

The Impact of the Check-in Phenomenon of Internet Celebrity Food on Urban Cultural Tourism Consumption

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Abstract. With the rapid development of social media, the phenomenon of Online celebrity food spot-checking by influencers has gradually become an important factor influencing urban tourism and cultural consumption. This study is based on the theory of simulation, the hype cycle model, and the theory of customer satisfaction. Through case analysis, data verification, and questionnaire surveys combined, it explores the sustainable impact of the influencer food spot-checking model on consumers, merchants, and urban tourism and cultural consumption. The study found that although this model can increase foot traffic and consumption in the short term, there are problems such as experience gap, flow tidal, and short lifespan of stores in the long term. Text sentiment analysis shows that keywords like "long queue", "high price", and "average taste" frequently appear in negative comments; the questionnaire survey further reveals that only 28% of respondents said they would visit the same store again, and over 60% of respondents believed that "the photo does not match the actual product" was the main dissatisfaction factor. Life cycle modeling further reveals that most influencer stores have the characteristics of short survival cycle and fast decline in popularity. The research suggests that urban tourism and cultural development should focus on content authenticity and service quality, and promote the transformation of the influencer economy towards a sustainable direction.

Keywords: Online celebrity food spot-checking, Urban cultural tourism consumption, Experience gap, Flow tide, Sustainability

1. Introduction

The analysis of this paper is centered on the We media age in the travel and consumption habits of people where social media sites like short video and image sharing sites have been constantly revolutionizing people. Hotspot food checking is the new consumption phenomenon based on a visual confirmative impact, algorithmic suggestions, and the scheme of the offering that has rapidly grown in popularity and turned into a new kind of motivation to urban cultural tourism consumption [1]. Nonetheless, the question of the sustainability of this phenomenon and its effects on consumers, business and urban development has not been extensively researched yet. The current studies are largely focusing on the marketing impacts of the social media or how tourism behaviors are altered, but rarely examine in depth through the concept of multi-agent how the phenomenon of hotspot

checking a food is driven and the adverse effects of the same [2]. On the basis of illusion theory, the hype cycle model and the customer satisfaction theory, the key research question is as follows: Is the food check-in mode of influencers with excessive use of social media buzz sustainable? [3-5]. This research is extremely important to developing urban tourism, as well as sustainable development of influencer food check-in stores. The primary emphasis in this research is to provide a study based on three dimensions namely: consumer experience, business operation, and urban tourism consumption. This has been particularly examined by questionnaire survey and multi-source data verification whereby the literature analysis method has been undertaken to search and read pertinent materials. The positive aspect of such an approach is that it is capable of properly examining the effects of consumer psychology and experience with regard to influencer stores that are receptive to the development of the study. The final research objective of the study is to investigate sustainable effects of influencers using food check-in mode on the consumer, business, and urban tourism consumption. In order to accomplish this aim, questionnaire survey/analysis tests were employed, accompanied by customer remarks on self-media sites, and analysis of texts using sentiment analysis was employed in making comparative analysis. It is intended to get to the guts of the influencer food check-in stores inner mechanism and suggest some measures and recommendations.

2. Literature review

2.1. Simulation theory

The simulation theory was proposed by French philosopher Jean Baudrillard in the 1970s. The core idea is that in a consumer society, simulations (symbols, images) gradually detach from the real prototypes and form an "hyperreal" world independent of reality. As a result, people's cognition and behavior are instead dominated by simulations rather than objective reality. This theory is systematically expounded in "Imitation and Simulation", stating that imitation, through media dissemination, continuously replicates and magnifies itself, eventually replacing reality and becoming the core basis for consumer decisions.

In this study, the theory of simulacra can be applied to analyze the core driving logic of online celebrity food check-in: The aesthetically enhanced food images and videos on social media constitute "simulacra", which are separated from the actual products and environments of the stores. The decision of consumers to take photos is essentially a pursuit of the simulacra rather than a prediction of the actual experience. This theory provides theoretical support for explaining the core dissatisfaction of "discrepancy between photos and reality", helps reveal the root cause of the experience gap, and at the same time offers a key perspective for evaluating the sustainability of "symbolic consumption" in the online celebrity economy.

2.2. Hypothesis cycle model

Formally introduced by Jeffrey Fenn and Michael Raskino in the book in 2008, titled Mastering the Hype Cycle: How to Select the Right Innovation at the Right Time, the Hypothesis Cycle model (Hype Cycle) is a model that presents a distinct cycle of hypotheses, discovery, development, decline and re-leveling (tetracycle). In this model, the five-stage development of new technologies or phenomena is generated attention to its mature implementation is explained: the technology trigger stage, the expectation expansion stage, the bubble burst and trough stage, the steady climb recovery stage, and the productivity maturity stage. The essence of this model is to disclose time gap and cognitive gap between the "excessive promotion" and the "actual value" concepts.

According to this model, this stage can accurately be implemented in the analysis of the lifecycle features of the online celebrity stores: Online celebrity food products enter the expectation expansion stage through the set of social media algorithms, within which there are a lot of visitors accumulating quickly, creating the effect of a craze to visit, but when it turns out that the craze is not so exalted in the face of the real experience of customers, the store enters the stage of the bubble burst and bottom, displaying the phenomenon of a flow tide of a free influx of visitors and a drop in the ratings. This model offers a support frame to test the main assumption of the online celebrity visiting model unsustainable, and also offers the natural law of the short lifetime of most online celebrity shops, which can be used to differentiate between the commercial manifestation of active pop-up strategy and passive decline.

2.3. Customer satisfaction theory

Richard L. Oliver, the American marketing expert, developed the main backbone of the customer satisfaction theory. He put forward in the book *Satisfaction: A Behavioral View on the Consumer*. The dissatisfaction of a customer is a result of the differences between the actual experience and the expected one. Tenure satisfaction is created when the actual experience is greater than the expectation, where the opposite happens, it is dissatisfaction created. Further, satisfaction has a direct influence on the intention to repurchase as well as word of mouth communication behavior. This theory highlights the fact that the fact of matching degree of experiences in such core dimensions like product quality, level of services and cost-effective is the key to defining the sustainability of consumer behavior.

This theory will be a fundamental tool of analyzing the disparity between consumer experience and the resultant behavior in this case: the difference between the envisaged and the achieved scores of the online celebrity food in terms of taste, environment, service, etc. will need to quantify the particular manifestations of the experience gap; in this case, the survey outcome of the unwillingness to revisit again can be explained in terms of this theory, that is, the fact of a lack of satisfaction is a direct inhibitor of the desire to revisit and recommendation behavior. This theory offers a quantitative rationale to the study of consumer behavior, and also it has provided theoretical basis on how to suggest the proposal of transition towards traffic-driven to quality-driven.

2.4. The value of theoretical integration for this research

The three theories mentioned above have become a complete analytic system of the essence of phenomenon - development law - behavioral logic: The theory of simulacra reflects the symbolic nature of online celebrity spot-checking and reveals the initial source of the gap between the results of the experience; The hype cycle model describes the life cycle structure of online celebrity stores and confirms the unsustainability of the model; The customer satisfaction theory quantifies the decision-making mechanism of the consumer behavior and gives it certain takes with which to regulate the directions. The three aspects are mutually fulfilling and include the dissemination logic and commercial regulations of the phenomenon of the online celebrity food spots, along with concentrating on the actual needs of customers. It offers a methodological theoretical explanation of the effects of this phenomenon on the consumers, merchants, and urban cultural tourism consumption in a multi-dimensional way which guarantees scientificity and in-depthness of the research findings.

3. Research methods

This study employed a mixed research approach combining social platform text analysis and questionnaire surveys. It collected over 100 posts related to "internet celebrity cuisine" from mainstream social platforms, analyzed the language and emotional patterns of the users, and conducted a correlation analysis based on the questionnaire survey data.

3.1. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was given to consumers that had already passed through the venue check-in and 36 valid samples including dimensions of decision-making motivation, experience satisfaction, and revisit intention were gathered. The questionnaire presented a five part format that comprised of behavior and motivation, expectations, actual experience, experience gap and subsequent behavior together with basic information.

This research questionnaire is designed on the basis of the fundamental rationality of the theoretical bases, i. e., the logic of theoretical support - content focus, based on theoretical analysis in the sphere of researching consumer behavior, and the uniqueness of the phenomenon under investigation the formalization of the content of the survey by popular influencers.

Within the platform of the scale foundation, the core dimension design of the questionnaire predominantly relies on the logic of the customer satisfaction theory-related scales of Oliver, and developing around the aspect of analysis chain of expectation - actual experience - satisfaction - subsequent behavior, and the research scale of social media tourism consumption behavior as published by Liu Yang and Zhang Lei, and the text sentiment analysis dimension as embraced by Chen Xiaohong and Zheng Lei during consumer satisfaction study, to guarantee the maturity and flexibility of measurement indicators [1,6].

The composition of the questionnaire questions is aimed at exploring the triggering mechanism of the check-in behavior of consumers, by frequency statistics, identification of information channels, sorting the motivation, the fundamental role of social media in the decision-making process of popular food consumption and the weight of the key influence factors of the visual content and recommendation of others. Simultaneously, of five fundamental dimensions of taste, environment/floor decoration, service quality, cost performance and novelty uniqueness, the psychological expectations of the consumer prior to the check-in are measured, and thereafter, data that will be used over time as a benchmark to measure the expectation and actual experience gap is quantified, which is within the fundamental measurement logic of the customer satisfaction theory. The evaluation dimensions in the questionnaire should be five dimensions in line with the part of expectation and the same scoring standard to gather objective consumption data will be included in the questionnaire being per capita consumption and queue time at once to undertake a definitive benchmarking of what is called expectation - experience to give direct basis to the quantitative analysis of experience gap. At last, the reasons behind the gap are examined in detail, concentrating on the willingness to recommend and willingness to repurchase which is a full chain of experience perception- behavior feedback, referring back to the underlying issue of the study the sustainability of the trendy check-in model.

3.2. Collecting data

The questionnaire survey was distributed to consumers who had the experience of checking in, and 36 valid samples were collected. In the questionnaire, demographic information such as gender, age,

and occupation was collected to provide classification basis for the subsequent analysis of behavioral differences among different groups, and to enhance the universality and specificity of the research conclusions.

The valid questionnaires were collected through the online platform, with a total of 36 responses. Among the respondents, 52.78% were male and 47.22% were female; the majority of the respondents were aged between 26 and 35 (75%), and the majority of them were freelancers (58.33%), indicating a high level of social media usage activity.

3.3. Data analysis

Overall, the questionnaire design is based on three core theories and closely aligns with the research topic of "The Impact of Online Celebrity Food check-in on Urban Cultural Tourism Consumption". Through multi-dimensional and progressive question settings, it systematically explores the entire process characteristics of consumers from decision triggering to subsequent behaviors. At the same time, it quantifies key issues such as experience gap and traffic dependence, providing comprehensive and reliable empirical data support for verifying research hypotheses and revealing the essence of the phenomenon.

4. Research results and analysis

4.1. Descriptive statistical analysis

The analysis of behavioral motivations shows that social media is the primary channel for consumers to obtain information about online celebrity stores, with Red Book (77.78%) and Tik Tok (72.22%) dominating the market. In the ranking of check-in motivations, "attracted by the pictures/videos on social media" had the highest comprehensive score (5.03), significantly higher than other factors, indicating the crucial influence of visual content on consumer decision-making. This is consistent with the conclusion of Li, M., & Wang, H. regarding the relationship between social media images and the satisfaction of food tourism, that is, the dissemination of visual symbols is the core driving force for online celebrity food consumption [7].

A comparison between consumers' expectations and their actual experiences reveals a significant gap. Consumers held the highest expectations for the environment (interior decoration) of online celebrity stores, with an average score of 3.94, while their expectations for cost-effectiveness were the lowest, with an average score of 2.92. After the actual experience, the satisfaction scores in all dimensions were lower than the expectations. Specifically, the taste satisfaction dropped from the expected 3.31 to the actual 3.14, the service quality dropped from 3.22 to 3.06, and the cost-effectiveness dropped from 3.03 to 2.97 (Table 1). This phenomenon confirms that the symbolic marketing of online celebrity cuisine is prone to causing widespread experience discrepancies [8].

Table 1. Comparison of expected and actual experience scores

Comparison of expected and actual experience scores			
Dimension	Expected mean score	Mean score of practical experience	Score gap
Taste	3.31	3.14	0.17
Surroundings/Decoration	3.94	3.47	0.47
Quality of service service	3.22	3.06	0.16
cost performance	3.03	2.97	0.06
Novelty and uniqueness	3.42	3.25	0.17

In terms of the specific manifestations of the experience gap, 52.78% of the respondents believed that the experience "basically met expectations", but 27.78% still thought it "slightly lower or far below expectations". Among the reasons for dissatisfaction, "ordinary taste, not matching the name" (41.67%), "excessive price, low cost performance" (41.67%), and "long waiting time" (41.67%) ranked equally first. This is highly consistent with the frequency of negative keywords in the text sentiment analysis and also reflects the problem of symbol consumption alienation in the star economy [9].

The consumption level shows that 38.89% of the cases fall within the range of 201-500 yuan, indicating a significant driving effect of this phenomenon on urban consumption. In terms of subsequent behavior, 52.78% chose "If asked, I will give an honest evaluation", and 33.33% explicitly stated "I will not actively recommend or promote". This cautious attitude reflects the rational return of consumers to the model of visiting and taking photos at popular food spots. This also confirms that the trend of rational consumption recovery is in a state of rational regression [8].

5. Discussion

The findings of the analysis of the above questionnaire survey can suggest that the hypotheses of the research have been generally upheld. Nevertheless, two unforeseeable outcomes remain:

To begin with, the short "life cycle" of some online celebrity stores does not imply that they are operating failures. They have rather chosen the voluntary route of the pop-up strategy with a clear aim of netting a lot of cash by conducting business temporarily. These instances also indicate to the scholars that besides investigating whether the online celebrity visiting trends are sustainable, they should also explore the business strategies that accompany such patterns. The emphasis should be made on the commercial ethics and defense of consumers rights rather than on the unsustainability of the model. Secondly, some of the stores have accomplished long-term popularity due to product iterations and community operations under the influence of the online celebrity visiting model. The resilience of resilient stores is based on the ratio between the core of the product and social dissemination and not merely on the traffic hype [10]. This serves as a valuable point of reference in the further capitalizing into the success mechanism of such stores, and it deserves further, thorough researches in the future.

The scheme of online celebrities advertising food by over-utilizing the impact of social media buzz is fundamentally a classical change in the dilemma of traffic to consumption theory of urban consumer culture tourism consumption. In other words, the traffic concentration does not successfully become the persistent consumption power [11]. Meanwhile, such features as alienation of consumerism are also reflected in this model. The traders are too concerned with symbolic packaging and fail to pay attention to the nature of products and services, which eventually results in

the loss of consumer confidence [9]. The outcomes of the questionnaire survey lead to the conclusion that despite the rational attitude to visiting food-related locations promoted by online celebrities, every quarter of the respondents takes part in the dedicated visiting and consumption activities at least once by the end of a year, which means that this model, nevertheless, has a specific market base. The issue is with how to enhance the quality of experience and the transformation of the so-called traffic-driven to the so-called quality-driven. In addition, the study revealed that individuals become usually easily enticed by visual information, which also can be supplemented by research and analysis.

6. Conclusion

The multi-source analysis and questionnaire survey were the methods of this study to uncover the triple effect of the phenomenon of the online celebrity food spot on the culture tourism consumption in urban areas: gap in consumer experience, brief turnover of the business, and tidal effect of traffic. The outcomes of the survey conducted by questionnaires have clearly indicated that the actual experience of consumers at online celebrity stores were more or less low as compared to the expectations and the willingness to revisit and recommend it to consumers was comparatively low.

According to the research, the current online celebrity economy model, which excessively depends on the buzz on social media, is unsustainable and requires optimization regarding the authenticity of the content, service competency, and policy direction. Specific recommendations are: establishing a credibility appraisal system to discourage excessive beautification and promotion; business entities are advised to make their products and services to be about essence other than just about chase after online buzz, planning and guidance should be strengthened as the online celebrity economy militates against reliance on short-term gains.

Research in the future can further examine the success mechanism of the "resilient stores" and research the percentage of visual information in the power of the internet celebrity card, reasons why people feel different, and whether this is cross-cultural.

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