Level 2 indicators. Respondents' scores on Unpleasant–Pleasant and Boring–Arousing were averaged to indicate emotional attitude.



To verify the internal consistency of variables, we first used Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine correlations between aesthetic value, educational and spiritual value, social and economic value, historical value, emotional attitude and tourism intention. Findings revealed a significant positive correlation between each pair of indicators, with coefficients ranging between 0.383 and 0.580 (Table 6). No abnormal scores were observed between the means and standard deviations. Pearson correlation analysis also confirmed the stability and consistency of scale results. The significant positive correlations between value cognition, emotional attitude and tourism intention initially supported research hypotheses H1 to H4.

**Table 3.** Independent-sample *t*-test results for each item.

Item Name	Average Score of High Score Group (<84)	Average Score of Low Score Group (>99)	SE	Sig.
Artistic appeal	3.86	4.87	0.117	0.00
Regional uniqueness	3.97	4.97	0.106	0.00
Art element integration	3.87	4.93	0.104	0.00
Aesthetic characteristics	3.63	4.92	0.118	0.00
Artistic authenticity	3.38	4.95	0.107	0.00
Completeness of artistic forms	3.49	4.96	0.115	0.00
Triggers spiritual resonance	3.29	4.83	0.134	0.00
Reflects community or national spirit	3.63	4.95	0.120	0.00
Inspirational and practical value	3.21	4.85	0.130	0.00
Serves as political, cultural and/or social institutional symbol	2.84	4.79	0.141	0.00
Commodity's added value	2.95	4.83	0.136	0.00
Service value	3.64	4.94	0.117	0.00
Employment opportunities	3.32	4.85	0.124	0.00
Participation of community residents	3.24	4.85	0.130	0.00
Ruins and historical relics	3.33	4.90	0.125	0.00
Historical reputation	3.57	4.97	0.114	0.00
Particularity	3.80	4.96	0.116	0.00
Historical heritage	4.07	4.98	0.116	0.00
Unpleasant–Pleasant	3.40	4.87	0.118	0.00
Boring–Arousing	3.35	4.83	0.123	0.00
Tourism intention	3.86	4.87	0.113	0.00

**Table 4.** Validity and reliability of reflective constructs.

Level 2 indicator	Level 3 Indicator	Variance (%)	Accumulation (%)	KMO	Cronbach's Alpha	Total Cronbach's Alpha
Aesthetic value	Artistic appeal	18.284	18.284	0.903	0.848	0.911
	Regional uniqueness					
	Art element integration					
	Aesthetic characteristics					
	Artistic authenticity					
Educational and spiritual value	Completeness of artistic forms	15.140	33.423	0.801	0.911	
	Reflects community or national spirit					
	Offers inspirational and practical value					
	Serves as political, cultural and/or social institutional symbol					
Social and economic value	Triggers spiritual resonance	13.915	47.338	0.738	0.782	
	Commodity's added value					
	Service value					
	Employment opportunities					
Historical value	Participation of community residents	13.038	60.376	0.782	0.639	
	Particularity					
	Historical heritage					
Emotional attitude	Historical reputation	13.038	60.376	0.782	0.639	
	Ruins and historical relics					
	Unpleasant–Pleasant					
Tourism intention	Boring–Arousing	13.038	60.376	0.782	0.639	
	Tourism intention					

**Table 5.** Rotated factor loading matrix.

Level 3 Indicator	Factor loading (Aesthetic value)	Factor loading (Educational and spiritual value)	Factor loading (Social and economic value)	Factor loading (Historical value)
Artistic appeal	0.719			
Regional uniqueness	0.703			
Art element integration	0.714			
Aesthetic characteristics	0.770			
Artistic authenticity	0.641			
Completeness of artistic forms	0.513			
Triggers spiritual resonance		0.663		
Reflects community or national spirit		0.716		
Inspirational and practical value		0.772		
Serves as political, cultural and/or social institutional symbol		0.735		
Commodity's added value			0.713	
Service value			0.604	
Employment opportunities			0.673	
Participation of community residents			0.689	
Ruins and historical relics				0.611
Historical reputation				0.725
Particularity				0.736
Historical heritage				0.761

Extraction method: Main component. Rotation method: Orthogonal rotation with Kaiser standardization.

**Table 6.** Means, standard deviations and correlations between types of value.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Aesthetic Value	Educational and spiritual value	Social and Economic Value	Historical Value	Emotional attitude	Tourism intention
Aesthetic value	4.406	0.667	1					
Educational and spiritual value	4.116	0.855	0.580**	1				
Social and economic value	4.165	0.804	0.499**	0.543**	1			
Historical value	4.423	0.718	0.514**	0.455**	0.529**	1		
Emotional attitude	4.366	0.8815	0.549**	0.509**	0.483**	0.452**	1	
Tourism intention	4.15	0.982	0.406**	0.474**	0.471**	0.383**	0.495**	1

Significance test: Two-tailed; \*\* Significantly correlated at the 0.01 level (both sides).

### 4.3. Exploring the Mediating Role of Emotional Attitude

After completing the data processing and verification, we used Preacher and Hayes' Bootstrap plug-in to test the mediation effect. Following Wen and Ye's [62] method and mediation effect model, we used a sample size of 5000 with a 95% confidence interval (CI). If the CI of the mediation results did not contain 0, then emotional attitude could be said to mediate the effect of value cognition on tourism intention.

The score interval for the path of 'aesthetic value–emotional attitude–tourism intention' did not include 0 (CI: [0.21,0.43]), and emotional attitude significantly mediated the effect of aesthetic value on tourism intention, with a mediating effect score of 0.31. After controlling for emotional attitude, the influence of aesthetic value on tourism intention was also significant (CI: [0.13,0.44]), and demonstrated a direct effect score of 0.28. For the path of 'educational and spiritual value–emotional attitude–tourism intention', the score interval did not include 0 (CI: [0.12,0.29]), and emotional attitude significantly mediated the effect of educational and spiritual value on tourism intention with a mediating effect score of 0.20. After controlling for emotional attitude, the influence of educational and spiritual value on tourism intention was likewise significant (CI: [0.23,0.46]), with a direct effect whose value was 0.34. The score interval of 'social and economic value–emotional attitude–tourism intention' did not include 0 (CI: [0.13,0.30]), and emotional attitude significantly mediated the effect of social and economic value on tourism intention (mediating effect score: 0.21). After controlling for emotional attitude, the influence of social and economic value on tourism intention was significant (CI: [0.25,0.49]), with the direct effect of 0.37.

For the path of 'historical value–emotional attitude–tourism intention', the score interval did not include 0 (CI: [0.15,0.37]), and emotional attitude significantly mediated the effect of historical value on tourism intention with a mediating effect score of 0.25. After controlling for emotional attitude, the influence of historical value on tourism intention was significant (CI: [0.14,0.41]) with a direct effect of 0.27 (Table 7). Hypotheses H1 through H4 were thus supported; however, emotional attitude only played a partial mediating role in each path, and other mediator variables existed.

**Table 7.** Indirect effects of value cognition on intention.

Path	Effect	Boot SE	Boot 95% CI	Supported	Hypothesis
Direct effect of aesthetic value on tourism intention	0.28	0.08	[0.13,0.44]	√	H1
Aesthetic value→emotional attitude→tourism intention	0.31	0.06	[0.21,0.43]	√	
Direct effect of educational and spiritual value on tourism intention	0.34	0.06	[0.23,0.46]	√	H2
Educational and spiritual value→emotional attitude→tourism intention	0.20	0.04	[0.12,0.29]	√	
Direct effect of social and economic value on tourism intention	0.37	0.06	[0.25,0.49]	√	H3
Social and economic value→emotional attitude→tourism intention	0.21	0.04	[0.13,0.30]	√	
Direct effect of historical on tourism intention	0.27	0.07	[0.14,0.41]	√	H4
Historical value→emotional attitude→tourism intention	0.25	0.05	[0.15,0.37]	√	

## 5. Discussion and Implications

Tourism development is an essential means of vitalizing ICH. Although such development can improve the living status of ICH, many ICHs suffer from over-commercialization, which can compromise their authenticity and shift them away from their intended value. The design, marketing

and evaluation of ICH products are essential to ICH sustainability. Therefore, TFTLC was taken as the focal ICH in this research, given its potential to be developed into popular tourism products, similar to other forms of traditional craftsmanship.

Value and value orientation are frequently mentioned in relation to sustainability. Understanding people's value orientations is crucial when organizing sustainable activities. Value orientation is also related to attitudes, describing dispositional weights and predicting behavioral intention [47,63,64]. Among value orientations, a set of linked propositions including value and existential elements can influence individuals' general patterns, decisions and belief intensity about outdoor recreation activities [65]. In particular, value cognition is an essential component of value orientation that evokes tourism intention. Heritage undoubtedly offers extensive value, and the development of heritage tourism holds great promise. However, preservation (i.e., non-use) values and use values [65], internal and external values [24,66], utilitarian and hedonic values [67] and experiential values [66] are insufficient in truly capturing the value of cultural heritage. It is more practical to consider residents' value cognition when seeking to develop corresponding tourism products that will meet tourists' expectations. As noted in the literature review, cognition includes perception, and value perception falls under the scope of value cognition. This conceptualization eliminates any potential redundancy of cognition and perception in our research framework.

We recruited residents from the TFTLC heritage site and a neighboring city as respondents to ensure a higher level of ICH value cognition and a more manageable workload. Residents' cognition of the ICH value was highly objective, thereby improving the accuracy of scale analysis. Our findings from residents can also be applied to tourists, because ICH tourism differs from other types of place-specific tourism. An intangible culture can be associated with numerous places, including museums, exhibitions, or heritage sites. With regard to ICH, residents offer greater contributions than tourists, but may also become tourists visiting local heritage sites. Our findings demonstrated a significant moderate correlation between aesthetic value, educational and spiritual value, social and economic value and historical value cognition, which should be helpful in translating our results in practice.

For example, celadon is renowned for its aesthetic value, long history, creation of economic value, spiritual sustenance and use as an educational tool. Four types of value cognition are closely related and indispensable in the ICH system. In terms of structure, the ICH tourism decision-making system based on the 'value cognition–emotional attitude–tourism intention' path is uniquely suited to ICH tourism intention research, representing an expansion on the 'cognition–emotion–behavior' and 'value–attitude–behavior' models. In addition to four value cognitions, we redefined the meaning of emotional attitude, which was found to partially mediate the influence of value cognition on tourism intention. In these paths, aesthetic value, educational and spiritual value, social and economic value and historical value appeared to directly affect residents' willingness to travel and indirectly influence the formation of tourism intention via emotional attitudes. These influences were positively correlated: an increase in value cognition evoked more positive emotions and thus strengthened residents' willingness to travel, consistent with our assumptions. Also, the mediation effect of emotional attitude was even larger than the direct effect of aesthetic value on tourism intention. Accordingly, emotional attitude appears to be an indispensable aspect of research on ICH tourism intention.

From a sustainability perspective, tourism development can provide an environment and living space for ICH, generate protection funds while improving national awareness and offer a foundation for ICH inheritance. At heritage sites, ICH tourism development can propagandize local brands, enrich the content of tourism products and improve the quality of such products. However, unsustainable ICH tourism development may destroy brand effects, eliciting fierce competition and potentially compromising the business environment. These activities also fail to emphasize value, lessening the educational significance for residents and tourists. The tourism industry has become increasingly competitive, and operators need functional strategies to sustain ICH tourism development and safeguard existing sites. It is therefore necessary to carefully consider residents' value cognition



regarding ICH along with their emotional attitudes; doing so can promote a thorough evaluation of ICH resource endowments in terms of product design, marketing and tourism experience assessment. Based on our findings, we offer several recommendations to government agencies and relevant scenic areas and attractions.

ICH tourism products should be offered in a way that will satisfy visitors' desires, namely by considering heritage characteristics along with customers' value cognition and emotional experiences. Before creating relevant tourism products, decision makers should combine the aesthetic, historical and educational and spiritual value of ICH to construct exciting travel experiences for tourists. Tourists may express positive emotional attitudes towards value symbols and interactive areas that can inspire their imaginations around ICH, inspiring them to participate in ICH tourism. For example, when developing celadon tourism products, designers should seek to strengthen the emotional impact and integrate scientific and educational content into static and dynamic tourism products. Designers should also combine successor performance, teaching, live-action song and dance performances and museum explanations to enhance tourists' value cognition. Offering a variety of activities could improve tourists' perceived experiential value, boosting tourists' intentions to return to and recommend an ICH destination [68]. Therefore, it is essential to improve the construction of scenic spots, including physical products such as relics, sites and souvenirs to create a complete, diversified and accessible boutique ICH tourism route.

In terms of ICH tourism marketing, practitioners should highlight the spiritual connotations and inheritance-based significance of ICH. According to the tourism intention model, value is indispensable in the formation path of visitors' willingness to travel. Therefore, in the process of ICH image creation and brand propaganda, underscoring ICH value and fostering relevant value cognition are pivotal. For example, when promoting TFTLC, a museum could display pictures and posters of celadon embryos and decorations to convey profound information about celadon craftsmanship and inheritors to visitors, thus promoting the product's connotations. With respect to advertising design and target market research, practitioners should consider different groups' emotional responses and cognition to create pleasing, exciting advertisements [49].

These strategies should include factors that tourists care about, consider whether such factors can meet tourists' emotional needs, focus on core elements of ICH tourism products, and raise tourists' awareness of values.

As intangible assets, ICH tourism products should be evaluated after bringing them to market. Since related sites and cultural relics are nonreplicable, more empirical research is needed to improve the research model and propose suggestions to promote the sustainable development of ICH tourism. This assessment should include factors such as stakeholders, ICH value, carrying capacity, ecological sensitivity, economic transformation and tourist cognition. Tourists' needs and the protection of ICH should also be considered in sustainable tourism development. Most importantly, operators and managers should recognize that a good ICH tourism product must be closely tied to visitors' preferences, specifically their value cognition and emotional attitudes; doing so will help ICH tourism operators address related dilemmas by aligning relevant experiences with tourists' needs.

## 6. Conclusions and Future Research

Taking TFTLC as a study case, we investigated residents' value cognition and emotional attitudes in a heritage site and nearby city and analyzed the formation path of tourism intention. The significant effects of value cognition on ICH tourism intention forms the theoretical basis of the 'value cognition–attitude–tourism intention' framework in this study, which can be used to forecast residents' and tourists' behavior. Our research elaborates on how ICH tourism products can promote the sustainability of ICH in environmental, economic and social aspects. Our results confirm the potential to predict tourists' motivations and intentions by studying their value cognition and emotions. We also provide valuable insight into product development, marketing and post-development evaluations of ICH tourism.

Despite its revelations, our study has several limitations that may encourage future research. Theoretically, the lack of an existing theory related to value cognition did preclude a confirmatory factor analysis. In the mediation effect exploration step, emotional attitudes were found to partially mediate the effect of value cognition on tourism intention, implying that other factors could also play mediating roles. Additionally, from data analysis not included in this paper, emotional attitudes were found to moderate the effect of historical value on tourism intention; subsequent studies could thus seek to identify such factors. In terms of the study sample, we focused on residents rather than tourists in light of our preliminary research. Tourists from other provinces expressed poor understanding of ICH or had difficulty completing the questionnaire. We compiled a sample of completed questionnaires based on quality, and only about 368 were valid. In a follow-up study, we will survey various groups of people on a larger scale who exhibit diverse demographics. We also plan to further test our value cognition scale and unveil additional mediating factors to render the ‘value cognition–attitude–tourism intention’ framework more feasible for ICH tourism research.

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## Appendix A

**Table A1.** Definitions of value cognition and emotional attitude indicators of traditional firing technique for Longquan celadon.

Level 2 Indicator	Level 3 Indicator	Definition of Level 3 Indicator
Aesthetic value	Artistic appeal	Celadon produced using this technique has artistic appeal
	Regional uniqueness	Celadon produced using this technique has unique Longquan characteristics and style
	Art element integration	Celadon produced using this technique perfectly blends artistic elements such as color and ornamentation
	Aesthetic characteristics	Celadon produced using this technique is elegant and smooth, with aesthetic features that are pleasing to the eye
	Artistic authenticity	Celadon produced using this technique satisfies social reality, aesthetic standards, and emotional impact
	Completeness of artistic forms	Celadon produced using this technique incorporates features of art, merchandise, and symbols, reflecting a complete concept
Educational and spiritual value	Triggering spiritual resonance	The technique can trigger spiritual resonance
	Reflecting community or national spirit	The technique reflects the traditional spirit of Longquan or the Chinese national spirit
	Inspirational and practical value	The technique encourages people to think critically and treat problems rationally, and inspires thinking and values
	Serving as political, cultural and social institutional symbols	The technique symbolizes the cultural, political, and social systems of Confucianism and Buddhism, such as Zhongyong, Zhonghe, and Renhou

Table A1. Cont.

Level 2 Indicator	Level 3 Indicator	Definition of Level 3 Indicator
Social and economic value	Service value	The local community can use this technique to operate services such as tourism and sightseeing, folk experiences, and so on
	Commodity's added value	The technique has trademark or brand value
	Current employment opportunities	The technique has created many job opportunities
	Current community residents' participation	The technique is conducive to depicting local residents' personal values
Historical value	Ruins and historical relics	The technique can produce ruins and artifacts
	Historical reputation	The technique is well known in history
	Particularity	The technique is an ICH unique to China
	Historical heritage	This technique is protected as an inheritance of history and culture
Emotional attitude	Unpleasant–Pleasant	People's feelings when learning about TFTLC, ranging from unpleasant to pleasant
	Boring–Arousing	People's feelings when learning about TFTLC, ranging from boring to arousing

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