

The influence of film impression on travel intention: The mediating role of arousal and flow experience

Jiang Xinrong (Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau SAR)

Wei Xinping (Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau SAR)

INTRODUCTION

Film-Induced Tourism (FIT), as an important field of tourism research in recent years, explores how film and drama affect the audience's perception of filming locations and tourism intentions through their visual, plot, and cultural elements. Under the FIT framework, film and drama content has become an important catalyst for destination marketing, and in recent years, animated films such as *Nezha 2* have shown significant potential to shape audiences' perception and travel intentions of filming locations (Tianshi Hall in Hanzhong, Shaanxi Province and Kunlun Mountain, Xinjiang) through film elements. However, there is still a lack of systematic exploration of the internal mechanism of this phenomenon, especially the dynamic relationship between the audience's multi-dimensional impression, presence, and flow experience of the film.

Taking *Nezha 2* as a case study, this study aims to reveal how the multi-dimensional impressions generated by the film, including structural impressions, environmental impressions, and plot impressions, affect the audience's multi-dimensional sense of presence, and further explore the mediating or direct role of flow experience and arousal in the relationship between presence and travel intention. By constructing an integration model, this study attempts to fill the gap in the existing FIT theory, and for the first time integrates audience perception, flow experience, and travel intention into a unified framework, and systematically explains the complex path of film and drama content-driven tourism decision-making.

METHOD

The study utilized an Internet-based questionnaire survey method to collect audience data from those who watched the animated film *Nezha 2*. A total number of 496 out of 562 questionnaires (88.3%) were deemed valid. Covering multiple provinces in China and one respondent from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan. The questionnaire contains closed-ended Likert scale items and demographic information. To ensure data quality, invalid responses that are incomplete or logically contradictory are eliminated in the preprocessing phase.

The partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM) was used for data analysis, and the Amos SPSS 26 was used to analyze the data. Firstly, the reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$) and convergence validity (AVE > 0.5) of the measurement model were verified, and the discriminative validity was tested by the Fornell-Larker criterion. Then, the hypothesis relationship was tested by structural modeling, and the Bootstrap method (5,000 samples) was used to evaluate the path significance and indirect effects. Furthermore, according to the results of Cronbach reliability analysis, the standardized Cronbach α coefficient of the overall scale was 0.986, indicating that the scale had extremely high internal consistency and the reliability was ideal. From the perspective of the correlation of the total number of corrected items, the CITC values of each item were higher than 0.6, and most of them were concentrated between 0.7 and 0.9, indicating that each item had a strong correlation with the overall scale and could effectively reflect the measured constructs. In addition, the α coefficient remained at 0.986 after the deletion of any item, which further verified that the contribution of all items to the overall reliability was balanced and indispensable. The results of validity analysis showed that the KMO value was 0.728, which was greater than 0.7, the chi-square value of the Bartlett spherical test was 2938.868, the degree of freedom was 1176, and the p-value was less than 0.001, indicating that the data were suitable for factor analysis. From the perspective of factor loading coefficients, the load value of each item on at least one factor is higher, indicating that the scale has good structural validity. The mean commonality was high, and the commonality of most of the items was more than 0.6, indicating that the items could be well explained by the extracted common factors. The cumulative

variance explanatory rate after rotation was 73.436%, indicating that the six factors could explain the variation of most of the variables and had strong explanatory power.

FINDINGS

In this study, 496 valid questionnaires were collected. Analysis of the questionnaire results revealed that the multidimensional impressions (Structural Impression, Environmental Impression, and Plot Impression) of the movie *NeZha 2* significantly enhanced the audience's multidimensional presence (Coexistence Presence, Communicate Presence, and Emotional Presence), which positively influenced their Travel Intention. Furthermore, Flow Experience and Arousal mediated the relationship between Presence and Travel Intention.

Based on the analysis of the pre-survey data, significant differences were found in the ratings of Impressions, Presence, Flow Experience, and Travel Intention among audiences of different ages, genders, and residency locations. The influence of monthly income and occupation on Travel Intention intensity was relatively insignificant among the demographical variables. (Table.1 in Appendix)

Additionally, among the multidimensional impressions of the movie, the Structural Impression of the movie *NeZha 2* had the most significant positive impact on generating a multidimensional presence, while the impact of plot impression was the least significant. Multidimensional presence had a highly significant promoting effect on flow experience and arousal generation, as well as significantly directly reinforcing the audience's travel intention.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Based on the theoretical FIT framework, the study explores how the multidimensional impressions (Structural Impression, Environmental Impression, and Plot Impression) generated by the movie *NeZha 2* influence the audience's multidimensional presence (Coexistence Presence, Communicate Presence, and Emotional Presence), and further examines how these impressions, mediated by Flow Experience and Arousal, directly impact or influence the audience's Travel Intention to the movie's filming locations. By constructing and validating this integrated model, the study enriches the theoretical perspective of film tourism research, by combining the audience's multidimensional impressions of the movie with multidimensional presence, revealing the key elements influencing audience presence (related to the movie's Visual Style, Story Plot...).

In practical application, the study offers practical implications for relevant stakeholders: Film producers can enhance audience Presence and Flow Experience by strengthening the film element that most inspires the audience's sense of presence, for example, Visual Style. Additionally, travel destination managers can target the key audiences for film tourism and leverage the popularity of films to emphasize the film element that most inspires the audience's sense of presence in designing immersive tourism experiences, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of destinations. It can also be extended to the optimization of VR tourism.

In conclusion, the study not only provides a new perspective and empirical support for theoretical research in the field of film tourism but also offers practical recommendations for stakeholders, demonstrating significant academic value and practical significance.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Differences in Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristic	Classification	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	293	59.07%
	Male	203	40.93%
Age	18-30	198	39.92%
	31-40	161	32.46%
	41-50	83	16.73%
	Above 51	54	10.89%
	Others	45	9.07%
Residency locations	Southeast China	173	34.88%
	Northeast region	107	21.57%
	Southwest China	80	16.13%
	Northwest China	77	15.52%
	Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan	14	2.82%
Occupation	Student	80	16.13%
	Civil servant	123	24.8%
	Freelance work	162	32.66%
	Others	131	26.41%
Monthly Income	3000 yuan and below	66	13.31%
	3001-8000 yuan	181	36.49%
	8001-15000 yuan	179	36.09%
	More than 15000 yuan	70	14.11%

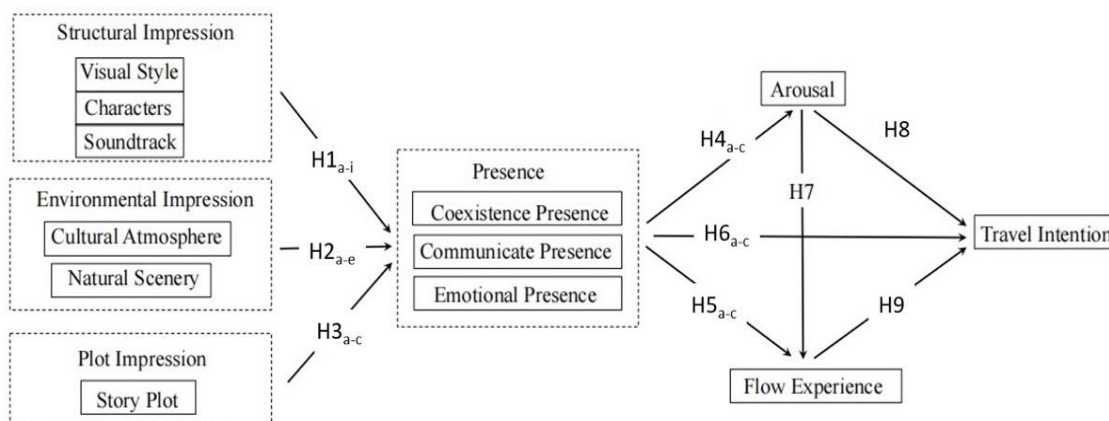


Figure 1: Theoretical Underpinnings and Hypotheses.