

The Impact of Tourism Destination Experience Scenarios on Tourists' Online Engagement: A Case Study of Ciqikou Ancient Town in Chongqing

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Abstract: As the core space embodying local culture, tourism destinations not only enhance tourists' cultural perception through their experience scenarios but also, to a certain extent, maintain emotional bonds between tourists and the neighborhoods, thereby influencing their online engagement behavior. Based on this, this paper takes the ancient town of Ciqikou in Chongqing as a typical case to examine the mechanism by which experience scenarios affect tourists' online engagement and proposes relevant strategic suggestions. The study finds that the experience scenarios in Ciqikou mainly consist of two dimensions: historical settings and consumption experiences. These two dimensions work together to influence tourists' perceived value, thereby promoting the formation of online engagement behavior. The research results of this paper provide valuable practical insights for tourism destination managers and offer theoretical support for better utilizing digital technologies to enhance tourists' online engagement and achieve sustainable development of tourism destinations.

Keywords: Tourism destination; Online engagement; Experience scenarios; Ciqikou in Chongqing; Historical culture

Online publication: August 14, 2026

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the internet and mobile technologies, tourists' travel behaviors have gradually extended from offline to online, forming a closed loop of "experience-sharing-interaction." As an important indicator measuring the extent of online interaction between tourists and tourism destinations, online engagement has become a significant topic in tourism marketing and destination management ^[1]. This concept not only reflects tourists' interest and emotional investment in the destination but also further influences their decision-making behavior, word-of-mouth communication, and loyalty to the destination ^[2]. In the tourism field, enhancing online engagement helps increase destination attractiveness and supports the

sustainable development of the tourism economy ^[3].

Experience scenarios represent the overall experiences tourists have during their travels, encompassing various aspects such as the physical environment, cultural atmosphere, and interpersonal interactions ^[4]. Generally, more positive experience scenarios are more likely to evoke positive emotions in tourists, leave a deeper impression in their memories, and subsequently influence their overall evaluation and behavioral intentions toward the destination, thereby enhancing their online engagement.

As a national 4A-rated tourist attraction, Ciqikou Ancient Town attracts tourists from all over the country with its rich historical and cultural heritage, distinct Ba-Yu characteristics, and diverse culinary delights ^[5]. However, with the intensifying competition in the tourism market, Ciqikou Ancient Town faces new pressures in enhancing tourists' experiences and strengthening its online appeal. Based on this, this paper takes Ciqikou Ancient Town in Chongqing as an example and analyzes the mechanism by which tourism destination experience scenarios affect tourists' online engagement, using comment data from online platforms. The findings provide theoretical references and practical bases for optimizing marketing strategies and achieving sustainable development for Ciqikou Ancient Town and other tourism destinations.

2. Literature review

2.1. Research on online engagement

The concept of customer engagement can be traced back to the field of marketing in the early 21st century, with its theoretical foundation primarily formed through practical explorations in Western business circles ^[6]. Against the backdrop of the deepening experience economy and a series of practical activities undertaken by enterprises to adapt to the times, customer engagement gradually found its way into the fields of marketing and service management, further developing under the impetus of the internet model ^[7-9]. As a specific form of customer engagement, online engagement primarily refers to the interaction, participation, and emotional connection formed between consumers and brands or products in an online environment ^[10]. With the rise of social media, the scope of research on online engagement has gradually expanded from initial brand communication to a broader range of online platforms and user behaviors. In the tourism sector, existing research generally indicates that online engagement significantly influences tourists' travel decisions, travel experiences, and post-travel behaviors. The concept was further refined in 2014, leading to the proposal of a multidimensional measurement model ^[11].

2.2. Research on experience scenarios

Research on experience scenarios primarily focuses on their constituent elements and their impact on tourist behavior and psychology. Scholars have proposed various models of experience scenarios, such as structural equation models ^[12]. Existing research shows that positive experience scenarios generally enhance tourist satisfaction and loyalty ^[12]; conversely, negative experience scenarios may trigger tourist dissatisfaction and adversely affect subsequent behaviors.

2.3. Current research status and shortcomings on the relationship between experience scenarios at tourism destinations and online engagement

In recent years, some scholars have begun to pay attention to the relationship between experience scenarios at tourism destinations and online engagement. However, overall, relevant research is still in its infancy.

Existing studies mainly rely on methods such as questionnaires and interviews to explore the connections between certain dimensions of experience scenarios at tourism destinations and online engagement ^[10]. Nevertheless, these studies have relatively limited mining of tourists' online text data, making it difficult to comprehensively and objectively present the impact of experience scenarios at tourism destinations on online engagement to a certain extent. Based on this, this paper intends to introduce text mining technology to analyze tourists' online review data, taking the ancient town of Ciqikou in Chongqing as an example, to explore the mechanism by which its experience scenarios affect tourists' online engagement, thereby providing new perspectives and methods for experience management and marketing at tourism destinations.

3. Research methodology

This paper employs web text mining methods, taking Ciqikou in Chongqing as an example, to explore the impact of experience scenarios at tourism destinations on tourists' online engagement. The specific research methods are as follows:

3.1. Data sources

The data for this paper are sourced from the representative online platforms Xiaohongshu and Ctrip, with keywords for data collection including "Ciqikou in Chongqing," "Ciqikou Ancient Town," and "Ciqikou." Using Python web crawlers, relevant review data were automatically scraped, yielding 1,927 Xiaohongshu notes and 2,591 Ctrip review texts. These platforms were chosen because they contain a large amount of user-generated content (UGC), including travelogues, reviews, and ratings, which can comprehensively reflect tourists' perceptions and evaluations of Ciqikou Scenic Area. The data collection period spans the last three years (from January 1, 2024, to June 10, 2026) to ensure the timeliness and representativeness of the data.

3.2. Data processing

Before data analysis, it is necessary to preprocess the raw data to improve data quality and analysis efficiency. Data processing mainly includes the following steps:

- (1) Data Cleaning: Remove duplicate reviews, invalid reviews (such as garbled text, advertisements, etc.), and reviews that are clearly unrelated to the research topic.
- (2) Text Segmentation: Use Python's Jieba text segmentation tool to segment the review texts. Taking the word as a unit, continuous text sequences are divided into independent words, and the top 20 most frequently occurring words with a frequency of at least three are selected as high-frequency feature words ^[13].
- (3) High-Frequency Word Filtering: Filter out function words, modal particles, punctuation marks, etc., that have no practical significance for text analysis, such as "ha," "le," and "ye." Additionally, since the obtained high-frequency words may include synonyms or dialects, to maintain word consistency, words like "bashideban" (very comfortable) and "meitese" (no characteristics) are replaced with "worth a visit" and "homogenization," respectively.

3.3. Text mining results

The Xiaohongshu text data comes from notes with the search term “Ciqikou Ancient Town” on Xiaohongshu, spanning from January 1, 2024, to June 10, 2026. A total of 1,927 Xiaohongshu notes were obtained, and after removing 253 notes with garbled or meaningless content, 1,674 notes were retained. The Ctrip website data comes from review texts for the “Ciqikou Ancient Town” scenic spot on the Ctrip app, extracted from January 1, 2024, to June 10, 2026. A total of 3,109 review texts were obtained, and after manually removing garbled and meaningless reviews, 2,591 reviews remained. Based on this, high-frequency feature words were obtained, with detailed results shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. High-frequency feature words on the platforms

Platform	Year	Keywords
Xiaohongshu	2024	Fried dough twist; Chicken gizzards; Memory of Liyuan; Hanlin Bridge; Longshan Park; Baolun Temple; Snacks; Ancient banyan tree; Brown sugar glutinous rice cake; Twisted sugar candy; Hot and sour noodles; Bar street; Little Chongqing Stele; Hemei Courtyard; Yuwang Palace; Soldiers' Monument; Baoshan Palace; Huangjueping Archway; Yinglong Gate; Epidemic
	2025	Ciqikou Back Street; Jiucigang; Commercialization; Crispy chili; Baolun Temple; Bracelet; Coffee shop; Teahouse; Bar; Huafu Cultural Festival; Times Youth League; Snacks; Check-in; Chongqing Memory Museum; Local specialties; Maoxuewang; Chicken gizzards; Shaci Postal Gift; Fan; Han Zidong Exhibition Hall
	2026	Ancient town chicken gizzards; Chen Changyin; Baolun Temple; Hot pot; Broad beans; Scent Diary; Running Man; Photo-taking; Thermometer; Mountain city charm; Stairs; Slippery flagstone road; Stilted buildings; Lampshade beef; Bracelet; Pork jerky store; Thousand-year-old temple; 1949 Theater; Jinbi Main Street; Night view; Jingzhongtian Square
Ctrip	2024	Worth visiting; Monotonous; Commercialization; Check-in; Convenient transportation; Steps; Hot pot; Old Chongqing; Chen Mahua; Souvenir; Internet-famous attraction; Many snacks; Crowded; Expanded area; Good scenery; Maoxuewang; High cost-performance; Famous ancient town; Interesting; Teahouse; Photo-taking; Chongqing landmark; Epidemic; River view
	2025	Commerce; Maoxuewang; Steps; Red Crag; Stilted buildings; Not bad; Sightseeing boat; Check-in; Popular; Delicious food; Night view; Complete variety of goods; Much the same; Convenient transportation; Blue flagstone; Hot pot; Patriotic education; Long history; Holidays; Well-preserved; 1949 Theater; Porcelain; Bar; Temple; Mahua; Poor hygiene
	2026	Chongqing 1949; Sightseeing boat; Stair climbing challenge; Jialing River; Homogenization; Superior location; Internet-famous check-in spot; Red education; Traditional opera; Worth it; Good scenery; Crowded; Commercialization; Strange-flavored beans; Hot pot; Large scenic area; Cost-performance; Many snacks; Photo-taking; Inconvenient parking; Noisy and crowded; Expensive; Stroll; Bayu characteristics; Narrow roads

3.4. Classification and coding

Tangible and intangible factors constitute the two parts of influencing factors among the high-frequency vocabulary. Tangible factors are those that can be personally experienced during a journey and can be categorized into transportation facilities, food, culture and history, shopping markets, price levels, etc. Intangible factors can be divided into image perception and expected benefits ^[14]. Based on the aggregated results of tourists' online frequency vocabulary, this paper adds an “activity” category within tangible factors, which primarily includes keywords such as performances, large-scale events held in Ciqikou, and spontaneous behaviors of tourists within the scenic area ^[13]. Subsequently, the words obtained through text mining are classified (**Table 2**), with synonyms merged and summarized during the classification process.

Table 2. Classification of high-frequency words

Tangible factors	Culture and history	Liyuan Memory, Hanlin Bridge, Longshan Park, Baolun Temple, Little Chongqing Stele, Yuwang Palace, Soldiers' Monument, Baoshan Palace, Yinglong Gate, Han Zidong Exhibition Hall, Ciqikou Back Street, Jiucigang, Steps, Stilted buildings, Thousand-year-old temple, Blue flagstone, Long history, Porcelain, Well-preserved, Hongyan Spirit, Patriotic education, Red education, Bayu characteristics	
	Events	Epidemic, Times Youth League, Running Man	
	Consumption	Food	Fried dough twist, Chicken gizzards, Many snacks, Brown sugar glutinous rice cake, Twisted sugar candy, Hot and sour noodles, Bar street, Crispy chili, Coffee shop, Teahouse, Bar, Local specialties, Maoxuewang, Chicken gizzards, Chen Changyin (food brand), Hot pot, Broad beans, Lampshade beef, Pork jerky store;
		Commodities	Bracelet, Shaci Postal Gift, Fan, Scent Diary, Souvenir, Complete variety of goods
	Attractions	Ancient banyan tree, Huangjueping Archway, Chongqing Memory Museum, Jinbi Main Street, Night view, Jingzhongtian Square, Thermometer, Internet-famous attraction, Famous ancient town, Chongqing landmark, River view, Mountain city charm, Internet-famous check-in spot, Jialing River	
	Activities	Huaifu Cultural Festival, Photo-taking, Check-in, Chongqing 1949 Theater, Sightseeing boat, Holidays, Traditional opera, Stroll, Stair climbing challenge	
Intangible factors	Image perception	Commercialization, Slippery flagstone road, Worth visiting, Monotonous, Convenient transportation, Old Chongqing, Crowded, Expanded area, Good scenery, High cost-performance, Interesting, Homogenization, Poor hygiene, Inconvenient parking, Noisy and crowded, Expensive, Superior location, Large scenic area, Narrow roads	

4. Results analysis and discussion

4.1. Four-quadrant distribution diagram

To visually illustrate the extent to which the dimensions of consumption experience and historical culture within the destination experience scenarios of Ciqikou influence tourists' online engagement, this paper has constructed a four-quadrant distribution diagram (**Figure 1**). The horizontal axis represents the intensity of positive evaluations of the experience scenario elements, while the vertical axis indicates the frequency with which these elements appear in tourists' reviews.

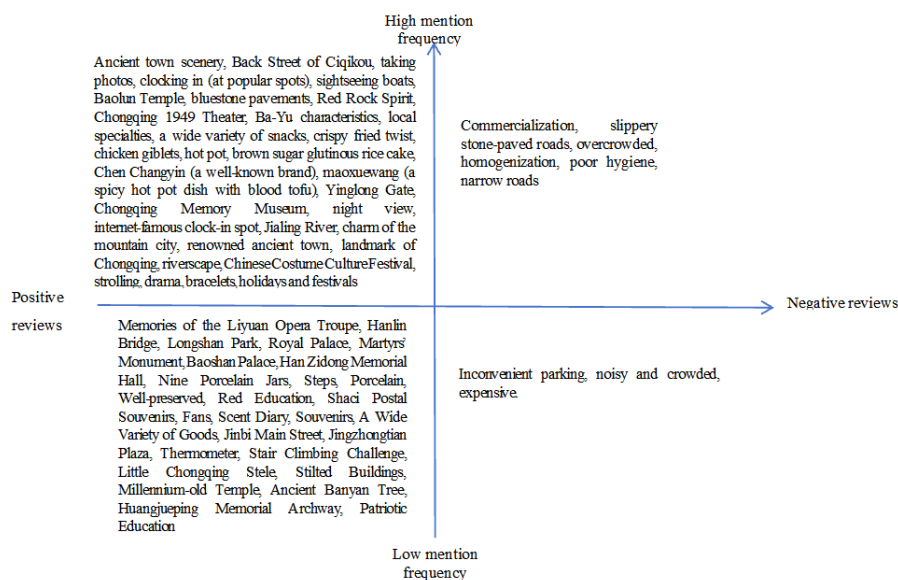


Figure 1. Four-quadrant distribution diagram

4.2. Problem identification

Based on the analysis of the four-quadrant distribution diagram, this paper identifies several prominent issues in the construction of experiential scenes in Ciqikou Ancient Town. The phenomena of excessive commercialization and homogenization are evident, with numerous similar commercial shops and products diluting the cultural characteristics of the ancient town, adversely affecting tourists' travel experiences, and generating numerous negative online reviews. There are also deficiencies in infrastructure and supporting services, with issues such as sanitation, parking convenience, and road conditions directly impacting tourists' comfort and convenience, becoming focal points of online feedback from tourists. Additionally, the inadequate exploration of cultural connotations is also a notable problem. Despite Ciqikou Ancient Town possessing rich historical and cultural resources, there is still a lack of presentation and interpretation, resulting in tourists' insufficient understanding of the town's culture and difficulty in forming stronger emotional connections.

4.3. Optimization measures

To address the aforementioned issues, the following optimization measures are proposed:

- (1) Strengthen planning and guidance to control the degree of commercialization: Reasonably regulate the number and types of shops, encourage the development of culturally creative products with local characteristics, and minimize the negative impacts of homogeneous competition.
- (2) Improve infrastructure and enhance supporting services: Increase investment in key areas such as sanitation, road conditions, and transportation facilities to further enhance tourists' safety, comfort, and convenience.
- (3) Deeply explore cultural connotations and innovate tourism products: Develop tourism products with stronger cultural characteristics based on research findings on the history and culture of Ciqikou Ancient Town, thereby enhancing tourists' cultural experiences.
- (4) Strengthen online interaction and guide positive reviews: Staff should promptly respond to tourists' comments, properly handle feedback issues, and encourage tourists to share their positive travel experiences to improve their online engagement.
- (5) Utilize big data technology for precision marketing: Analyze tourists' behavioral characteristics based on their online review texts to better understand their preferences and actual needs, and implement precision marketing accordingly to enhance tourists' satisfaction and loyalty.

5. Summary and outlook

Taking Ciqikou Ancient Town in Chongqing as an empirical object, this study utilized Python web crawler technology to capture online reviews from tourists across multiple platforms. Based on the classification of scene dimensions using Jieba word segmentation and text qualitative coding, an analysis matrix was constructed using a four-quadrant distribution diagram to deconstruct the path through which destination experiential scenes influence tourists' online engagement behaviors. This method aims to accurately identify the strengths, potentials, weaknesses, and critical issues in the experiential scenes of target areas, providing decision-making bases for precision marketing and multidimensional management of scenic spots. The study reveals that the consumption experience and historical and cultural dimensions within experiential scenes have varying pulling effects on tourists' online engagement. Specifically, advantageous elements such as

the ancient town's appearance, specialty snacks, and folk culture have significant driving effects on online engagement; in contrast, multiple weaknesses such as excessive commercialization, scene homogenization, and lagging infrastructure act as negative blocking factors restricting online interaction.

In light of this, this paper proposes scene optimization paths from dimensions such as refined spatial planning, service quality and efficiency improvement, resilient infrastructure optimization, in-depth cultural interpretation, and intelligent community interaction, aiming to achieve bidirectional improvement in tourists' travel experiences and online engagement. This, to a certain extent, deepens the theoretical discussion on the logical connection between experiential scenes and tourists' online engagement and provides micro-level practical references for authorities to promote data-driven scenic spot governance.

Despite the explorations made in this study, there are still some limitations. Firstly, the existing analysis is primarily based on online texts, with insufficient integration of multi-source data. Subsequent research can introduce multimodal data such as questionnaires and in-depth interviews to enhance the mutual corroboration of research conclusions. Secondly, constrained by the time slices of observation, the study has not fully presented the dynamic evolution of experiential scenes and online engagement behaviors. Thirdly, this paper has not examined tourists' individual differences in sufficient depth, and it is necessary to further analyze the preference discrepancies and behavioral characteristics of different tourist groups in the future. Based on the aforementioned limitations, future research can continue to expand in the following aspects: constructing a more multidimensional and three-dimensional/comprehensive experiential scene evaluation framework, exploring long-term longitudinal tracking mechanisms for "scene-engagement," optimizing tourism experiences by combining big data and artificial intelligence, and introducing cross-regional and cross-cultural comparative studies to provide more universal theoretical support for the sustainable operation and digital transformation of the tourism industry.

Funding

Key Project of Philosophy and Social Sciences in Shapingba District, Chongqing (Project No. SPBSKZDKT02), entitled "Creative Transformation and Innovative Development of Traditional Culture in Shapingba District."; the Graduate Innovation Program of Chongqing University of Science and Technology (Project No. YKJCX2420810), entitled "Value Assessment and Conservation-Oriented Development Strategies for the Chongqing Port Opening Heritage Park."

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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