Vol.7 Iss.3 2026
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.emr.2026.011

How New Consumption Scenarios Cultivate the Civilizational Experience Economy: Evidence from Jimei District, Xiamen

Yuanzhen Zhao*
Xiamen Institute of Technology, Xiamen, Fujian 361021, China
***Corresponding author, E-mail: yuanzhenzhaow@outlook.com**

Abstract

Research on the deep integration of culture, tourism, sports and commerce must answer not only why integration fails, but also why it succeeds. Taking Jimei District of Xiamen as a critical case, and drawing on policy documents, official statistics and in-depth interviews with 12 scenario stakeholders, this study adopts a qualitative design of theoretical sampling combined with comparable-case and internal-variation contrasts. It asks a simple question: how could an island suburban district with medium endowments cultivate the Jiageng Spirit written in textbooks into a civilizational experience that can be participated in, consumed and identified with? The findings show that Jimei's success lies not in resource abundance but in a set of mutually embedded, circularly reinforcing cultivation mechanisms. Symbolic translation makes culture perceptible, bodily entry makes experience credible, and identity sedimentation makes consumption sustainable, while identity in turn lengthens the life cycle of consumption and enhances its local conversion. New consumption scenarios thus become micro-sites of the civilizational experience economy, which is defined as an economic form in which Chinese civilization serves as the carrier and civilizational identity is constructed through consumption. The paper further proposes three groups of observable criteria for distinguishing cultivation from fabrication and conducts a directional test against the case materials, offering lessons for similar urban new districts and providing local governments with an accountable analytical tool for evaluating the effectiveness of integration.

Keywords:

new consumption scenarios, civilizational experience economy, integration of culture, tourism, sports and commerce, cultural identity, Jimei District

1 Introduction

China's celebrity hometowns have roughly two fates. One is a statue plus an exhibition hall: tourists leave as soon as they have taken their photos, guides recite the same script year after year, and the hometown becomes a sightseeing part on an assembly line. The other is Jimei. Students read in the morning beneath the Nanxun Building; drumbeats come across the Dragon Boat Pool year after year; young people from Taiwan learn to cook a table of Minnan dishes in the old houses of Dashe Village. The same kind of celebrity hometown—one has enshrined its culture, the other has put its culture to use. This difference is worth pondering.

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

In previous work I diagnosed the superposition dilemma of culture-tourism-sports-commerce integration—elements adjoining without relating, flows pulsing without settling, culture present while meaning absent—and proposed a shift from superposition to symbiosis. Diagnostic articles are easy to write; the hard part is the other side: if the dilemma is universal, is there a place that has already made symbiosis an everyday reality? If so, how did it do it? Dilemma research answers why integration is hard; sample research answers why it succeeds. Without either of the two questions, theory limps. Jimei was chosen precisely because its endowments are middling. This municipal district off Xiamen Island has no peer of the Five Sacred Mountains and no thousand-year-old city wall; by resource stock it does not rank among China's urban districts. Yet it is exactly this island-suburban new district that has produced a national-level nighttime culture-and-tourism consumption cluster and become the preferred destination for cross-strait study tours. Middling endowments with outstanding performance—there must be a mechanism at work in between.

This paper calls this mechanism cultivation. The opposite of cultivation is fabrication. Many localities are used to speaking of fabricating scenes, wishing for planning, completion, and results all within the same year: once the project is launched, the scene is declared to have arrived. Cultivation, by contrast, acknowledges a plain truth—scenes grow; they are not built. A manager in Jimei who has worked in culture-tourism operation for more than a decade compressed this truth into one line: "Some things cannot be managed into being; they have to be raised into being—you have to give them time" (P12). Cultural resources do not automatically become civilizational experience, and civilizational experience does not automatically become civilizational identity; in between lies a long process of nurturing. Experience-economy theory long ago pointed out that what consumers pay for is memorable activities (Pine & Gilmore, 2011), but this framework, colored by individualism, struggles to explain the phenomena in Chinese culture-tourism consumption that exceed individual sensory satisfaction. My judgment is that the essence of such consumption is the identity confirmation of members of a civilizational community. In the context of the civilizational state (Zhang, 2017), consumption behavior is often the micro-practice of civilizational identity. This paper continues to use the civilizational experience economy as an exploratory theoretical concept, defining it as an economic form in which Chinese civilization serves as the carrier and civilizational identity is constructed through consumption behavior, and regards new consumption scenarios as its micro-sites. The three dimensions of scene theory—authenticity, theatricality, and legitimacy—have been used to parse the cultural temperament of urban culture-tourism consumption spaces (Fu & Wang, 2021), providing a handy tool for dissecting the micro-site.

To propose a new concept, one must first answer how it divides labor with the existing conceptual cluster. The experience economy presupposes experience as a private event and cannot explain why shared memories exert more consumption pull than individual ones. Place attachment is an individual psychological construct and cannot explain synchronous identification at very large scales. Cultural-identity research describes the state of identity but rarely asks how identity is produced by consumption behavior. The increment of the civilizational experience economy lies precisely here: it takes the production process of identity, rather than its static result, as the object of analysis, answering what consumption constructs while buying things.

Consider next the research gap on which this paper stands. Existing research provides three foundations: diagnoses of the integration dilemma, revealing common problems such as format superposition and the ebb and flow of hot phenomena (C. Xu et al., 2025); strategies for constructing consumption scenarios, proposing

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

principled paths from scenario innovation to the generative logic of new scenarios (Chen et al., 2025; Jiang et al., 2026; Ye & Tang, 2025); and empirical work on experience and identity, demonstrating the effects of cultural narrative and immersive participation on emotional resonance and identity formation (Chang, 2025; C. Wang & Zhang, 2026). Each line has its accomplishments, and the gaps are equally clear. Diagnoses abound while mechanisms are scarce: the micro-mechanisms by which the dilemma is escaped have been insufficiently dissected. Principles abound while criteria are scarce: there is still no handy ruler for judging whether a scene is genuinely or falsely integrated. Meaning interpretation abounds while value realization is scarce: how identity sediments into sustainable consumption is rarely pursued. This paper applies its effort at exactly this gap.

2 Research Design and Data Sources

The first question of case research is always why this case. This paper selects Jimei following the logic of theoretical sampling rather than random sampling. First, Jimei is a critical case of middling endowments with outstanding integration performance; middling endowments happen to exclude the interference of resource determinism. Second, Jimei has a complete range of scene types—academic village, village, coastline, commercial districts, and performance spaces coexist—providing a complete cross-section for observing the whole cultivation process. Third, Jimei sits in the core area of the demonstration zone for cross-strait integrated development, making it convenient to observe the depth gradations of civilizational-identity construction at a single site.

For the contrast design, this paper abandons the practice of setting off the best sample with the worst and adopts two more explanatory types of contrast. The first is the comparable-case contrast. From April to May 2026, the research team visited three scenic areas selected by three criteria—of the celebrity-hometown type, rated 4A or above, and built and open for more than five years (anonymized at the managers' request; hereafter G1, G2, and G3, located in East, Central, and Southwest China respectively and likewise endowed with celebrity resources and policy support). Their operating forms are highly similar: the core attractions are statues and exhibition halls, interpretation relies on fixed scripts, commercial support consists mainly of homogeneous tourist commodities, and visitor stays are measured in hours. This type of contrast excludes differences in whether resources and policies exist, highlighting whether the mechanism exists. The second is the internal-variation contrast. Within Jimei itself, the degree of cultivation is uneven across scenes: the academic village, the Dragon Boat Pool, and the Shili Long Embankment are cultivated relatively deep, while some newtown commercial districts remain at the stage of having traffic without cross-conduction. The same urban district and the same set of policies yield divergent results according to the degree of mechanism penetration; this isolates confounding factors such as district branding and locational policy better than external contrasts.

Materials come from four channels. First, policy texts and planning documents, including relevant policies at the national, provincial, municipal, and district levels and Jimei District's industrial support measures. Second, government public data and mainstream media reports; any data self-assessed by organizers are not cited as evidence. Third, the research team's fieldwork from March to June 2026, visiting twelve sites including the Jimei Academic Village, Dashe Village, the Shili Long Embankment, the Dragon Boat Pool, Xinglin Bay, and Jimei New Town, and conducting semi-structured interviews with residents, merchants, tourists, university

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

teachers and students, Taiwan youth, and managers, completing twelve valid interviews (coded P01–P12), with ages spanning 19 to 62 and educational attainment ranging from junior middle school to doctoral degree. Each interview lasted about 50 to 90 minutes; all were transcribed verbatim and then coded through the three-level coding procedure of grounded theory. Taking open coding as an example, original utterances such as “after rowing, he kept saying he wanted to row again” and “what the child remembers is what she made with her own hands” were assigned respectively to labels such as memory sedimentation of bodily participation and acquired identity of hands-on practice, then gathered through axial coding into main categories such as bodily entry and identity sedimentation, from which the core category was finally distilled. Two coders worked back-to-back, and label agreement reached 91 percent after reconciliation; reliability was ensured through respondent validation and cross-case comparison. All interviews were conducted with informed consent and anonymized by number; quoted utterances are marked with their codes to indicate provenance. This paper is a speculative study: its goal is not to estimate a population from a sample but to clarify concepts and distill mechanisms through a case. Empirical assertions are anchored as far as possible in concrete materials; literary scene descriptions serve only to convey atmosphere and are not used as evidence.

3 What Jimei Got Right

Let me lay out the facts first. In 2022, the core area of Jimei New Town was selected into the second batch of national-level nighttime culture-and-tourism consumption clusters; Jimei District is Xiamen’s only national all-for-one tourism demonstration area, and in June of the same year it was designated as the city’s only national pilot county-level unit for youth development; the Jimei Academic Village is a national key cultural relics protection unit and a provincial historical and cultural block. According to data released by the Jimei District Cross-Strait Study-Tour Exchange Center, in 2024 the district received more than 8,000 study-tour groups and over 1.5 million person-times and held 34 Taiwan-related activities; in 2025 the cross-strait study-tour units were updated to 79. A civilization-practice belt themed on carrying forward the Jiageng Spirit strings together nine core venues and five check-in routes, with 20 premium courses developed; by the organizer’s account, it has received 3.9408 million citizen and visitor person-times since 2024—a figure used here only to indicate the scale of activity, not as evidence of effectiveness. Jimei’s integration is not integration in planning texts but integration that has already happened and keeps growing. What does the growing rely on?

The first thing done right is that all scenes share the same narrative line. Many places cannot be said to lack cultural resources; the problem is that each speaks its own language, ending in a platter without a storyline. Jimei is different. The Jiageng Spirit is not the private property of the Tan Kah Kee Memorial Hall alone; it is the grammar of the whole city. The academic village’s architecture tells it, the drumbeats of the dragon boat races tell it, the study-tour courses tell it, and even the investment-promotion language of the new town’s central vitality zone tells it. The aforementioned cool thinking on culture-tourism hot phenomena has suggested that projects chasing external hotspots rise and fall like tides, while content rooted in the local endures (C. Xu et al., 2025). Jimei did not chase other people’s stories; it told its own story as one consistent narrative. Visitors arriving in Jimei see different sights but hear the same song.

The second thing done right is making young people the protagonists rather than the audience. More than a hundred thousand university teachers and students live in the academic village, which means that Jimei’s

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

cultural scenes have a confidence hard to learn elsewhere: they are not sets built for tourists but a home that young people use every day. Students of Jimei University attend classes in Jiageng buildings; young makers open shops in the art parks; youth from both sides of the strait paint graffiti on the walls of Dashe Village; and the trunk market has grown spontaneously along the Shili Long Embankment. A young woman who came from Yunnan for university volunteered at the international photography season: "Our little place can host an international exhibition too. When I give people directions, I feel quite proud. I am from Yunnan, and here I am in Xiamen introducing Jimei to people—funny, isn't it?" (P06). The actors in the scenes are living people; the content of the activities is life. The aforementioned evaluation research on cultural atmosphere has found that resource endowments do not necessarily translate into the cultural atmosphere perceived by tourists; effective cultural narrative and value dissemination are the keys to strengthening emotional resonance and spiritual identity (C. Wang & Zhang, 2026). Jimei's narrative works precisely because it is not performed for outsiders: it first came alive in the everyday of local youth and only then overflowed into an atmosphere perceptible to tourists.

The third thing done right is keeping culture alive in use. Dashe Village, with more than seven hundred years of history, sits next to the academic village; its red-brick old houses and fanzilou (Western-style veranda buildings) have not been fenced off to sell tickets but have opened as cafés, Western restaurants, and studios—incense keeps burning, and life goes on. The Dragon Boat Pool was formed when Mr. Tan Kah Kee presided over the building of the embankment and land reclamation in 1950; to this day, gongs and drums resound together every Dragon Boat Festival. The aforementioned scene theory has made clear that once authenticity yields to copy-and-paste symbol appropriation, space degenerates into a set without narrative capacity (Fu & Wang, 2021). Heritage-tourism research further shows that negative experiences triggered by over-commercialization sediment into memorable memories that continuously erode tourists' willingness to revisit and recommend (Lin et al., in press). Jimei has escaped this trap not by enshrining culture but by letting it continue to be used and needed. Use is the best protection; living is the deepest inheritance.

The three things done right are really one thing: Jimei has always let culture grow within life rather than hover above it. Jimei has not managed itself as a scenic area but raised itself as a home. This distinction is the soil on which the mechanism analysis below stands.

4 The Mechanism Network of Cultivation

Reducing Jimei's experience to transferable logic reveals three mutually embedded mechanism links: symbolic translation solves how culture becomes perceptible; bodily entry solves how experience becomes credible; identity sedimentation solves how consumption becomes sustainable. The three are not a one-way ladder joined end to end but a multi-entry, circular, mutually reinforcing network. No link can be missing, yet there is more than one entrance: some first read the symbols beneath the Chengyi wall, while others first rowed up a sweat in the Dragon Boat Pool and only then wanted to read the stories by its side. Identity sedimentation in turn supplies translation with new audiences and entry with new reasons; the cycle thus keeps turning without ceasing.

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

4.1 Symbolic Translation Makes Culture Perceptible

The Jiageng Spirit is abstract. Patriotism, sincerity and perseverance, devoting one's fortune to education—these words are written in textbooks; everyone knows them, but not everyone feels them. Between knowing and feeling lies a process of translation. A close look at Jimei's practice shows that translation comprises three procedures. First, extraction: from the voluminous Jiageng historical materials, lifting out story cores with imagery and pathos—"would rather sell the mansion than fail to support Xiamen University"—rather than moving the chronology into a display case. Second, weaving: knitting the story cores into study-tour courses, check-in routes, and night-tour circulation, so that people follow the story and, walking along, walk into it. Third, operation: 20 premium courses deposited year by year, the civilization-practice belt's activities renewed season by season; symbols are reactivated in each retelling and participation. Museum research has found that role configurations that let audiences participate in content production correlate significantly with venue attractiveness (J. Xu et al., 2025). Jimei tacitly accords with this principle. Jiageng's quotations are melted into study-tour task cards, letting students read out their weight by themselves in searching and verifying; Jiageng buildings are not cordoned off for distant viewing but remain teaching buildings in use to this day, their bells ringing on schedule every day; what the civilization-practice belt designs is not display cases but check-in routes, letting visitors' footsteps, rather than their eyes, complete the reading.

For the effect of translation, students' bodies are the most honest. A male student from Quanzhou recalled a sophomore course that did not stay in the classroom: the teacher had students take task cards into the academic village to find the characters carved on the buildings and check which building was donated by whom. "There was one building with the two characters of our school motto, chengyi (sincerity and perseverance), on the wall. The sun was fierce that day. I stood beneath those characters and suddenly felt a warmth in my heart. That feeling is different from sitting in a classroom and being told a hundred times to love your country" (P05). Once symbols enter tasks and quests, watching becomes verifying, and knowing becomes feeling. Failed translation is not rare across localities. Some places have made culture into decals: hang up a display board, print a fridge magnet—the symbol is present, the meaning absent. Heritage-tourism research's warning about over-commercialization applies here as well: once such hollowed-out experiences provoke aversion, they sediment into memorable negative memories that drag down a destination's reputation for a long time. Jimei's translation always anchors itself in real people and real events, in the educational everyday that the academic village is still continuing; the narrative thereby gains legitimacy, and the experience thereby gains authenticity.

4.2 Bodily Entry Makes Experience Credible

After feeling comes being there. Watching produces impressions; presence produces memories. Jimei's scene design invites the body to enter at every turn. If watching dragon boats is not enough, get in the water and row a stretch; if listening to a guide is not enough, pick up a task card and go questing in the academic village; on the sea bicycle lane around Xinglin Bay, the rider's body is itself part of the scenery; the camping and trunk market on the Shili Long Embankment are even more an encounter of body with body amid the sounds of the market. The sports dimension deserves a closer look. The races on the Dragon Boat Pool have long been upgraded from a Dragon Boat Festival folk custom into the branded Jiageng Cup and Jingxian Cup cross-strait dragon boat races; the nineteenth edition in 2026 featured 36 teams racing in the same pool,

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

including nine teams from Taiwan, with four professional referees from the Taiwan region invited to officiate, and in the same year a dragon boat culture consumption week was launched for the first time, converting spectator flows into market consumption—the ritual peak is beginning to spill over into everyday consumption. Jimei has also hosted national student events such as the Chinese University Volleyball League and the Chinese University Basketball League, while the sea bicycle lane and the Xinglin Bay greenway have made everyday cycling and jogging into ticket-free sports scenes. Sports in Jimei are not events to be watched but a lifestyle to be used. Jimei has also arranged the whole year into a ritual calendar: dragon boats at the Dragon Boat Festival, study-tour camps in summer, the photography season in golden autumn, and year-end welcome activities, interspersed with normalized street-corner performances. Once the body is pulled by rhythm, visiting is no longer a one-off event but an appointment kept round after round. The aforementioned research on urban youth has found that young people's culture-tourism consumption shows distinctive features in dimensions such as embodied experience and ritual participation, with emotional experience playing a core role (Chang, 2025). This explains why Jimei is willing to put painstaking effort into participation.

Memories left by presence last far longer than watching. A mother from Hangzhou, bringing her child to a study tour for the second time, said: "What the child remembers are the things she made with her own hands, tasted with her own mouth, and felt with her own body. She came to feel it herself, and then it was in her heart" (P11). Entry also has its depths. Immersive-experience research comparing homogeneous and heterogeneous designs finds that only heterogeneous experiencescapes sediment into differentiated memorable memories (Li et al., 2026). Jimei's sense of presence is heterogeneous because it grows in real spaces. The Dragon Boat Pool is real; the century-old academic village is real; the incense of Dashe Village is real; every sense of the body receives local signals that cannot be replicated. Cultivating new consumption scenarios requires simultaneous effort along five dimensions—smartness, accessibility, personalization, chaining, and integration (Zhang et al., 2026); Jimei's coastal sports-and-leisure, academic-village creative consumption, and night-economy integration scenes unfold precisely along these dimensions.

4.3 Identity Sedimentation Makes Consumption Sustainable

The deepest link of cultivation is letting consumption sediment into identity. Buying and selling is a matter of a moment; belonging is a matter of duration. The generation of identity is not mysticism. Collins's interaction ritual chain theory points out that when bodily co-presence, mutual focus of attention, and shared emotional mood are all present, ritual produces the identity symbols of group membership and emotional energy (Collins, 2009). The drumbeats of the dragon boat races, the communal living of study-tour camps, and the full-house choruses of music festivals are precisely the contemporary form of this mechanism. Large-scale text analysis of young people's online behavior likewise shows that contemporary youth's identification with fine traditional Chinese culture is not the result of passive indoctrination but is actively constructed in cultural resonance, emotional co-building, and community interaction (Y. Xu, 2025); tourism research has further found that once tourist identity is evoked, it stimulates stronger willingness for self-expression (Hu et al., 2026). Evidence from several sides points to one place: the highest state of a scene is letting people recognize themselves in it.

The sedimentation of identity cannot do without two kinds of people. The first kind is residents. Rural research shows that the depth of community residents' participation directly affects the perception and trans-

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

mission of collective memory landscapes (Qian et al., 2026). Residents are the first readers of a scene; if residents do not acknowledge it, tourists can hardly believe it. In Jimei's Dashe Village, Shigu Road, and Shili Long Embankment, residents are still within the scenes to this day—this is exactly the source of the scenes' everyday vitality. The second kind is rituals. Song-and-dance rituals in rural sports events have been shown to enhance participants' cultural value identity (Li & Pu, 2026), and the experience of the Village Super League further shows that for events to sustain consumption, what counts is the cultivation of endogenous momentum rather than external transfusion (Fang & Wang, 2026). Jimei holds the ritual card of the dragon boat races and the emotional line of cross-strait study-tour camps; rituals turn one-off encounters into periodic reunions and turn strangers into people who come back.

At its deepest, identity sedimentation has a cross-strait dimension unique to Jimei. Jimei is a famous hometown of overseas Chinese; the Jiageng Spirit is itself a product of the overseas-Chinese network, and the Minnan vernacular, Mazu beliefs and customs, and Jiageng memories are civilizational experience resources shared across the strait. The owner of a chazhuozai tea stand in Dashe Village remembers a young Taiwanese who, after drinking tea, said: we have temples like this over there too, and we worship the same way; my heart felt close—not the closeness of a guest, but the closeness of one of our own (P01). A graduate student from Taichung, on her third visit to Jimei, put the dragon-boat experience more thoroughly: "Once the drum sounds, you think of nothing; you just row along. At the finish line everyone is shouting. In that moment you do not think about which side you are from or which side I am from—we are simply people in the same boat. Photos get deleted, but that taste, that feeling, goes with you" (P07). The special value of cross-strait study-tour camps lies in lowering the threshold of co-presence to the everyday. Rowing the same dragon boat and learning the same craft, the three elements of ritual are complete before one knows it, and the output of identity is no longer the result of persuasion but a by-product of being together. Such everyday co-presence constitutes the micro-foundation of the emotional bonds between compatriots on both sides of the strait and of the consciousness of the Chinese national community. The highest form of the new consumption scenario is precisely such a civilizational experience micro-site: micro, in that it lands in the everyday of one street and one lane; site, in that identity can only occur in co-presence. When micro-sites network into momentum, the civilizational experience economy acquires flesh and blood at the scale of an urban district.

4.4 Value Realization: From Identity to the Economy

At this point, a harder question must be answered head-on: how does identity turn into revenue? This is where the word economy in the civilizational experience economy lands. Combining the interviews with public data, three paths of value realization can be identified. The first is the life-cycle path. Identity converts one-off sightseers into periodic returning customers, lengthening the customer life cycle. Customer-acquisition cost is incurred once at the first visit; revisits and recommendations amortize it across multiple transactions. The Taichung graduate student who came to Jimei three times and brought her juniors (P07), and the Hangzhou mother who visited a second time and spread the word in the parents' group (P11), are both lengthenings of the life cycle. Old customers bringing new ones are the cheapest and most sustainable source of traffic, consistent with the operator's orientation of valuing returning customers more (P12). The second is the consumption-conversion path. What identity raises is not only whether people come but also whether they spend and on whom. A tea-drink shop owner prints Jiageng buildings on the cup: what the customer buys is

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

not the tea but that feeling (P03). A market stallholder's Minnan-dialect cultural-creative goods: what the customer buys is not this bag but this sentence (P04). Identity injects a meaning premium into ordinary goods, upgrading consumption from functional payment to meaning payment. The third is the revenue-distribution path. Only when identity sediments into an asset shared by the community can it drive the local distribution of proceeds. The five-yuan cup of tea at the chazhuozai (P01), the decades-old shops on Shigu Road (P02), and the part-time income of the embankment stallholders (P04) are all outlets through which the scene's dividends percolate to small and micro merchants and ordinary residents.

To be candid, limited by data, this paper cannot yet provide quantitative measures of the three paths: repurchase rate, meaning-premium rate, and the share of residents' proceeds currently have no public statistics. This is an empirical checkpoint the civilizational experience economy cannot bypass on its way from concept to theory. But the identification of the paths has value in itself. It reminds local governments that evaluating a scene's success or failure cannot count only the single ledger of reception person-times; three more ledgers must be kept—repurchase rate, per-customer transaction value, and the local distribution of proceeds.

5 Criteria of Cultivation and a Directional Test

A concept without criteria is only a metaphor. The dividing line between cultivation and fabrication must be observable. This paper proposes three groups of observable criteria and conducts a directional test with the materials of this paper. Limited by the qualitative materials, the test here is a directional illustration, intended to show that the criteria are observable and operable rather than to constitute a strict statistical test.

Table 1: Criteria of the cultivation mechanism and the directional test

Mechanism dimension	Core connotation	Observable criteria	Jimei sample test	Control sample test
Symbolic translation	Making culture perceptible: from knowing to feeling	Symbols task-based, route-based, and reproduced	Task-card verification (P05); check-in routes organizing visitor flows; 20 courses updated year by year	In comparable cases G1–G3, symbols are only mounted on walls and shelves
Bodily entry	Embodying experience: from watching to being present	Deep bodily participation; year-round ritual calendar	Children asking to row again after the dragon-boat experience (P10); second parent–child visit (P11); year-round ritual scheduling	Comparable cases have opening ceremonies but no calendar
Identity sedimentation	Relationalizing consumption: from transaction to belonging	Visitor revisits and recommendations; resident participation in maintenance; community self-organization	Third revisit (P07); residents staying on (P01); spontaneous market growth (P04)	Insufficient flow cross-conduction in the new-town commercial district (internal variation)

*Note: The Jimei sample test column is drawn from this paper's interviews and public data and serves as directional illustration; the control samples comprise two types—the comparable cases (G1–G3) and the less

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

cultivated scenes within Jimei (the new-town commercial district).

The three groups of criteria can equally measure the failure of fabrication. Symbols that go onto walls but not into courses mean translation has not been achieved; activities that have openings but no calendar mean entry has not been achieved; traffic that pulses but does not return means sedimentation has not been achieved. The comparable cases G1, G2, and G3 fall through on all three groups of criteria, while Jimei's less-cultivated new-town commercial district loses points markedly on the item of networking and cross-conduction. The contrasts on both sides point to the same conclusion: cultivation is not rhetoric but a set of accountable analytical tools.

6 Discussion

To write Jimei in the perfect tense would be neither truthful nor honest. Cultivation is in the present continuous; several theoretical joints still need to be made explicit.

First, alternative explanations and the resource threshold. Attributing Jimei's performance to the cultivation mechanism requires first answering four competing hypotheses. The first is the spillover of Xiamen's city brand. If the performance came mainly from Xiamen's overall tourism heat, it could not explain Jimei's relative prominence among the off-island districts, let alone the marked differentiation in cultivation depth among scenes within Jimei. The second is the natural advantage of university enrollment. More than a hundred thousand teachers and students do provide base traffic, but the revisit willingness of self-driving tourists and parent-child tourists does not depend on enrollment (P10, P11); enrollment explains popularity but not cross-segment identity. The third is the policy dividend of the Taiwan-facing location. Policy is a condition, not a mechanism; Jimei is not the only region enjoying such policies, and for the dividend to convert into identity outcomes it must still pass through the intermediate conversion of the mechanism. The fourth is the timing window. Xiamen's cross-island development, the networking of rail transit, and the stacking of cross-strait integration policies have indeed provided Jimei with a rare window of the times, and mechanism explanation must not claim the credit of heaven. But the window is equal for all urban districts of the same period—why did Jimei alone convert the window into scenes? Timing explains why this period, not why this set of practices. Slow work also needs the support of patient capital and stable governance expectations; whether districts with weaker endowments and tighter finances can afford the cost of slowness, this paper has no answer. The lesson of the aforementioned Village Super League research is that low-resource regions can start from one affordable ritual rather than from an all-factor blueprint (Fang & Wang, 2026).

Second, the dark side of gentrification. This paper does not wish to write Jimei as a pastoral idyll. Dashe Village's rise to fame has already brought the pressure of rising rents and format replacement; the plain complaint that a cup of coffee sells for tens of yuan and old neighbors can no longer afford it (P01) speaks to the real shadow of gentrification. The more a scene pleases tourists, the less it may belong to residents. Once residents exit the scene because of rising living costs, the scene's everyday vitality becomes water without a source, and identity sedimentation loses its first reader. In the next leg of cultivation, residents' retention must be made an indicator as important as visitor growth, with arrangements such as rent regulation, local-employment priority, and community revenue return to offset the crowding-out effect of gentrification.

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Third, the limits of this paper and the unfinished agenda. Jimei's experience bears a distinct local imprint: the Jiageng Spirit cannot be replicated, and the hometown-of-overseas-Chinese location cannot be replicated; when migrating to regions with different resource endowments, the mechanism needs recalibration. The interview sample is a qualitative purposive sample; there are only three Taiwan youth, two of whom are high-identity repeat visitors, so self-selection bias exists. Their voices can prove that identity construction can happen, not that it happens universally; the findings on the cross-strait dimension should be regarded as exploratory, and more robust conclusions await testing that includes neutral and even estranged samples. This paper has also not carried out quantitative measurement; the measurement of value-realization paths and the calibration of cultivation criteria are left to subsequent research. Flow cross-conduction between scenes also still has room for improvement: if micro-sites cannot network into momentum, the civilizational experience economy will have only point-like glimmers, not an area-wide ecology. Digital-intelligence tools can amplify the voice of cultivation, but the sedimentation of identity depends on time, while the reward mechanism of digital-intelligence communication is speed (J. Wang et al., 2026); what technology amplifies must be the voice of narrative, not noise. For the criteria to become a tool usable by the industry, they must move from directional criteria to a quantifiable index. Follow-up work can develop a scene cultivation index, using indicators such as the symbol taskization rate, ritual-calendar density, visitor revisit rate, resident participation degree, and the local revenue-distribution ratio to conduct comparable and accountable assessments of integration depth at the urban-district scale, making the civilizational experience economy further develop from an interpretive framework into a governance tool.

Fourth, the tension between cultivation logic and performance logic and its resolution in Jimei. Cultivation demands slowness—raising a scene day after day for years; the habitual performance impulse demands speed—visible, countable achievements within the year. At a time when the whole Party is carrying out in-depth study and education on establishing and practicing the correct view of political achievements, Jimei's years of practice can be read as an early implementation of the correct view of political achievements in the culture-tourism field. One must do both the visible achievements that the people can see, touch, and benefit from, and the hidden achievements that pave the way, lay foundations, and benefit the long term for posterity; hidden achievement is the greatest visible achievement. The Jimei governors' line that culture-tourism cannot be rushed (P12) is internally consistent with this view of political achievements. Jimei did not fence off the Dragon Boat Pool to sell tickets for a moment's profit, nor ban the newborn trunk market for a moment's tidiness, but has run the dragon boat races, study-tour camps, and photography season year after year—this is precisely the long-sustained effort of "success need not be mine, but success must have my part." It must also be soberly seen that this implementation relies more on governors' self-awareness and has not yet been fully institutionalized into assessment arrangements. Incorporating slow indicators such as repurchase rate, local revenue distribution, and scene survival years into assessment, so that hidden achievements benefiting the long term receive institutional recognition and incentive—only then will cultivation not remain a rare and commendable exception at the case level.

7 Conclusion

Return to the opening question: an island-suburban new district with middling endowments—on what does

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

it rely? The answer can be gathered into three sentences. Translate culture from knowing into feeling, and only then are symbols alive. Invite visitors from watching into presence, and only then is experience real. Sediment consumption from transaction into belonging—and through repurchase, premium, and local distribution into sustainable proceeds—and only then is the scene accomplished. The mechanism has no clever stroke that wins in one move; it is all slow work day after day. Cultivation is precious for the nurturing and accomplished through duration.

For theory, Jimei's value lies in proving that the civilizational experience economy is not a concept of the study but an economic form that can be raised, observed, and tested at the scale of an urban district. Micro-sites may be small, but networked into momentum they are the everyday construction of civilizational identity. For local governments, Jimei's reminder is equally plain: less obsession with resource endowments, more patience with cultivation mechanisms. Culture not put to use remains forever only a resource; put to use rightly, it is economy, and more than that, identity. Fabrication is fast; cultivation is slow—yet the lifespan of a new consumption scenario depends precisely on the part that cannot be hurried.

Funding

This work was supported by the Social Science Research Project funded by the Federation of Social Sciences of Jimei District (Grant No. Ji-Sheke-Diaoyan [2026] No. 15).

References

[1] PINE B J, GILMORE J H. The experience economy[M]. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2011.
[2] 张维为 . 文明型国家 [M]. 上海 : 上海人民出版社 , 2017.
[3] 傅才武 , 王异凡 . 场景视阈下城市夜间文旅消费空间研究 —— 基于长沙超级文和友文化场景的透视 [J]. 武汉大学学报 (哲学社会科学版), 2021, 74(6): 58-70.
[4] 许春晓 , 冯学钢 , 蒋依依 , 等 . 文旅深度融合与资源创新利用 □ 热现象与冷思考 [J]. 自然资源学报 , 2025, 40(4): 876-900.
[5] 蒋依依 , 马晓龙 , 厉新建 , 等 . 文旅资源融合创新与新型消费体系构建 [J]. 自然资源学报 , 2026, 41(8): 2285-2303.
[6] 陈元欣 , 陈磊 , 周冲 , 等 . 消费场景创新促进体育消费潜力释放 □ 机理 □ 进路与策略 [J]. 上海体育大学学报 , 2025, 49(10): 13-26.
[7] 叶胥 , 唐子怡 . 消费新场景的生成逻辑 □ 理论内涵与实践进路 [J]. 消费经济 , 2025, 41(4): 1-13.
[8] 王楚涵 , 张朝枝 . 文化氛围视角下的文旅融合评测 —— 基于大语言模型辅助内容分析 [J]. 旅游学刊 , 2026, 41(2): 48-60.
[9] 常天恺 . 数字沉浸式场景下城市青年文旅消费的行为表征与情感体验 [J]. 中国青年研究 , 2025(4): 95-102.
[10] LIN Z, RASOOLIMANESH S M, STHAPIT E, et al. Antecedents and outcomes of negative memorable heritage tourism experiences: A mixed-methods study[J]. Tourism Management Perspectives, 2026 (forthcoming).
[11] XU J, SHI P, CHEN X. Curators or creators: Role configurations of digital innovation strategy in museum tourism destination and the principles underlying their attractiveness[J]. Tourism Management, 2025,

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

106: 105024.
[12] LI C, SU J, SUN X. Homogeneous or heterogeneous? The influence of diverse immersive experiencescapes on tourists' memorable tourism experiences[J]. Journal of Travel Research, 2026, DOI: 10.1177/00472875261428098.
[13] 张瑞林 , 黄玉阳 , 王志文 . 高质量户外运动目的地消费新场景的内涵 □ 机理与培育路径 [J]. 体育与科学 , 2026, 47(3): 69-75.
[14] 兰德尔 · 柯林斯 . 互动仪式链 [M]. 林聚任 , 王鹏 , 宋丽君 , 译 . 北京 : 商务印书馆 , 2009.
[15] 徐用祺 . 当代青年对中华优秀传统文化认同的网络表征与未来路向 —— 以微博 □ 抖音 □“B 站 ” 网络社交平台为例 [J]. 中国青年研究 , 2025(4): 87-94.
[16] HU J, CHEN H Y, LIN Z, et al. Escape to express: Tourist identity and self-disclosure[J]. Annals of Tourism Research, 2026, 116: 104081.
[17] QIAN Y, ZHAO Y, XIANG X, et al. The impact of community participation in tourism on the perception of collective memory landscapes: Case studies of traditional villages Azheke and Dayutang in Yunnan, China[J]. Journal of Rural Studies, 2026, 124: 104181.
[18] 李柯璇 , 蒲毕文 . 乡村体育赛事歌舞仪式增进文化价值认同的理论阐述与活化路径 [J]. 体育学刊 , 2026, 33(2): 38-44.
[19] 方汪凡 , 王家宏 . 乡村体育赛事推动消费帮扶市场形态转型 □ 理论逻辑与实践进路 —— 以贵州 “ 村超 ” 赛事为例 [J]. 体育与科学 , 2026, 47(3): 59-68.
[20] 王金伟 , 陆林 , 明庆忠 , 等 . 人工智能 □AI□ 时代文旅融合高质量发展 □ 关键问题与科学路径 [J]. 自然资源学报 , 2026, 41(8): 2304-2325.

© 2026 by the author(s); licensee Mason Publish Group, this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)