

# An Analysis of the Sentiment and Impact of Mainstream Media Coverage of Chinese Tourists in the U.S. and China in the Aftermath of the COVID-19

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**Abstract**—The COVID-19 pandemic is reshaping global travel, particularly affecting Chinese tourists in the U.S. and China. This study dives deep into how Chinese and American mainstream media portrayed the travels of Chinese tourists in 2023 by analyzing the sentiment and broader impact of the media portrayal surrounding Chinese tourists in both countries, post-COVID-19 outbreak. Doing so sheds light on how these media outlets shape our perception of Chinese tourists, depending on the cultural and national settings. Comparative analysis is used to examine the difference between *China Daily* and *Voice of America* in the news headlines on Chinese tourists from 2023. 109 *China Daily* reports and 59 *Voice of America* reports were analyzed. Sentiment analysis is used to explore emotional attachments in mainstream media that are rooted in cultural, social and discursive contexts. By digging into the content, the researchers grasp a fuller picture of the experiences and hurdles faced by Chinese tourists. Moreover, this analysis prompts us to contemplate the fairness and impartiality of media coverage, offering valuable insights for reflection. The study finds differences in news coverage between Chinese and U.S. media about Chinese tourists, impacting China's image and the tourists' perception.

**Keywords**—COVID-19, Chinese tourists, media coverage, sentiment analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 crisis, which emerged in China in 2019, has affected the global tourism industry to a greater degree than previously thought. The crisis as well as the crisis aftermath are not yet fully understood, causing concern among policy-makers and tourism practitioners. China, being a primary source of tourists, significantly influences the global tourism market. The travel behaviours and preferences of Chinese tourists have garnered widespread attention, shaping debates in global media and impacting perceptions on the international stage. In the light of the unprecedented nature of the crisis empirical research is essential to shed light on its short- and long-term impact on the global tourism sector. This study investigates the sentiments expressed in mainstream media reports from China and the United States regarding the travel patterns of Chinese tourists. By doing so, it aims to uncover how media coverage in both countries shapes perceptions of Chinese tourism and its impact on China's image. Through a thorough analysis of the content, we can gain insights into Chinese tourists' challenges and opportunities. Furthermore, this research encourages thought on the fairness and objectivity of media coverage.

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) report [1]

outlined the extent of the crisis, noting that COVID-19 put up to 75 million jobs at immediate risk: with the potential to lose \$2.1 trillion in Travel Tourism GDP in 2020 [2]. Earlier work on SARS and avian flu outbreaks provides some insights into how COVID-19 may impact tourism demand, highlighting the need to develop updated empirical models that capture the ongoing pandemic's unique characteristics [3].

The tourism industry is experiencing a period of intense difficulty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this global pandemic has impacted most nations, resulting in restrictions on air travel, including flight bans [4]. The pandemic's economic implications, such as the global economic contraction and GDP loss, argue for a holistic understanding of its impact on the tourism sector [5].

UNWTO has projected that the pandemic could lead to the loss of 1.1 billion international tourist arrivals, with substantial impacts on export earnings and tourism employment [6], which leaves governments and many other sector stakeholders in an unenviable position of trying to protect the tourism industry and its workforce from a crisis while they manage the wider economic and the public health consequences of the epidemic [5]. The current study aims to explore and analyze the sentiment and impact of mainstream media coverage of Chinese tourists in the United States and China following the COVID-19 pandemic.

### A. Research Purpose

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on the global tourism industry, with significant economic and societal implications. A comprehensive understanding of the nature and extent of this impact is critical to develop effective policy responses that can reduce the tourism industry's vulnerability in the event of future crises, and amend the broader economic implications that accompany such crises. This research aims to examine the sentiment and impact of mainstream media coverage on Chinese tourists in the U.S. and China following the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Chinese tourism in 2023 post-COVID-19 outbreak was portrayed in the mainstream American and Chinese media outlets, and the potential implications of these portrayals on public perceptions of Chinese tourism. By examining the content and sentiment of media headlines in China and the U.S., the research seeks to uncover the complexities and variations across different cultural and national settings, as well as the shared experiences and challenges Chinese tourists face.

### B. Research Questions

1. Which topics or themes have been particularly emphasized in the 2023 coverage of Chinese tourists by *China Daily* and *Voice of America*?
2. How do *China Daily* and *Voice of America* reflect their particular media paradigms regarding language and presentation in their coverage of Chinese tourists?
3. How do the positions and tendencies of *China Daily* and *Voice of America* differ in their coverage of Chinese tourists?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 epidemic has significantly impacted the tourism industry [7–9]. Destination images are constructed, and markets are identified by media discourse, which shapes visitor behavior [10]. Numerous research reports have investigated this phenomenon, shedding light on the exponential growth of outbound travelers. Chinese tourists who reintegrate into the tourism industry around the world have particularly attracted much more attention from international viewers. Chen *et al.* have specifically identified them as the world's largest market of outbound tourists [11]. These reports not only emphasize the sheer increase in Chinese tourists but also emphasize the distinct challenges [12] and cultural conflicts they encounter in destinations [13].

As the influence of Chinese tourists on the global tourism economy continues to expand, scholars have directed their attention toward examining the dual impact they exert on local tourism dynamics [14]. The immaturity of the market environment, noncredit transactions by tourism operators, unethical purchasing habits, and inadequate regulatory structures are the primary causes of unethical behavior in the tourism industry [15, 16]. The comprehensive nature of these research reports paints a holistic picture of the multifaceted impact of travelers on global tourism.

Media discourse reflects social practices and helps shape public opinion and behavior [17]. News media reporting helped its audience understand and explain important shifts in perception and policy [8]. They explore various dimensions, ranging from the surge in tourist numbers to the intricate cultural clashes and the profound economic implications [18, 19]. Social media has an impact on both tourism and visitor experience, and it also shapes visitor perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes [20, 21]. Social media gives tourists more initiative [22] and the actual behavioral changes of tourists during this unique phase remain worthy of study, whether to validate existing predictive studies or to identify these complex effects [23].

Reviewing the existing literature, it is clear that there is a need for a focused analysis of how mainstream media coverage has shaped the public sentiment and potential impact on Chinese tourists in the U.S. post-COVID-19, as well as how Chinese media coverage has shaped the potential impact of U.S. tourists to China. While some studies have demonstrated that the media plays a key role in shaping the public sentiment of tourists, they fail to go into the level of depth that is necessary to truly gauge the content and tone of media reports in each country. This is a crucial gap because, without a deep understanding of how media portrayals of tourists shape public sentiment, one would be left with very

little guidance to offer policymakers and tourism practitioners who are searching for ways to shape public sentiment in post-pandemic tourism.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This paper adopts a comparative approach in research. Through the method of comparative analysis, news headlines on Chinese tourists in 2023 were selected from *China Daily* and *Voice of America*, and the study was made on the differences between contents, word collocations, and expressional strategies of the headlines from the two-news media. We chose 109 news reports on Chinese tourists from *China Daily* and 59 from *Voice of America* from January to November 2023. At the same time, this paper applies of sentiment analysis to the research methods for probing the emotional tendency and tone of the mainstream media in China and the United States when they report news related to Chinese tourists. We went beyond the existent text itself and took into consideration the cultural, social, and discursive context of the news in order to enlarge the connotation of “reader” and provide for a thorough treatment of the construction of text and reader.

### A. Sentiment Analysis

Sentiment analysis provides an effective tool to dig deeper into emotional tendencies and attitudes. It not only quantifies the sentiment trends and attitudes in the texts but also helps to capture the different attitudes and perspectives of the two media outlets on the recovery behavior of Chinese tourists, providing further insight into the thematic orientation of the coverage and its emotional impact on readers. Considering the differences in culture and values between China and the United States, the sentiment expression of the same event in media reports of the two countries will be different.

Thus, to assurance the accuracy and completeness of the analysis, sentiment analysis must take into account various cultural, social, and contextual elements in addition to the text itself. This cross-cultural method of analysis offers a more profound, more thorough viewpoint that aids in comprehending the significance and purpose of the coverage.

To distinctly separate media opinions regarding Chinese tourists, this study established three attitude classifications: positive, neutral, and negative. Among them, neutral attitudes convey an impartial and neutral position, positive attitudes show support, while negative attitudes involve opposition and criticism. We concentrate on the topic selections, word choices, and tone tendencies of Chinese and American mainstream media reporting on Chinese visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic by analyzing the reports' sentiment. This highlights the parallels and variations in sentiment expression between the two nations and how their media portray the event and shape national image.

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS

This study used the method of sentiment analysis to analyze the sentiment tendencies of news reports on Chinese tourists in the mainstream media in China and the United States. The following results were obtained by collecting and organizing many reports.

Table 1 compares the top ten most frequently occurring nouns and verbs in the headlines of two media reports about

Chinese tourists. Both media outlets showed significant interest in reporting on “China” and “Chinese”, underscoring the centrality of China and the United States to the global political, economic, and cultural landscape. This coverage

concentration may reflect continued interest in the bilateral relationship, policy decisions, or the role of China and the United States in international affairs.

Table 1: Keywords in VOA and China Daily’s coverage of Chinese tourists

VOA	Frequency	Percentage	China Daily	Frequency	Percentage
China	25	24.51%	Chinese	81	35.06%
Chinese	18	17.65%	Tourist	64	27.71%
tourists	10	9.80%	tourism	17	7.36%
Thailand	9	8.82%	Welcome	15	6.49%
Travel	7	6.86%	Return	14	6.06%
US	7	6.86%	Thailand	13	5.63%
Hong Kong	7	6.86%	Visa	7	3.03%
Asia	7	6.86%	Visitor	7	3.03%
COVID	6	5.88%	market	7	3.03%
tourism	6	5.88%	traveler	6	2.60%

The focus on “tourists” points to the importance of tourism in the economic and cultural exchanges between the two countries. As globalization accelerates, tourism has become essential to increasing national income, promoting cultural exchanges, and strengthening friendly international relations. While Thailand and the tourism industry have been a focus for both media outlets, *China Daily* has emphasized this more. It may be related to the large number of Chinese tourists in Thailand, bilateral tourism agreements, or cooperation between the two countries in the field of tourism. This attention may also be influenced by the demand for travel information, safety advice, or destination guides from *China Daily*’s audience. The industry has become essential to increasing national income, promoting cultural exchanges,

and strengthening friendly international relations.

From these remarks, it can infer differences in reporting strategies and audience targeting between *China Daily* and VOA. *China Daily* seems to focus more on providing practical information or analysis related to “tourism” and “tourist”, probably to meet its audience’s specific needs or concerns. Conversely, VOA may focus more on providing in-depth reports, analyses, or commentaries related to “China” and “Chinese” to meet its audience’s concerns or news background.

Table 2 compares *China Daily* and *Voice of America* regarding frequency of use across grammatical and linguistic categories and Lexical Density. The following is an analysis of this data:

Table 2. Comparative analysis of *China Daily* and *Voice of America* in terms of language categories and lexical density

Category	Noun	Verb	Adjective	Proper Noun	Preposition	Auxiliary word	Lexical Density
<i>China Daily</i>	31.08%	13.72%	14.79%	15.76%	12.43%	4.07%	41.05%
VOA	8.17%	8.17%	3.10%	51.96%	13.24%	0.82%	55.07%

### A. Grammar and Linguistic Categories

The most frequently used linguistic category in *China Daily*’s reports, Proper Nouns, occupies 15.76%, followed by Nouns and Adjectives with 31.08% and 14.79%, respectively. It indicates that *China Daily* often cites specific names of people, places, or organizations in its reports. Besides, Verbs account for 13.72%, prepositions 12.43%, and auxiliary words for 4.07%.

In contrast, proper nouns accounted for 51.96% of VOA’s coverage, much higher than any other category. It means that VOA deals more with specific names of people, places, or other proper nouns. In other categories, nouns and verbs are used with the same frequency of 8.17%, while adjectives are only 3.10%. Prepositions accounted for 13.24%, and auxiliaries for 0.82%.

### B. Lexical Density

*China Daily*’s lexical density is 41.05%, meaning the vocabulary used in its reports is relatively prosperous and diverse. In contrast, VOA’s vocabulary density is 55.07%, which indicates that VOA uses richer and more varied vocabulary in its reports.

There is a clear difference in the vocabulary usage patterns

in the headlines of the two media reports. Specifically, *China Daily* frequently used nouns, verbs, and adjectives in their stories, with proper nouns being particularly notable. This high frequency of use may imply that they often quote or refer to specific people’s names or geographical locations in their stories. In contrast, VOA’s vocabulary in its news coverage is characterized by a high reliance on proper nouns, suggesting that its content may involve many specific and notable people or institutions. VOA’s vocabulary is more varied, except for proper nouns. This difference in vocabulary choice and use may not only be related to the reporting styles of the two media outlets. However, it may also reflect their different strategies and targeting of news content, audience reception, and reporting preferences.

Overall, *China Daily* may focus more on news related to specific people, events, or places in detail, so proper nouns account for a higher proportion of its coverage. Conversely, VOA is likely more oriented towards providing a wide range of news content. Hence, its overall vocabulary use is more varied, and it also emphasizes the use of proper nouns.

#### a) Examples of Positive Items

##### *China Daily*:

- “Dubai holds promotional event in Beijing to lure Chinese tourists.”

**Analysis:** This headline states that Dubai organized a promotional event in Beijing to attract more Chinese tourists. The headline shows a positive and strategic intent. The word “*lure*” suggests that Dubai is actively attracting Chinese tourists through this campaign. It shows Dubai’s importance to the Chinese market and its desire to further increase the number of Chinese tourists.

● **“Greece set to welcome return of Chinese visitors.”**

**Analysis:** The title suggests that Greece is looking forward to the return of Chinese tourists, indicating a positive attitude towards them. The word “set to welcome” suggests that Greece is ready and eager for the return of Chinese tourists. It reflects Greece’s optimism about the economic and tourism opportunities presented by Chinese tourists and possibly its expectation and readiness for the return of Chinese tourists after a decline in their numbers.

● **“Thailand announces new visa-free policy for Chinese visitors.”**

**Analysis:** “Visa-free policy announced” indicates that Thailand is welcoming to Chinese tourists. The headline conveys a positive and open attitude. By using the word “announces”, the headline emphasizes the action taken by the Thai government to provide a more convenient travel policy for Chinese tourists. It shows Thailand’s growing interest in Chinese tourists and its desire further to enhance tourism and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

**VOA**

● **“Bali Welcomes 1st Flight from China as COVID Rules Ease.”**

**Analysis:** The headline presents an atmosphere of optimism and hope. “Welcomes” suggests that Bali has a positive attitude towards the return of Chinese tourists. It reflects the gradual recovery of tourism and economic relations between Bali and China, laying the foundation for future cooperation and development.

● **“Greece Welcomes Return of Chinese Travelers.”**

**Analysis:** The title conveys a friendly and open attitude, showing that Greece welcomes the return of Chinese tourists. The word “Welcome” shows that Greece has a positive and welcoming attitude towards the arrival of Chinese tourists. It shows that Greece sees Chinese tourists as an essential tourist market and is willing to provide them with a convenient and friendly environment.

● **“As China Reopens, African Countries Gear Up for Business.”**

**Analysis:** This headline points to the fact that African countries are gearing up for business cooperation and exchanges with China as the Chinese market reopens. “Gear Up for Business” suggests that African countries are gearing up for business cooperation and investment with China, signaling a potential enhancement of economic and commercial ties between the two sides.

**b) Examples of Negative Items**

**China Daily:**

● **“US to lose \$20b due to fewer Chinese visitors.”**

**Analysis:** This headline shows that the decrease in Chinese tourists negatively affects the economy and tourism in the United States. This headline conveys a sense of concern and pessimism, and it points out the economic challenges and losses that the United States may face due to fewer Chinese

tourists, highlighting the importance of tourism and economic ties between the two countries.

● **“Denial of visas to Chinese tourists will hurt Western economies.”**

**Analysis:** This headline clarifies that if Western countries refuse to issue visas for Chinese tourists, it will hurt their economies. This headline conveys a sense of warning and concern and it emphasizes the importance of Chinese tourists in Western economies and implies that if visas are denied, Western economies will take a hit.

**VOA:**

● **“China Has Reopened to Tourists, but Few Want to Travel There.”**

**Analysis:** The title conveys a less optimistic sentiment. Despite the reopening of China, tourists are not very willing to travel. It implies that despite the steps China has taken to reopen its doors, it still needs more tourists, and it may suggest a decline in public interest or confidence in China as a tourist destination.

● **“VOA Asia Weekly: China Accused of Hypocrisy as Japan Set to Release Fukushima Wastewater.”**

**Analysis:** The title points to a negative sentiment. The word “hypocrisy” clearly implies that China accuses Japan of double standards or hypocrisy, possibly because it believes the decision may have environmental and health implications for itself or the region. The title may reflect tensions or disagreements on environmental, security, and political issues in Asia, particularly between China and Japan.

● **“VOA Asia Weekly: Foreign Tourists Reluctant to Travel to China.”**

**Analysis:** This headline suggests that foreign tourists hesitate or are uncertain about traveling to China and the title conveys a cautious or negative sentiment. It points to foreign tourists’ hesitation or concern about traveling to China.

**c) Examples of Neutral Items**

**China Daily:**

● **“Saudi Arabia set for Chinese tourists.”**

**Analysis:** This headline may imply that Saudi Arabia has a more open and friendly attitude towards Chinese culture and tourists and suggests the potential for more cultural and tourism exchange activities between the two countries. The title conveys Saudi Arabia’s readiness and expectation to receive and attract Chinese tourists while also hinting at the potential for cooperation and exchanges between the two countries regarding tourism, economy, and culture.

● **“Hainan needs to further improve services to be a tourist paradise.”**

**Analysis:** The title conveys that Hainan has room for improvement as a tourist destination and must further improve its services and facilities, and this title conveys constructive criticism or proposal. It points out potential shortcomings in Hainan’s tourism services and encourages or expects them to be further enhanced to meet tourists’ expectations and it may be a point of view that encourages the local tourism sector or related organizations to improve their services and facilities.

● **“Village homes in on tourists visits.”**

**Analysis:** The phrase “homes in on” in the title implies that the Village is focusing or concentrating on tourism activities and tourist arrivals. It may imply that the Village is working to develop or increase its tourism business, and it may also

mean that the Village is evaluating its position in the tourism market and taking steps to attract specific types of tourists or meet specific tourism needs.

**VOA:**

● **“After 10 Years of China’s BRI Projects in Cambodia, Benefits Up for Debate.”**

**Analysis:** The title reflects that after ten years of China’s Belt and Road project in Cambodia, its benefits and advantages are controversial or need further discussion. Nevertheless, an exploratory or interrogative sentiment is implied. It reminds the reader that multiple views or opinions about the outcomes and impacts of a long-term project (in this case, ten years) may have positive and negative evaluations. Such a title encourages the reader to learn more about or engage in this discussion better to understand the impact and effectiveness of the project.

● **“Japanese News Media Did Not Report 20 Million Chinese Visitors During the Golden Week”**

**Analysis:** The headline states that the Japanese news media failed to report on the approximately 20 million Chinese tourists during the Golden Week. It may imply that the Japanese news media had some deficiency or bias in reporting and failed to provide accurate and comprehensive

information about Chinese tourists during the Golden Week, and it may have triggered discussions or questions about the fairness, transparency, or ethical responsibility of news reporting.

● **“Is a Chinese Blockbuster Discouraging Travel to Thailand?”**

**Analysis:** The title expresses a predominantly questioning and exploratory sentiment. It alludes to a possible issue or effect of whether a Chinese blockbuster has hurt people traveling to Thailand. Emotionally, it may spark curiosity and interest in the reader, making them want to learn more about the background and details of the issue. Overall, however, this is a neutral title of an exploratory nature rather than expressing a definite emotion or position.

Table 3 compares positive and negative reports of two media reports. *China Daily* and *VOA News* show different emotional tendencies in their tourism treatment and economic issues related to Chinese tourists. *China Daily* reported positively on countries such as Dubai, Greece, and Thailand, which have taken steps to attract Chinese tourists, demonstrating the high value these regions place on the Chinese market.

Table 3. Comparison of positive and negative reports between *China Daily* and *VOA*

Number of items	Number of positive items	Number of negative items	Number of neutral items
<i>China Daily</i>	59	2	48
<i>VOA</i>	19	15	25

In addition, the newspaper mentioned the possible negative impact on the U.S. and Western economies due to the decrease in the number of Chinese tourists. Comparatively, *VOA News* showed a broader perspective in its coverage. The *VOA* emphasized the positive attitudes towards Chinese tourists in some regions, such as Bali and Greece, but also focused on issues such as the declining attractiveness of China as a tourist destination and some tensions between Japan and China.

Both media outlets show diverse emotions and attitudes regarding China and tourism and economic issues related to Chinese travelers. *China Daily* emphasized China’s global influence and economic relations with other countries more, while *VOA* showed a broader perspective, covering multiple countries and issues related to China.

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. Sentiment Tendency

There are specific differences in emotional tendencies between Chinese and American mainstream media reports on Chinese tourists. In the news reports on Chinese tourists by Chinese and American mainstream media, Chinese media emphasize positive emotional expressions of Chinese tourists, such as support and encouragement for Chinese tourists, as well as their happiness and safety feelings during their travels. The American media, on the other hand, focuses more on negative emotional expressions of Chinese tourists, such as concerns about travel risks and safety issues, as well as criticisms and questions about Chinese tourists’ travel behaviors.

### B. Different Expressions

The choice of vocabulary and the way it is mainly used reflects the unique reporting style of each media outlet. Each media outlet may have unique editorial guidelines, writing style, and linguistic style, directly impacting the vocabulary they employ in their reporting. This difference may also be related to the different focus and emphasis on news content between the two media outlets. The media may focus more on reporting specific events or individuals in detail and, therefore, use more proper nouns related to those events or individuals.

Furthermore, the audience reception and preferences of the two media may also influence their vocabulary choices. In order to meet the expectations and needs of their audiences, the media may consciously adjust their reporting styles and lexical choices. These lexical differences may also be related to the two media’s reporting preferences and targeting strategies. Different reporting preferences mean that each media outlet may have unique news values, viewpoint preferences, and reporting objectives, which may influence their vocabulary choices and usage.

### C. The Impact of News Reports on China’s Image and Countermeasures

There are significant differences in the stance and emotional coloring of Chinese and U.S. media coverage of Chinese tourists in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak, which directly affects perceptions of China’s image and the image of tourists.

Chinese media may be more inclined to emphasize the positive image of Chinese tourists and China’s global efforts after the end of the COVID-19 epidemic. Coverage may

highlight Chinese tourists' cultural literacy, etiquette, and respect for the destination to present a positive image of China in international tourism. Emotional overtones may be more positive, emphasizing Chinese tourists' contributions and friendly image.

U.S. media may be influenced by domestic public opinion and political factors, and coverage may be more diversified. Some media may focus on Chinese tourists' consumption behavior and cultural differences and emphasize possible problems or challenges. Sentimental coloring may be more neutral but may also be influenced by international political relations and present a particular bias.

#### *D. Impact on China's Image and the Image of Chinese Tourists*

Media coverage in China and the United States directly shapes the international community's impression of China. If the coverage is more optimistic, highlighting the civilized manners and positive contributions of Chinese tourists, it will help enhance China's international image. On the contrary, if there is a negative bias in the coverage, it may lead to prejudice against China in the international community and affect the perception of China.

The stance and emotion of Chinese and U.S. media coverage of Chinese tourists in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak directly shaped the international community's perception of China and Chinese tourists. Understanding and balancing the stances of the media in both countries can help to perceive and evaluate the reports more objectively and promote more understanding and harmonious international media relations.

#### *E. Cultural Values in Different News Reports*

*Voice of America* focuses more on Western values such as individualism, democracy, and freedom of expression. The report focuses on the individual stories of Chinese tourists, exploring their experiences and reflections on a personal level, as well as their adaptation and understanding of different cultures. China Daily puts more emphasis on collectivism, solidarity, and family values. Coverage highlights the positive role of Chinese tourists in teamwork and community relations, emphasizing the cohesion and solidarity of Chinese society.

The country's ideology may influence media coverage and emphasize differences and conflicts between countries, leading to misunderstandings or stereotypes of tourists in the other country. This single ideological perspective limits understanding of different cultures and can create barriers between cultures. The media can encourage tourists to be more open to different cultures and to understand the other country's history, traditions, and values. This means that coverage should be more balanced, emphasizing differences and commonalities.

#### *F. The Media's Responsibility: Promoting Communication and Understanding*

The media are responsible for promoting two-way understanding in their reporting and helping bridge the cultural gap between international travelers. It can be accomplished by choosing diverse topics, showcasing the positive aspects and cultural attractions of each other's countries, and guiding tourists to be open to different cultures.

The media can emphasize cultural commonalities and advocate tolerance and respect in their reports, thus creating a more favorable atmosphere for interaction between Chinese and American tourists.

Advocating two-way understanding through the media can encourage Chinese and American tourists to gain a deeper understanding of each other's cultures and increase mutual understanding and respect, which will help establish a more favorable international tourism relationship, promote exchanges and cooperation, and promote friendly relations between China and the United States. By combining ideology and two-way understanding, the media can serve as a bridge to promote cultural exchange and understanding, provide more positive and inclusive information to Chinese and American tourists, and create favorable conditions for establishing deeper friendly relations between the two sides.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study has analyzed the news coverage of Chinese tourists in the later stages of the COVID-19 epidemic in the mainstream media in China and the U.S. Significant differences in the coverage of Chinese tourists directly affected the perception of China's image and the image of Chinese tourists.

There are differences in the attitudes towards Chinese tourists in mainstream media reports in China and the United States. In Chinese media reports, more emphasis is placed on the positive impact and importance of Chinese tourists, expressing a solid attitude of encouragement and support whereas U.S. media reports show more of a wait-and-see and cautious sentiment, analyzing and evaluating the possible risks.

Both Chinese and U.S. media present in their reports the expectations and hopes for Chinese tourists, which are considered to be of great significance for the recovery of the tourism industry and the promotion of economic development. In addition, the media are also generally concerned about the safety and health of Chinese tourists, emphasizing the importance of preventive and control measures and standardized tourism behavior.

The language and presentation of the stories should also focus more on mutual respect and understanding and avoid emphasizing opposites, making it easier for readers to accept and appreciate the other culture. Raising public cross-cultural awareness through news coverage helps people to understand other cultures more profoundly and promotes tolerance and shared prosperity in the global community.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Mingting Zhao conducted the research, while Linxin Zhang gathered the data. Mingting analyzed the data, and Mingting Zhao and Yina Cao collaborated to write the paper. The final version was approved by all authors.

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