The Impact of Online Travel Agency Platform Marketing on Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

Customer satisfaction is a crucial factor influencing consumer purchasing decisions and plays a significant role in the survival and development of enterprises. With the continuous growth of the tourism market, competition among travel agencies has intensified. To gain a larger market share, travel agencies must innovate in product quality, pricing, and services to enhance customer satisfaction. With the widespread adoption of the Internet and mobile devices, online travel platforms have emerged and rapidly become a dominant force in the tourism industry. Online Travel Agencies (OTAs), as a new business model, have had a profound impact on hotels and tourism service providers, presenting greater challenges for businesses. This study employs the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) method to construct a customer satisfaction evaluation model for OTA platforms and validates the model's rationality and effectiveness through empirical research. Furthermore, it analyzes the impact of OTA platform marketing on customer satisfaction from four perspectives: service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services. Additionally, perceived value is introduced as a mediating mechanism to further explore the influence of OTA platform marketing on customer satisfaction. The research results show that all marketing factors have a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, and perceived value plays a partial mediating role. The IPA analysis shows that service quality and brand image are in an advantageous area, while intelligent and personalized services are relatively insufficient. The platform should focus on optimizing intelligent recommendations and interactive experiences to enhance customers' perceived value and satisfaction.

Keywords: *IPA Analysis; OTA Platform Marketing; Perceived Value; Customer Satisfaction*

1. Introduction

In the context of rapid developments in information technology, the traditional tourism industry is undergoing a profound transformation from offline to online. In recent years, with the continuous maturation of mobile internet, artificial intelligence, and big data technologies, Online Travel Agency (OTA) platforms have become vital channels for booking travel products and services. While consumers enjoy convenient and efficient services, their expectations for product information, price transparency, personalized recommendations, and interactive experiences have also increased. Existing research mainly explores customer satisfaction from the perspectives of service quality, brand image, and price perception. However, as technology evolves, intelligent services and customized marketing have become new competitive focal points (Chen, Wang & Faiz Izwan, 2024). This paper, based on the practical operational environment of OTA platforms, combines the Perceived Value Theory and the SERVQUAL model to examine the direct impact of platform marketing strategies on customer satisfaction, as well as the potential mediating mechanisms involved. It aims to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for related companies to optimize their services and enhance user loyalty.

In recent years, China's online travel market has experienced explosive growth. According to the "National Tourism Development Report" released by the China Tourism Academy, the transaction scale of China's online travel market exceeded 1.4 trillion RMB in 2023, with a year-on-year growth of 18.3%. Leading OTA platforms such as Ctrip, Fliggy, and Meituan have continually expanded their product lines and technological applications, driving the continuous optimization of travel bookings, travel services, and intelligent recommendations. Among them, Ctrip, through big data-driven precise marketing and AI customer service systems, has significantly enhanced user experience and satisfaction, becoming a model of intelligent services in China's OTA platforms.

This research focuses on the Chinese market, specifically studying major OTA platforms in China, including but not limited to Ctrip, Meituan, and Fliggy. The target consumers are Chinese users who frequently use OTA platforms to book travel products (such as flights, hotels, tickets, etc.), with a particular emphasis on their real-life experiences and satisfaction evaluations during platform usage. By focusing on practical cases and user behavior in the Chinese market, this research is more closely aligned with the actual operational environment, providing theoretical support for the development of local Chinese OTA platforms with practical significance.

This paper constructs a conceptual framework with "service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services" as core independent variables, "customer perceived value" as a mediating variable, and "customer satisfaction" as the dependent variable. This framework will help readers comprehensively understand the logical relationships and mechanisms between various marketing elements while providing structural support for empirical research models. The conceptual framework not only reveals the independent effects of each service element but also delves into the mediating role of perceived value in the process of forming customer satisfaction, offering insightful pathways for OTA platforms to improve service quality and user satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction has long been an important research topic in service management and marketing (Oliver, 1980). Existing studies have shown that service quality, brand image, and personalized services significantly impact customer satisfaction (Kotler et al., 2016). The SERVQUAL model defines five dimensions of service quality—reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility—and suggests that high-quality services can effectively enhance consumer satisfaction. Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman (1988) further proposed the concept of perceived value, stating that consumers, when evaluating a product or service, comprehensively consider the costs (such as price, time, and effort) and benefits (such as quality, brand, and experience), forming a subjective judgment of satisfaction. Additionally, brand image can strengthen consumer trust in a company, thereby improving loyalty and satisfaction. Stivala (2022) found that in OTA platforms, brand image not only affects the initial choice of customers but also determines their long-term usage intentions. Personalized services are also important factors in enhancing customer satisfaction. Huang and Benyoucef (2013) pointed out that data-driven personalized recommendations can enhance the customer purchase experience and increase platform stickiness. With the development of technology, intelligent services have become a key variable affecting customer satisfaction (Sahani, Chaudhary & Ghouse, 2025). Research indicates that AI-driven personalized recommendations and automated customer service systems can effectively improve the customer experience and enhance platform competitiveness. Rane, Kaya, Mallick and Rane (2024) and others emphasized that the optimization of intelligent services not only improves user convenience but also reduces friction points during the usage process, thereby enhancing overall satisfaction.

2. Objectives

1) Identifying the Direct Impact of Key Marketing Elements on Customer Satisfaction

Based upon measurements in terms of service speed, correctness in information provision, response speed, and support to customers, this work examines the direct effect of service quality on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, this work compares diverse aspects of service quality on overall satisfaction to determine the factors that operate most effectively in bringing about positive responses among customers. Based on awareness regarding brands, trust in brands, and brand loyalty, this section explains how an established brand image builds dependence upon and identification with the platform by customers. This section goes further to discuss the effectiveness of communication tactics in influencing customer satisfaction to provide theoretical justification for building brands on online platforms. Based on personalized recommendations, among others, this section addresses methods through which platforms can better respond to customers to realize increased experience and satisfaction by exactly fulfilling consumers' individualized requirements. This section especially addresses differences in user feedback according to user characteristics

when receiving personalized services to provide targeted recommendations. In this part, importance is given to examining the positive impact that automated recommendations and AI-assisted customer support have on customers. It discusses in-depth the importance of these services in reducing response time and optimizing interactive effectiveness.

2) Testing the Mediating Effect of Customer Perceived Value Between Marketing Elements and Customer Satisfaction

Based on the SERVQUAL model, brand management theory, and perceived value theory, this section constructs a comprehensive structural model to clarify the influence paths of service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services on customer perceived value, while also testing the mediating mechanism of perceived value on final customer satisfaction. By collecting a large amount of consumer survey data, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and the Bootstrap method are employed to verify whether customer perceived value plays a significant mediating role between various marketing elements and customer satisfaction. Additionally, a comparative analysis of the mediation effects of different marketing elements is conducted to identify the key areas for optimization. Building upon the theoretical model, the specific dimensions of customer perceived value are further subdivided. The study explores the roles each dimension plays in the mediation process, aiming to uncover the intrinsic evaluation mechanisms consumers use when engaging with OTA platforms.

3) Providing Empirical Evidence and Practical Guidance for Optimizing Marketing Strategies for OTA Platforms

Through Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA), consumers' importance perceptions and experiences towards various service factors are both measured. This method provides an explicit visualization of where service factors fall in the market to establish both strengths in performance now and areas for improvement. Based on the results of empirical investigations and IPA analysis, concrete recommendations to aid in improving service quality, building an attractive brand image, and developing personalized and intelligent services are presented. Additionally, future uses of big data and artificial intelligence technologies to achieve precision marketing and deepen customer loyalty are detailed.

3.Material and Method

3.1 Data Collection and Sample Selection

The objective of this study's questionnaire is to explore the key factors influencing customer satisfaction on OTA platforms, with a focus on five aspects: service quality, price perception, brand image, platform personalization services, and intelligent services. The target population for the survey consists of Chinese consumers who have used OTA platforms for travel, flight, and hotel bookings. Each dimension includes multiple questions, evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, to capture customers' genuine perceptions of these aspects.

The questionnaire is divided into five main sections:

1) Demographic Information: Collects basic demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as gender, age, and frequency of platform usage.

2) Service Quality: Assesses customers' perceptions of the service quality on OTA platforms, including the accuracy of information and the responsiveness of customer service.

3) Price Perception: Examines customers' views on the transparency of platform prices, discount offerings, and price fairness.

4) Brand Image: Evaluates customers' overall impression and recognition of the brand, including brand awareness, brand reputation, and brand loyalty.

5) Intelligent Services: Focuses on the use of artificial intelligence, big data analysis, and other technologies to provide personalized recommendations, real-time customer support, and efficient service experiences.

Data were collected through both online and offline questionnaires, with distribution channels

including Chinese social media platforms, OTA platform user communities, and on-site distribution at offline events. Questionnaires with insufficient response time, missing answers, or logical errors were excluded, resulting in a final valid sample of 536 completed questionnaires.

3.2 Data Analysis Methods

In this study, a questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale, covering multiple items across various dimensions—including the reliability of service quality, responsiveness, fairness in price perception, brand image prominence, and the precision of personalized platform services. Following data collection, the analysis was conducted using SPSS and AMOS software. Initially, descriptive statistical analysis was carried out, followed by factor analysis to assess the measurement structure of each variable. Structural equation modeling was then applied to examine the hypothesized relationships. Moreover, a mediation effect test was performed to explore the role of perceived value as a mediator between the identified factors and customer satisfaction. The findings provide empirical evidence for optimizing user experience and enhancing customer satisfaction on OTA platforms, while also offering managerial insights to the industry regarding brand development and innovations in intelligent services.

3.3 Research Hypotheses

3.3.1 The Impact of OTA Platform Marketing on Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a key indicator for evaluating consumers' overall perceptions of a product or service, directly affecting repeat purchases and brand loyalty. Within the context of OTA platforms, marketing strategies—encompassing dimensions such as service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services—significantly influence customer satisfaction. High-quality services enhance user experience and build trust; a strong brand image bolsters trust and loyalty (Karaca & Baran, 2023); personalized services improve the customer experience by meeting individual needs (Yang, Zhang & Feng, 2024); and intelligent services optimize interactive experiences, thereby increasing satisfaction. Based on these considerations, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: The service quality of OTA platforms has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1b: The brand image of OTA platforms has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1c: The personalized services of OTA platforms have a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1d: The intelligent services of OTA platforms have a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

3.3.2 The Impact of OTA Platform Marketing on Customer Perceived Value

Customer perceived value encompasses a holistic assessment of the advantages and sacrifices linked to the consumption experience. The marketing strategies of OTA platforms (i.e., service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services) directly influence customers' perceptions of the platform's value, thereby affecting purchasing decisions and loyalty. High-quality services enhance trust and brand loyalty; a strong brand image increases perceived value and social recognition (Talwar, Dhir, Kaur & Mäntymäki, 2020); personalized services improve convenience and interactive experiences; and intelligent services elevate service efficiency and user experience. Based on these insights, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2a: The service quality of OTA platforms has a positive impact on customer perceived value.

H2b: The brand image of OTA platforms has a positive impact on customer perceived value.

H2c: The personalized services of OTA platforms have a positive impact on customer perceived value.

H2d: The intelligent services of OTA platforms have a positive impact on customer perceived value.

3.3.3 The Impact of Customer Perceived Value on Customer Satisfaction

Research indicates that customer perceived value significantly and positively influences satisfaction through factors such as service experience, brand image, and price fairness (Pham & Nguyen, 2019). An elevated perception of value strengthens trust and loyalty, consequently enhancing customer satisfaction. In light of these findings, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Customer perceived value has a positive impact on customer satisfaction on OTA platforms.

3.3.4 The Mediating Role of Customer Perceived Value

Customer perceived value serves as a mediator between service quality, brand image, personalized services, intelligent services, and customer satisfaction. High-quality services improve perceived value, which in turn enhances satisfaction; brand image influences satisfaction through its impact on perceived value; personalized services augment interactive experiences, thereby increasing both perceived value and satisfaction; and intelligent services optimize the overall experience, indirectly enhancing satisfaction. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4a: The effect of service quality on customer satisfaction is mediated by customer perceived value.

H4b: Customer-perceived value functions as an intermediary in the link between brand image and customer satisfaction.

H4c: The relationship between personalized services and customer satisfaction is mediated by customer-perceived value.

H4d: Customer perceived value acts as a mediating factor between intelligent services and customer satisfaction.

3.3.5 Research Model

Based on the above, the research model of this study is shown in Figure 1.

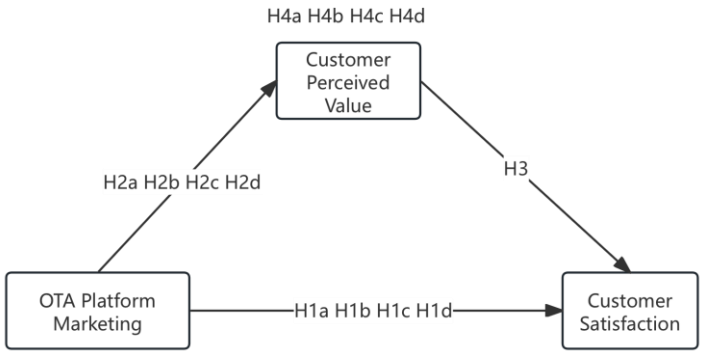

Figure 1: Research Hypotheses on the Impact of OTA Platform Marketing on Customer Satisfaction

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Basic Information of the Sample

The basic demographic characteristics of the sample were analyzed descriptively. In terms of gender composition, there were 216 male respondents, accounting for 40.3%, and 320 female respondents, accounting for 59.7%. Regarding age distribution, the largest group was individuals aged 18-25, with 231 respondents, accounting for 43.1%, indicating that the majority of users of online travel platforms are young

adults. The second largest group was those aged 26-35, making up 23.9%, while the proportion of those aged 36 and above was relatively small. In terms of occupation, students numbered 171, accounting for 31.9%; office workers totaled 193, accounting for 36%; freelancers accounted for 9.7%, with 52 individuals; retirees made up 8.8%, with 47 individuals; and other occupations comprised 13.6%, with 73 individuals. Regarding the types of online travel platforms typically used, Meituan and Ctrip were the most commonly used platforms, with respective proportions of 33.8% and 24.1%. In contrast, users of Fliggy and other platforms represented a smaller proportion, at 14.7% and 7.6%, respectively. Regarding the frequency of using online travel platforms, the majority of travelers used the platforms occasionally or monthly, accounting for 53.7% and 25.4%, respectively.

4.1.2 Reliability Analysis

Table 1 Reliability Analysis

Scale	Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's alpha	Number of Items
Service Quality	A1	0.645	0.805	0.839	5
	A2	0.634	0.808		
	A3	0.655	0.803		
	A4	0.637	0.808		
	A5	0.637	0.808		
Brand Image	B1	0.753	0.874	0.898	5
	B2	0.738	0.877		
	B3	0.751	0.874		
	B4	0.762	0.872		
	B5	0.729	0.879		
Personalized Services	C1	0.743	0.858	0.886	5
	C2	0.713	0.865		
	C3	0.716	0.864		
	C4	0.737	0.859		
	C5	0.716	0.864		
Intelligent Services	D1	0.725	0.863	0.887	5
	D2	0.741	0.859		
	D3	0.729	0.862		
	D4	0.714	0.865		
	D5	0.721	0.864		
Perceived Value	F1	0.649	0.823	0.851	5
	F2	0.669	0.818		
	F3	0.667	0.818		
	F4	0.658	0.821		
	F5	0.663	0.82		
Customer Satisfaction	G1	0.651	0.823	0.851	5
	G2	0.651	0.824		
	G3	0.635	0.827		
	G4	0.653	0.823		
	G5	0.723	0.805		

As shown in Table 1, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for service quality, brand image, personalized services, intelligent services, perceived value, and customer satisfaction are 0.839, 0.898, 0.886, 0.887, 0.851, and 0.851, respectively, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7. Moreover, Cronbach's overall alpha for the questionnaire is 0.880. The corrected item-total correlations for all items are above 0.5, and Cronbach's alpha values decrease when any item is deleted. These results indicate that the questionnaire demonstrates high reliability and strong internal consistency.

4.1.3 Validity Analysis

Table 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO		0.884
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7797.955
	df	435
	Significance	0.000

Factor analysis was conducted based on the KMO and Bartlett's test values, as shown in Table 2. The overall KMO value for the scale is 0.884, close to 1, indicating strong sampling adequacy. Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded an approximate chi-square value of 7797.955 (df = 435) with a significance level of 0.000, well below 0.001. These results confirm that the data is valid, making it suitable for further factor analysis.

The rotated component matrix was obtained using the maximum variance method. The factor loadings of all items are greater than 0.5, indicating that the structural validity is satisfactory.

4.1.4 Structural Equation Model Analysis

Table 3 Path Coefficients Analysis Results

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Customer Satisfaction	<---	Service Quality	0.128	0.049	2.596	0.009
Customer Satisfaction	<---	Brand Image	0.122	0.045	2.694	0.007
Customer Satisfaction	<---	Personalized Services	0.110	0.050	2.200	0.028
Customer Satisfaction	<---	Intelligent Services	0.192	0.048	3.971	***
Perceived Value	<---	Service Quality	0.128	0.051	2.505	0.012
Perceived Value	<---	Brand Image	0.112	0.047	2.388	0.017
Perceived Value	<---	Personalized Services	0.243	0.052	4.678	***
Perceived Value	<---	Intelligent Services	0.148	0.050	2.978	0.003
Customer Satisfaction	<---	Perceived Value	0.112	0.051	2.185	0.029

The results of the data analysis based on the testing of each path are as follows:

In the "Customer Satisfaction <--- Service Quality" path, the Estimate is 0.128, C.R. = 2.596 > 1.96, P = 0.009 < 0.01, indicating that service quality on the OTA platform positively influences customer satisfaction and Hypothesis H1a is supported.

In the "Customer Satisfaction <--- Brand Image" path, the Estimate is 0.122, C.R. = 2.694 > 1.96, P = 0.007 < 0.01, indicating that brand image on the OTA platform positively influences customer satisfaction, and Hypothesis H1b is supported.

In the "Customer Satisfaction <--- Personalized Services" path, the Estimate is 0.110, C.R. = 2.200 > 1.96, P = 0.028 < 0.05, indicating that personalized services on the OTA platform positively influence customer satisfaction, and Hypothesis H1c is supported.

In the "Customer Satisfaction <--- Intelligent Services" path, the Estimate is 0.192, C.R. = 3.971 > 1.96, P = 0.000 < 0.001, indicating that intelligent services on the OTA platform positively influence customer satisfaction, and Hypothesis H1d is supported.

In the "Perceived Value <--- Service Quality" path, the Estimate is 0.128, C.R. = 2.505 > 1.96, P =

0.012 < 0.05, indicating that service quality on the OTA platform positively influences the perceived value and Hypothesis H2a is supported.

In the "Perceived Value <--- Brand Image" path, the Estimate is 0.112, C.R. = 2.388 > 1.96, P = 0.017 < 0.05, indicating that brand image on the OTA platform positively influences perceived value, and Hypothesis H2b is supported.

In the "Perceived Value <--- Personalized Services" path, the Estimate is 0.243, C.R. = 4.678 > 1.96, P = 0.000 < 0.001, indicating that personalized services on the OTA platform positively influence perceived value, and Hypothesis H2c is supported.

In the "Perceived Value <--- Intelligent Services" path, the Estimate is 0.148, C.R. = 2.978 > 1.96, P = 0.003 < 0.01, indicating that intelligent services on the OTA platform positively influence perceived value, and Hypothesis H2d is supported.

In the "Customer Satisfaction <--- Perceived Value" path, the Estimate is 0.112, C.R. = 2.185 > 1.96, P = 0.029 < 0.05, indicating that perceived value positively influences customer satisfaction on the OTA platform, and Hypothesis H3 is supported.

Detailed results are presented in Table 3.

4.1.5 Mediation Effect Testing

Table 4 Standardized Bootstrap Mediation Effect Testing

Path		Estimate	S.E.	P	95%CI	
					lower	upper
Service quality → Perceived value → Customer satisfaction	Total Effect	0.148	0.044	0.000	0.061	0.236
	Direct Effect	0.134	0.044	0.005	0.048	0.220
	Indirect Effect	0.015	0.008	0.013	0.002	0.034
Brand image →Perceived value → Customer satisfaction	Total Effect	0.150	0.046	0.000	0.061	0.236
	Direct Effect	0.136	0.045	0.003	0.046	0.223
	Indirect Effect	0.014	0.008	0.027	0.001	0.033
Personalized services → Perceived value → Customer satisfaction	Total Effect	0.141	0.044	0.001	0.050	0.225
	Direct Effect	0.113	0.045	0.012	0.023	0.198
	Indirect Effect	0.028	0.012	0.006	0.007	0.053
Intelligent services → Perceived value → Customer satisfaction	Total Effect	0.223	0.044	0.000	0.135	0.306
	Direct Effect	0.205	0.044	0.000	0.118	0.290
	Indirect Effect	0.018	0.009	0.007	0.004	0.037

The analysis results indicate that perceived value plays a partial mediating role in all the paths. This suggests that service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services not only have a direct impact on customer satisfaction but also indirectly enhance satisfaction by improving perceived value.

4.1.6 Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA)

To visually present the actual performance of various marketing elements, this paper adopts the IPA method to construct a two-dimensional matrix (see Figure 2).

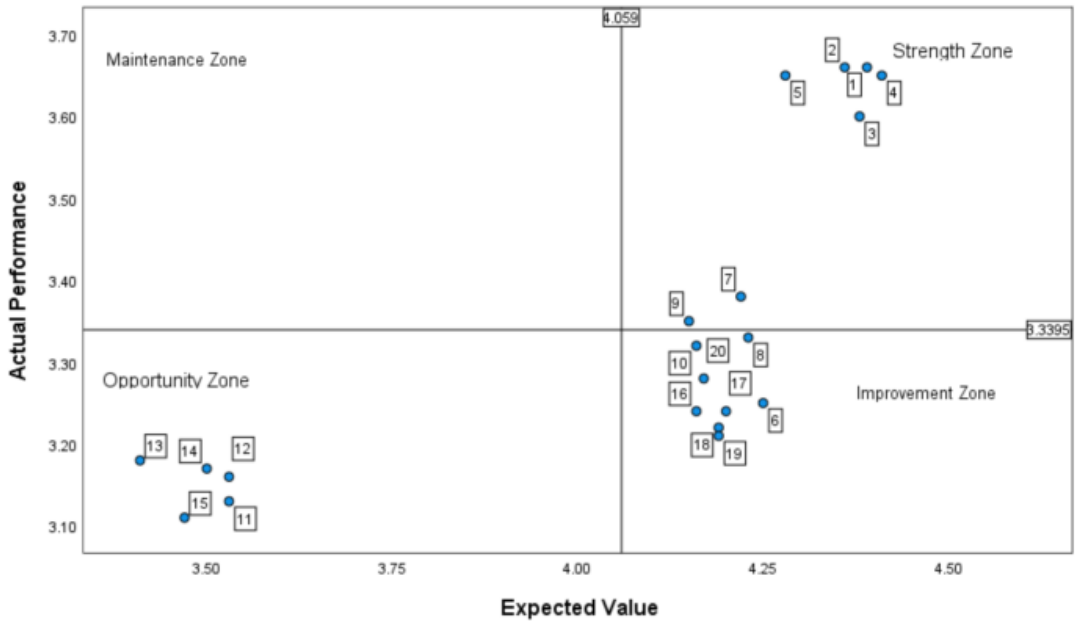

Figure 2 Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) Matrix

The first quadrant represents the "Strength" zone. The indicators in this quadrant reflect both high actual performance and high expectations. The mean of actual performance must exceed 3.3395, and the mean of expectations must exceed 4.0590, with a total of 7 evaluation indicators. According to the IPA analysis, these 7 indicators have high actual ratings for the OTA online travel platform, and customers also have high expectations for them. These are considered the platform's strengths and should be prioritized in subsequent improvement measures.

The second quadrant is the "Maintain" zone. The indicators in this quadrant reflect high actual performance but low expectations. The mean of actual performance must exceed 3.3395, and the mean of expectations must be below 4.0590. No indicators fall within this quadrant in the figure.

The third quadrant is the "Opportunity" zone. The indicators in this quadrant reflect both low actual performance and low expectations. The mean of actual performance must be below 3.3395, and the mean of expectations must be below 4.0590, with a total of 5 evaluation indicators. Based on the IPA analysis, these 5 indicators can be considered long-term planning projects. In the future development of tourism strategies, efforts should be made to gradually improve service outcomes.

The fourth quadrant is the "Improvement" zone. The indicators in this quadrant reflect low actual performance but high expectations. The mean of actual performance must be below 3.3395, and the mean of expectations must exceed 4.0590, with a total of 8 evaluation indicators. According to the IPA analysis, these 8 indicators are relatively important to customers, but the actual performance during the customer experience process is lower than their expectations. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on improving brand image and intelligent services to enhance customer perception and satisfaction levels.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Research Contributions

This study employs the IPA analysis method and structural equation modeling to conduct a comprehensive and systematic empirical examination of the intrinsic relationships between key marketing

dimensions of OTA platforms and customer satisfaction. Survey data indicates that service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services are the primary drivers of customer satisfaction on OTA platforms, with service quality and brand image having particularly significant direct impacts on customer satisfaction. High levels of service quality are reflected not only in the platform's operational efficiency, response speed, and information accuracy but also in the creation of a superior user experience that fosters emotional recognition and trust among consumers. An excellent brand image contributes to building the platform's market reputation, mitigating negative emotions arising from occasional service shortcomings, thereby enhancing overall customer satisfaction. This conclusion aligns with the customer satisfaction theory of Oliver (1980) and the SERVQUAL model of Parasuraman et al. (1988), providing robust empirical support for research in the OTA platform domain.

Further data analysis shows that personalized services and intelligent services not only directly enhance customer satisfaction but also exert a significant mediating effect through increasing perceived value. By implementing customized recommendations and intelligent service technologies, OTA platforms effectively meet consumers' multidimensional needs in price, efficiency, and experience, fostering a positive "value-for-money" perception. The mediating role of perceived value between marketing strategies and customer satisfaction has been statistically validated as significant. This finding confirms the related research results of Chen, Wang and Faiz Izwan (2024) and Stivala (2022), emphasizing the importance of personalized and intelligent services in the context of the digital economy.

The results also suggest that, during their digital transformation, OTA platforms can gain higher user loyalty and sustained competitive advantages by continuously optimizing service processes, improving user interfaces, and strengthening brand communication. The enhancement of service quality is not only reflected in technological performance and information transmission efficiency but also in its deeper significance in stimulating customer emotions and trust through continuous service process improvement. Meanwhile, brand image is strengthened by building a unique brand culture and consumer recognition, further enhancing the emotional connection between the platform and its users.

Theoretically, this study expands the research framework on customer satisfaction in OTA platforms by incorporating emerging service models that have arisen during digital transformation into the customer satisfaction model. It constructs a multi-level, multidimensional analytical framework, offering new perspectives and empirical evidence for future academic discussions. Practically, the research findings provide OTA platform managers with targeted directions for improvement. Platform operators can leverage the conclusions of this study to focus resources on enhancing service quality and brand development, while fully utilizing data analysis and artificial intelligence technologies to drive innovation in personalized and intelligent services. This customer-centric strategy not only helps improve user satisfaction and loyalty but also creates significant differentiated advantages in market positioning, brand promotion, and customer relationship management.

By conducting an in-depth empirical examination of the impact of various marketing dimensions of OTA platforms on customer satisfaction, this study clarifies the core role of service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services in enhancing customer satisfaction, while also validating the key mediating effect of customer perceived value in this process. The research results provide strong data support and theoretical foundations for academic discussions on consumer behavior in the context of digital services, while also offering practical guidance for OTA platforms in future strategic adjustments and market competition.

4.2.2 Practical Implications

(1) Building a Full-Link Service Assurance System

The structural equation model analysis indicates that service quality has a direct impact on customer satisfaction (β= 0.128, P= 0.009), which is further strengthened through the mediating effect of perceived value (indirect effect = 0.015, P= 0.013). IPA analysis reveals that the actual performance of

service quality (3.60-3.66) is significantly lower than customers' expectations (4.28-4.41), particularly in areas such as "service consistency with promises" and "care from service staff," where the gap ranges from -0.76 to -0.78. Therefore, platforms should develop a full-link service standard that covers pre-sale, in-sale, and post-sale processes, leveraging digital tools to enable transparent management and enhance service response speed and quality.

(2) Creating a Brand Value Resonance Mechanism

The research shows that brand image has a direct impact on customer satisfaction (β= 0.122, P= 0.007), and indirectly influences satisfaction through perceived value (indirect effect = 0.014, P= 0.027). IPA analysis reveals that the actual performance of brand image (3.25-3.38) is below customers' expectations (4.15-4.25), with the greatest disparity in areas such as "market influence" and "consumer reputation." To address this, platforms should enhance brand value through differentiated positioning, strengthen social responsibility, and leverage user-generated content to enhance brand credibility.

(3) Designing Demand-Driven Dynamic Experience Solutions

Personalized services have a direct impact on customer satisfaction (β= 0.110, P= 0.028), and generate significant indirect effects through perceived value (indirect effect = 0.028, P= 0.006). IPA analysis indicates that the actual performance of personalized services (3.11-3.18) is below customer expectations (3.41-3.53). Platforms should use dynamic user profiles, employ machine learning algorithms to optimize recommendation systems, and enhance personalized service quality through emotional design and co-creation with users, thereby improving customer satisfaction.

(4) Promoting Technological Innovation Guided by Ethics

The impact of intelligent services on customer satisfaction is primarily transmitted indirectly through perceived value (indirect effect = 0.018, P= 0.007). IPA analysis reveals that the actual performance of intelligent services (3.21-3.28) is far below customer expectations (4.16-4.20), particularly in areas such as "recommendation satisfaction" and "service trust." Platforms should improve the performance of intelligent services and user trust by utilizing explainable AI, optimizing intelligent customer service responses, and enhancing data privacy protection, thereby transforming intelligent services from the "improvement zone" to the "advantage zone."

(5) Activating Multidimensional Perceived Value Transmission Paths

Perceived value is a key mediator linking service attributes to customer satisfaction, with a direct effect of 0.112 (P= 0.029). Platforms should design strategies to make value more explicit, strengthen the transmission of economic, service, and social value through visual comparisons and functional reports, and build a "value community" to enhance user participation. Additionally, platforms should design achievement incentive mechanisms for high-value users, fostering a value cycle to maximize satisfaction enhancement.

4.2.3 Research Limitations and Future Directions

（1）Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study manifest in both methodological and contextual aspects. Methodologically, although structural equation modeling was employed to capture the relationships between variables, the issue of endogeneity has not been fully addressed. For instance, customer satisfaction may have a reverse effect on service quality evaluation, and the lack of instrumental variable methods could lead to an overestimation of path coefficients. In terms of data, although the sample covers major economic regions in China, rural users only account for 7.3%, which limits the ability to reflect the impact of the digital divide on service perception. Temporally, the data collection period coincided with the peak travel season, which may have amplified the short-term effects of promotional activities on satisfaction. From a theoretical standpoint, emerging variables such as "metaverse immersion" and "generative AI interaction experiences" were not incorporated into the model. Furthermore, the lack of cross-cultural comparisons raises questions about the generalizability of the findings. For example, East Asian users may place more value on social factors due to collectivist culture, while in individualistic cultures, emotional value may hold

greater weight. Such differences require validation through cross-regional studies.

（2）Future Research Directions

Future research could advance in three key directions: First, employing a mixed-methods approach that combines big data analysis with in-depth interviews would allow for capturing both macro-level behavioral patterns and micro-level decision-making logic. For example, analyzing clickstream data from millions of users while conducting narrative interviews with representative users could reveal the deeper motivations behind the conversion from "perceived value" to "satisfaction." Second, developing dynamic computational models by incorporating time-series analysis and machine learning techniques would enable the prediction of the effects of policy changes or technological disruptions, such as the impact trajectory of ChatGPT on satisfaction.

5. Conclusion

This study constructs a theoretical model of the impact of OTA platform marketing on customer satisfaction, validating the positive effects of service quality, brand image, personalized services, and intelligent services on customer perceived value and satisfaction. The study also confirms that customer perceived value partially mediates these relationships. The research findings provide both theoretical and empirical support for optimizing platform marketing strategies and enhancing user experience. Furthermore, the study reveals current shortcomings in intelligent services and personalized recommendations on platforms, offering directions for future improvements. Overall, this paper not only enriches the theory of digital marketing and customer behavior but also provides data support and practical guidance for continuous innovation in the online travel industry.

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