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Framework and Perception Survey of Tourism Accessibility Concerning Regional Airports Based on Nexus Thinking: An Empirical Study in Ganzi Prefecture, China

Jin Zhou [1,2,*], Lihua Li [1] and Ruoran Lei [1,2]

[1] Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chengdu 610041, China
[2] University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100049, China
* Correspondence: zhoujin20@mails.ucas.ac.cn

Abstract: Blocking regional communication is the beginning of the deterioration and even destruction of civilization. Accessibility is the principal condition for the development of mountain areas and the first barrier to the breakthrough of tourism. In this context, the lack of unified transportation planning and analysis of tourists' perceptions leads to poor accessibility and consequently the sustainable development of tourist destinations. This paper considers Yading Airport, the highest civil airport in the world, located in the mountainous area of southwest China, as an example. Based on the computed results of traffic accessibility, this research elucidates tourists' perception with Nexus Thinking of sustainability. Furthermore, in light of deconstructing the connotation of accessibility by questionnaire, subdivision dimensions together with certain factors are paraphrased. The paper ultimately puts forward the following concepts: (1) The perception of accessibility represents invariant material form in the subjectivity space and attributes of the flow space; (2) Taking perception as the variable, evaluation of accessibility is considered affected by residents' attitudes; (3) Tourism accessibility represents the duality between tourist flow and airport security management. These conclusions demonstrate that, in certain regions, tourism has an effect on integrating elements and constructing identity. Relevant suggestions are presented in this paper for sustainable development that relate to tourism in mountainous areas.

Keywords: tourism accessibility; regional airports; tourist perception; Nexus Thinking

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1. Introduction

In March 1928, Joseph Rock, an American anthropologist, set out from Muli and crossed Daocheng twice. Later, in 1933, American writer James Hilton took Rock's exploration experiences as the material to create the novel Lost Horizon, which depicted a mysterious realm named Shangri-La. Daocheng Yading, "the last pure land on the Blue Planet", is considered by many people to be the original image of "Shangri-La", hidden in mountains of southwestern China [1], awaiting for the wayfarers.

Since the beginning of the new millennium, along with the development of cultural tourism, regional aviation has been booming in China. By November 2021, there were 23 branch airports registered by Civil Aviation Administration in Southwest China (Ministry of Transport of China. 2021 National Civil Transport Airport Production Statistics Bulletin. (22 March 2022) (17 January 2023). https://www.mot.gov.cn/tongjishuju/minhang/202204/t20220408_3649981.html). Among them, Yading Airport, which is in Daocheng County, has certain particularities in terms of location, attributes, and functions. Concerning one feature, Yading is a 4C-level civil and military airport, which is the highest civil airport (4411 m) in the world. As far as the tourism demand of Yading Scenic Spot, for the other, there are still deficiencies in the tourist service at the airport [2]. All of these elicit the topic that, as the airport with the highest throughput in Ganzi Prefecture, in the context

of the development of China's aviation and cultural tourism, tourist accessibility of this "mysterious realm" is worthy for further study.

In the context of dense transportation networks and widespread airport economic zones, the migration population carried by transportation facilities will bring about changes in the material, social, and cultural forms of the region [3]. Although the construction and operation of the airport itself has a limited impact on passenger motivation in terms of factors such as location [4], the demand for air travel is derived since the air service and route layout are highly sensitive to changes in the social, political, and economic environment [5]. That is, the meaning of tourism accessibility is not only limited to the traffic accessibility of tourism resources, but the connection between supplied service and tourism demand. Accessibility presents more than just the geospatial connectivity.

In the 1970s, new cultural geography (NCG), presented by Peter Jackson, emerged in the field of cultural geography [6,7]. The discussion of NCG points to an update of geographical research on the correlation among spatial elements [8,9], which also promotes the exploration of spatial interdependence with more coherent thinking [10], encouraging broader cultural connections and constantly simplifying permissible conditions for spatial connectivity [11]. In 2016, Peter Jackson chose "Nexus Thinking", originating in a report from the 2011 World Economic Forum, as the topic of his speech at a geographical conference. The report defined water security as a "gossamer" in a multitier network, as the complex interaction within water–food–energy (WEF) is described [12]. In fact, Nexus Thinking grew out of energy and resource issues in the field of sustainability research to foster new cognitive approaches to multiple sustainability challenges by strengthening the understanding of the nature of complex systems, especially clarifying the interconnections among subjects [13]. Fairly approximate to NCG, Nexus Thinking that originated in the interstices of conventional academic disciplines brings out the interdependence among different sectors and focuses on the efficiency of the systems rather than independent elements, embedded in certain issues in the field of geography [14]. That is to say, the tourism destination and aviation network are not regarded as independent sectors, but seem to be the "Nexus" chain to join the supply and demand of tourism resources more fairly and sustainably. This is not a trivial broadening of horizons, since the nexus approach could serve as a tool for systems integration and a method for exploring development pathways [15]. Certain case studies have demonstrated the value of this thinking frame to adapt to locality in practical applications [16–18].

Concerning realistic problems of the tourism industry, there is also a warning to the research of accessibility. In the summer of 2017, certain tourist destinations witnessed the emergence of "anti-tourism" activities [19,20]. Under the surface of prosperity in the tourist industry, transportation, which is dominated by tourists, does not give equal consideration to the destination, leading to weakened participation of local communities in tourism and the spread of "tourism phobia" among residents. In order to adjust the strengthening of accessibility, the analysis framework concerning tourism should introduce the key role of multiagent reception rather than be separated from the spatial relationship, since the tourism research has brought public issues such as equality, destination reputation, and sustainability into the horizon [21]. At present, China is also facing this problem after the relief of prevention and control. It means that unexpected situations such as "overtourism" extended by tourism recovery need to be further considered.

2. Related Literature

2.1. Tourism Accessibility

Walter G. Hansen (1959) was one of the earliest scholars involved in the field of accessibility [22]. At that time, some people believed that accessibility was a measure of spatial distribution and could be adjusted according to the willingness to overcome spatial separation. As a consequence, Hansen defined accessibility as "the potential of opportunities for interaction". It not only focuses on the efficiency of interaction, but also comprehensively evaluates the possibility of interaction between tourists and destinations.

Recalling the exposition of accessibility in the context of tourism, it can be found that tourism accessibility in a broad sense is manifested in two aspects. One is the geographical accessibility of the tourist destination, which involves factors such as location and transportation; the other is the tourism accessibility of the destination, which is determined by the facilities, cultural environment, and tourist behavior [23]. The fixed location and the gradual development of transportation make the evaluation of accessibility tend to be objective. Nonetheless, from the perspective of tourists, accessibility is subjective and not completely stable. Therefore, in this sense, tourists make a pivotal judgment concerning the accessibility of tourism destinations.

Subsequently, in light of the analysis of the representational dimensions of accessibility, Zhou Shangyi (2002) defined accessibility as the convenience of people using the resources of space points [24]. Lv Dongyang (2007) further narrowed the scale of the study area and focused on the accessibility of scenic spots, putting forward that accessibility of scenic spots refers to the communication with the external space [25]. Meanwhile, Heyan (2007) changed the previous interpretation of tourism city accessibility from the perspective of urban traffic, extending and deconstructing the concept of accessibility from the perspective of tourists' perception into an organic aggregate jointly influenced by multidimensional factors such as traffic accessibility, constructed environment adaptability, and cultural acceptance, and conducted an empirical study combined with tourist behavior [26]. In a broad sense, accessibility is a concept that has been applied to a number of research fields, including transportation geography, urban planning, marketing, and so on, also leading to its connotations being complex and varied with different criteria. Overall, by the nature of these concepts, accessibility is not limited to the consideration of spatial accessibility. Transportation is only a component of tourism, and the evaluation of tourism accessibility cannot avoid the influence of social and cultural aspects. For instance, Liu Huixia (2019) and Stefanie Benjamin (2021), respectively, deconstructed the social friendliness and psychological acceptance of tourism accessibility for special groups from the perspectives of inclusiveness and fairness, focusing on the social environment for people with disabilities [27,28].

In addition, because the concept of accessibility has obvious endemicity, the analysis of accessibility in existing studies also considers the characteristics of the local development stage. In the study of Kuklina Maria (2022), five regions in Siberia with different economic development levels and ethnic cultural characteristics were selected to analyze the interaction between tourism and transportation infrastructure and the realization path from a cultural perspective [29]. It is worth noting that one of the characteristics of these study areas is that they all include a certain number of indigenous communities, which are clear supporters of transport facilities regardless of their environment and background. To some extent, indigenous communities realize that a relatively negative attitude is not conducive for transport facilities to play a supporting role in external communication, and will intensify the cultural and economic competition between migrants and local residents [30]. This perspective on accessibility and the analysis of reality at the local level enable the regional environment to occupy a place in the accessibility evaluation system.

2.2. Tourist Perception

Everyone has their own mental map, and can recognize where is reachable or where the appropriate activity place is during the process of "drawing", which indicates that the perception of accessibility becomes one of the fundamental factors that ultimately determines spatial behavior [31]. Conversely, the behavior of tourists may also have an impact on destinations, depending on their level of cognition and perception of the location. Consequently, from the perspective of perception, the accessibility of tourist destinations is a relative concept, since the personal characteristics of tourists may affect their perception and lead to certain senses or evaluations of the location. For example, the difference in travel motivation among diverse types of tourism behavior may lead to a difference in transportation preferences, thus affecting their assessment criteria for accessibility [32].

Additionally, the choices of transportation mode and service experience often impress tourists' satisfaction and perception [33].

Under this premise, Silvia Aulet (2020) proposed the concept of spiritual sustainability and expounded the existence of emotional and spiritual dimensions of accessibility in the context of religious tourism [34]. It points out that the ingenious combination of elements in tourism space does not interfere with the path of spiritual continuation, and the orderly operation of space largely depends on its significance in religious or social ideology, that is, the identity and value perception formed by religious tourists. Specifically, during tourist activities, tourists with differentiated characteristics might interpret the process of gathering, detecting, filtering, and interpreting the heterogeneous information in the space, thus perceiving the same "place" in different ways [31].

The destination system provides tourists with an existing perceptual environment. From the perspective of accessibility, the spatial distribution pattern of tourism resources and facilities is not only the representation of regional operation and development mode, but also the basis for individual physical practice and emotional perception. Based on this, Kamille Almer Bernsdorf (2017) discussed the relationship between accessibility of restaurants and the intake of fast food, and then proposed that the inhibition of unhealthy dietary behavior should be combined with the accessibility evaluation of the environment [35]. The consideration of the environment here shows the correlation path between behavioral activities and regional environment from the perspective of individual perception. Regarding mountain tourist destinations, it can be found that, generally speaking, access to mountain scenic spots often requires the connection and combination of various modes of transportation. It is evident that the completeness of a corresponding service system such as a traffic sign system in addition to the infrastructure such as transportation should be considered in this environment [36]. Travel to remote areas, represented by mountains, means long journeys and multiple transfers [37], where tourist transport plays an irreplaceable role in the perception of accessibility.

To summarize, studies on perception and cognition in geography have proved that decision-making related to spatial behavior originates from perception of environment, which also means that the tourists' perception concerning accessibility is an important factor to consider. In a highly intertwined and complex tourism transport network, the brain's information contact and reception is often in an "overloaded" state. Therefore, even in a seemingly simple space, some information that is not essential to current behavior is filtered out, and the environment and perception are malposed to a certain extent. At the same time, tourists' statements of perceived information will be colored or distorted to varying degrees due to differences in individual backgrounds and preferences, while the possibility of information being detected or correctly remembered depends on individual spatial abilities, which are often related to physical practice, imagination, and information conversion abilities. Golledge and Stimson (1997) identified three components of spatial capability: (1) knowledge of geographical location and related attributes; (2) construct of the spatial relationship and connection between people and places; and (3) realize movement between places [38]. Based on this, individuals not only have different perceptions of accessibility in a certain space, but also may have incomplete perceptions of environmental information. Therefore, systematically extracting the perceived environment is indispensable, and correspondingly, it is necessary to recognize the multiple dimensions of tourists' perception.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Study Area

Ganzi Prefecture belongs to Sichuan Province, which is the second largest Tibetan region in China (Figure 1). It is located in the southeastern Qinghai–Tibet Plateau and the east side of the Hengduan Mountains. Daocheng County is located in southern Ganzi Prefecture, spanning 27°58′~29°30′ north latitude and 99°56′~100°36′ east longitude. The county is 3750 m above sea level, the fourth highest city in Ganzi Prefecture, and the

total population is 32,000 (2020) (Daocheng County Government. Overview of Daocheng. (EB/OL). (12 November 2020) (7 March 2022). http://www.daocheng.gov.cn/dcxrmzf/c102540/202011/762216a9605243eebdc2bed7271456b6.shtml).

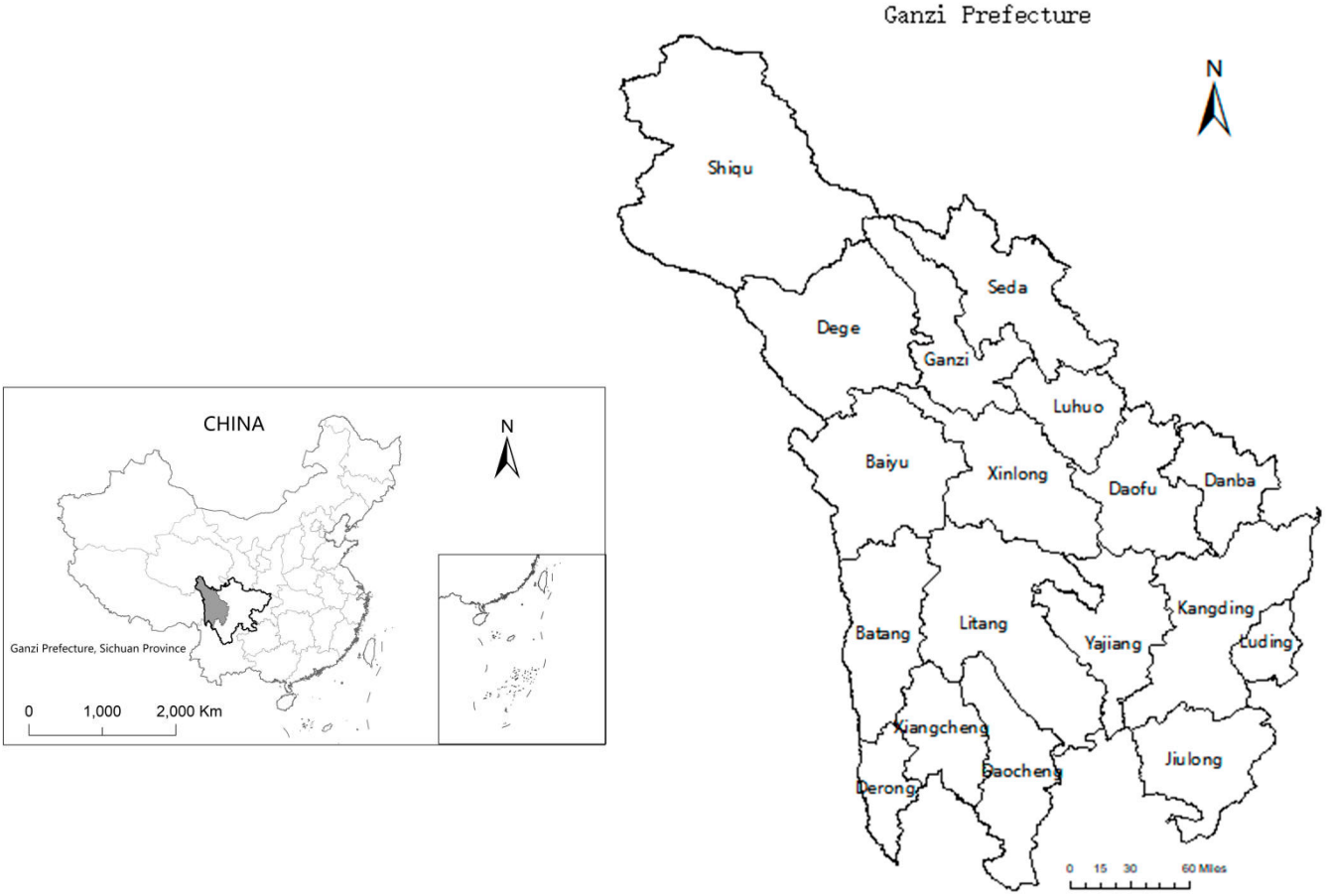

Figure 1. Location of Ganzi Prefecture in Sichuan Province, China.

3.2. Data Sources

3.2.1. Statistical Data

The number and distribution of A-level scenic spots, the total tourism revenue, and the condition of tourist reception were all collected from the Statistical Yearbook of Ganzi Prefecture and the People's Government of Daocheng County. The passenger volume and the takeoff and landing frequency at Yading Airport were collected from the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC).

3.2.2. Text Data

The online comments and travel notes of Yading Airport were collected from six existing online travel agencies (OTA), including Ctrip, Qunar Travel, and others. The review period is from 2013 to now.

3.2.3. Geographical Data

The data for the administrative division boundary were taken from the national DLG data 1:250,000 vector map of the National Basic Geographic Information Center. Road traffic data for the counties and towns in Ganzi Prefecture were obtained from the Ganzi Prefecture Transportation Bureau and the national 1:250,000 vector data set of basic geographic elements.

3.2.4. Questionnaire Data

The questionnaire data were obtained from a field survey, including paper and network questionnaires. To investigate the basic information concerning air tourists and measure their accessibility perception, a sample survey was conducted among air tourists and residents in Daocheng County, Ganzi Prefecture. According to these survey purposes, the travel itinerary information including departure city, travel destination, personal information, and others adopted semi-open data statistics, and the perception section takes the scale as the statistical pattern.

3.3. Tourism Accessibility Analysis Framework and Measurement Method

The airport is a space that may make passengers feel lonely or dislocated, but these experiences are inevitable in the process of travel. Airports seem to suppress different intentions and strengthen their own rules and cultural orientation, thus providing a transformation mode for tourists' perception and setting the starting point of an "accessible" path for tourist destinations [39]. This paper aims to form a tourism accessibility analysis framework guided by Nexus Thinking and takes by the connection relationship between tourists, airports, and destinations as a clue. This analysis illustrates the tourists' perception in the airport space, that is, the connection between tourists and the airport.

Therefore, from the perspective of tourists' perception and spatial ability, three aspects of accessibility are deconstructed to form a basic framework for analysis:

- Knowledge: understanding of geographical location and related attributes;
- Involvement degree: to construct the spatial connection between people and places;
- Practice: implement movement among places.

In addition, based on Nexus Thinking for the integration of multiple platforms and departments, in order to clarify the connection relationship between airports and destinations in the process of tourism activities, this paper makes a comprehensive analysis of the transportation accessibility and distribution of scenic spots in the study area, and clarifies the basic conditions for the formation of the relationship described above. Finally, the overall framework of tourism accessibility analysis is formed.

3.3.1. Deconstruction of Accessibility Dimensions: A Textual Analysis of OTA Reviews

Quantitative content analysis is adopted in this paper, which is a quantitative research method for textual data. Its authenticity and reliability have been recognized in tourism research [40], and it has been widely used in research fields such as destination image [41,42], tourist behavior [43], and tourism experience [44]. With the help of ROST CM6, word segmentation is carried out on the crawled comment text to obtain the key words and word frequency.

Finally, 46,053 words of comments concerning Yading Airport were collected as Table 1. Then, the textual data were converted to TXT format ANSI encoding, and the data were imported into ROST CM6 text analysis software for word segmentation. In order to ensure the effective word frequency analysis, the analysis process uses the filter word list, merged word group, and reserved word list.

Table 1. Text data sources and statistics.

Data Sources	Main Content	Start Time	Number of Comments	Word Count
Ctrip	travel agency	2015	58	3932
Qunar	services	2015	5	191
Fliggy	travel ticketing	2017	10	270
Umetrip	air travel	2017	87	4287
VariFlight	information	2018	52	2280
DianPing	travel service	2013	267	35,093
	Total		479	46,053

A total of 1402 keywords were extracted from the textual data by word frequency analysis, and 971 related words were obtained, with a total number of 7878 word frequencies, as shown in the Table 2:

Table 2. Quantity and frequency statistics of dimensions.

Dimension		Quantity	Proportion (%)	Frequency	Proportion (%)
Spatial ability	knowledge	304	31.32	3689	46.82
	involvement	495	50.98	2792	35.44
	practice	172	17.70	1397	17.74
total		971	100	7878	100

The words with unclear semantic meaning were eliminated, and the three dimensions, "knowledge", "involvement" and "practice", were clustered based on the existing framework of accessibility. Finally, the word frequency statistical analysis results for the three dimensionally related words were obtained as Figure 2. On the strength of keyword analysis and integration, the tourism accessibility analysis and evaluation model were formed.

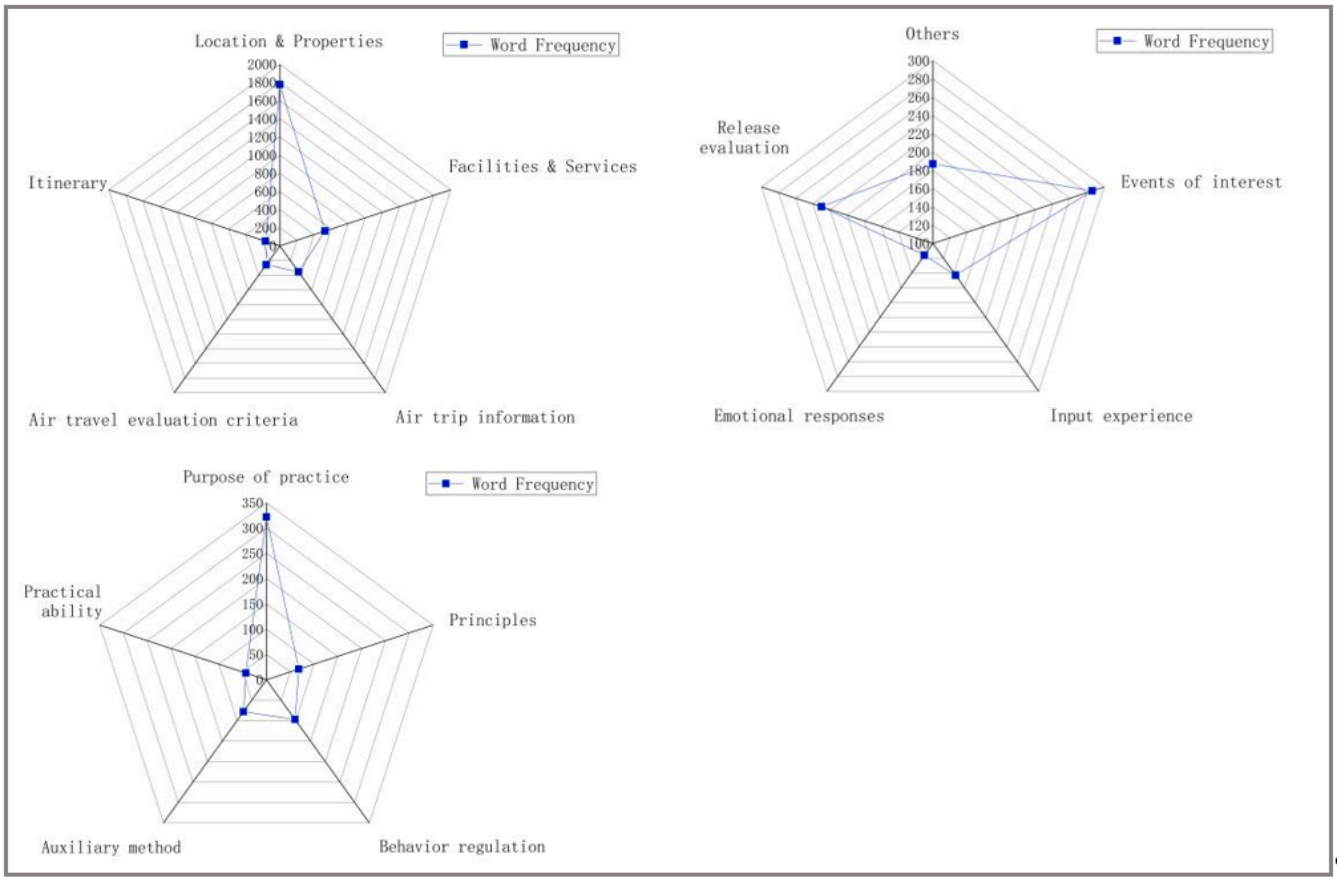

Figure 2. Frequency distribution for secondary coding (high frequency words) with different dimensions of accessibility.

The analysis in this stage discusses the impact of airports on tourists' perception at the intermediate link of the connection relationship. Specifically, in terms of the knowledge dimension, "Location & Properties", is highly representative, that is to say, understanding the basic information of airports is the key to stimulate tourism motivation, especially for airports in mountainous areas, where high altitude and unknown environment may deter tourists. In the dimension of involvement, the discussion is mainly about the participation

of tourists. In this dimension, "Events of interest" occupy a large proportion, and the triggering of novelty is the key for tourists to invest in emotion and cognition and form relevant perception. The practical dimension presents the behavior of tourists to establish a connection with the airport, and "Purpose of practice" is the main element of this dimension. On the whole, in the connection between tourists and airports, the most important aspect is to guide aircraft to become the best travel choice for tourists, and at the same time, guide tourists to participate in tourism activities through aviation information and other related services, and extend this perception of "accessibility" to the next stage.

3.3.2. Basic Conditions of Access: An Analysis of Traffic Accessibility

In existing research, the measurement methods of accessibility mainly include the cumulative–chance method, buffer analysis method, network analysis method, shortest-path method and two-step mobile search method [37,45–48]; this paper uses the shortest-path method to measure the traffic accessibility of Yading Airport; the formula follows:

$$Ai = \min(Mj, Tij) \quad (1)$$

where Ai represents the accessibility of any point i in the study area, Tij is the shortest passage time between point i in the road traffic network and airport j in the traffic network, and Mj represents the weight of airport j.

Based on the consideration for ground traffic, ArcGIS10.2 is used in this paper to convert the original vector data map into raster data, so as to avoid the insufficient coverage of the accessibility measurement of non-network nodes [49]. Additionally, the traffic accessibility of Yading Airport is measured based on the highway data at all levels in Ganzi Prefecture. The basic principle of the accessibility measurement method applied here is to rasterize the original vector base map with a grid network that is 1 km $\times$ 1 km, and then delimit the shortest passage time to Yading Airport by using the grid network unit where any scenic spot is located.

According to the four types of highway codes: G, S, X and Y, together with highway technical grade, the data were preliminarily screened, excluding the roads that were not considered in the related highway category, the unmarked township streets, and the commercial or residential area roads. Additionally, the relevant data which lack certain information should be perfected and supplemented, and the rating information of relevant sections should be supplemented according to the situation of the road in the same line, then all kinds of highway codes should be completed. Finally, considering the calculation requirements for the following steps, the highway data for Ganzi Prefecture and Daocheng County were classified and processed according to the highway technical level, and the highway mileage statistics of Daocheng County were formed with the help of ArcCatalog. In addition to the road types, highway data for Ganzi Prefecture were classified by technical levels and are illustrated in the following Figures 3 and 4.

According to the relevant standards and indexes of the Technical Standards for Highway Engineering of the People's Republic of China (JTG B01-2014), the speed limits (km/h) for different levels of highways are determined according to the current design speed and actual operating speed of highways, taking into account the topographic and geological conditions of Ganzi Prefecture, especially Daocheng County, the average driving time (min) per kilometer of all levels of highway was calculated, thus generating the time cost based on the road traffic network.

As illustrated in Table 3, the existing road data were assigned and reclassified, and the time cost per kilometer was formed by using a grid calculator, which was embedded with the boundary data. By using the ArcGIS10.2 cost distance calculation tool, Yading Airport and other regional airports in Ganzi were taken as the target points to calculate the minimum time cost of any grid unit arriving at the airport in the region, and the traffic accessibility measurement results for Ganzi Prefecture were obtained as Figure 5.

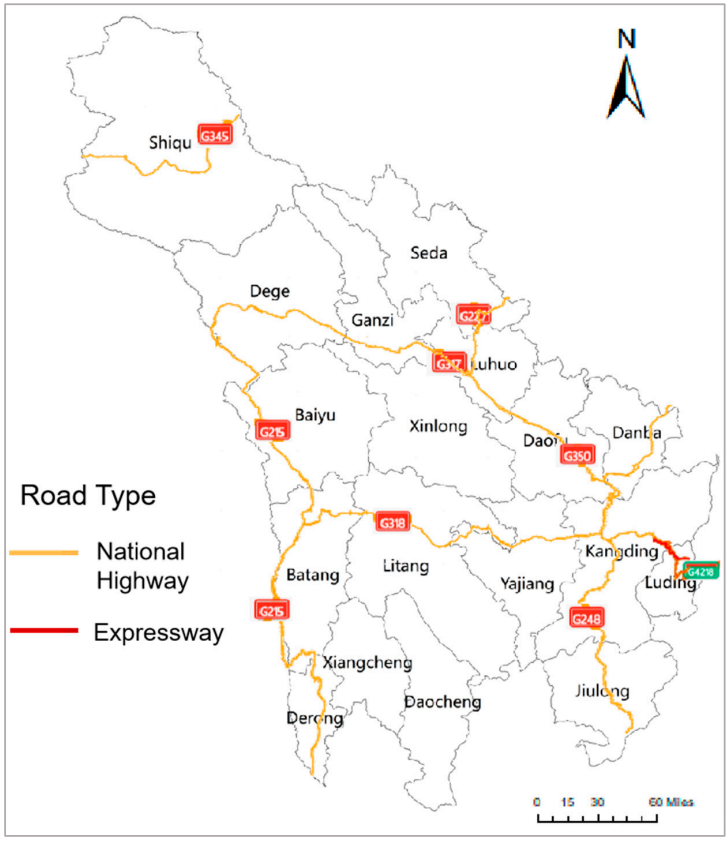

Figure 3. National highways in Ganzi.

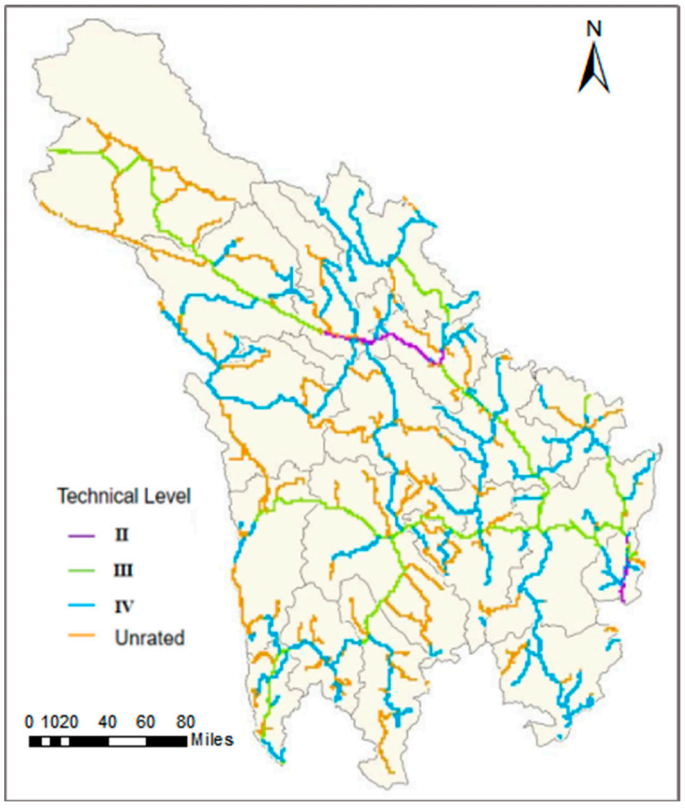

Figure 4. Distribution of highways at all levels.

Table 3. Classification of speed and time cost.

Level	Design Speed (km/h)	Actual Speed (km/h)	Time Cost (min/km)
highway	120, 100, 80	100	0.60
I	100, 80, 60	80	0.75
II	80, 60	60	1.00
III	40, 30	40	1.50
IV	30, 20	20	3.00
unrated	NA	15	5.00

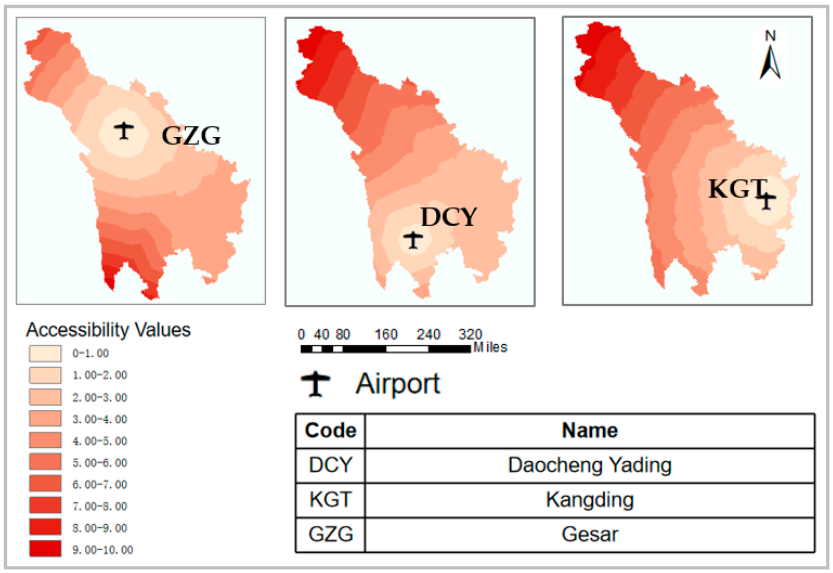

Figure 5. Analysis results for traffic accessibility of Ganzi Prefecture civil airports.

4. Survey of Tourists' Perceptions of Accessibility

In order to further acquire the accessibility perception data of Yading Airport and analyze the influencing factors of each accessibility dimension, this paper adopts the method of questionnaire survey and obtains the original data for perception evaluation through field investigation.

4.1. Survey Area and Sample Point Setting

Yading Airport is the highest civil airport in the world with an altitude of 4411 m and lies 48 km from Daocheng County. Taking into account the altitude and distribution of tourism attractions, as well as the previous investigation of tourist routes as Figure 6, it can be found that passengers mainly choose Jinzhu, Sangdui, and Shangri-La as their destinations after landing. Therefore, the questionnaire distribution areas were located in these three towns as Figure 7. Based on the field investigation, sample acquisition points were set in the airport terminal, passenger departure or landing waiting areas, scenic spots, and other areas where the number of tourists is relatively dense.

The participants completing the questionnaire were generally divided into three categories: (1) one-way/round-trip passengers to Daocheng by plane; (2) local residents in Daocheng County; (3) staff members of relevant 4C branch airports with Daocheng Air travel experience. Finally, a total of 214 questionnaires were issued, of which 207 were valid, and the original data from the questionnaires were uniformly inputted.

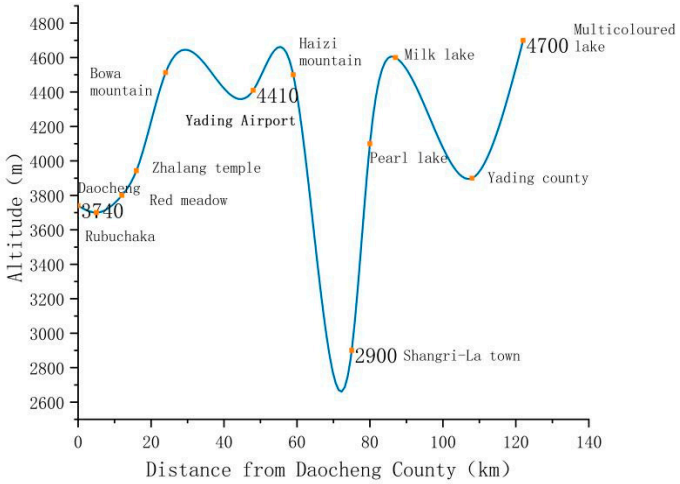

Figure 6. The elevation along the tourism route.

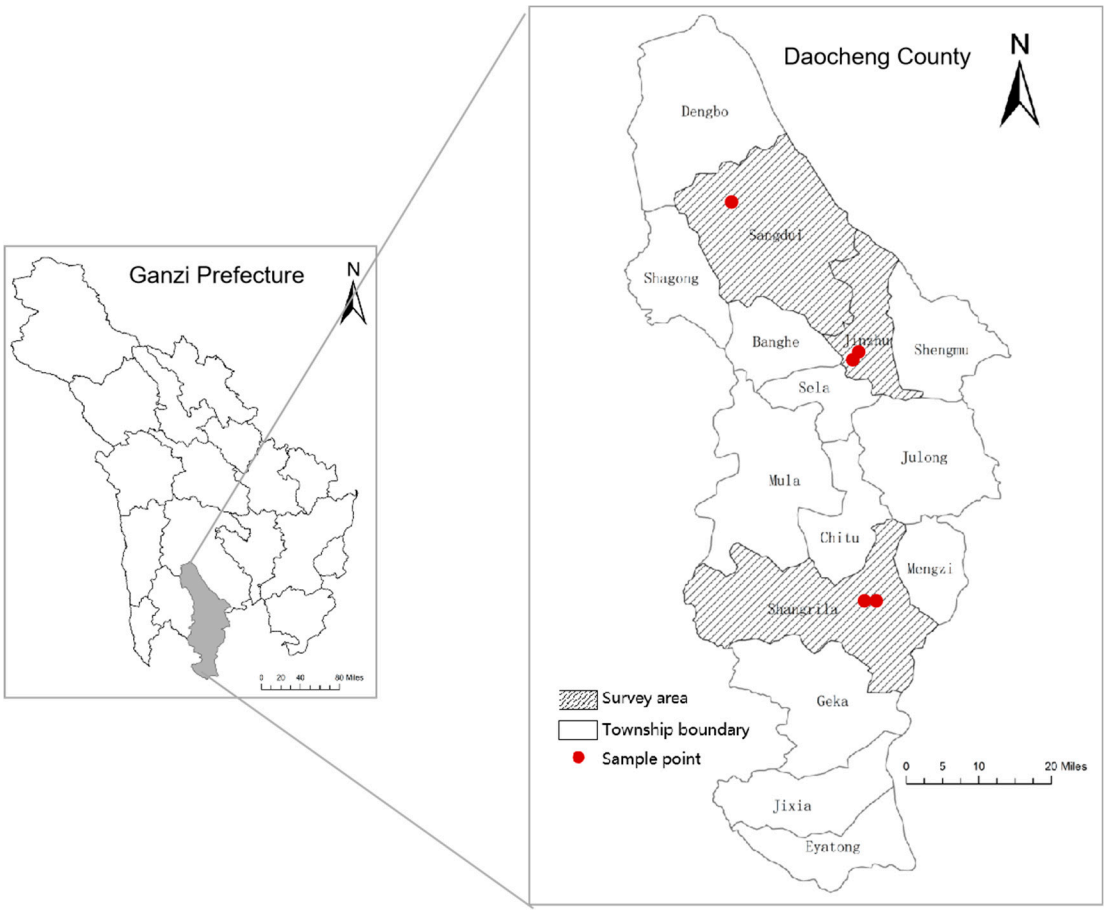

Figure 7. Survey area and sample acquisition point.

The Cronbach reliability test was conducted on the questionnaire data, and the reliability coefficient value was 0.938 ($\alpha > 0.8$), indicating a high reliability quality for the data. Among all CITC values, the total correlation of the correction items of negative items is weak, and the CITC value is 0.29, less than 0.3, so the items are adjusted. In the validity test, the KMO value of the data is 0.939, greater than 0.6, and the p value is less than 0.05, indicating that the data have certain validity.

4.2. Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Survey Results

4.2.1. Sociological Characteristics of the Samples

The basic information about the questionnaire respondents is shown in Figure 8. In terms of gender, there were 116 males and 91 females, respectively, with a 14:11 male–female ratio. The sample was concentrated between 20 and 40 years old and more than half of the respondents were undergraduates.

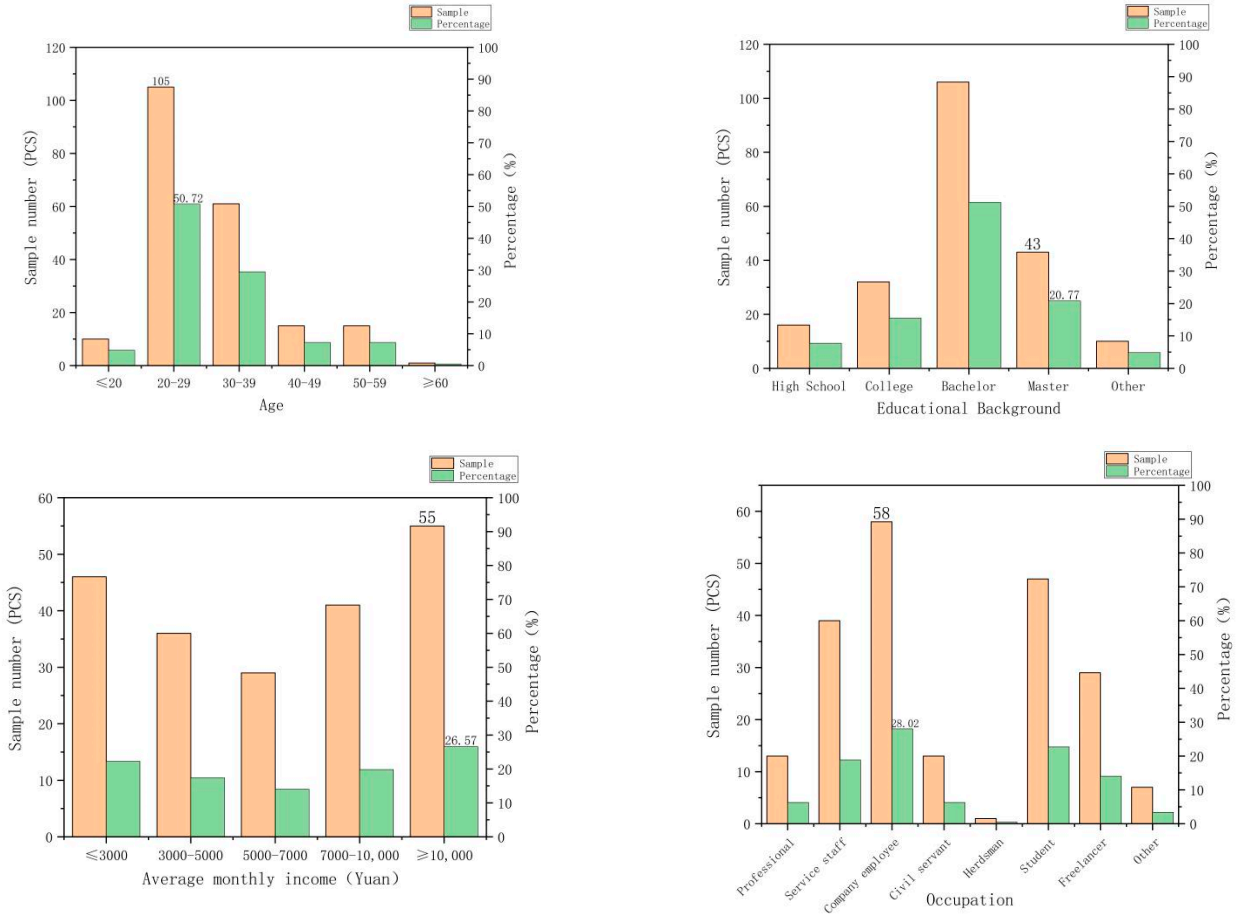

Figure 8. Statistical analysis of sociological characteristics of the sample.

Among the survey samples, 61 local residents were investigated. Considering the local Tibetan language as an ethnic minority characteristic, part of the questionnaire was filled in by using the semi-structured interview method. As the survey objects include a certain number of local residents and tourism practitioners, the service staff and herdsmen account for nearly 20% of the sample in occupational questions. Moreover, due to the presence of airport staff and researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences among the respondents, professionals also account for a proportion (6.28%).

In terms of the basic situation of air routes and passenger transport, Yading Airport has six air routes in the summer shipping season 2022, during the survey period. Among them, Chengdu has a large weekly planned flight reserve as Figure 9. Flight CA2567/68 and flight 3U8641/42, operated by Sichuan Airlines, can reach the rate of one flight per day. In terms of residence, the number of local residents is consistent with the sample number of relevant activity items as Figure 10, which proves the validity of the data to a certain extent.

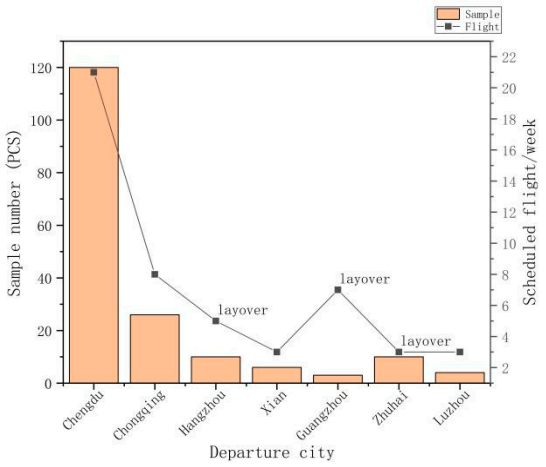

Figure 9. Statistics of departure cities.

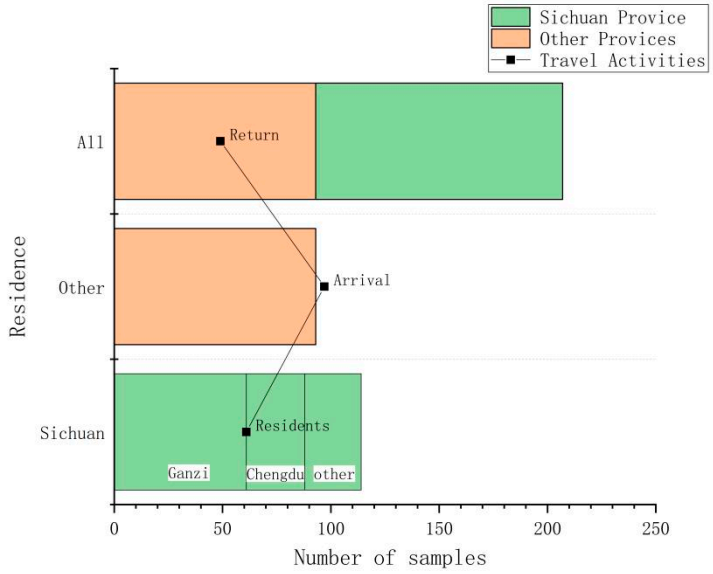

Figure 10. Statistics of airport activities.

4.2.2. Travel Itinerary Information Analysis

Daocheng County and its main tourist attractions belong to the two-hour tour circle around Yading and the Shangri-La tour circle. Among the Yading ring line, Litang is the destination with the highest proportion of tourist visits (61.11%). In other areas of Ganzi Prefecture, the number of visits to Kangding reaches 15 person-times. Yading Airport is located in northern Daocheng County, which has S217 that connects the county with Xiangcheng County (12 person-times) and Litang County (33 person-times).

Yunnan Province is the main tourist destination outside Sichuan province, with Diqing, Lijiang, and Dali accounting for 67.74 of the total. Although Yading Airport has planned to open a flight route from Daocheng to Kunming, according to the tourism statistics of Ganzi Prefecture, there is no flight schedule during the corresponding flight season of Daocheng County's peak tourism season (August to October). Within the Yading tourism loop (54 person-times), Daocheng County formed the basic connection of landing traffic of air tourism based on the existing roads. For the Shangri-La loop (41 person-times), however, the air network for the branch line of Yading Airport needs to be further encrypted, or the flight frequency should be adjusted according to the fluctuation of tourist reception in off-peak and peak seasons. All the information mentioned is illustrated in Figure 11.

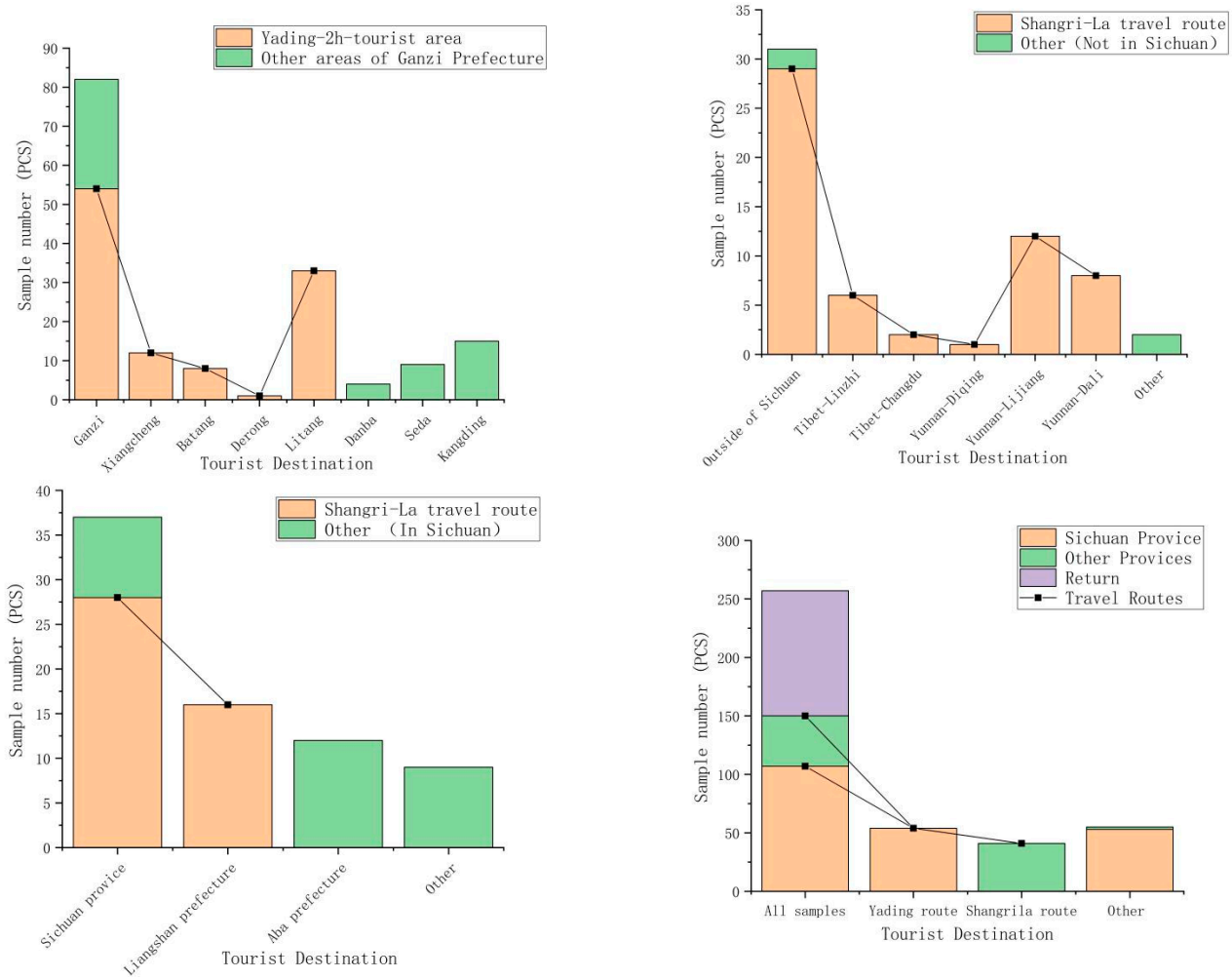

Figure 11. Statistics of tourist destination visits.

4.3. Analysis of Influencing Factors for Tourism Accessibility

After measuring the accessibility perception of Yading Airport, this paper further analyzed the relevant influencing factors. The measurement results for tourism accessibility mainly come from two dimensions: transportation accessibility of airport facilities and the spatial capacity of individuals. Therefore, this research divides the influencing factors into four aspects: facilities, individuals, services, and places. Based on the existing results, the research hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

Research hypothesis

H1: *The result of accessibility awareness is related to individual spatial ability. The better passengers understand airport attributes and aviation information, the stronger their ability to predict airport traffic rules and flight changes.*

H2: *The result of accessibility awareness is related to airport facilities. Complete airport facilities and strong reception capacity will deepen passengers' accessibility perception.*

H3: *The result of accessibility awareness is related to aviation service. The higher satisfaction of tourists to aviation services, the higher score for accessibility perception.*

H4: *The result of accessibility awareness is related to the image of the place, namely the tourist destination. Resources and supporting services are the background conditions of accessibility perception.*

As mentioned above, the data were standardized and descriptive statistical analysis was conducted. The factors consist of 12 items, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Table 4. Descriptive statistics of influencing factors.

No.	Influencing Element	Sample Size	Minimum	Maximum	Mean Value	Mean Square Error
			individual (A1)			
A1-1	travel demand	207	1	10	7.65	1.70
A1-2	acceptance of alteration	207	1	10	6.97	1.64
A1-3	experience expectations	207	1	10	7.84	1.79
			facility (A2)			
A2-1	terminal environment	207	1	10	7.70	1.78
A2-2	airfield construction	207	1	10	8.25	1.86
A2-3	personnel and commodity	207	1	10	7.03	1.90
			service (A3)			
A3-1	cabin and ground service	207	1	10	7.99	1.76
A3-2	information and supporting services	207	1	10	7.86	1.92
A3-3	non-aviation consumption	207	1	10	7.79	1.89
			place (A4)			
A4-1	social and culture	207	1	10	8.31	1.63
A4-2	tourist reception service	207	1	10	7.89	1.83
A4-3	tourist destination image	207	1	10	7.95	1.56

The variance of mean square error is 0.36 (<0.50), which is within a reasonable range, so all elements are preserved. Next, a correlation matrix of 12 elements is established, as shown below in Table 5:

Table 5. Correlation matrix table.

	A1-1	A1-2	A1-3	A2-1	A2-2	A2-3	A3-1	A3-2	A3-3	A4-1	A4-2	A4-3
A1-1	1	0.244	0.631	0.651	0.454	0.586	0.558	0.500	0.623	0.484	0.526	0.602
A1-2	0.244	1	0.133	0.219	0.122	0.240	0.234	0.265	0.243	0.118	0.158	0.183
A1-3	0.631	0.133	1	0.556	0.613	0.458	0.671	0.562	0.604	0.642	0.687	0.644
A2-1	0.651	0.219	0.556	1	0.454	0.616	0.717	0.634	0.771	0.450	0.596	0.564
A2-2	0.454	0.122	0.613	0.454	1	0.391	0.593	0.507	0.537	0.587	0.590	0.605
A2-3	0.586	0.240	0.458	0.616	0.391	1	0.514	0.361	0.583	0.360	0.427	0.534
A3-1	0.558	0.234	0.671	0.717	0.593	0.514	1	0.758	0.741	0.585	0.661	0.591
A3-2	0.500	0.265	0.562	0.634	0.507	0.361	0.758	1	0.668	0.448	0.589	0.418
A3-3	0.623	0.243	0.604	0.771	0.537	0.583	0.741	0.668	1	0.517	0.695	0.626
A4-1	0.484	0.118	0.642	0.450	0.587	0.360	0.585	0.448	0.517	1	0.578	0.732
A4-2	0.526	0.158	0.687	0.596	0.590	0.427	0.661	0.589	0.695	0.578	1	0.619
A4-3	0.602	0.183	0.644	0.564	0.605	0.534	0.591	0.418	0.626	0.732	0.619	1

Through data analysis in the matrix, it can be found that, on the whole, there is a relatively significant correlation between all elements; for instance, the correlation coefficient of A2-1 and A3-3 reaches 0.771. Additionally, referring to the results of KMO and the Bartlett test which are shown in Table 6, the closer the KMO value is to 1, the better effect of factor analysis on these variables. Additionally, the data passed the Bartlett test with significance $p < 0.001$, indicating that the variables were highly correlated, which provided a reasonable basis for the next step, principal component analysis.

Table 6. Test table for the KMO and the Bartlett test.

KMO measure of sampling adequacy		0.927
Bartlett's test of sphericity	pseudo chi-square	1685.425
	df	66
	sig.	0.000

The standardized data were processed by reducing dimensions, and the principal component analysis results of variable-influencing factors were obtained. Then, a new factor-load matrix was created by calculating variables based on the existing eigenvalues of the principal components. The expression is:

$$Ui = A_i/SQRT(X_i) \quad (2)$$

where X is the eigenvalue of each principal component. Multiply Ui by Zx_i, the standard value of 14 variables, to obtain the principal component Y expression, as follows:

$$Y = U_1Zx_1 + U_2Zx_2 + U_3Zx_3 + \ldots + U_nZx_n \quad (3)$$

Take the proportion of the corresponding eigenvalues of the three principal components in the total as the weight to calculate the comprehensive principal component value, and the expression is as follows:

$$Y = \lambda_1/(\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + \lambda_3) \times Y_1 + \lambda_2/(\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + \lambda_3) \times Y_2 + \lambda_3/(\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + \lambda_3) \times Y_3 \quad (4)$$

Finally, the comprehensive principal component score of 207 samples and 12 variables was obtained, so as to generate statistics for the perception evaluation.

According to the linear combination coefficient matrix of principal components, the comprehensive score coefficients were calculated. Then, the comprehensive score coefficients were normalized to obtain the weight for each, and the original data were calculated accordingly.

According to the calculation results, the total variance interpretation rates for the first three principal components are 6.864 and 1.092, respectively, with values greater than 1. At the same time, based on the comprehensive evaluation of the change trend of their values and the covariance matrix, the first two principal components are finally selected as Table 7.

Table 7. Principal component factor-load distribution.

Name	Component 1	Component 2	Common Factor Variance
Characteristic Value	**6.864**	**1.092**	
Variance Interpretation Rate	**57.197%**	**9.098%**	
X1	0.767	0.146	0.609
X2	0.289	0.724	0.608
X3	0.817	−0.228	0.720
X4	0.816	0.237	0.721
X5	0.727	−0.306	0.622
X6	0.671	0.287	0.532
X7	0.861	0.047	0.744
X8	0.753	0.155	0.590
X9	0.859	0.143	0.758
X10	0.734	−0.382	0.685
X11	0.809	−0.155	0.678
X12	0.801	−0.213	0.687

Finally, the comprehensive principal component score of 207 samples and 12 variables was obtained, so as to generate statistics for the survey result.

5. Results and Discussions

5.1. Accessibility Analysis Framework

With the continuous spread of globalization and the vigorous development of tourism, airports have gradually become quite important tourism transportation facilities, especially in remote mountainous areas where is inaccessible. It can be considered as the strategic asset for sustainable development of the region [30].

In China, 1.5 h driving time is emphasized by the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), recognizing that ground travel of 100 km or a 1.5 h drive is the service radius index of the airport (Civil Aviation Administration of China. National civil layout plan. (EB/OL). (1 July 2008) (9 July 2022). http://www.caac.gov.cn/XXGK/XXGK/ZCFB/201511/t20151104_10860.html (accessed on 5 March 2023)). Each option is assigned according to the visiting situation of the sample tourist attractions, and the final calculation result is obtained. As far as the 6 A-level scenic spots in Daocheng are concerned, all of them are within the range of landing traffic service of Yading Airport, but only Red Meadow located in Sangdui town is within the range of effective aviation service for the airport as Figure 12.

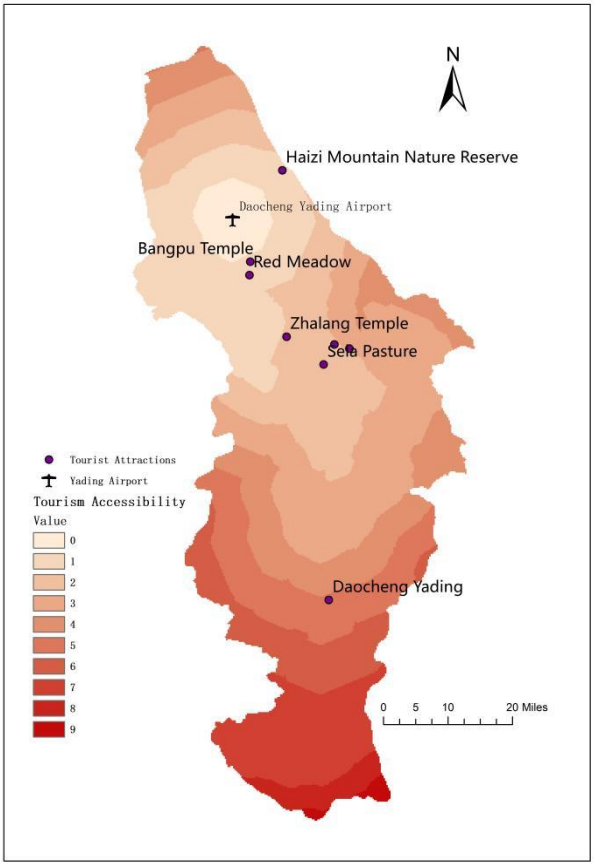

Figure 12. Tourism accessibility analysis for Yading Airport.

Based on the existing research hypothesis, there are four influencing factors, including individual, facility, service, and place, in the "Nexus" relationship between tourists, airports, and destinations. Through investigation and analysis, it can be further found that there are massive differences in individual perception under such an influence. This paper extracts two main elements to elaborate the state of the connections and established the analysis framework of tourism accessibility as Table 8. In the first principal component, factor loads are predominantly allocated in "cabin and ground service (X7)" and "non-aviation consumption (X9)", indicating the significant role of service in the constructing connection. The second principal component, "acceptance of alteration (X2)", has a better explanatory effect. In the face of the relatively special tourism environment in mountainous areas, it is notably important for tourists to comprehend and accept the changes. In the research on accessibility, the discourse power of destination as the subject has been neglected, and accessibility has consistently been a one-direction input concept. In the actual analysis, it can be found that the connection of this link is indeed weak. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that "tourist reception service (X11)" and "tourist destination image (X12)" still play a certain role in interpretation. Tourism participation and perception of destination communities are crucial to further analyzingthe accessibility connection.

Table 8. Tourism accessibility framework.

On this basis, the paper finally puts forward an analytical framework for tourism accessibility, including four influencing factors: individual, facility, service, and place, together with perception dimensions of knowledge, involvement, and practice in the tourism–airport–destination connection, as shown in the table: **Node**	**Tourist (OT)**	**Regional Airport (FA)**		**Destination (TD)**
Factor	**individual (A1)**	**facility (A2)**	**service (A3)**	**place (A4)**
	travel demand acceptance of alteration experience expectations	terminal environment airfield construction personnel and commodity	cabin and ground service information and supporting services non-aviation consumption	social and culture tourist reception service tourist destination image
Dimension	**knowledge**	**spatial ability (B1)** **involvement**	**practice**	
	accessibility to tourism transportation (B2) subjective dimension of accessibility			
Condition	Daocheng County tourist attractions and accessibility to Yading Airport			

5.2. Perceptions of Tourism Accessibility

5.2.1. Knowledge

Knowledge is not only the simple information transmission, but also represents the ability of tourists to "enter" the airport and expand their own spatial boundaries. Since the deregulation of aviation in the 1990s, privatization and commercialization of the aviation industry have gradually dismantled the air travel privileges of minority classes or groups [50,51]. With the increasing development in transportation and communication technology, the "threshold" to enter the airport has almost been leveled in the case of continuous breakthrough of accessibility. Therefore, the analysis of accessibility knowledge described in this paper focuses on the content of knowledge that individuals explore, expand, apply, and even control in the airport space in the case of "knowledge popularization" in the airport.

It is worth noting that the airport, as a transportation facility pursuing convenience, comfort, and safety, has certain particularity. In the "flow space" of the airport, the movement and passage of passengers are not completely autonomous [52]. Only when the power from the airport space completely covers the passengers, can the orderly operation be guaranteed by the formation of the norms that are exclusive to the airport [53]. On the contrary, it can be said that airport security is the key force to promote the transformation of the airport system itself. For tourists, the regulation under the situation of space security may be invisible or obscure "knowledge", representing the reasons why tourists have different degrees of involvement in space, that is, the difference in background [54].

Owing to the "high altitude" of Yading Airport, the differences in knowledge background indicate that tourists will take "altitude sickness", "hypoxia", and other problems into consideration in the prediction of air travel itinerary. However, some of them still lack the prediction of the local area or the attributes of the airport, and consider that the security inspection merely adds barriers to "entry". That means, it plays a role in the boundaries of the network, and the passengers can only transform their knowledge and choose the information already provided in the airport. Passengers yearn for space liberty, concerning privacy, safety, and experience, although regulated to a certain extent, they have to sacrifice some privacy requirements for "accessibility" [55], and the difference in the perception of accessibility is thus born.

5.2.2. Involvement

The concept of involvement originally belongs to the research scope of social psychology, which is used to measure the individual's behavior in consumption research. With the introduction of tourism and leisure research, the concept of tourism involvement comes into being, which is usually regarded as a psychological activity, meaning that an individual is involved in a specific tourism situation [56]. That is to say, in the context of tourism, the involvement often reflects the degree of tourists' interest in activities and their emotional responses, and the content measured by it is closely related to personal motivation and expectation, as well as input, evaluation, and response.

The airport space has a certain sense of anonymity and isolation [39]. In this space, tourists' entry intention is not unreserved. The suitcases on the side, the coats placed by the neighboring seats, and the smart phones in the hands are all representations of the space boundary which means the airports, to some extent, limit people's ability to express their own intentions in space [57]. "Emotional response" has the lowest value in the word frequency statistics of this dimension, but it does not mean that there is a lack of emotional input in the process of establishing contact with others, since the tourist were interested in events, and even investing in the experience. It is just that the transmission of emotion in this special space is affected by its physical attributes [58] to a certain extent, showing the particularity of airport space for the involvement in air tourism.

Arguably, an airport is a place of intricate flow paths, emotional connection undercurrents, and full of different behaviors. In this article, according to the analysis results, the tourism involvement of passengers mostly follows the general path of "aviation service—

interaction—service evaluation", but different opinions were expressed, which means the airport is a destination in itself, a place where authentic experiences reside.

5.2.3. Practice

Under the background of globalization and consumerism, the airport has become a place where passengers share the risk of multiple spatial collisions such as social and cultural. In order to ensure smooth progress in the practice of "moving between places", increasingly more technologies and behaviors have begun to be negotiated and implemented around management, coordination, and risk avoidance. Passengers are accepting what they might otherwise reject in another environment, understanding established rules and standards of behavior for achieving "accessibility".

It is worth noting that from the perspective of passengers, the intensity of airport space security management is not balanced. The intensification of airport security, along with the subtext for the breach of personal information, creates and maintains social and class divisions. In this way, it is important to realize that flow and stillness are interwoven in complex ways to present social and spatial imbalances, which shape the differences in practical ability and effectiveness of travelers in the process of mobility.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Deconstruction of Tourism Accessibility: Perceptual Dimensions, and Influencing Factors

1. The concept of tourism accessibility can be divided into two parts: individual spatial capacity and facility transportation accessibility. Additionally, the accessibility of regional airport tourism can be further divided into four dimensions: individual spatial ability of knowledge, involvement, practice, and subjective perception of accessibility. Knowledge refers to the location and attributes of the airport, involvement indicates the level of tourists' interest, practice represents the concrete moving process of tourists, and subjective dimension indicates whether aviation is the priority travel choice for tourists [57].
2. The factors influencing the accessibility of regional airports mainly include individual, facility, service, and place. Individuals refer to the influence of tourists' demand, ability, and experience expectation. It aims to show that the influence level of accessibility not only includes the objective conditions of transportation accessibility, but also is affected by economic, social, cultural, and other aspects. Based on these assumptions, when the tourism space regulation is stable and orderly, the influencing factors from the four aspects should be equal. In terms of the survey results, passengers' perceptions of individuals, facilities, services, and places account for a similar proportion. However, concerning one specific aspect, there is still a requirement for adjustment. For example, the airport needs to provide more improved information services to strengthen "acceptance of alteration".

6.2. Analysis of Spatial Relationship: Spatial Form, Attribute, and Orientation

1. As far as social relations are concerned, the airport can be regarded as the obligatory point of passage (OPP) to regulate the behaviors of the actor [59], which is accompanied by the actor–network theory (ANT) [60]. In terms of relational space, relational and procedural thinking believe that there is not only the stable prescription space of Euclidean, but also a topological space in which social spatial relationship changes. The perception of accessibility represents the invariable material form in the subjectivity space and the multidimensional attributes of the flow space.
2. In terms of accessibility, the analysis of influencing factors at the "place" level confirms that there is "dialogue" between the tourist and destinations. The analysis of the perceived dimensions and elements of relational subjects expands and maintains the presentation of residents' self-awareness in tourism space [61]. Additionally, with the perception of local community residents as the variable in the flow space, it is believed

that the evaluation of airport tourism accessibility is affected by the destination social environment and the attitude of local residents.

6.3. The Boundary of Airport Tourism Space: Duality of Security and Entertainment

An airport is a special space where individual liberty and group regulations coexist [62]. In the process of arrival, entry, and passage, tourists constantly transform the potentially dangerous state into a safe and standardized state through the adjustment of airport rules, marking guidelines, and regulations. However, at the same time, the liberty of individuals does not disappear; thus, the duality between tourist flow or entertainment direction and airport space security management is shown [63]. The mechanization and complexity of large-scale transport infrastructure weakened by regional airports provide a platform for tourists' self-expression from one-way to multidimensional accessibility. Therefore, the accessible dimensions and factors should be used to further open the connecting path.

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