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Ethnic Cultural Tourism Consumption Preferences and Sentiment: An Empirical Analysis of Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village

Shengjun Zhang*

School of Business Administration, Guizhou University of Finance and Economics, Guiyang 550025, Guizhou, China

***Corresponding author:** Shengjun Zhang, 3069174372@qq.com

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Abstract: This study examines 1,210 online reviews of tourism consumption at Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village to identify visitors' cultural preferences and sentiment patterns. Word-frequency and semantic analyses show that stilt houses, Miao attire, travel photography, local food, and folk activities are central to visitor interest. Sentiment is predominantly positive (82.17%), while negative responses (14.91%) mainly concern commercialization, transportation, sanitation, and service quality. The findings indicate a shift from passive sightseeing to participatory cultural experience. Accordingly, the study recommends strengthening distinctive cultural products, balancing commercialization with cultural authenticity, improving infrastructure and services, and establishing demand-oriented feedback mechanisms to support sustainable ethnic cultural tourism.

Keywords: Ethnic culture; Tourism consumption preferences; Sentiment analysis; Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village

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1. Introduction

Ethnic cultural tourism is increasingly shaped by experiences that combine cultural identity, participation, and consumption. Visitors no longer evaluate a destination only by its scenery. They also respond to cultural authenticity, opportunities for interaction, perceived value, and service quality. These responses influence both consumption choices and the emotions attached to the trip. Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village provides a useful setting for examining this process because Buyi and Miao cultural elements coexist in a living tourism space. Traditional architecture, ethnic clothing, handicrafts, food, festivals, and everyday village scenes are simultaneously cultural resources and objects of tourism consumption.

Previous studies provide several foundations for understanding this behavior. Research on cultural globalization and cultural landscapes emphasizes the circulation and reinterpretation of cultural symbols, while UNESCO highlights the cultural and social value of cultural participation [1–2]. Consumer research

further shows that decisions are influenced by perceived gains and losses and by experiential dimensions such as feelings, fantasies, and enjoyment [3–4]. Cross-cultural studies also demonstrate that cultural background can shape consumer perception and acceptance [5]. In China, studies of ethnic tourism and intangible cultural heritage have examined cultural-tourism integration and purchase intentions [6–7]. More recent work treats emotion as an important variable in consumption and shows that affect can shape value judgments and decisions [8–11]. Other studies connect cultural consumption with heritage transmission, emerging guochao practices, and digital cultural-tourism development [12–14].

2. Research gap and purpose

Despite this progress, two gaps remain. First, much research stays at the level of industry development or resource utilization and gives less attention to micro-level visitor preferences. Second, preference and sentiment are often examined separately, although they interact during cultural consumption. Research on living, multi-ethnic tourism settings is especially limited. The coexistence of Buyi and Miao cultural symbols may create compound consumption scenarios that differ from single-ethnic destinations.

This study therefore analyzes online reviews of Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village from a demand-side perspective. It identifies the cultural elements most frequently associated with visitor consumption, measures overall sentiment, and links negative responses to specific experience problems. The aim is to provide a concise empirical basis for improving cultural products, services, and destination management while maintaining the cultural distinctiveness of the village.

3. Research design: Data collection and processing

Visitor reviews were collected with Octoparse from Ctrip, Qunar, Dianping, and Mafengwo for January–December 2024. The collected fields included review text, star rating, posting date, and user tags. The raw data were manually screened to remove advertisements, duplicate entries, content unrelated to Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village, and very short comments with little substantive information. After cleaning, 1,210 valid reviews were retained. Text preprocessing was conducted in Python using the jieba word-segmentation library. Common stop words were removed, and synonymous expressions were standardized to improve the consistency of frequency statistics. The analysis then combined word frequency, semantic relationships among high-frequency terms, and sentiment classification. Reviews were classified as positive, neutral, or negative, and representative terms were used to interpret the cultural experiences and service issues associated with each sentiment tendency.

4. Results

4.1. Consumption preferences and key terms

The frequency results show that visitor attention is concentrated on recognizable cultural symbols and experience-oriented consumption. The five most frequent terms were “Miao village” (528), “Qianhu” (486), “stilt house” (356), “Miao attire” (312), and “tourist” (298). High frequencies for “scenery,” “travel photography,” “sour soup fish,” “performance,” and “food” indicate that visitors combine visual appreciation with clothing, photography, dining, and folk-cultural activities. **Table 1** presents the 18 most frequent terms.

Table 1. Selected high-frequency terms for Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village

Rank	Term (n)	Rank	Term (n)	Rank	Term (n)
1	Miao village 528	2	Qianhu 486	3	stilt house 356
4	Miao attire 312	5	tourist 298	6	scenery 265
7	travel photography 248	8	sour soup fish 235	9	culture 210
10	service 198	11	accommodation 186	12	sightseeing shuttle 175
13	performance 168	14	food 156	15	experience 152
16	photography 148	17	commercialization 145	18	night view 136

The term structure suggests three linked preference dimensions (**Figure 1**). First, architecture and landscape are primary cultural anchors, represented by "stilt house," "scenery," and "night view." Second, participatory experiences are prominent, especially Miao-attire rental, travel photography, performances, and local food. Third, service-related terms such as "service," "accommodation," and "sightseeing shuttle" show that cultural appreciation is evaluated together with the practical quality of the trip. In other words, visitors consume both cultural content and the conditions under which that content is experienced.

Negative or ambivalent terms clarify the main constraints on satisfaction. "Commercialization" appeared 145 times, while the sightseeing shuttle appeared 175 times, and price-related comments were also frequent. These expressions are associated with concerns about excessive commercialization, waiting time, price variation, and convenience. The semantic structure therefore places core cultural symbols at the center, connects them to specific consumption activities, and links the outer layer to service quality and management. This pattern indicates that cultural attractiveness remains strong, but the quality of supporting services can amplify or weaken the emotional value of the cultural experience.

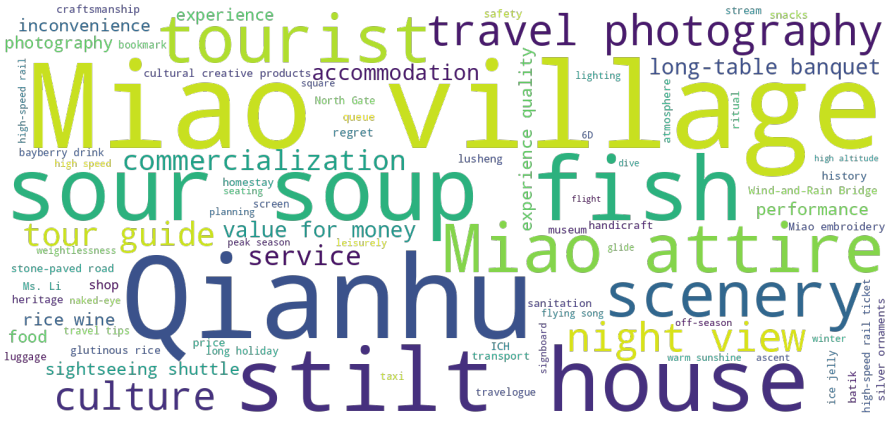

Figure 1. Word cloud of high-frequency terms for Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village

4.2. Sentiment Analysis

For the sentiment statistics reported in **Table 2**, 1,200 texts were classified. Of these, 986 were positive (82.17%), 35 were neutral (2.92%), and 179 were negative (14.91%). The predominance of positive reviews is consistent with the strong frequency of cultural and experiential terms, suggesting that the village generally delivers a favorable cultural tourism experience.

Negative responses, although limited, are important because they cluster around concrete management issues rather than rejection of the culture itself. Complaints refer mainly to commercialization, price transparency,

sanitation, transport capacity, queues, and service quality. Most negative responses were mild in the original classification. This implies that targeted improvements in supporting services could reduce dissatisfaction without changing the cultural core of the destination. The overall distribution is summarized in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Sentiment distribution of online reviews

Analysis result	Count	Proportion
Positive sentiment (0, +∞)	986	82.17%
Neutral sentiment [0, 0]	35	2.92%
Negative sentiment (-∞, 0)	179	14.91%

Taken together, the preference and sentiment results reveal a consistent mechanism: distinctive cultural symbols attract attention, participatory activities convert attention into consumption, and infrastructure and service conditions influence the emotional evaluation of that consumption. Positive sentiment is therefore closely tied to the combined quality of cultural content and the tourism environment.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

This study finds that ethnic cultural elements are the main drivers of tourism consumption at Qianhu Buyi-Miao Village. Traditional architecture, Miao attire, travel photography, local food, and folk performances form the strongest preference cluster. The results also show a shift from passive sightseeing toward participatory and recordable experiences. Visitors increasingly value activities that allow them to wear, taste, make, photograph, or otherwise interact with ethnic culture.

Sentiment is predominantly positive, but negative responses reveal a clear boundary condition: cultural attraction alone does not guarantee satisfaction. Commercialization, transport, sanitation, price transparency, and service quality shape how visitors evaluate the destination. The findings therefore support a demand-oriented view in which cultural authenticity, experience design, and supporting services must be managed together.

5.2. Recommendations

First, cultural products should move from simple display toward deeper participation. Architecture, village landscapes, Miao attire, batik, embroidery, food, music, and festival customs can be organized into coherent experience routes. Interpretation should explain the cultural meaning of these elements rather than present them only as photo opportunities. This can strengthen both cultural understanding and the distinctiveness of tourism products.

Second, commercialization should be managed through authenticity rather than through a simple reduction in commercial activity. Products and services should be rooted in local cultural features, while homogeneous souvenirs and excessive sales-oriented spaces should be controlled. A portion of tourism benefits can also support the maintenance of traditional spaces and the continuation of living cultural practices.

Third, infrastructure and service quality should be treated as part of the cultural experience. Improvements to shuttle capacity, roads, public toilets, accommodation, signage, and price transparency can directly address the main sources of negative sentiment. Staff and merchants should receive service training and clear operating standards so that practical problems do not weaken visitors' cultural impressions.

Finally, the village should establish a continuous feedback mechanism that combines real-time complaint

handling with post-visit review analysis. Repeated negative terms can be used as early signals of service problems, while changes in high-frequency cultural terms can indicate emerging visitor interests. Linking these signals to product design and destination management can create a cycle of demand identification, experience improvement, and cultural value enhancement.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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