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# *Global Attitudes Towards China Travel: A Comparative Public Media Analysis Based on YouTube*

**Haoyang Pan[1*], Yuanyuan Cai[2]**

[1]*Department of Statistics and Data Science, Southern University of Science and Technology, Shenzhen, China*
[2]*Department of International Business, South China Normal University, Guangzhou, China*
**Corresponding Author. Email: 12312814@mail.sustech.edu.cn*

***Abstract.*** This study investigates how audience attitudes towards Chinese tourism have evolved following the reinstatement of the transit visa-free policy, using YouTube comments as the primary data source. By employing sentiment analysis, Latent Code Identification (LACOID), and Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), the study examines comments from YouTube travel videos published by bloggers from different regions. The findings reveal a significant increase in positive sentiment post-policy, suggesting that increased exposure to diverse and authentic travel narratives has positively influenced public perceptions of China as a travel destination. Additionally, the study highlights regional variations in audience responses, indicating that cultural context plays a critical role in shaping public sentiment. These insights demonstrate the powerful influence of social media content in shaping tourism perceptions, and suggest that policy changes, when effectively communicated through popular media platforms, can significantly enhance the attractiveness of a destination.

***Keywords:*** Chinese tourism, Visa-free policy, YouTube comments, Sentiment analysis, Social media engagement

## 1. Introduction

The expansion of inbound tourism plays a crucial role in promoting sustained economic growth [1]. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, attracting international travelers has become a pivotal factor in the revival of the tourism industry [2]. In 2023, China resumed its visa-free transit program and progressively expanded the list of eligible countries. By July 4, 2024, China had implemented a 72-hour or 144-hour visa-free transit policy for travelers from 54 countries [3]. Thanks to its straightforward requirements, this policy has become a primary gateway for international tourists. Data from the National Immigration Administration indicate that in the first half of 2024, approximately 14.635 million foreigners entered China, marking an increase of 152.7% year-on-year, with over 50% utilizing visa-free access [4].

The visa-free policy has notably facilitated the influx of international bloggers to China, amplifying the popularity of the "China Travel" tag across various social media platforms. This phenomenon has ignited global interest and spurred a trend focused on exploring China. Numerous

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videos shared by these bloggers have attracted the attention of international netizens, sparking curiosity about China and, in some cases, inspiring viewers to plan their own visits. This study aims to investigate the evolution of global attitudes towards travel to China, offering insights into how perceptions have shifted over time. The analysis focuses on comments from Chinese tourism videos on YouTube, evaluating sentiment and attitudes. This research will conduct a comparative analysis to examine the variations in video comments over time and across different blogger perspectives.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Visa-free policy

With the mitigation of the Covid-19 pandemic, the relaxation of visa restrictions has become an important measure to revive global tourism. After a period of silence, the impact of visa policies on international tourism has become a hot topic among academics, governments, and tourism practitioners [5].

China's 72/144-hour transit visa exemption is a policy implemented by the Chinese government to facilitate the entry and exit of foreigners and promote international trades and cooperation. China issued a 72-hour/144-hour transit visa exemption policy for Norwegian citizens from November 17, 2023. So far, the scope of countries applicable to China's 72-hour/144-hour transit visa exemption policy has increased to 54 [6]. In the first quarter of this year, the number of foreigners visiting China more than tripled compared to the same period in 2023, and a total of 466,000 foreign visas were issued, an increase of 118.8% year-on-year [4].

When there is big event holding in China, there will be visa-restriction policy. One paper also analyses the economic impacts of visa-restriction on tourism: a case of two events in China which is the 1989 Tian'An Men Square Incident and the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The 2008 Beijing Olympics caused large economic and welfare losses due to both the event itself and visa-restrictions. The results show that in China, the economic losses of $88.232 million caused by visa restrictions and the economic losses of $65.713 million caused by the event itself (the result of the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident) only reduced welfare by approximately $2.847 million and $2.111 million. Visa restrictions reduced China's welfare by $193.563 million and Beijing's welfare by $73.957 million. Visa restrictions afford privileges for the citizens of developing Western nations as opposed to severe restrictions for others. The poorer, the less democratic and the more exposed to armed political conflict the target country is, the more likely that visa restrictions are in place against its passport holders.

"City or Not~Uh~?" The trend of foreign visitors filming videos in China has given rise to a new internet meme among international vloggers, particularly noted in the recent travels of American blogger Bao Bao Xiong's sister to China. This foreign blogger made several videos of himself and his sister traveling around China and explained on Chinese social media recently that the term "city" not only conveys urbanization but also a lively and cheerful feeling and a similar pronounciation with the Chinese word 'ciji', meaning excited.

### 2.2. Effects of travel vlogs to their audiences

Nowadays, travel vlog video has become an important source for tourists to acquire tourism information, which influences the behaviour intention of the viewers. Travel vlogs record the real experience of the vloggers and demonstrates them in the forms of videos.

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By using empirical analysis and reference of the Social Learning theory, one study finds out that the vlogger's physcial and social attractiveness, interactivity, credibility, perceived entertainment and perceived usefulness of travel Vlog videos have a significant positive impact on behavioural intention to travel, among which credibility had the strongest impact. The effect of their social attractiveness on viewer's wishful travel intention was even strengthened when the vlogger and the viewer are in different genders [7].When a viewer reveals a higher level of similarities between his or her ideal self-image and the perceived image of the SMI (Social Media Influencer) endorser, the consumer tends to express greater visit intention toward the endorsed destination.

Either positive or negative verbal communication or non-verbal communication from the media has been shown to affect consumers' thoughts, perceptions, and behaviour [8]. However, when media outlets deliver misleading information to the public, adverse societal consequences could follow. Misleading media coverage occurs when mass media channels depict events as negative, threatening, irritating, or in other ways that the audience perceives as unfavorable [9]. While mass media reports of events may or may not be truthful [10], audience effects do not differ substantially regardless of whether the reported event has actually occurred : Viewers experience shock or fear regardless, and their degree of scepticism can increase and affect their decision-making . In the constructivist media effects model, audiences are dependent on a version of reality based on individual experience, peer interaction, and interpreted selections from the mass media [11].

Another study examines the motivational factors for watching travel vlogs through information seeking and entertainment as a source of consumer satisfaction using the (U&G) perspective. This motivation of consumers to manage this video content, which includes the desire for information and entertainment, significantly influences their engagement. This leads to a higher degree of attachment. Therefore, consumers who are emotionally attached and consider travel vlogs to have a high social presence will significantly impact their intention to travel and share e-WOM (electronic Word-of-Mouth). Stories based on relevant personal experiences will make consumers feel the social presence of influential people even though the influential people are not physically nearby.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Research questions

This study aims to explore public attitudes towards China travel by analyzing comments on YouTube videos. To better understand the dynamics of these attitudes, the following two research questions have been formulated:

RQ1: How have audience attitudes towards Chinese tourism changed before and after the implementation of the visa-free policy?

Objective: This research question aims to identify shifts in public sentiment and perceptions using the visa-free policy implementation as a significant temporal marker. Specifically, we will analyze YouTube comments on China travel videos from two distinct time periods: before and after the policy's extension.

RQ2: What is the impact of geographically diverse bloggers on audience attitudes towards travel to China?

Objective: This question assesses how the geographic origin of travel bloggers influences the attitudes of their audience towards China. By analyzing the content from bloggers from different regions, the study explores whether cultural background or regional familiarity impacts viewers' perceptions and engagement.

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### 3.2. Theoretical foundation

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the influence of social media on tourism and public attitudes. Social media platforms, like YouTube, have become vital in shaping travelers' destination choices and experiences [12]. The concept of media richness theory explains why rich content, such as video blogs, significantly impacts perceptions of places [13]. The dual impact of social influence theory [14] is also crucial, as it provides insight into how influencers affect their audience's attitudes through social validation and informational cues.

Network ethnography [15] is employed in this study to explore online community interactions and cultural contexts present in YouTube comments. This approach is particularly suited to capture the diverse and emergent meanings audiences attach to videos in a complex, interactive environment. Comments, as an essential aspect of digital ethnography, serve as a record of immediate audience responses to content, allowing for the study of emotional connections and social resonance between creators and viewers.

### 3.3. Related work and limitations

Previous research has explored the role of social media in tourism promotion, focusing largely on sentiment analysis and audience engagement [16]. However, many of these studies have been limited by their reliance on surface-level sentiment analysis, without delving into the nuanced and context-specific reactions of viewers. Additionally, existing studies often focus primarily on quantitative metrics, such as likes and shares, rather than engaging in a qualitative examination of user-generated content.

This study aims to address these gaps by incorporating both network ethnography and sentiment analysis, providing a richer understanding of social dynamics and emotional responses. One significant limitation of the current study is the reliance on YouTube comments, which may not represent the broader population's views due to the self-selection bias inherent in social media platforms. Furthermore, the study's focus on a limited number of bloggers, each from distinct regions, may restrict the generalizability of the findings to all regions or blogger types. These limitations are acknowledged and will be considered when interpreting the results of the analysis.

### 3.4. Data collection

To address the proposed research questions, this study employs a mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis. The primary data source consists of comments on YouTube videos discussing Chinese tourism, especially those published before and after the implementation of the visa-free policy. Videos were systematically selected based on the level of audience engagement, including the number of views, comments, and likes.

The YouTube comments were gathered using the Google API, followed by data cleansing and pre-processing in R. The pre-processing steps included the removal of newlines, conversion of non-English characters to ASCII, and exclusion of comments that contained only numbers or punctuation marks. Additionally, only top-level comments (parent reviews) were retained to ensure that all analyzed comments represented independent audience opinions rather than replies, thus avoiding potential bias from comment threads.

Given the abundance of China travel videos available on YouTube, it was necessary to establish an initial database of relevant videos. Factors such as posting time, video topic, and blogger location

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were taken into consideration when selecting videos for analysis. Videos were categorized into different groups to facilitate a more detailed and systematic analysis of the data.

To address RQ1, which investigates changes in audience attitudes before and after the implementation of the visa-free policy, the videos in the database were divided into two parts: one before and one after the November 2023 milestone. On November 21, 2023, China extended its transit visa-free policy to 54 countries [6]. Following November 2023, many bloggers claimed on their videos that they had entered China by virtue of this policy. Therefore, it can be presumed that November 2023 signifies the official resumption of China's transit visa-free policy. The study will examine comment data over two 200-day intervals—the pre-policy period, which runs from May 15, 2023, to November 30, 2023, and the post-policy period, which runs from December 1, 2023, to June 17, 2024—in order to guarantee consistency between the two time periods. With this method, opinions about Chinese tourism in relation to the policy change can be clearly compared, and the impact of other events, such as epidemic breakouts and lockdowns, on viewer perspectives is eliminated. Furthermore, in order to enhance the relevance of the selected videos, a curation process was conducted focusing on the theme of "First-time Experiences in China." Such videos typically garner substantial viewership and commentary, with the majority of comments reflecting genuine sentiments towards China travel. The compiled list of selected videos is presented in Table 1.

To address RQ2, examining the difference in audience attitudes among bloggers from different geographical regions, video bloggers in our database were categorized based on their geographical affiliation, with three representative bloggers from the Americas, Europe, and Oceania. Their China travel videos, boasting significant local airtime, provide insights into the local audiences' attitudes on China travel. To ensure relevance in subsequent video comments' analysis, three popular topics with high airtime among China travel videos were selected: cultural shock during a first visit to China, exploration of food and attractions in Chinese cities, and experiencing China's high-speed rail. This selection facilitates a detailed examination of audience feedback for each channel, enabling a comparison of how bloggers' styles and authenticity influence attitudes towards traveling to China. The bloggers' genders were also taken into account, with a female blogger from Australia (Josie Lifts Things), a male blogger from Germany (Ken Abroad), and a couple blogger from Canada (Alina Mcleod). In addition, only videos uploaded after the policy's restoration were chosen, in order to isolate the effect of the transit waiver policy on commenters' sentiments. The compiled list of selected videos is presented in Table 2.

### 3.5. Data analysis

The analysis of YouTube comments collected from the selected videos involved both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the audience's attitudes and perceptions towards travel to China. Sentiment Analysis was conducted to systematically assess audience emotions. The comments were classified into positive, negative, or neutral sentiments using natural language processing (NLP) techniques. Sentiment analysis allowed for the quantification of changes in emotional tone over time, providing insights into shifts in public perception before and after the visa-free policy was implemented. This method also enabled comparisons between the comments on videos created by bloggers from different geographical regions.

#### 3.5.1. Latent Code Identification (LACOID)

Latent Code Identification (LACOID) was employed to perform an in-depth thematic analysis of the collected comments. LACOID is a text analysis framework that integrates machine learning with

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qualitative text coding techniques. It allowed for the identification of underlying themes in the YouTube comments without compromising the contextual richness of the data. Unlike traditional automated text analysis, LACOID's unsupervised learning approach ensured that emergent codes and themes were not based on preconceived notions of classification, thereby preserving the original context and complexity of the comments.

### 3.5.2. Latent Dirichlet Allocation

Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) was used for topic modeling to identify recurring topics within the comments. This approach was particularly useful given the large volume of text data and the presence of multiple potential topics within the comments. Four key metrics were utilized to determine the optimal number of topics: perplexity, coherence score, Gibbs sampling convergence, and model improvement. To ensure robustness, at least two consistent metrics were required for the selection of an optimal topic count. This step allowed for the identification of major discussion points and recurring theme

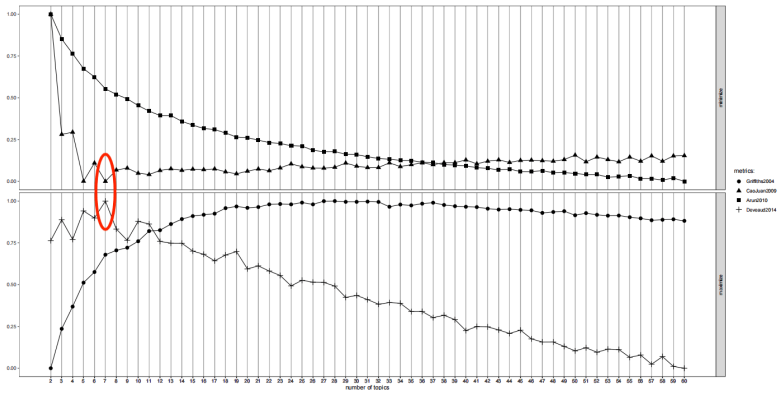


Figure 1. LACOID code modelling for RQ1 - Before the policy

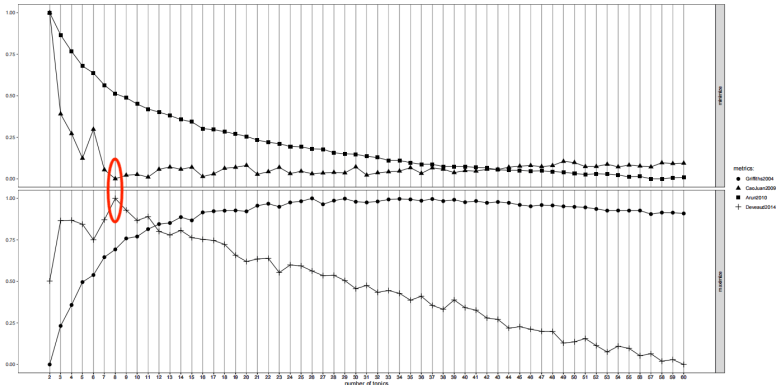


Figure 2. LACOID code modelling for RQ1 - After the policy

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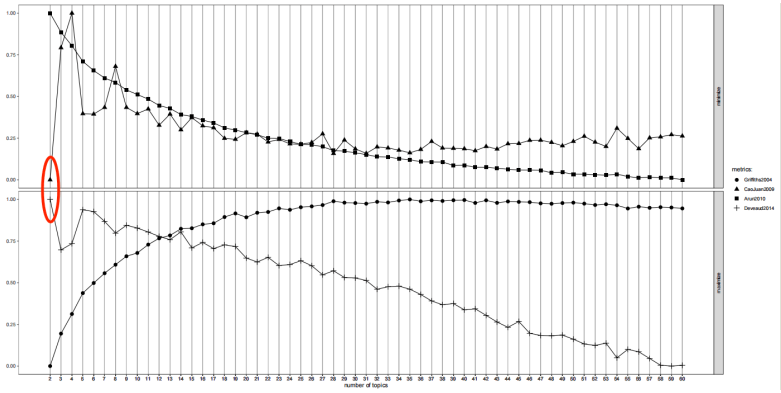


Figure 3. LACOID code modelling for RQ2 - Josie lifts things

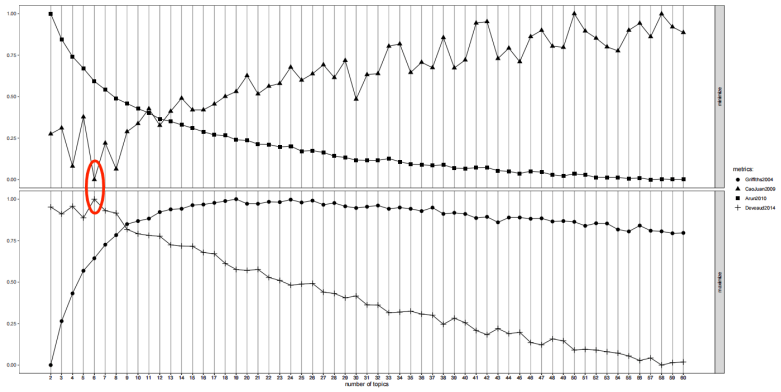


Figure 4. LACOID code modelling for RQ2 - Ken abroad

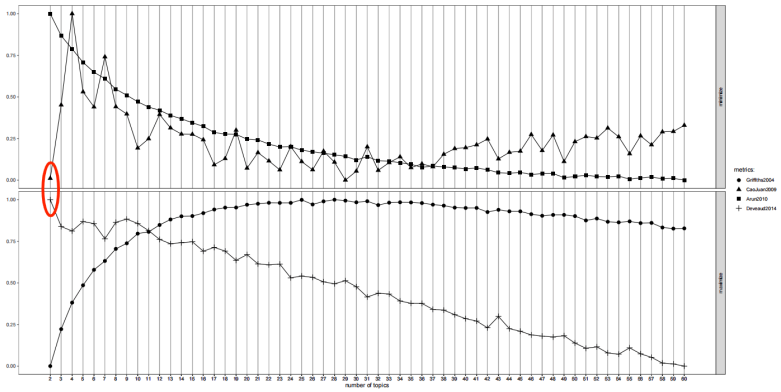


Figure 5. LACOID code modelling for RQ2 - Alina mcleod

## 4. Results and analysis

### 4.1. Answer to RQ1: take the implementation of visa-free policy as the key time point to compare whether the audience's attitude towards chinese tourism changes before and after

#### 4.1.1. Result of LDA analysis

The Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) analysis identified seven topics within the pre-policy dataset and eight topics within the post-policy dataset. These topics are detailed in Table 3 and Table 4,

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respectively, with each table showcasing the top 15 most relevant keywords associated with each identified topic. Figures 6 and 7 further illustrate the inter-topic distance maps and visualize the distribution of the top 30 most salient terms for the first topic in both the pre-policy and post-policy datasets.

The Intertopic Distance Map presented in Figures 6 and 7 provides insights into the relationships between topics in the pre- and post-policy datasets. In the maps, each topic is represented as a circle, with the size of the circle indicating the prevalence of the topic within the dataset. The distance between circles indicates the level of similarity or difference between topics—topics that are closer together share more common terms and may overlap in thematic content, while those that are farther apart represent more distinct themes. The map allows for a visual representation of how diverse or convergent the identified topics are within each period, offering insights into the complexity of audience discourse before and after the policy implementation.

The visual representation of the Top-30 Most Relevant Terms helps to better understand the focus of each topic. By comparing the salient terms in the first topic of both datasets, key differences in the audience's primary concerns and interests can be identified. These results provide a foundational understanding of how audience attitudes may have shifted in response to changes in visa policy.

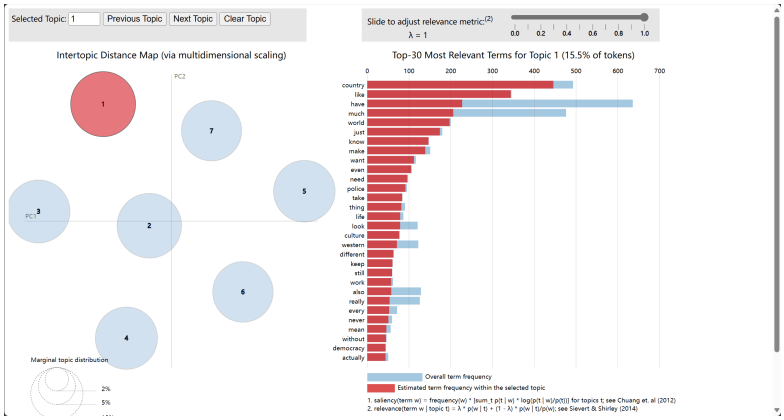



Figure 6. Top 30 most salient terms for Pre-policy$V_{B1}$

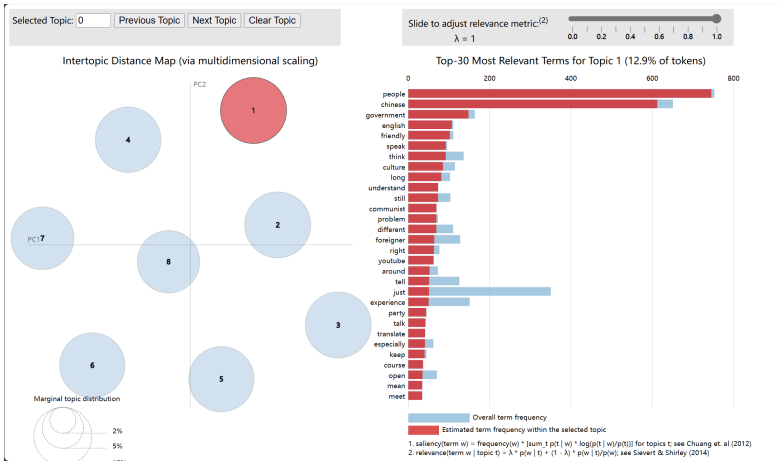



Figure 7. Top 30 most salient terms for Post-policy$V_{A1}$

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### 4.1.2. Topic analysis

For the purpose of comparative analysis, the nine Pre-policy themes and eight post-policy themes were recategorized into five common themes through a manual process of thematic analysis. This reclassification aimed to minimize redundancy between the initial themes identified, thereby improving the analysis's lucidity. As shown in Table 5, the finalized themes comprise five primary domains: experience and impression of China travel, positive and negative reaction towards China and the engagement of travel videos. We can also conduct a primary evaluation of the evolution in attitudes towards Chinese tourism following the reinstatement of the transit visa-free policy. Prior to this policy reinstatement, there was a discernible topic of negative comments about China, which included criticisms regarding China's handling of COVID-19, issues related to China's territorial sovereignty involving Hong Kong and Taiwan, and similar concerns. In contrast, after the reintroduction of the visa-free policy, the LACOID analysis did not reveal significant negative thematic trends. These previously prevalent negative comments appear to be largely disconnected from the content of bloggers' China travel videos, suggesting that the restoration of the visa-free policy might have led to an increase in tourism-related videos on social media platforms. It is plausible that the availability of more content related to Chinese tourism has provided viewers with a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of China, ultimately contributing to a more balanced perspective.

### 4.1.3. Comparative analysis of sentiment histograms

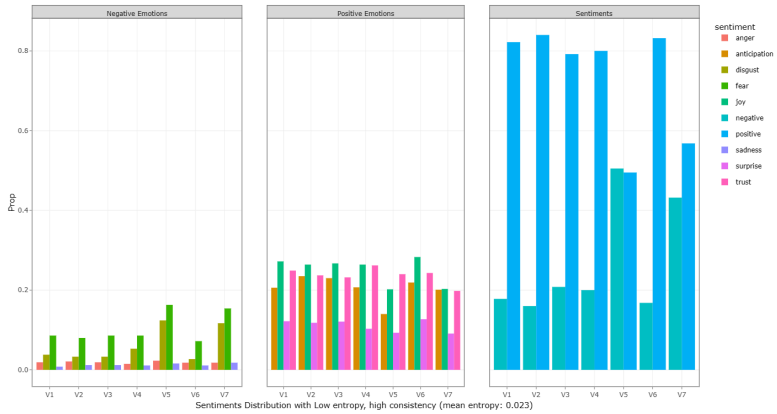



Figure 8. Sentiment distribution histograms of RQ1-Before

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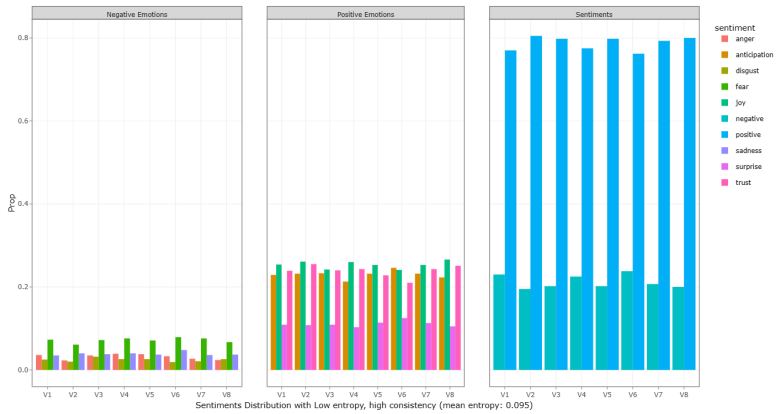



Figure 9. Sentiment distribution histograms of RQ1-After

A noticeable change in the emotional terrain is apparent when comparing the two histograms that show the distribution of sentiments. When it comes to negative emotions, there has been a noticeable decrease in their frequency along with a more even distribution across different topics. Specifically, the reductions in "Disgust" and "Fear" are particularly notable post-restoration of the visa-free policy, whereas other negative sentiments remain relatively stable.

On the positive sentiment spectrum, a cursory analysis reveals there was little overall change before and after the policy recovery. Nevertheless, a deeper examination uncovers a more uniform distribution of positive sentiments across diverse topics, signifying an increased consistency in foreign netizens' emotional stance towards Chinese tourism after visa liberalization. When individual positive emotions are examined, “Joy” and “Surprise” exhibit little variation, whereas 'Anticipation' and 'Trust' exhibit slight increases. This pattern suggests that, following the restoration of the visa-free policy, travel bloggers may be emphasizing the travel experiences, potentially resonating with their audience and fostering greater engagement and trust.

## 4.2. Answer to RQ2: the impact of geographically diverse bloggers on audience attitudes towards china travel

### 4.2.1. Result of LDA analysis

LACOID identifies 2 topics for Josie Lifts Things’ dataset, 2 topics for Alina Mcleod’s dataset and 6 topics for Ken Abroad’s dataset. These topics are detailed in Table 6, Table 7 and Table 8, respectively, with each table showcasing the top 15 most relevant keywords associated with each identified topic. Furthermore, Figure 8, Figure 9 and Figure 10 present the inter-topic distance map and visualised distributions of the top 30 most salient terms for the first topic for the three bloggers.

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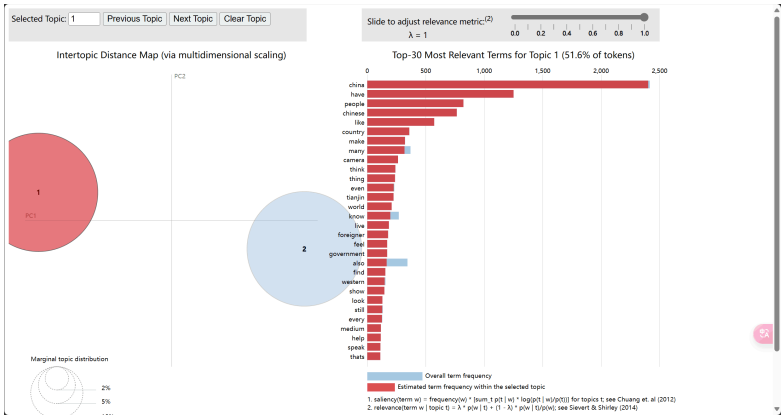



Figure 10. Top 30 most salient terms for Josie lifts things$V_{J1}$

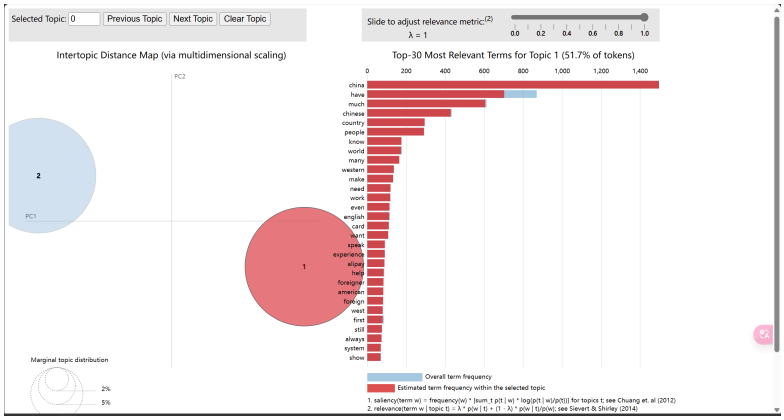



Figure 11. Top 30 most salient terms for alina mcleod$V_{M1}$

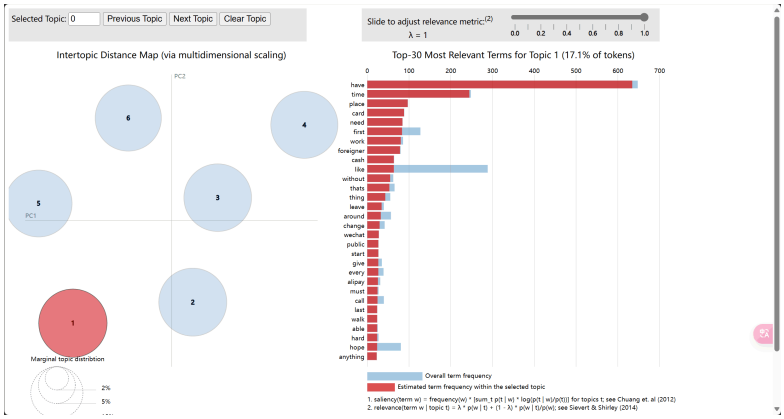



Figure 12. Top 30 most salient terms for Ken Abroad$V_{K1}$

### 4.2.2. Topic analysis

For the purpose of comparative analysis, the identified topics of the three selected bloggers were recategorized into two common themes through a manual process of thematic analysis. This reclassification aimed to minimize redundancy between the initial themes identified, thereby improving the analysis's lucidity. As shown in Table 9, the finalized themes comprise two primary domains: public perceptions of China and the experience and impression of China travel.

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### 4.2.3. Comparative analysis of sentiment histograms

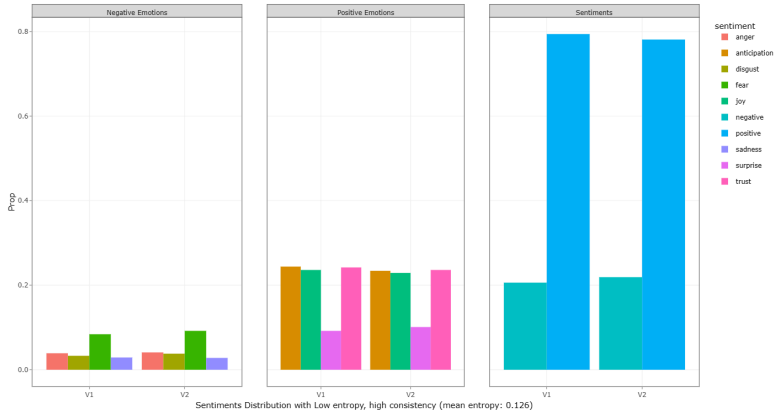



Figure 13. Sentiment distribution histograms of RQ2- Josie lifts things

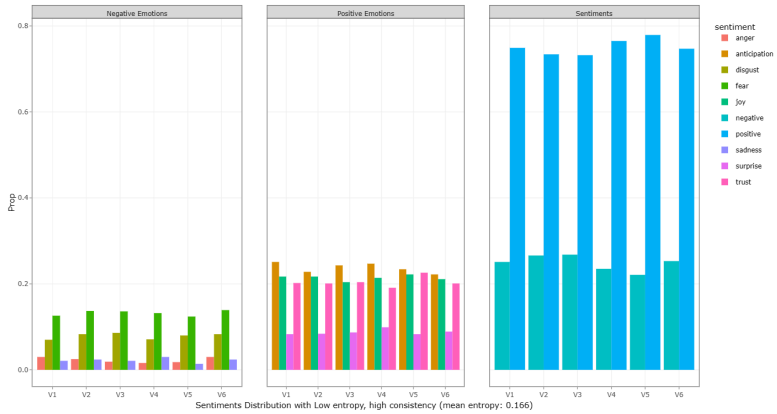



Figure 14. Sentiment distribution histograms of RQ2- Ken Abroad

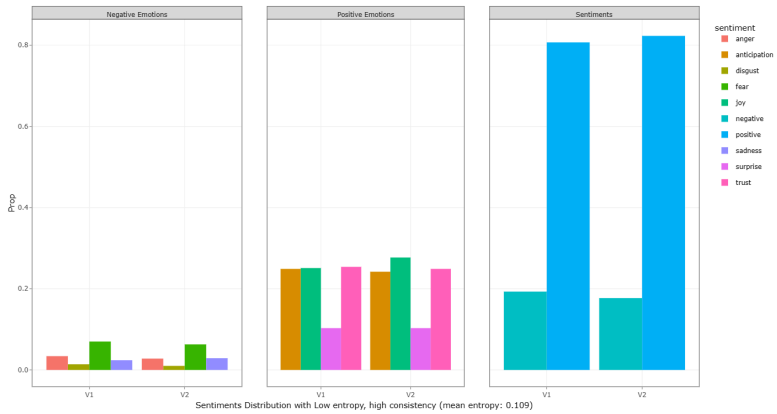



Figure 15. Sentiment distribution histograms of RQ2- Alina Mcleod

Overall, the analysis reveals that while the positive sentiment proportions among the three bloggers exhibit a relative similarity, the disparities in negative sentiments are more pronounced. Specifically, Ken Abroad's negative sentiment scores exceed 0.2, whereas Josie Lifts Things' and Alina Mcleod's commend below this threshold.

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First, the positive emotions of "involvement," "joy," and "trust" are evenly distributed among the bloggers as a whole, while "surprise" occupies a smaller percentage, in line with earlier findings from RQ1. On the other hand, when it comes to negative feelings, "fear" is the most prevalent, while different bloggers have different distributions of other negative feelings.

The sentiment distribution of viewer comments from bloggers Josie Lifts Things and Alina Mcleod is very similar, with the former registering slightly more "disgust" in negative sentiments and the latter slightly more "joy" in positive sentiments. Josie Lifts Things' negative feelings are slightly higher than Alina Mcleod's, while Alina Mcleod's positive feelings are slightly higher than Josie Lifts Things'. This disparity can be attributed to the differing video styles, as Alina Mcleod's content tends towards planned travel experiences, while Josie Lifts Things offers a more random experience.

In contrast, Ken Abroad, a male blogger from Germany, exhibits a distinct emotional distribution in audience comments. When it comes to negative emotions, "disgust" and "fear" significantly outweigh "anger" and "sadness," with the latter two emotions scoring similarly to the other bloggers. However, Ken Abroad's audience expresses much higher levels of "disgust" and "fear" than the other two bloggers. Regarding good sentiments, the distribution is largely consistent with the other bloggers, except that Ken Abroad viewers assign a slightly higher score to "involvement", making it his most significant component of the positive sentiment.

## 5. Discussion

This study offers valuable insights into the evolving audience attitudes towards Chinese tourism, particularly following the reinstatement of the transit visa-free policy. The findings indicate a shift in public perception, primarily influenced by the broader dissemination of positive travel narratives facilitated by social media platforms like YouTube.

One critical aspect of the analysis is the self-selection bias inherent in YouTube's recommendation algorithm. The platform tends to push content that generates higher engagement, contributing to a disproportionate representation of positive sentiments towards Chinese tourism in the post-policy period [17]. This bias is particularly pronounced given that content creators who receive more likes, views, and comments are more likely to have their videos promoted by the platform, potentially skewing the overall perception towards a more favorable view of China. As a result, the sample may not accurately represent the broader audience's perspectives, which should be considered when interpreting the results.

In terms of video selection limitations, the disparity between pre-policy and post-policy video content presents a significant challenge. There were far fewer China travel videos during the pre-policy period, which complicates direct comparisons. Following the visa-free policy reinstatement, the number of videos and comments surged, leading to an imbalance in the data. Future research should aim to address this imbalance, perhaps by expanding the dataset or applying statistical techniques to mitigate the impact of unequal sample sizes.

The selection of videos for RQ2 was also constrained due to the limitations of certain processing tools, such as MDCOR and SENA, which were unable to effectively analyze non-phonetic textual content. Consequently, videos from regions like Japan, Thailand, and Arabia were excluded. The exclusion of these regions likely limited the diversity of audience perspectives in the analysis. Future studies should explore methods to include these excluded regions, as their perspectives offer considerable value for a more comprehensive understanding of audience attitudes.

Despite these challenges, the reinstatement of visa-free access appears to have fostered greater engagement with travel content, enhancing the credibility and appeal of travel narratives among

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viewers. The increase in positive sentiment observed in the post-policy dataset aligns with the notion that exposure to diverse and authentic travel experiences can shape more favorable public perceptions. The proliferation of China travel videos, coupled with higher viewer engagement, suggests that the renewed visa policy has been effective in promoting positive tourism narratives on social media.

## 6. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated the significant role that visa policies play in shaping public attitudes towards tourism, particularly through social media interactions. The reinstatement of the transit visa-free policy for China correlated with an increase in positive sentiments towards Chinese tourism, as evidenced by the analysis of YouTube comments. The findings suggest that increased exposure to authentic travel experiences shared by diverse bloggers can contribute to more favorable perceptions of China as a travel destination. However, several limitations should be acknowledged. The imbalance between pre-policy and post-policy video content, the exclusion of certain regions due to methodological constraints, and the self-selection bias inherent in YouTube's recommendation system all challenge the generalizability of the findings. Despite these limitations, this research provides a solid foundation for future studies. Expanding the dataset to include a broader range of geographic regions and employing advanced methodologies to address identified biases would help provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of social media on tourism attitudes. Additionally, including perspectives from currently excluded regions could offer valuable insights into the diversity of audience responses to tourism content.

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## Appendix

Table 1. The selected videos of RQ1

| | Video’s title | Video’s link | Date | Before/ After the policy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Video1 | Indian Travelling to China for the First Time (SHOCKING EXPERIENCE) | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYpeA_kVcI8 | May 16, 2023 | Before |
| Video2 | Indian Travelling to China for the First Time \| How Is China After Lockdown? | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZlvpP97qdU | Jun 10, 2023 | Before |
| Video3 | CHINA IS NOT LIKE IT WAS BEFORE \| What changed in 3 years of isolation? | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtFyFVVpKtc | May 16, 2023 | Before |
| Video4 | Our Eye-Opening 24 Hours in CHINA in 2023 (has Shanghai changed?) | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z328kVoh3Lo | Jul 23, 2023 | Before |
| Video5 | I am the first tourist to enter China! | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rv9ng75WyDs | Apr 17, 2023 | Before |
| Video6 | ARRIVING IN CHINA... absolute culture shock. | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Gvls-do0kY | Mar 23, 2024 | After |
| Video7 | Americans First Time in China… NOT AT ALL what we expected (Beijing, China) | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UL5e6qk3sLE | Jun 2, 2024 | After |
| Video8 | Our Shocking Arrival in CHINA Everything was a lie ... | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXk6mgHQ-N8 | May 9, 2024 | After |
| Video9 | Our FIRST DAY in SHANGHAI, CHINA - 144-hour TRANSIT VISA | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bqFjcDeVIg | Aug 14, 2023 | After |
| Video10 | Stressful Arrival In Shanghai, China | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aYcFjsEULM&t=23s | Nov 14, 2023 | After |

Note: The blogger in video10 mentions coming to China through the transit visa waiver policy in the video.

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Table 2. The selected videos of RQ2

| | Video's title | Video's link | Blogger's name | Blogger's country |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Video1 | I Was Wrong About China... So I Came Back | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOo9ZraQfLo&t=1172s | Josie Lifts Things | Australia |
| Video2 | 24 Hours Inside China's Capital City (Crazy Day in Beijing) | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HtpTlRQCZU | Josie Lifts Things | Australia |
| Video3 | Riding the WORLDS FASTEST Bullet Train From Shanghai to Beijing, China | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lVKqz6VAS-k | Josie Lifts Things | Australia |
| Video4 | Stressful Arrival In Shanghai, China | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aYcFjsEULM&t=23s | Ken Abroad | Germany |
| Video5 | My 1st Day In Shanghai (What's China Really Like?) | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luXAfmkN1yo&t=162s | Ken Abroad | Germany |
| Video6 | World's Longest High-Speed Train Ride Across China | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a23yfkC73Iw | Ken Abroad | Germany |
| Video7 | ARRIVING IN CHINA... absolute culture shock. | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Gvls-do0kY | Alina Mcleod | Canada |
| Video8 | GUANGZHOU IS SO MODERN! \| A Canadian's First Time To China | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snuuqaS9gVc | Alina Mcleod | Canada |
| Video9 | CHINA'S RAIL SYSTEM IS INCREDIBLE \| Traveling Over 1000km From Guangzhou To Zhangjiajie | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIJKiOXuFbg&t=5s | Alina Mcleod | Canada |

Table 3. Topic modelling for the Pre-policy datasets

| Code (V) | Topic | Keywords |
|---|---|---|
| RQ1-Before (VB) | | |
| VB1 | Discovering and Understanding China. | country,like,have,much,world,just,know,make,want,even,need,police,take,thing,life |
| VB2 | The comparative perspective of China shown in videos. | India,people,Chinese,have,Indian,many,think,medium,government,always,English,west,give,understand,develop |
| VB3 | Positive travel experiences in Chinese cities. | good,much,visit,city,Shanghai,travel,great,time,come,hope,live,welcome,beautiful,amaze,friendly |
| VB4 | China's management of the COVID-19 pandemic and its issues with territorial sovereignty. | China,show,Covid,food,Taiwan,also,virus,control,part,capital,propaganda,develop,Beijing,Wuhan,YouTube |
| VB5 | Non-English Perspectives on China travel. | para,como,fotos,pero,todo,chinos,siempre,hace,bien,fente,persona,pandemia,tambin,hacer,donde |
| VB6 | Positive reactions on China travel vlogs. | video,bhai,love,nice,please,thank,vlog,nahi,next,tourvashu,pakistan,wait,bahut,yuan,episode |
| VB7 | Positive engagement with video bloggers. | luisito,saludos,desde,comida,luisillo,gracias,este,mundo,buen,calle,todos,mucho,esta,mejor,vdeo |

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Table 4. Topic modelling for the Post-policy datasets

| Code (V) | Topic | Keywords |
|---|---|---|
| RQ1-After($V_A$) | | |
| $V_{A1}$ | Perceptions of Chinese people and government from a foreign perspective | people,Chinese,government,English,friendly,speak,think,culture,long,understand,still,communist,problem,different,foreigner |
| $V_{A2}$ | Experiences and impressions of traveling in Chinese Cities | city,visit,Beijing,Chengdu,place,also,foood,many,Guangzhou,Shanghai,province,explore,park,center,panda |
| $V_{A3}$ | Distinctive daily travel experiences in China, notably the prevalent use of electronic payment systems. | take,need,good,work,card,foreign,hotel,Alipay,help,thing,tourist,cash,money,phone,local |
| $V_{A4}$ | Perceptions of China in Western Media | country,China,western,medium,world,west,much,progagan da,even,every,always,believe,state,American,cant |
| $V_{A5}$ | Positive reactions on China travel vlogs | good,like,just,come,know,live,make,much,want,feel,free,erything,life,east,comments |
| $V_{A6}$ | Experiences and plan on traveling to China for North Americans | have,much,time,travel,first,back,never,many,Ameican,little,ever,Canadian,soon,think,become |
| $V_{A7}$ | Positive impressions and invitations to experience the real China | China,welcome,beautiful,safe,real,please,friend,everyone,true,person,lady,another,learn,visit,have |
| $V_{A8}$ | Positive engagement and enjoyment of travel videos | video,enjoy,thank,love,great,look,nice,trip,hope,travel,really,watch,like,amaze,show |

Table 5. Common themes for Pre-policy and Post-policy datasets

| | Pre-policy | Post-policy |
|---|---|---|
| Macro-perspective towards China. | $V_{B1}$ , $V_{B2}$ , $V_{B5}$ | $V_{A1}$ , $V_{A4}$ , $V_{A6}$ |
| Experience and impression of China travel. | $V_{B3}$ | $V_{A2}$ , $V_{A3}$ |
| Positive reaction towards China. | $V_{B6}$ | $V_{A5}$ , $V_{A7}$ |
| Negative reaction towards China. | $V_{B4}$ | |
| The engagement of travel videos. | $V_{B7}$ | $V_{A8}$ |

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Table 6. Topic modelling for Josie lifts things' datasets

| Code(V) | Topic | Keywords |
|---|---|---|
| RQ2-Josie Lifts Things($V_J$) | | |
| $V_{J1}$ | Public Perceptions of China | China,have,people,Chinese,like,country,make,many,camera,think,thing,even,Tianjin,world,know |
| $V_{J1}$ | Positive impression and recommendations for visiting China | much,good,Beijing,city,video,visit,travel,time,just,welcome,train,food,place,need,really |

Table 7. Topic modelling for alina mcleod's datasets

| Code(V) | Topic | Keywords |
|---|---|---|
| RQ2-Alina Mcleod($V_M$) | | |
| $V_{M1}$ | Public Perceptions of China | China,have,much,Chinese,country,people,know,world,many,western,make,need,work,even,English |
| $V_{M2}$ | Positive impression on modern Chinese cities | good,like,Guangzhou,video,travel,time,city,train,alina,just,visit,food,enjoy,thank,welcome |

Table 8. Topic modelling for Ken Abroad's datasets

| Code(V) | Topic | Keywords |
|---|---|---|
| RQ2-Ken Abroad ($V_K$) | | |
| $V_{K1}$ | Essential considerations for foreigners traveling in China | have,time,place,card,need,first,work,foreigner,cash,like,without,thats,thing,leave,around |
| $V_{K2}$ | Perceptions and considerations for traveling to China | people,like,look,just,many,even,German,visa,think,come,seem,feel,cant,want,much |
| $V_{K3}$ | Positive travel experiences and interactions with Chinese locals | good,Chinese,make,know,travel,English,experience,speak,always,find,never,help,mean,local,drink |
| $V_{K4}$ | Public Transportation System in China | train,take,airport,maglev,world,trip,Beijing,next,high,speed,ticket,airline,also,fast,price |
| $V_{K5}$ | Positive impression on modern Chinese cities | China,much,city,country,visit,welcome,live,travel,weatern,modern,safe,different,still,hope,stay |
| $V_{K6}$ | Positive reactions to the video of Shanghai: food and sights | Shanghai,video,thank,really,enjoy,great,love,food,nice,watch,amaze,interest,share,delicious,beautiful |

Table 9. Common themes for three selected bloggers

| | Josie Lifts Things | Alina Mcleod | Ken Abroad |
|---|---|---|---|
| Public perceptions of China. | $V_{J1}$ | $V_{M1}$ | $V_{K1}$ , $V_{K2}$ |
| Experience and impression of China travel. | $V_{J2}$ | $V_{M2}$ | $V_{K3}$ , $V_{K4}$ , $V_{K5}$ , $V_{K6}$ |