

From cognition to emotion: A literature review of the image construction of Dinghu Mountain as a tourist destination in the context of TikTok

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Abstract: The short video platform Tiktok has become a new arena for the construction and dissemination of destination imagery. This paper takes Dinghu Mountain as its research object, based on a “cognitive-emotional” dual-dimensional framework, and systematically reviews domestic and international literature in three major fields: online communities, corpus-based tourism research, and new media cultural tourism promotion. It examines how user-generated content (UGC) contributes to shaping destination imagery within the Tiktok context. The findings reveal: (1) The high stickiness of interactions in online communities and the detailed and emotional nature of UGC significantly enhance potential tourists' cognitive and emotional evaluations; (2) Corpus methods based on online texts can effectively reveal tourists' diverse perceptions of Dinghu Mountain and their intentions to revisit; (3) Tiktok short videos achieve the immediate dissemination and emotional reproduction of destination images through KOL/KOC, topic tags, and algorithmic distribution. This study theoretically expands destination image research from traditional questionnaire paradigms to short video platform contexts, enriching interpretive perspectives on new media tourism communication. Practically, it provides actionable recommendations for Dinghu Mountain and other scenic areas to optimize digital communication strategies, strengthen emotional connections, and enhance repeat visit rates.

Keywords: Tiktok; destination image; UGC; cognitive-emotional model; Dinghu Mountain

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Related Research on Online Communities

In the late 1990s, as the internet began to gain widespread adoption, online communities emerged. As gathering places for internet users, online communities encompass a large number of users, making them suitable as a large-scale sample for user research and observation. A search of the CNKI database using the keyword “online community” yielded a total of 1,577 relevant literature entries. Over the past six years, the number of published articles has shown an upward trend. Among these, most studies related to online communities employ text mining methods, with primary themes focusing on the underlying mechanisms of different online communities and their influence on consumers.

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) noted that users perceive themselves as part of the network and form close emotional bonds with other users within it, thereby recognizing the community platform ^[1]. Bickart and Schindler (2001) confirmed that users show more interest in content generated by ordinary users than in content directly created by professional marketers, and that online communities are more appealing to users than corporate websites ^[2]. Yoon (2002) found a positive relationship between users' trust and satisfaction with a website and their purchasing intent ^[3]. Trust between the community and users is the foundation for the community's development and attracts users to participate in community development. At this level, the community and users establish a strategic relationship through trust. When the community privatizes community content at the technical level, it enhances users' experience and strengthens their loyalty to the community. As the community develops and user loyalty increases, communication between users becomes more frequent, further enhancing trust among users. Liu Long (2002) argues that in online communities, members gather through recognition and trust in the community, and the community's scale reflects users' trust and loyalty. Online communities can effectively identify historical user characteristics by retaining user data, providing personalized products and services to users, thereby enhancing positive feedback toward the online community

and increasing customer satisfaction [4]. As understanding deepens, both users and platforms gain a deeper understanding of each other. Users become more familiar with the platform's operational mechanisms and the creative contributions of other users, while the platform gains a clearer understanding of users' needs, enabling it to develop features that meet those needs. Du Junfei (2004) argues that in virtual communities, the process of collectively discussing similar or related themes can strengthen social cohesion [5]. This cohesion manifests itself in various aspects of social life and can exert a significant influence on the development of society as a whole. In summary, the existence of virtual communities is essentially the digitization of physical communities within a social environment, leveraging the convenience and speed of the internet to enable users to connect with like-minded individuals without leaving their homes. While virtual communities share many characteristics with physical communities, they also offer anonymity and privacy, resulting in lower costs for information exchange and dissemination compared to physical communities.

Web 2.0 technology has supported the vigorous development of user-generated content (UGC), leading to increasingly diverse community content and enriched research in this area. Dye (2007) argued that user-generated digital content has begun to gradually industrialize [6]. Community users engage in online posting primarily for self-expression. Daugherty et al. (2008) found that users are more willing to create blogs and images online to build online communities rather than simply consume content [7]. Shao (2009) argues that users enter online communities to express themselves and achieve self-realization by creating their own content. To meet their information, entertainment, and emotional needs, users strengthen social connections and virtual communities through interactions with content and other users within online communities [8]. Zhao Fuzeng (2009) notes that the abundant production of UGC provides rich shared resources for user communication and interaction, and widespread information sharing can facilitate collaboration and resource access [9]. Sparks et al. (2013) similarly found that UGC is more effective than professionally produced marketing content in stimulating travel intentions, and the more detailed and rich the content users post, the greater the promotional effect on other users' intentions [10]. Weng Jinyan and Wang Kai (2023) summarized empirical studies on virtual communities both domestically and internationally, focusing on aspects such as the external effects of communities, UGC behavior subjects, and member behavior [11].

In summary, online communities, as the latest social networking achievements under technological development, contain rich embedded information. Due to their open nature, they can aggregate internet users, facilitating the acquisition of information and characteristics of internet users. The user information and content expressions carried by online communities can serve as samples for this study, thereby yielding research conclusions with broader implications.

1.2 Research on the Relationship Between Tourism Scenic Spot Databases and Tourism Scenic Spot Images

With the rapid development of information technology and the advent of the big data era, research on tourism image perception based on network text analysis has gradually become a hot topic among domestic scholars. A search using the keywords "tourism" and "corpus" in the CNKI database yielded a total of 489 relevant literature entries. Among these, there are relatively few foreign studies on corpus construction and its relevance to the tourism industry, while domestic research is more abundant. Currently, most research on corpora related to the tourism industry employs text analysis methods, and the number of studies constructing tourism destination corpora based on online text data has also been increasing, with a rising trend in the number of publications over the past two years. However, the disciplinary distribution is predominantly concentrated in foreign languages and literature and Chinese languages and literature, with tourism studies ranking third.

Constructing a tourism corpus based on OTA online reviews is the most direct method to reflect consumers' perceptions of tourism destinations. Yao Limei (2020) conducted an empirical study on inbound tourists' perceptions of the tourism destination image of Quanzhou based on an OTA online review corpus, finding that tourists' perceptions of Quanzhou's tourism image exhibit diverse and personalized characteristics, providing new insights for the dissemination of tourism destination images and brand building [12]. Chun Yu Tong (2021) and others explored tourists' intentions to revisit and perceptions of the tourism image of Xiamen Gulangyu Scenic Area and the Palace Museum in Beijing by mining and analyzing text data from tourists' social media and online reviews, providing valuable references for tourism destination image shaping and enhancing tourist satisfaction. Liu Dingzhou and Jiang Chunxia (2023) conducted in-depth studies on the international image dissemination of Guangxi and Dujiangyan based on corpus discourse analysis and corpus technology, respectively, revealing the characteristics and strategies of different regions in international image shaping [13].

In terms of regional tourism corpus construction, Yang Li (2022) proposed strategies to enhance the attractiveness of inbound tourists based on an improved tourism destination gravity model. By constructing a regional tourism corpus, she conducted an in-depth study of inbound tourists' travel needs and preferences, providing data support for precise marketing and product development at tourist destinations [14].

In the field of web text mining and tourist satisfaction research, Zhang Xuan (2024) utilized text mining (web crawling) technology in her master's thesis to select tourist data from Ctrip.com, conducting an in-

depth analysis of tourists' satisfaction expressions on social media and online reviews. The results were analyzed using an AHP satisfaction evaluation system based on semantic analysis scoring, and satisfaction scores were corrected based on sentiment analysis, revealing the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and strategies for improvement, providing scientific basis for enhancing tourism service quality ^[15]. Additionally, Sun Dan (2024) and others took international students in Hainan as the research subjects, using lexical association and corpus research methods to explore international students' perceptions of Hainan and the construction of the "Hainan image," providing reference for the development of Hainan as an international tourist island ^[16].

In summary, domestic scholars have achieved abundant results in tourism image perception research based on online text analysis, providing strong support for destination image shaping, visitor satisfaction improvement, and international image dissemination. Therefore, in this study, we will utilize relevant models and principles of online text analysis to deeply identify and analyze the cognitive and emotional image of the Dinghu Mountain Scenic Area, aiming to uncover the aspects of the scenic area's image that contemporary tourists most care about. This will provide an empirical foundation for revealing the influence of Tiktok short videos on tourists' intentions.

1.3 Related Research on New Media and Cultural Tourism Promotion

In recent years, with the development of new media, high-quality cultural tourism promotion has become key to attracting tourists, and social media has gradually become an important channel for cultural tourism promotion. Through the promotion of KOLs and KOCs, it is also possible to influence the decisions of potential tourists to a certain extent. Using keywords such as "new media," "cultural and tourism promotion," and "tourism" in the CNKI database, a total of 85 relevant literature pieces were retrieved. Currently, scholars' research perspectives on cultural and tourism promotion primarily focus on new media platforms.

Wang Wenjun and Yao Shuang, using Kaifeng as an example, emphasized the importance of collaborating across all media channels for effective promotion ^[17]; Ni Jing focused on new media cultural and tourism communication in Xinjiang, pointing out that cultural and tourism departments should integrate cultural and tourism resources with new media technology ^[18]; Jiang Wancun argued that the integration of cultural and tourism industries should be organically combined with all-media communication to achieve greater benefits ^[19]. These studies highlight the untapped value of new media in cultural and tourism communication from a macro perspective, but lack targeted discussions on specific communication platforms.

Li Yu took the official Tiktok account of Shanxi Province as the research object, proposing communication optimization pathways based on the characteristics of Shanxi's cultural and tourism accounts ^[20]; Yang Hua and Zhang Xi explored the sustainable development strategy for short video creation by cultural and tourism bureau chiefs, using the case of "Ganzi Cultural and Tourism Bureau Chief Liu Hong" as an entry point ^[21]. These studies have implemented specific communication platforms, but their research perspectives vary.

Existing research findings reflect the diverse characteristics of current cultural and tourism promotion research perspectives, including cultural and tourism promotion entities, cultural and tourism promotion platform characteristics, and cultural and tourism promotion content preferences, and integrate macro and micro perspectives, providing important reference value for research on cultural and tourism promotion pathways under the new media landscape. It is worth noting that in the modern media society, the diversification of media communication channels and methods has further increased users' selectivity toward media content, which provides a theoretical foundation for the analysis of the distinct characteristics of tourism content in this study.

In summary, the image of a destination is not static but rather a product continuously constructed through users' interactions with media content. The information structure, emotional tone, and symbolic systems presented in shared content first influence individuals' cognitive frameworks and emotional evaluations, thereby shaping their overall impression of the tourist destination. Therefore, this study will use Tiktok comments as its corpus to conduct a multidimensional analysis of tourism sharing content, exploring how it contributes to shaping the cognitive and emotional images of Dinghu Mountain. This will reveal the key role of short video platforms in destination image construction, providing theoretical foundations and practical references for optimizing digital communication strategies in scenic areas.

II. CONCLUSION

This study uses comments from short videos on Douyin as its corpus, integrating online community theory, corpus discourse analysis, and a new media communication perspective to systematically examine and analyze the construction logic of the Dinghu Mountain tourist destination image in the context of short videos. The findings reveal:

(1) The "cognitive-emotional" structure of the destination image exhibits dynamic reproduction characteristics on short video platforms. The emotional polarity, symbolic density, and narrative frameworks of UGC are continuously refined through dual mechanisms of algorithmic visibility and social interaction, ultimately forming a progressive pathway of "instant cognition-emotional deepening-behavioral intention."

(2) Corpus methods based on online texts can effectively capture the fine-grained representation of Dinghu Mountain's image: the cognitive dimension centers on core tags such as “mountain-water ecology” and “Zen meditation culture,” while the emotional dimension exhibits a gradient transition from “healing-surprise-attachment,” which is significantly positively correlated with the intention to revisit.

(3) Short video platforms amplify emotional resonance and symbolic visibility through the synergistic effects of KOL/KOC demonstrations, topic tag aggregation, and algorithmic distribution, achieving a closed-loop process of “viral diffusion-emotional deepening-behavioral conversion” for destination image, thereby validating the explanatory power of “medium as context” in tourism communication.

(4) Theoretically, this study expands destination image research from traditional questionnaire paradigms to short video platform contexts, enriching the UGC-driven “cognitive-emotional” model and providing replicable corpus construction and emotional computing frameworks for future research. Practically, the study proposes a three-pronged digital communication optimization strategy of “emotional narrative script consistency-short-chain interaction tasks-comment emotional monitoring closed loop,” providing operational pathways for scenic areas to dynamically manage destination image, enhance emotional connection, and increase repeat visit rates.

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