

A Review of Research on the Impact of Short Video Communication on Travel Intention

Haiyang Wang^{*}, Ting Wang, Jingran Bai

School of Geography and Tourism, Anhui Normal University, Wuhu, China

^{}Corresponding author*

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Abstract: Short videos have emerged as a pivotal domain for destination marketing and significantly influence tourist decision-making processes. However, the current body of research is deficient in a comprehensive and systematic understanding of the mechanisms through which the communication facilitated by these short videos impacts travelers' intentions to visit specific destinations. To address this gap, this article undertakes a meticulous and systematic review of both domestic and international core literature. The review is structured around three critical dimensions: the content characteristics of short videos, the interaction mechanisms they employ, and the psychological pathways through which they affect viewers. By delving into these dimensions, the article aims to uncover the underlying internal logic that governs how short video communication shapes travel intentions. Furthermore, the study identifies the existing shortcomings in the current research landscape and suggests potential future research directions. This comprehensive analysis not only enhances our understanding of the role of short videos in travel marketing but also lays a solid foundation for further in-depth exploration into the impact of short video communication on travel intention, thereby contributing to more effective and targeted destination marketing strategies.

1. Introduction

With the further advancement of the Digital China strategy, short videos, as an important form of Internet application, have been deeply integrated into the field of tourism information dissemination and marketing. As of June 2024, the number of short video users in my country has reached 1.05 billion, accounting for 95.5% of the total Internet users, with an annual growth rate of 8.3%, making it the digital media form with the most growth potential [1]. The 14th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development clearly proposes the need to use digital technology to improve the digitalization level of the tourism industry and innovate marketing models [2]. In this context, short videos, with their immersive experience, strong social attributes and precise algorithm recommendations, have reconstructed the tourism decision-making chain and become a key medium to stimulate tourism willingness.

This paper systematically sorts out the existing research on the impact of short video communication on tourism willingness, focusing on the three dimensions of content characteristics,

interactive mechanisms and psychological paths, revealing its internal logic of action, and pointing out the shortcomings of existing research and future directions.

2. Definition of Related Concepts

2.1. Concept of Short Video Communication

The rise of short videos is based on the emergence of short video apps. The earliest short video app traced back to date is Viddy, which emerged in the United States in 2010. This platform makes it easier for users to create, share and spread short videos. Short videos are gradually developing and changing, and their boundaries are gradually blurring. Therefore, the academic community has not yet reached a unified consensus on the concept of short video communication. Cheng and Dale collected videos on YouTube and analyzed their common features. They found that short videos are less than 10 minutes long, have social sharing properties, and have a certain increase in views after being released [3]. Wang et al. defined short videos as videos shot on mobile terminals for quick editing or beautification and recording and sharing, usually with a duration of 5-15 seconds [4]. Later, the "Research Report on the Development of Short Video Industry" suggested that the duration range be relaxed to 5 minutes or less, and short videos were defined as videos with short duration, fast dissemination speed, low creation threshold, and strong participation [5]. With the development of short videos, Wang Ying and Huang Liyao further broadened the definition of short video duration, believing that the duration of short videos should not exceed 20 minutes [6].

Although different scholars have different definitions of short videos, most scholars define short videos from three aspects: short video duration, core characteristics, and platform carriers. Therefore, this study defines short videos as videos with a duration of less than 10 minutes that are publicly disseminated by users on social media platforms. At the same time, short video dissemination can be defined as: video content dissemination behavior that is created, edited and publicly shared by users through social media platforms, usually within 10 minutes in length, with rapid diffusion, fragmented consumption, strong social attributes and low creation threshold.

2.2 Concept of Travel Intention

The concept of intention originated from the field of psychology, emphasizing an individual's psychological state, meaning the subjective probability or subjective possibility of people producing a certain behaviour [7]. If there is not obstruction or interruption from other factors, once the intention is formed, it will continue and stabilize until the actual behavior occurs.

Tourism is a kind of consumption behavior of tourists. The concept of tourism intention comes from the basic theory of consumption behavior and is a kind of consumption behavior intention. It was used in tourism research as early as the beginning of the 20th century. At present, domestic and foreign scholars have conducted in-depth research on tourism intention. From the perspective of the concept of travel intention, we can understand its dimensions: whether one is willing to purchase tourism products and whether one will purchase tourism products again; Yang Qinqin believes that travel intention is the tourist's tendency to travel to a specific tourist destination [8]. Liu Li believes that travel intention is the tendency of potential tourists to make a certain travel decision in the future [9]. Although researchers have different definitions of the concept and have different emphases, they all regard travel intention as a tendency to travel to a destination in the future, which is also the essence of the concept of travel intention.

Therefore, this study defines travel intention as the potential tendency of potential tourists to travel to a specific tourist destination in the future. It is a subjective psychological state that reflects the individual's expectations and plans for travel behavior and can predict the occurrence of travel

behavior.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Research Progress of Short Video Communication

Through searching and sorting out domestic and foreign literature related to short videos, it is found that the academic research on short videos mainly focuses on the following three research topics: the content of short video communication, the characteristics and strategy research of short video communication, and the impact of short video communication.

In the research on the content of short video communication, scholars focus on the diversification and vertical development of content. Wang Xiaohong and others pointed out that in the early days, content was often pointed out to have problems of homogeneity and excessive entertainment. However, as the industry matures, content shows a trend of transforming into high-quality and professional content, and vertical fields (such as science popularization and news) have become important growth points [10]. For example, Li Video improves the quality of information content through the PUGC model (professional photographers +editors) [11], while popular science short videos achieve popular dissemination of knowledge through animation demonstrations, expert interpretations, etc. [12]. It is worth noting that short videos have also become a new carrier of innovative expressions of traditional culture, such as operas, festivals, etc., to attract young audiences through creative adaptations, but we need to be wary of the risk that cultural symbols may be superficially consumed. Wu Feng et al. deepened our understanding of the short video content ecology and its evolution, and provided insights into content innovation strategies [13].

In the study of short video communication characteristics and strategies, the research revealed its core communication characteristics and discussed optimization strategies. Short videos show distinct characteristics of fragmented communication. Their short duration is highly adapted to the fragmented time consumption habits of mobile terminals, and the average daily usage time of users is considerable. The powerful intelligent algorithm recommendation mechanism creates an immersive experience by accurately matching user interests, significantly improving user stickiness. In addition, based on convenient social sharing functions (such as forwarding and commenting), short video information can be quickly and multi-level diffused, forming a fission-type communication network. In response to these characteristics, scholars have proposed a series of communication strategies: for example, Pan Lian and Tang Jiawei combined the SIPS consumer behavior model to promote cultural communication in stages [14];Zhang Dapeng optimized the communication effectiveness from the dimensions of communication subject, content, and channel based on Laswell's 5W model [15]; at the same time,the research also generally emphasizes strengthening the content review mechanism and copyright protection to deal with vulgar information and infringement issues and ensure the healthy development of the industry. These studies provide important basis for understanding the communication mechanism of short videos and formulating effective strategies.

In the study of the impact of short video communication, the research perspective focuses on its multi-dimensional social and cultural effects and user behavior changes. In terms of positive impact, short videos are considered to have promoted cultural democratization, provided expression space for marginalized groups, played a role in popularizing knowledge, and enhanced cross-cultural understanding. However, its negative impact cannot be ignored: excessive entertainment tendency may weaken the ability to think deeply; potential impact on the values of young people has caused concern; risks such as privacy leakage and cyber violence are frequent; the "information cocoon" and overuse and even addiction caused by the algorithm recommendation mechanism are

increasingly concerned. User behavior research shows that the motivation for use mainly comes from satisfying the needs of self-expression, social interaction and fragmented learning, but the stickiness strengthened by algorithm recommendation also brings the risk of behavioral dependence [16]. These studies deeply reveal the double-edged sword effect of short videos as an emerging medium, and put forward new requirements for social governance and user media literacy.

3.2 Research Progress on Travel Intention

In the 1970s, foreign scholars began to pay attention to the field of travel intention. Fishbein et al. proposed that "intention" is the inherent potential of individuals to make decisions and execute actions, laying the foundation for subsequent research [17]. Icek et al. further clarified that "intention" precedes individual behavior and is a necessary stage for behavior to manifest, emphasizing the key position of intention before action [18]. In the early 21st century, scholars explored the specific factors that affect travel intention through empirical research. Litvin et al. used Singaporean travelers as the research object and adopted the variable control method to find that the travel intention of Singaporean tourists was affected by their personal attitudes and the attitudes of local residents. They first pointed out the important role of the external factor of the destination residents' attitudes on travel intention, which broadened the research scope of influencing factors [19]. Lam et al. incorporated the theory of planned behavior into the study of the traveler decision-making process, revealing that tourists' satisfaction, perception and travel intention are closely related to their previous travel experience, providing theoretical support for understanding the formation mechanism of travel intention from a psychological perspective [20]. Jung et al. found that the application of augmented reality technology has a significant impact on tourists' experience, and content quality, personalized services, and system performance are the key factors in shaping user experience, reflecting the important role of technology in shaping travel intention, which is in line with the development trend of contemporary tourism technology integration [21].

The discussion of tourists' travel intention in Chinese academia began in the 1980s. Bao Jigang, through empirical research, revealed that Beijing residents' travel preferences are affected by the combined effects of external motivations, internal motivations and mediating variables, and initially laid the foundation for the research framework of domestic travel intentions [22]. Since then, relevant research has gradually deepened. Meng Fei used the movie "Lost in Thailand" as a starting point to analyze the factors that affect the willingness of Jinan citizens to travel to Thailand, reflecting the potential guiding role of cultural media on travel willingness and broadening the research perspective [23]. In recent years, domestic research has achieved fruitful results in the factors affecting travel willingness. Yao Yanbo et al. focused on social media travel sharing and found that its presentation form affects the sense of presence, and then indirectly affects impulsive travel willingness through flow experience, highlighting the key role of social media in shaping travel willingness, which is in line with the current era of the prevalence of social media [24]. Liu Yun studied the impact of self-media short videos on the travel decision-making and consumption willingness of young people and found that its dissemination was significantly correlated with the travel consumption willingness of young people, reflecting the strong impact of emerging communication media on the travel willingness of young consumer groups [25]. Zheng Chunhui et al. focused on the emotional connection between online virtual tour experience and actual travel motivation. With the help of place attachment theory, they found that the higher the value of online experience, the stronger the network emotional attachment, and the greater the shaping effect on the intention of on-site travel, which provides strong empirical evidence for the study of the relationship between virtual tourism and real tourism intention [26].

3.3 Research Progress on the Impact of Short Video Communication on Travel Intention

As an emerging form of social media, short videos have rapidly changed the way people obtain information and entertainment, and have had a significant impact on travel intention. By combing through relevant domestic and foreign literature, it can be found that existing research generally studies the impact of short video dissemination on travel intention from the perspective of content characteristics, interactive mechanisms and the psychological mechanisms triggered.

The core driving role of short video dissemination content characteristics is self-evident. Wang Jianlei used the image self-narration method of the Douyin platform to reveal the impact of different scenes, information content and user personal characteristics on short video consumption experience. The quality of this experience is directly related to travel decisions [27]. Zheng Yingli further refined the content dimension and emphasized the importance of the professionalism of the dissemination subject, the richness of the content and the detailedness of the explanation. They have a significant impact on tourists' rural tourism intention by shaping the cognitive image of the tourist destination [28]. Liu Xin and Hu Yanwenjuan paid attention to the special preference of young groups for short video content and found that the innovation of the content (such as creative editing) can directly stimulate their purchasing behavior [29]. Hu Rong and Wang Guangwei added authenticity (such as real-life shooting), geographical freedom, scene experience, and the direct role of influencer marketing [30]. Li Jiayu et al., from a multi-dimensional perception perspective, proved that the combined impact of short video content on tourists' cognition, emotion and overall image can significantly improve behavioral intention [31]. In addition, highly infectious storytelling content deeply attracts audiences through emotional resonance and strengthens their determination to travel [32]. Wu & Ding's "inspiration chain" model also echoes this point, indicating that emotional narrative drives behavioral transformation by inspiring travel inspiration, and has a particularly significant impact on hedonic tourists [33].

The interactive mechanism of short video dissemination plays a key role in the influence chain. Wengel Yana revealed that user comments indirectly promote decision-making by strengthening the description of travel experience and the fun of the place [34]. Latif Kashmala et al. verified the social exposure effect-for every 10% increase in the amount of travel content posted by friends, the user's willingness to visit increased by 8.3% [35]. This social interactivity was explained by Childer et al. as enhancing consumer experience enjoyment by enhancing the interactivity of online communication [36]. Platform algorithms also play a mediating role. Han et al. confirmed that algorithms can reach niche audiences based on interest tags, but excessive homogeneity may lead to "single experience" [37]. The celebrity effect has been verified by both Chinese and foreign studies. Liu Xin and Hu Yanwenjuan found that it has a direct impact on young tourists [29]. Zhu et al. added that celebrity elements indirectly enhance the willingness by enhancing the perception of destination authenticity [38].

The study of the psychological mechanism triggered by the spread of short videos has further explored the deep-level action path. Qin Suxiang and Wang Pengfei proposed that emotional content stimulates purchase intention by triggering resonance [39]. Zhang Ke et al. found that the flow experience (immersive concentration) guided by the short video host is the key mediator to enhance travel intention [40]. Zhao Wei and Qin Zhili further confirmed that content features such as entertainment and scene-based content promote behavioral conversion by enhancing perceived value [41]. Fang et al.'s grounded research shows that destination image presentation and video production quality indirectly affect willingness by inspiring travel inspiration, and the core psychological path shows chain mediation characteristics [42]. Liu et al. verified that the perceived usefulness, professionalism and interactivity of short video marketing affect willingness by enhancing the sense of presence (immersion), and the sense of presence needs to further trigger the flow experience to fully achieve behavioral conversion [43]. Nguyen et al. added that passive exposure to short videos may trigger "travel envy", indirectly promote decision-making through

desire, and reveal the potential motivational effect of emotional conflict[44].

4. Research Review

By combing through relevant literature, this paper reviews the research on short video communication, travel intention and the impact of short video communication on travel intention, and makes the following summary and review:

In the research progress of short video communication, the academic community has achieved remarkable results, laying the foundation for understanding the impact of short videos on travel intention. The research reveals the diversification and verticalization development trend of short video content, which has gradually transformed from early homogeneity and entertainment to boutique and professionalization, covering science popularization, news, traditional culture and other fields, providing reference for tourism content creation. At the same time, the communication characteristics of short videos, such as fragmented communication, intelligent algorithm recommendation, social sharing function, etc., also provide theoretical support for its application in tourism information communication. In addition, the research also focuses on the multi-dimensional social and cultural effects of short video communication and its changes in user behavior, revealing its positive role in promoting cultural democratization, popularizing knowledge and enhancing cross-cultural understanding, while also pointing out problems such as excessive entertainment, privacy leakage, and information cocoon. However, existing research is still insufficient. In terms of content research, there are few empirical studies on the in-depth mining and innovation strategies of short video tourism content, especially the lack of research on the correlation between tourism vertical content and user travel intention. Although the core characteristics of short video communication characteristics have been clarified, there is a relative lack of research on how to improve the quality of tourism information through multiple channels. In the study of communication impact, there is a lack of research on the quantitative relationship between short video communication characteristics and travel intention, making it difficult to accurately measure its actual promotion effect on travel intention.

In terms of the research progress of travel intention, foreign scholars have begun to pay attention to it since the 1970s, laying a basic theoretical framework, clarifying the inherent potential of intention as a behavioral decision and its key position before action, and exploring various factors affecting travel intention through empirical research, including personal attitudes, attitudes of destination residents, and technology applications. Since the 1980s, domestic academic circles have also achieved a series of results, revealing that tourism intention is affected by the combined effects of external motivations, internal motivations and mediating variables, broadening the research perspective, especially in-depth discussions on the impact of social media and virtual experience on tourism intention. However, existing research still has shortcomings. In terms of the impact of emerging technologies, there is insufficient research on the in-depth impact of emerging technologies such as short videos and virtual reality on travel intention. Especially at the current time when short videos are developing rapidly, systematic research on their relationship with travel intention is still weak, and it is difficult to fully adapt to the technological changes in the tourism industry.

In terms of the impact of short video communication on travel intention, scholars have explored it from three main perspectives: content characteristics, communication interaction mechanism, and psychological mechanism. In terms of content characteristics, the study pointed out that different scenes, information content, and user personal characteristics have a significant impact on short video consumption experience, which in turn affects travel decisions. The professionalism of the communication subject, the richness of the content, and the detailedness of the explanation have an

important impact on tourists' travel intention by shaping the cognitive image of the tourist destination. In addition, storytelling content attracts audiences through emotional resonance and strengthens their determination to travel. In terms of communication interaction mechanism, the study revealed that user comments indirectly promote decision-making by strengthening the description of travel experience and the fun of the place. The celebrity effect indirectly enhances travel intention by enhancing the authenticity perception of the destination. In terms of psychological mechanism research, emotional content stimulates purchase intention by triggering resonance, and flow experience is the key intermediary to enhance travel intention. Entertainment and scene-based features promote behavioral transformation by enhancing perceived value, while presence needs to further trigger the flow experience to fully achieve behavioral transformation. Although the content characteristics, communication interaction mechanisms, and psychological mechanisms of short video dissemination have been preliminarily studied, there has not yet been a clear quantitative analysis and systematic theoretical construction of the interaction mechanism between these factors and how they jointly affect travel intention. Existing research focuses more on the action path of a single factor, but lacks a comprehensive analysis of the interaction of multiple factors. For example, the synergy between creator attributes (such as style and expression) and content attributes (such as storytelling and authenticity) on travel intention has not been systematically explored, and existing research still has shortcomings.

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