

A Review of Research on the Perception of Chongqing's Tourist Destination Image

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Abstract: The image of tourist destinations plays a pivotal role in the development of modern tourism. Using databases such as Web of Science and CNKI as data sources, this paper systematically reviews and analyzes research related to the perception of Chongqing's tourist destination image. The study finds that research on the perception of Chongqing's tourist image can be summarized into three aspects: attractions and landscapes, cuisine and culture, and tourist attractions. In terms of emotional image, tourists express high satisfaction and strong intentions to revisit on the positive side, while issues such as public facilities and commercialization are perceived negatively. The main research methods include web text analysis and content analysis, supplemented by various software tools for in-depth exploration.

Keywords: Tourist destination; Image perception; Research review; Chongqing

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1. Introduction

The image of tourist destinations plays a pivotal role in the development of modern tourism. As the public's overall, abstract, and generalized perception and evaluation of a tourist destination, it is significantly positively correlated with tourists' willingness to travel, recommend, and revisit ^[1-2]. Chongqing, as an important tourist city in southwest China, attracts a large number of tourists with its rich natural landscapes, long-standing historical culture, and unique mountain city charm. However, research on the perception of Chongqing's tourist destination image is still insufficiently in-depth. Therefore, this paper, using databases such as Web of Science and CNKI as data sources, aims to provide theoretical foundations and practical guidance for shaping and enhancing Chongqing's tourist image by reviewing relevant research on the perception of Chongqing's tourist destination image.

2. Research progress on the perception of tourist destination image

Research on the perception of tourist destination image, as an important component of tourism studies, has a history dating back to the 1970s when scholars began to focus on the impact of tourist destination image on

tourists' behavioral decision-making^[3]. By comparing semiotic analyses, Hunter explored the social construction of Seoul's online tourism image, providing a new perspective for research on the perception of tourism destination images^[4]. At that time, Hunt first defined "tourism destination image" as the sum of an individual's impressions of non-residential places, and this definition laid a theoretical foundation for subsequent research^[5]. With the vigorous rise of the tourism industry, the image of tourism destinations has increasingly emerged as a key factor influencing tourists' decision-making, while also exerting a profound impact on the competitiveness of tourism destinations^[6].

Domestic scholars have gradually recognized the importance of tourism destination images and have devoted themselves to relevant research, deepening their understanding of this field. Hu Mengjiao, through a comprehensive analysis of literature on tourism destination images from 1989 to 2015, refined three major dimensions for measuring destination images and proactively pointed out that the integration of structured and unstructured measurement methods would be a future development trend^[7]. These early research findings have constructed a solid theoretical framework and methodological system for research on the perception of tourism destination images. Entering the 21st century, the vigorous rise of the Internet and social media has greatly enriched the dissemination channels and influencing factors of tourism destination images, presenting more complex and diverse challenges and opportunities for research on the perception of tourism destination images^[8].

In summary, research on the perception of tourism destination images has continuously evolved over time, with its theoretical depth and practical breadth continuously expanding with the changing times. These studies also provide a rich background and theoretical foundation for research on the perception of tourism destination images in Chongqing.

3. Current research status on the perception of Chongqing's tourism image

As a popular tourist city, Chongqing has attracted a large number of tourists, whose travel experiences in Chongqing vary widely, attracting the attention of numerous scholars. Based on this, this paper focuses on the current research status of the perception of Chongqing's tourism image, systematically reviewing it from three aspects: scenic spots and landscapes, cuisine and culture, and tourism attractions.

3.1. Scenic spots and landscapes

Research on Chongqing's tourism image adopts a multi-pronged approach. Network text analysis reveals discrepancies between the official promotion of Chongqing's tourism image and tourists' perceptions. The official emphasis lies in tourism promotion and experiences, while tourists focus more on the environment and attractions^[9]. Analysis of online travelogues indicates that tourists are deeply impressed by Chongqing's urban landscape, with the "mountain city" image standing out prominently^[10-11]. Similar conclusions are drawn from research on online travelogues from the perspective of tourism subjects, which also shows that modern urban landscapes and historical buildings are the primary perceptions of tourists^[12-13]. Network text analysis of popular attractions reveals that each attraction has distinct characteristic attributes, with Tiansheng Sanqiao evoking high positive emotions and the Yangtze River Cableway generating more negative emotions^[14]. Through text mining and other analyses in Jiangjin, it is found that the tourism industry is closely integrated with culture and wellness^[15]. In terms of high-frequency elements at Hongya Cave, tourists and the official image share similarities, with a greater focus on the environmental atmosphere and tourism experience^[16]. Rooted theory and network text

analysis of Heigu Valley reveal an uneven cognitive image among tourists, with a strong tourism atmosphere and a strong perception of the scenic area's environment ^[17]. Network text and image analysis of Danzishi Old Street indicate that tourists pay attention to elements such as the street's landscape ^[18]. Research on Chongqing Garden Expo Park shows that tourists have a high level of attention to elements such as the park's landscape ^[19]. Network text analysis of Shancheng Lane reveals that tourists have a good perception of the architectural style and the atmosphere of old Chongqing, with a high level of attention to tourism resources ^[20]. These studies contribute to a deeper understanding of Chongqing's tourism image and characteristics from different dimensions.

3.2. Food and culture analysis

Chongqing as a whole through online travelogues, tourists are deeply impressed by its cuisine, with a vivid image of it being a "city of gastronomy." However, their perception of history and culture is weak, suggesting the need to tap into cultural resources and develop food tourism ^[10-11]. From the perspective of tourism subjects, by collecting and analyzing online travelogues on urban tourism in Chongqing using grounded theory and content analysis methods, it is concluded that Chongqing leaves a deep impression on its "food", while perceptions of "culture, history, and art" are weak ^[12]. Collecting and analyzing travelogues from Mafengwo on Chongqing reveals that specialty snacks are the primary image perception of tourists, and the entertainment value of tourism needs to be enhanced. Historical resources can be utilized to create cultural icons ^[13]. By constructing a tourism image perception analysis model to study Chongqing's perception from 2015 to 2019, it is found that before 2018, humanistic tourism resources received attention, and "hot pot" left a deep impression ^[21]. Hao Xiwen employed methods such as questionnaire surveys to explore the impact of cultural integration on tourists' image perception in Wulong's natural scenic areas. He constructed a perception factor model, clarified the effectiveness of cultural integration measures and the positioning of the scenic area's image, providing valuable insights for research on the integration of culture and tourism ^[22].

3.3. Tourism attractions

Wu Hongyan analyzed Wansheng Ordovician Scenic Area through online texts and images, finding that the projected image and perceived image of the scenic area largely align in terms of amusement facilities, but differ in the promotion of cultural landscapes, offering guidance for the scenic area's development ^[23]. An analysis of online travelogues revealed negative perceptions of Chongqing's tourism environment and the need for improved public facilities ^[10-11]. By collecting online travelogues of Chongqing's urban tourism from the perspective of tourists and applying grounded theory and content analysis, it was found that Chongqing left a deep impression in terms of its "tourism environment" ^[12]. Based on the "cognitive-affective" model, Tongjing Hot Spring Scenic Area was found to have hot springs, services, and the environment as its basic cognitive images ^[24].

3.3. Research status on Chongqing's tourism emotional image

An analysis of research on the perception of Chongqing's tourism image reveals varied perceptions among tourists. Subsequently, related research will be analyzed in terms of positive and negative images.

3.3.1. Positive image

By collecting online travelogues of Chongqing's urban tourism from the perspective of tourists and applying grounded theory and content analysis, it was found that tourists' evaluations were positive, with high tourism

satisfaction and strong intentions to revisit. A perception system was also constructed to explain the mechanisms^[12]. By collecting travelogues from Mafengwo, Chongqing was found to have a high recognition as a “Food Capital”, and overall satisfaction was good^[13]. A tourism image perception analysis model was constructed to study Chongqing’s perception from 2015 to 2019, revealing an overall positive image^[21]. Tianshengsan Bridge was found to have a relatively high proportion of positive emotions^[15]. Research on Hongya Cave Scenic Area showed similarities between tourists and official images in high-frequency elements, with a greater focus on the environmental atmosphere and tourism experience. Official positive evaluations were high in emotional elements, and tourists exhibited high positive emotions^[16]. At Tongjing Hot Spring Scenic Area, based on the “cognition-emotion” model, tourists predominantly exhibit positive emotions^[24]. Through online text analysis of Shancheng Lane, it is found that tourists have a favorable perception of the architectural style and the atmosphere of old Chongqing^[20].

3.3.2. Negative image

Through the analysis of online travelogues regarding Chongqing as a whole, it is found that public facilities need improvement, and there is a negative perception of the tourism environment and public facilities^[10–11]. A study constructing a model for analyzing the perception of Chongqing’s tourism image from 2015 to 2019 revealed that after this period, awareness of internet-famous attractions and activities increased, while negative emotions intensified due to large tourist volumes^[21]. An online text analysis of popular tourist attractions in Chongqing indicates that overall tourist satisfaction is average, with dissatisfaction mainly regarding commercialization, waiting times, and management. The Yangtze River Cableway generates significant negative emotions^[14]. Through grounded theory and online text analysis, it is found that at Heiguan Valley Scenic Area, there are issues with ticket and transportation prices, and there is a discrepancy between official and tourist perceptions of the image^[17]. At Tongjing Hot Spring Scenic Area, based on the “cognition-emotion” model, negative emotions are concentrated on tourism infrastructure^[24]. Although no negative impacts are explicitly mentioned in the online text and image analysis of Danzishi Old Street, potential issues such as inadequate facilities or services can be inferred^[18]. Research on Chongqing Garden Expo Park reveals dissatisfaction primarily centered on service management, aligning with some evaluation criteria^[19]. Through online text analysis, Shancheng Lane is noted for issues such as roads and commercialization^[20].

4. Current status of research methods

Regarding the research methods employed by scholars to study the perception of Chongqing’s tourism image, although each has its own focus, they all fully leverage the advantages of online text analysis, combined with different software tools and theoretical frameworks, to conduct in-depth explorations of tourism image and tourist perception. Based on this, they can be categorized into online text analysis and content analysis.

4.1. Online text analysis

In terms of research methods, online text analysis is widely used and supported by various software tools. Some studies have employed ROST CM6 or ROST Content Mining software to conduct in-depth explorations of topics such as Shancheng Lane, the competitive-cooperative relationships among scenic spots, and the depth of perception of tourism images through methods including high-frequency word analysis, word frequency statistics,

semantic network analysis, and sentiment analysis^[12, 20, 25–26]. Hu Duohao utilized network text analysis and applied the ROST Content Mining tool for word frequency and semantic network analysis^[27]. NVivo 12 software was also employed for coding analysis of textual data, combined with ROST CM software for high-frequency word and word cloud analyses, further enriching the research perspectives^[17]. Python, as a technological tool, was used to collect travelogue texts from multiple platforms, which, after preprocessing, underwent high-frequency word processing and sentiment analysis to study tourist perceptions^[21].

4.2. Content analysis method

Some studies directly utilized online travelogues and reviews as samples, employing content analysis methods combined with tools such as ROST Content Mining 6 software to conduct high-frequency word analysis, semantic network analysis, and sentiment analysis, exploring tourist perceptions of destinations like Danzishi Old Street and the International Garden Expo Park^[18–19, 27]. Other studies selected online travelogues, applied grounded theory for categorization, and then statistically analyzed high-frequency words to assess perceptions of tourism images^[12]; some research also examined the competitive-cooperative relationships among scenic spots through spatial analysis methods^[25].

5. Research review and prospects

5.1. Research review

5.1.1. Research content

The research content on the perception of Chongqing's tourism image primarily focuses on tourists' cognition, emotions, and intentions regarding Chongqing as a tourism destination. Researchers have delved into the constituent elements of Chongqing's tourism image, such as natural scenery, cultural history, and culinary experiences, by analyzing tourists' online reviews and social media data. These studies not only unveil tourists' overall evaluations of Chongqing's tourism image but also pinpoint specific differences in their perceptions across various tourism resources and activities.

5.1.2. Research methodology

In terms of research methodology, scholars have widely adopted online text analysis methods, conducting both quantitative and qualitative analyses of online travelogues. This approach allows them to uncover themes and emotional tendencies in tourist reviews, providing an in-depth examination of tourists' perceptual details. Such a diversified research methodology ensures that the research conclusions are more comprehensive and profound.

5.1.3. Research areas

The research areas primarily focus on major tourist destinations within Chongqing, such as Hongya Cave, Jiefangbei, and the Yangtze River Cableway. These areas not only serve as iconic attractions in Chongqing's tourism landscape but also act as crucial windows through which tourists perceive Chongqing's tourism image. By conducting in-depth analyses of tourists' perceptions in these areas, researchers have provided a solid foundation for shaping and enhancing Chongqing's tourism image.

5.2. Research prospects

Future research can proceed in three main directions. Firstly, expanding the research scope to cover the entire

Chongqing region, with a particular emphasis on studying the images of tourism destinations in counties and districts, paying attention to niche and rural attractions, and constructing a comprehensive tourism image system for Chongqing. Secondly, emphasizing the integrated application of multiple research methods, strengthening the organic integration of quantitative and qualitative research to enhance the scientific rigor and depth of the studies. Thirdly, given the constantly evolving tourism market, increasingly diverse tourist demands, and the emergence of new forms of tourism, continuously tracking and studying the impact of these new trends on the perception of Chongqing's tourism image will help promote the sustainable development of Chongqing's tourism industry and enhance its overall image and competitiveness.

Additionally, subsequent research should strengthen foundational theoretical research to construct a complete theoretical framework; prioritize the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods to deeply explore influencing factors; promote interdisciplinary research by combining theories and methods from multiple disciplines; and enhance the practical application of research findings by combining resource analysis with tourist perception surveys to provide more effective guidance for destination development. It is hoped that more comprehensive and in-depth research in the future will drive Chongqing's tourism industry to new heights.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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