



Exploring Overseas Citizen's Perceptions of Chinese Furniture on Social Media: Content Analysis of Q&A Text Based on Quora

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ABSTRACT

The global online Q&A community provides us a possibility to observe the spread of Chinese utensil culture abroad in the era of social media. In this article, user data linked to Chinese furniture were collected via the Python crawler program. We apply LDA topic model, sentiment analysis, word frequency and word cloud analysis, and metaphor analysis to explore the leading producers, information needs, and foreigners' attitudes and understanding mode of Chinese furniture knowledge. The results show that the principal contributors are non-Chinese people with Chinese experience and design expertise. Overseas people's attention to Chinese furniture covers eight topics, including restaurant furniture, furniture trade, furniture sales, furniture marketing, furniture style, and hongmu furniture. Although some users employ economic, cultural, and political metaphors to describe the negative image of Chinese furniture, overseas citizens are mostly positive about Chinese furniture. The findings of this study will aid relevant ministries and businesses in boosting intercultural communication of Chinese furniture.

Keywords: Chinese furniture, social platform, Quora, LDA-based topic modeling, sentiment analysis, metaphor analysis.

1 INTRODUCTION

An individual spends at least two-thirds of his or her life indoors. In the living space consisting of individuals, families, and society, furniture plays a vital role and dramatically affects people's quality of life (EPA, 2014). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years, the furniture sector has experienced a new need for living spaces as well as a new sales boom (Chen and Yang, 2021). According to the Centre for Industrial Studies' *World Furniture Outlook 2022* (Notifex, 2021), worldwide furniture sales exceeded \$500 billion in 2021. The recovery was more substantial than expected, led by significant contributions from Europe and Asia. Compared with other countries, Chinese furniture has formed its unique style in the lengthy development process. In particular, the outstanding achievements of Ming-style furniture have laid the glorious position of Chinese furniture.

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in world history (Fan and Feng, 2019). Since the 1980s, Chinese furniture has been undergoing an industrialization process. After over 30 years of efforts, China has been the world's largest furniture manufacturer, exporter, and consumer, attracting extensive attention from the industry and academia (Xiong et al., 2017).

Nowadays, the public cannot function without the assistance of the Internet in their daily lives, given the rapid progress of computer technologies and networks. In the age of big data, users are less satisfied with passive information consumption. They are more willing to contribute to information-sharing activities and acquire the capacity to speak on their behalf. They share knowledge on a specific topic, event, or person and express their opinions and emotions online. Consequently, the Q&A platforms of social networks have emerged (Wang et al., 2020), whose typical representatives are Quora, Zhihu, etc. With the rapid growth of these platforms and the continued expansion of user scale, it has become a hot topic and an emerging trend to extract users' perspectives on exotic things from Q&A texts (Han et al., 2020).

Regarding that Chinese furniture is a representative case of Chinese culture that comes and goes, there is an urgent need to study Chinese furniture abroad. Existing research concentrates on specific groups such as western collectors, scholars, aristocrats, and designers, whether the analysis of Chinese furniture's overseas communication (Ye, 2014) or the discussion of its influence

abroad(Evarts and Liu, 2011). Few studies on Chinese furniture incorporate foreign participants and online Q&A communities. Therefore, we investigate the opinions of foreigners on Chinese furniture in the online Q&A community to detect how this issue is presented on Quora. Based on pertinent user information and Q&A texts as data sources, we use quantitative and qualitative textual methods such as LDA topic modeling, sentiment and metaphor analysis to explore foreigners' cognitive and emotional attitudes toward Chinese furniture(Wang et al., 2022a).

This study aims to answer the following four questions.

- (1) Who participates in the discussion about Chinese furniture on Quora?
- (2) What are users' information needs, and what topics are covered?
- (3) How does the general public perceive Chinese furniture?
- (4) With what metaphors do people describe Chinese furniture?

This study contributes to the existing literature in three aspects. First, this paper analyzes the overseas perception of Chinese furniture from the perspective of social media for the first time. Second, most studies focus on the furniture industry, history, and culture in China and seldom examine the production and dissemination of knowledge about Chinese furniture. This study fills the gap. Finally, interpreting overseas users' attitudes and value cognition is beneficial for government departments to comprehend transmission data and provide targeted recommendations for accurately enhancing the international communication of Chinese cultural symbols.

The remaining portion of this study is organized as follows. The second section reviews the relevant literature. The third section outlines the data gathering and processing steps, as well as the research methods adopted. The fourth chapter presents the study's results. In the fifth section, the results are discussed. In the final part, we summarize the research findings and analyze the study's limitations and prospects.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chinese furniture

Chinese Domestic Furniture, which Gustav E published in 1944, marked the beginning of scholarly research on Chinese furniture(Peng and Dong, 2021; Li et al., 2022a). With regard to the prominence of Chinese furniture in the global furniture industry, numerous academics have initiated a fierce discussion. The previous research is mainly carried out from the following aspects. One kind of research is done on classical or traditional Chinese furniture. This research emphasizes the application of new technologies. For instance, some academics attempt to incorporate wireless communication, the Internet of Things(Wu, 2022a), Artificial Intelligence(Wu, 2022b), and Three-Dimensional Virtual Simulation(Peng and Du, 2021) into the design and display of furniture. Some scholars use eye-tracking technology to probe the cognitive preferences of various Chinese furniture styles(Wan et al., 2018a). Based on this, researchers combined the perceptual evaluation method to determine the morphological characteristics of Tang dynasty chairs(Zhagn and Xu, 2020). Intelligent furniture is one of the current trends. Some authors have proposed user interface design strategies for smart home products based on Ming-style furniture modeling elements(Chen, 2022).

The second research category is concerned with collecting and interpreting Chinese furniture. For example, Altehenger J stated that China's 1980s use of modular panel furniture was tied to socialism's material and spiritual civilization based on photographs and texts from *Furniture and Life Magazine*(Altehenger, 2022). Besides, some researchers are also interested in Chinese furniture stored abroad, and European kings' palaces are excellent venues for finding antique Chinese furniture(Meyer, 2012; Veron-Denise, 2006).

The third type of research examines the current state of the Chinese furniture market and industry. Internal and external perspectives dominated the researchers' discussions. Several academics have elucidated the connection between supply chain and operations(Dobler, 2008). Others have built an unsafe risk model of Chinese furniture production from the perspective of organization management(Tong et al., 2021). At the same time, several scholars have recognized the significance of green manufacturing(Xiong et al., 2020) and environmental legislation(Zhang et al., 2019) for the sustainable growth of Chinese furniture and have implemented appropriate remedies. On the other hand, many publications use export statistics to assess the worldwide competitiveness of the Chinese furniture sector(Han et al., 2009) and study the product quality of Chinese furniture(Wan et al., 2022).

The fourth is to pay attention to the purchasing behavior of Chinese furniture customers. Wan et al. used consumer samples from Shanghai and Shenzhen to claim that the Chinese middle class would pay more for eco-friendly children's furniture. They discovered a link between willingness to pay and consumers' marital status, education level, sustainable lifestyle orientation, and environmental view(Wan et al., 2018b). Furniture online shopping has become a new consumption mode in the late years. Some researchers have discussed this phenomenon and found that price value, performance expectation, and social influence positively impact purchase intention. In contrast, perceived risk has a significantly negative effect(Li et al., 2020).

2.2 Research on China in the Q&A community

The public can share knowledge on the online Q&A platform based on user-generated content, which gradually develops into a public forum for social and political issues(Lou et al., 2020). The key insight of these platforms is users, questions, and answers(Khusro et al., 2017). Currently, China-related studies concentrate mainly on user behavior(Xu et al., 2021; Ye and Chua), user intent(Jia et al.; Wen et al., 2022), problem classification(Wang et al., 2022b), content suggestion(He et al., 2018), and

information quality evaluation(Wu et al., 2020; Li et al., 2021a). Network text contains a lot of valuable information. Studying the text helps to grasp the themes that people care about. Meanwhile, it helps to comprehend the public's perspectives and attitudes toward a particular issue or incident. Among them, health is the field on which researchers concentrate (Wang et al., 2022c; Chen et al., 2021). For example, researchers mined the Q&A text data under the topic of diabetes in "Slow Friends" and "Clove Garden." They discovered that treatment and symptoms have always been the primary information demands of users(Li et al., 2022b) although most diabetes-related discussions are negative(Wang et al., 2022d).

Vaccine knowledge has drawn widespread interest with the resurgence of public health consciousness, China's funding for health education, and the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak. Some research on COVID-19 vaccines suggests that adverse reactions and side effects after vaccination are the main reasons for unfavorable public sentiment in China, influencing vaccine decision-making and resulting in vaccine rejection(Wang et al., 2022e; Yao et al., 2011). In addition to livelihood-related themes such as sports and climate change, China's exterior image and communication power have also been examined. Some scholars believe that sharing Confucius information on Quora entails metaphorically constructing the concept of Confucius(Yang, 2021). A highly acclaimed comment on Zhihu stated, "In terms of the external influence of Chinese culture, one 'Ziqi Li' is worth 1,000 CGTN(Chen, 2020)."

In summary, early Chinese studies on the Q&A platform focus primarily on people's livelihood hotspots and cultural celebrities, while material image cognition is rarely discussed. Current research on Chinese furniture discusses products, images, or market data. It has prioritized internet data use over the past few years, particularly from e-commerce platforms like Taobao and JD.com. Few scholars utilize online Q&A community texts overseas to evaluate furniture information demands and users' emotions. There needs to be more evidence of symbolic representations in users' interpretations of Chinese furniture. Hence, this article on the above situation will launch a thorough discussion.

3 MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Data collection and preprocessing

Quora is the largest English-speaking social networking service Q&A website. It establishes a knowledge ecosystem for information exchange and gives users dual roles as information producers and consumers(Li, 2014). On Quora, knowledge sharing about China has reached a certain level of maturity, and people from many cultural locations prefer to view China as another(Guo, 2019). The Q&A structure, real-name environment, and reputation mechanism make Quora a suitable platform for objectively debating of Chinese furniture issues(Rao and Kumar, 2022). On September 20, 2022, a Python-written web crawler was applied to collect all questions, answers, and supplementary information about Chinese furniture to obtain essential data efficiently.

This research preprocesses the data to guarantee its accuracy before analysis. Following the removal of duplicate and noisy data, the 48 question texts and 298 answer texts were acquired. After gathering 346 users' basic information, 87 duplicate IDs and 53 missing and incomplete samples were discarded. A total of 216 effective users' data were obtained. Data segmentation is the subsequent phase(Zhang et al., 2021). The specific handling steps are as follows: the title and content are merged into a column, a regular expression removes URLs and digits, and the word_tokenize runs in the nltk toolkit in python segment words. Next, the lemmatize function in nltk is used to restore the speech part of each word, and finally the stopwords in the list are deleted.

3.2 LDA-based topic modeling

Texts are the principal knowledge carrier on Q&A platforms. Users are able to express their knowledge needs through raising questions(Li et al., 2021b). The premise of analyzing the Q & A knowledge behavior of Chinese furniture on Quora is the survey of users' knowledge requirements(Yan, 2020). The LDA topic model proposed by D. M. Blei et al.in 2003 is the most representative method in text topic mining area(Wu et al., 2013). Therefore, we select the question text and use Python's Gensim toolkit for LDA topic modeling to extract user's information needs for Chinese furniture. The model needs to determine the optimal number of topic K to ensure the topic extraction effect. Perplexity is a standard index to evaluate the modeling effect. Generally speaking, the lower the perplexity value, the better the quality of the model, and the more appropriate the topic classification is(Blei et al., 2003).

3.3 Sentiment analysis

Sentiment analysis is a method of analyzing, processing, summarizing, and reasoning the emotional color of subjective text, as well as using some emotional score indicators to quantify qualitative data(Tripathy et al., 2015). There are two popular sentiment analysis methods: dictionary-based methods and machine learning-based methods(Lou et al., 2020). This study adopts the first method, which assesses the emotional content of the Q&A texts to determine foreigners' perspectives and opinions toward Chinese furniture.

The first step is to build a Chinese furniture sentiment dictionary according to the CNKI Hownet sentiment dictionary, NRC dictionary, degree adverb dictionary, and negative dictionary. The second step is to calculate the emotional value. Each sentence is segmented using the nltk toolkit's word_tokenize function. Then, we check if a word is positive or negative and if degree adverbs and negatives precede it. The initial positive score is set as the variable pos_score = 0, which is determined in the following cases:

- (1) If a word is positive and preceded by neither a degree adverb nor a negative word, then $\text{pos_score} = \text{pos_score} + 1$;
- (2) If a word is a positive word and a degree adverb precedes it without any negative words, then $\text{pos_score} = \text{pos_score} + 1 *$

degree adverb weight;

(3) If a word is a positive word and is preceded by a degree adverb and a negative word, then $\text{pos_score} = \text{pos_score} - 1 * \text{degree adverb weight}$;

(4) If a word is a positive word and a negative word precedes it without any degree adverb, then $\text{pos_score} = \text{pos_score} - 1$;

(5) If a word is positive and preceded by two negative words, then $\text{pos_score} = \text{pos_score} + 1$

Similar calculations are used to determine a sentence's neg_score . Then, the sentiment score of each sentence = $\text{pos_score} - \text{neg_score}$. The sentence's emotional score accumulates the dynamic score of each text. The sentimental score of Q & A text can be used to characterize the user's emotional polarity. Positive emotion is indicated by a score of more than zero, negative feeling by less than zero, and neutral sentiment by a score of zero. The greater the score's absolute value, the more intense the emotion it expresses(Xu, 2021).

3.4 Word frequency and word cloud analysis

Word frequency analysis is a text mining method that counts and describes keywords in the text(Dicle and Dicle, 2018). Word clouds, also called text clouds, are used to visualize data. After filtering out low-frequency text information, high-frequency keywords are visually shown(Atenstaedt, 2017), revealing the text's topic and fundamental ideas. In this study, we first count the frequency of positive and negative words in the Q & A text. Then, we utilize python's wordcloud toolkit to construct a word cloud to comprehend foreigners' feelings towards Chinese furniture.

3.5 Metaphor analysis

One-third of daily speech is a metaphor. It is conducive to understand human cognitive abilities and language understanding(Zhu, 2002). Metaphor is an essential means of expressing thought. Van Dijk, T.A., a renowned linguist and communication specialist, suggested text and context as two analytical dimensions(Peng, 2021). These two can reveal essential parts of Chinese furniture content: "what to say" and "how to say." The former explains the subject of Q & A, while the latter its narration(Jan, 2017). After detecting 108 metaphors in 346 Q&A texts, this research identifies example situations using Van Dijk's social cognitive model. Consequently, we are able to comprehend the nature of social sharing based on the knowledge of community members, which can also provide the spatio-temporal background of the discourse, participants' identities, roles, goals, and present knowledge(Van Dijk, 2008).

Figure 1 depicts the framework of this study.

4 RESULTS

4.1 User participation

Through statistics, it is found that non-Chinese groups ($n=212$, accounting for 98 % of the total effective population) are the primary producers, sharers, and even fans of Chinese furniture topic. They are mainly from the US, UK, Canada, Australia as well as Japan, India, Vietnam, and South Korea. This group presents two characteristics. First, they have China experience, such as living, working, visiting, or studying in China, trading with China, or knowing the Chinese language, history, culture, and food. Second, they have the expertise as craftsmen, design enthusiasts, architects, interior designers, museum curators, or furniture store owners or suppliers. Some people ($n=77$, counting 36% of the total valid population) have had direct experience with Chinese furniture. However, most users lack extensive experience with Chinese furniture issues, making it challenging to comprehend China through actual perception and other means. Thus, social media, portal websites, and interpersonal communication play a significant role in attracting and educating people about Chinese furniture. It is evident that indirect experience is the primary source of Chinese furniture expertise on Quora.

In terms of engagement, Balasubramaniam K, former chief executive officer of the Central Bank of India, was the most engaged user (14 answers). Rivoira F, an Italian furniture designer, is the most active user (12 questions and answers). Ebbert C, who has traveled to China; Alexander D, a planner for manufacturing and commercialization; Jiang M, a French speaker; Ciao M, an investor; Denlinger P, who has lived in mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong; Jain S, senior vice president of HDFC Bank; Chan W, purchasing expert; Yoho, an outdoor furniture company in Hangzhou; and Talovich Y, who resides in Taiwan and teaches Chinese literature and history, were active participants. They are both questioners and responders regarding the Chinese furniture issue. In addition, this topic has 28 followers, and these individuals and businesses above constitute the primary force in producing and disseminating knowledge about Chinese furniture.

4.2 Hot topics

We extract subjects from the question text using the LDA topic model. Calculatedly, when the number of topics is eight, the perplexity is minimum, and the topic effect is optimal. We trained the LDA model with the following parameters: alpha was set to 50/number of topics, and iteration times were set to 100. As illustrated in Figure 2, we apply the pyLDAvis toolkit to generate LDA topic visualization results. When a theme is selected in Figure 2, the circle on the left gets darker, and the list on the right shows 30 relevant keywords. We extract each topic's weight and top 10 feature words, manually summarize them, and get LDA topic labels of Chinese furniture knowledge needs.

Table 1 shows that topic 3, 4, and 8 are hot topics. Among these, topic 3 (restaurant furniture) has the highest intensity, accounting for 13.8%. This suggests that foreigners are more interested in Chinese restaurant furnishings and want to know where to get them. Topic 4 (furniture trade) is also of high intensity and closely related to topic 6 (furniture purchase), topic 7 (furniture marketing) and topic 8 (furniture sales). It demonstrates that overseas consumers are concerned about the

cross-border trade channels, production and sales links, and brand reputation of Chinese furniture. Additionally, overseas citizens are also fascinated by Ming and Qing dynasty furniture, its material qualities and how they are placed in contemporary spaces, and the attractiveness of hongmu furniture.

4. 3Sentiment in text

The emotion score results show that 25% of the question text is neutral, and 75% is positive. Response texts are each 1% negative and neutral and 98% positive. It is not difficult to see that the user's emotions are predominantly positive in the Q & A about Chinese furniture, indicating that the overall perception of Chinese furniture reflects a positive mindset. In terms of specific scores, the question text falls between [1,56], whereas the answer text falls between [1,399.5]. The question text's variance is 90.25, and the answer's variation is 4, revealing that the questioner has an apparent emotional propensity that varies substantially.

Figure 3 depicts the word cloud graph of users' positive and negative emotions. The high-frequency words of positive emotions related to Chinese furniture are "quality," "diet," "culture," "tradition," "build," "manufacturer," and "influence." These terms are primarily associated with Chinese furniture manufacturing, folk culture, and communication influence. Q & A users focus closely on the durability of Chinese furniture, and they all give it a favorable and trustworthy review. Tariff conflicts, economic sanctions, and intergovernmental events in Chinese furniture export are causing negative public sentiment. People display anxiety, nervousness, and worry in response to these uncertain threats.

4.4 Metaphor in text

The Quora community describes Chinese furniture under the Western system(Xiang et al., 2021). It generates pertinent narrative discourse from the viewpoint of others, and the discourse is full of vivid metaphors. We can find economical, cultural, political, and social metaphors in the Chinese furniture debate(Imani et al., 2021). Economic metaphors are the most common of these, followed by cultural metaphors.

Table 2 clearly lists the symbolic context of Chinese furniture built by specific users. In the economic dimension, metaphors highlight the law of the jungle and game logic in the furniture business and downplay mutual benefit and international responsibilities. The West is attempting to accuse China via public opinion and discourse hegemony. The US and India have become key terms. The example portrays China as a "terminator" and the US as an "ignorant fool" by using phrases like "hollowing out" and "weakening." In this context, China is frequently referred to as a competitor and a threat, while the US is seen as a victim of China's economic aggression. Western countries led by the US demonize Confucius Institutes with traditional Chinese furniture. The political metaphor is apparent, reflecting the solid ideological hue in Western media, and this is also the US's China-related public opinion measure in Sino-US trade friction(An and Xu, 2015). In the cultural dimension, selling famous furniture copies at Chinese exhibits is seen as "copying original ideas." The context frequently associates Chinese furniture with imitations, characterizing it as "cheap replicas" or "poor quality." Last but not least, in the social dimension, furniture burning is interpreted as a lack of care for the environment and an attempt to moralize China.

To sum up, opposition to Chinese manufacture and a boycott of Chinese goods make a skewed context in which Chinese furniture is inferior to Japan and Germany and damages the US economy. In the Q&A text, several users characterized Chinese furniture in a negative image. It is important to note that this negative definition contradicts itself, as the various dimension descriptions of Chinese furniture are positive expressions. Overseas users have insight into the aim of American public opinion and comprehend Chinese furniture's significant market dominance and dependence on it, as well as the influence of Chinese furniture on Japanese, Korean, Scandinavian, and British Rococo designs. Moreover, they recognize the regional and folk peculiarities in Chinese furniture and favor the Chinese people's furniture skills and hard work.

5 Discussion

In response to the first question, we discover that non-Chinese groups dominate the production and dissemination of Chinese furniture knowledge on the Quora platform. This aligns with Yang F's viewpoint, according to which Non-Chinese populations are the primary contributors to the "Confucius" knowledge production process(Yang, 2021). The Quora community served as a forum for people of diverse viewpoints and cultural backgrounds to engage in cross-cultural conversation around the Confucius theme. The assertion made by Shan et al. that the Chinese and their descendants make up the largest group of Chinese knowledge contributors on Quora is in conflict with our findings(Shan and Zhou, 2020). The distinction in the scope of relevant issues in China may be one explanation for this. Surprisingly, our research's findings support Shan et al. in terms of the traits of non-Chinese users. In particular, the questioners, respondents, and sharers of Chinese topics have direct or indirect experience in China. They either take school courses in China, like reading about China regularly, or have worked, lived, or settled in China. They compare their own culture with Chinese culture and draw on prior knowledge to provide their own interpretation.

Regarding the second question, the topic results indicate that users' knowledge requirements for Chinese furniture include furniture trade, sales, marketing, style, hongmu furniture, quality, and purchasing. The most interesting finding is that the public is particularly intrigued by Chinese restaurant furnishings. This phenomenon might be credited with the excellent reputation of Chinese cuisine abroad(Yu et al., 2018). The findings on this issue add to the ideas presented by Tian et al.(Tian and Wang, 2019; Shan, 2021). They argue that Chinese restaurant furniture is in high demand in the Belt and Road countries. Through the growth of the Internet, exemplified by TikTok and Wechat, Chinese culture has had a significant impact on individuals all over the world. It is now common to learn Chinese, cook Chinese food, create Chinese paintings, and purchase Chinese-style furniture. Moreover, our results contradict those of Yang et al.(Yang et al., 2012). The latter cite hongmu furniture, bedroom furniture, kitchen furniture, and office furniture as the main export products of China. Their degree of debate in other nations ranges from high to

low, and hongmu is the material of choice when it comes to Chinese furniture.

The results of the third question indicate that foreigners have a generally favorable opinion of Chinese furniture. It might be related to how appealing cultural diversity is. The findings of Cheng Q et al.(Cheng and Zhao, 2021), who discovered that foreign viewers had a positive attitude toward Chinese feature films and a low proportion of negative feelings, are similar to this one. The emotion of the text realizes the positive creation of China's image in documentary feature films, which is a significant indication of the program's impact on global communication. Our findings are also similar to Shi's observation that foreign tourists' perception of the tourism image of Zhangjiajie city in China is predominantly favorable(Shi, 2011). According to certain earlier studies(Jia and Zhang, 2022; Lu et al., 2014), public unease is mostly caused by worries about the difficulties the Chinese furniture trade is encountering. In their study, negative images represent both the mistrust that other nations hold for Chinese commodities and their poor impression of China. In light of the Sino-US trade friction, furniture has evolved into a focal point for the creation of China's image. The likelihood of bilateral trade friction will rise as a result of economic downturn and market contraction, enhancing international rivalry in the furniture business. Researchers also contend that industrialized nations discriminate against emerging nations, leading them to see the latter's goods as of worse quality, enact trade barriers against them more frequently, and prevent their goods from entering the market(Newburry et al., 2006)

The result of the last question confirms that Westerners often perceive Chinese furniture culture through metaphor, which includes economic, cultural, political, and social aspects. Among them, economic metaphor is the most common and frequently utilized. Our finding supports the theories put forth by Wang et al.(Wang and Zeng, 2020) and suggests that the Sino-US trade intensifying economic competition caused it. They believe that European and American countries are prone to misread China's big surplus in trade and relative economic development advantage during a global economic downturn as "unfair competition," "grabbing key technology," and "crowding the market of other countries firms." These nations prohibit the importation of Chinese goods in the name of anti-dumping, intellectual property rights protection, and nature conservation. Moreover, a growing "political tendency" in the economic area noted by Li et al.(Li et al., 2022; Liu, 2022) is supported by our findings. The Indian government has consistently emphasized the rivalry between China and India in the furniture industry to obtain support from domestic and international political forces. It attempts to replace "Made in China" with "Made in India" to gain a competitive edge in the "Dragon Elephant battle."

6 Conclusion

Chinese furniture is a significant means through which the rest of the world can better comprehend Chinese culture. This study starts by looking into the "Chinese furniture's" knowledge-producing activities on Quora before interpreting the participants, information needs, and cognitive preferences of international internet users. From the current analysis, we can draw the following conclusions.

(1) The process of producing furniture knowledge in China is primarily carried out by non-Chinese groups. They have a wealth of Chinese experience and design expertise. Indirect experience is the main source of Chinese furniture knowledge.

(2) Restaurant furniture, furniture trade, furniture sales, furniture marketing, furniture style, hongmu furniture, furniture quality, and furniture purchasing are listed in descending order of popularity for Chinese furniture topics.

(3) Despite the fact that some users metaphorically express the economic, cultural, political, and social aspects of Chinese furniture using words with negative connotations, this does not change the generally favorable attitude of individuals living abroad toward Chinese furniture. Namely, for the most part, the foreigners' response to Chinese furniture has been favorable, to say the least.

The theoretical contributions of this study are as follows. This study enhances our understanding of the cross-cultural transmission of Chinese furniture and expands the literature's use of social texts. The research also offers a deeper understanding of the global participation in the sharing Chinese information via the Internet from the viewpoint of others by observing the behaviors and perceptions of individuals abroad in the creation, dissemination, and sharing of Chinese furniture knowledge. Moreover, our analysis assists in introducing policies to improve the structure of the furniture industry and reducing the uncertainty and problem that government agencies and firm management encounter while speaking with the outside world about Chinese furniture.

This study also sheds light on how to promote Chinese furniture overseas. First and foremost, official media should keep up with the times and emphasize the importance of global online knowledge-sharing platforms in promoting the export of Chinese furniture products and culture. Specifically, the official media should take the initiative to respond and clarify the doubts and prejudices of some users. On the other hand, they must actively and methodically expand the sub-topics of Chinese furniture. On Chinese furniture, there are now only a few questions and answers available. By telling stories, we may raise the attraction and allure of its culture and increase international awareness. Second, government agencies should focus on the multi-sensory experience of the external construction of Chinese furniture's image and promote the social connection between users. This study demonstrates that users frequently employ text and pictures when discussing Chinese furniture on Quora but rarely use social emoticons and videos. Clearly, the external communication of Chinese furniture must be enhanced in terms of visual appeal and interactivity. In the end, we should encourage furniture associations and related stakeholders to register and maintain accounts on international knowledge-sharing platforms, and pay close attention to the outward representation of Chinese furniture. To further increase user engagement and activity, incentive mechanisms like Q&A rewards can be adopted.

Besides, our study has some limitations, notably the absence of cognitive comparisons between user groups. According to the classification of countries, additional research can investigate the similarities and variations in how different users perceive

Chinese furniture. Furthermore, the image presentation and audience cognition in the short video are intriguing topics we could explore in future studies of Chinese furniture social data.

7 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

8 AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

WG conceived the study, analyzed the data, and wrote the manuscript. YZ and WW collected the data. JY oversaw the research and examined the manuscript. All authors participated in manuscript revision and approved the submitted version.

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10 DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

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Figures and tables

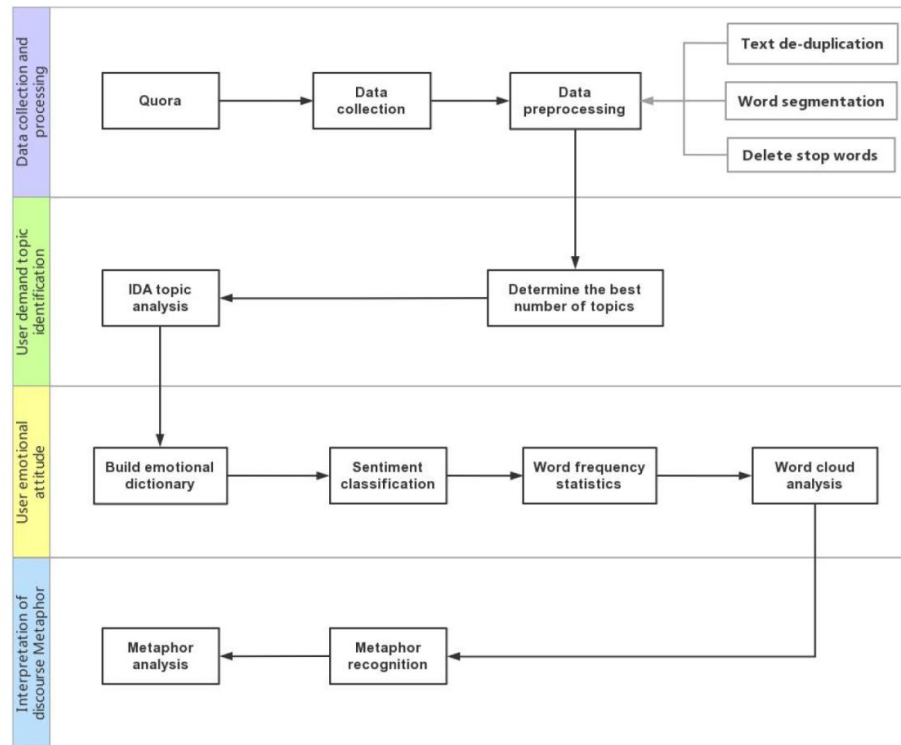


Figure 1. Analytical framework of this paper.

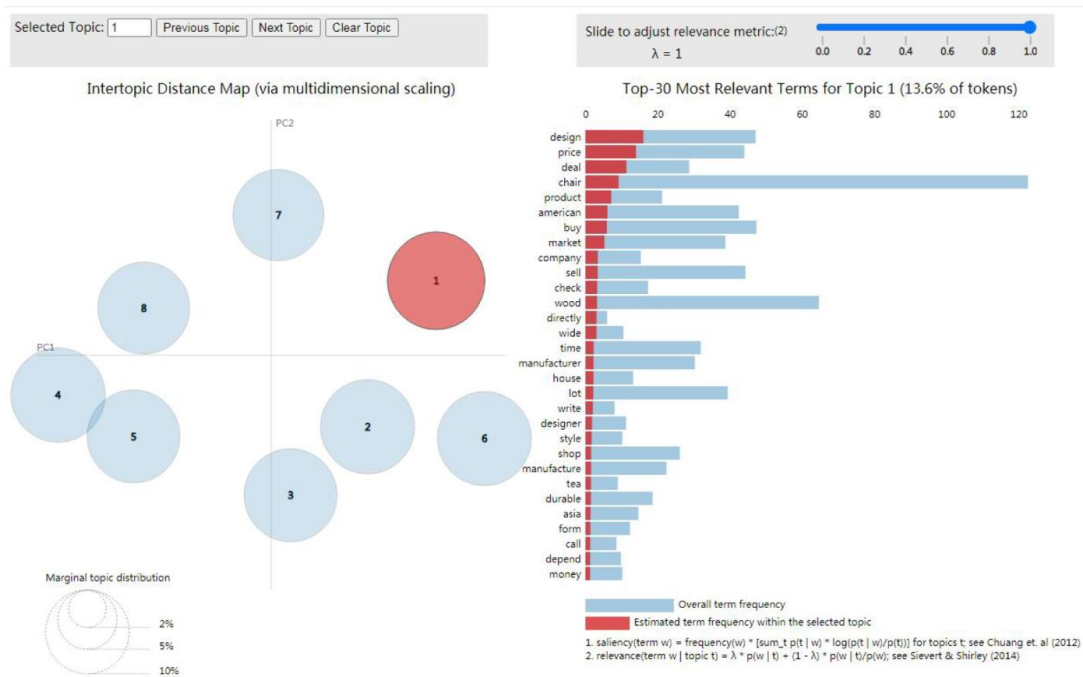


Figure 2. LDA topic visualization of Chinese furniture.



Figure 3. The word cloud map of Chinese furniture emotional tendency. (A) shows the positive question words, (B) shows the negative question words, (C) indicates the positive answer words, (D) indicates the negative answer words.

Table 1. LDA topic distribution of Chinese furniture.

Topic id	Label	Term	Proportion
Topic1	Furniture style	Modern, ming, chair, sit, call, wood, lot, remember, table, qing	12.3%
Topic2	Furniture quality	chair, stand, american, manufacture, durable, develop, time, bos, people, piece	11.7%
Topic3	Restaurant furniture	cheap, design, people, lot, restaurant, deal, designer, sell, craft, set	13.8%
Topic4	Furniture trade	cheap, chair, western, company, dynasty, asia, buy, product, sell, household	13.2%
Topic5	Hongmu furniture	industry, price, red, wood, chair, tea, form, export, style, deal	11.9%
Topic6	Furniture purchase	business, trump, cost, entrepreneur, local, shop, supplier, buy, chair, wood	11.4%
Topic7	Furniture marketing	traditional, material, market, house, wood, check, culture, money, Japanese, ship	12.7%
Topic8	Furniture sales	brand, manufacturer, doe, characteristic, stick, buy, build, sell, wide, write	13%

Table 2. LDA topic visualization of Chinese furniture.

Framework	Text id	Context topic	Context content	Contextual metaphor
Economic dimension	Answer 110 Answer 292	Furniture trade	The complete collapse of the furniture industry in the US in the past 20 years has gone largely un-noticed. Chinese imports have almost completely hollowed out the furniture making industry in the South. People are always looking for the lowest price and American factories cannot compete with Chinese labor costs. The result is the collapse of an important trade in America. In the meantime the US cuts its own throat on a daily basis sacrificing manufacturing jobs and know-how to the Chinese, still shipping thousands of jobs to China every month - 10,000 each month for every single month of the George W. Bush administration alone. And Americans, who would rather buy low-price Chinese made goods from Walmart than support local industry and good-paying jobs, are ignorant dupes helping China destroy America, essentially turning America into a consumption vassal of China while	China is the destroyer of American furniture market

Political dimension	Answer 5	Furniture place	<p>I study in a university with its own Confucius Institute. And I only began supporting the CCP just last year when I began to read more about Chinese history, politics and current affairs</p> <p>In the office alone, I have seen no portraits of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping or anyone of the paramount leaders—not even that of Dr. Sun Yat-sen or Chiang Kai-shek. I also don't see any hammer and sickle flags anywhere. The room is adorned with traditional Chinese furniture and ornaments such as porcelain tea sets and dragon statuettes.</p>	The purpose of demonizing Confucius Institutes in the West
	Answer 246		<p>People burn furniture in the streets for warmth even though there's perfectly good non-flammable options.</p>	Chinese people lack environmental awareness
Social dimension	Answer 174	Furniture people	<p>The Chinese in Malaysia are doing pretty well for themselves by and large. When I moved into my new condo the management kindly gave me a list of contractor contacts who could carry out plumbing, electrical, plastering and custom furniture renovations, parquet flooring, door repairs and kitchen appliance repairs. 9 out of the 12 names are Chinese. The Chinese drive around in Mercedes , BMW's and Volvo's, the Malays in Peroduas and Protons.</p>	Overseas Chinese have earned a good material life through hard work