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Yihan Li

Sympathetic sentiment to Serbia among Chinese netizens: the influence of Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism on pre-travel tourist behaviour

FINAL MASTER PROJECT

Academic tutor prof. Anton Clavé Salvador

UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI

Vila-seca

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements, nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgment is made in the acknowledgments

Yihan Li

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Abstract

Relationships between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism and Chinese outbound tourists' destination awareness and travel intention to Serbia was evaluated under the context of COVID-19 pandemic with a standard quantitative method. Employing LDA-based topic clustering, Chi-square test and Pearson's correlation test, the author found that Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism have negative influences on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia, and COVID -19 pandemic could not reinforce Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia. This negative correlation may be interpreted by the unpredictable travel policy due to the spread-out of COVID-19 diseases, unsound financial situation of Chinese outbound tourists after the strike of COVID-19 pandemic, and low priority to Serbia as a must-go travel destination. This study provides an insight to Chinese outbound tourism market that Chinese cyber nationalism and tourism should be taken into careful considerations when destination countries propose and implement new travel policies. The focus on Serbia, a country either has sovereignty conflict or historic issues with China, offers an alternative angle to review and develop Chinese outbound tourism marking strategies in western world, especially in European countries.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Opening remark

Chinese outbound tourism is noticeable for its large volume and skyrocketing growth in departures and expenses. Its continued growth trend inevitably attracts destinations around the globe. (Jin & Wang, 2015; UNWTO, 2016; UNWTO, 2019). Europe was ranked as the second favorite oversea destination by Chinese tourists. They, surprisingly, occupied merely 3.83% of the market share across Europe. (China Tourism Academy, 2019). The industry held an optimistic attitude towards Chinese outbound tourism until the COVID-19 struck China and later the whole world. By April 2020, the monthly world international tourism growth was minus 97 percent compared with March 2020 (UNWTO, 2020). Due to the significant negative influences COVID-19 had on human health and economy, long-lasting ignorance, racism, and discrimination against China escalated, which led to netizens censuring China for breaking out this virus. Those discriminations, verbal harassment, and criticism from western societies aroused nationalism amongst Chinese netizens (Daily Mail, 2020; the Diploma, 2020). Tourism as an industry, often influenced by natural disasters, political issues and pandemics, would be undoubtedly involved in this storm.

Existing literatures have shown that Chinese nationalism had negative influences on outbound tourism to Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea (Zhang, Cho & Wang, 2020; Cheng & Wong, 2014; Luo & Zhai, 2017). But can Chinese nationalism reinforce its outbound tourism through potentially enhanced destination awareness and travel intentions? Observing from one of the most popular social media platform Weibo, it seemed people hold different attitudes towards Serbia. Mixed with nationalism and patriotism emotions, a great extent of sympathy was given on Serbia, predominantly based on the shared historical experience with the USA- in 1999 during the Kosovo War, NATO which was led by the US bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, killing three Chinese journalists. Thousands of Weibo users left their comments under the post of Serbian Tourism, asking for approaches to financial assistance to Covid-19 related

activities. New hashtags like #塞尔维亚到底有多美# (how scenic Serbia could be) emerged. Besides, netizens also showed enthusiasm for traveling to Serbia after COVID-19. Those enthusiasm were soon responded by the Serbian Embassy in China, which opened its first official account on Weibo and thanked Chinese netizens for their kindness and called the friendship between China and Serbia were as solid as iron. Compared with other countries and areas who also suffered from COVID-19, for instance, the USA, Taiwan and other European countries like Britain and Italy, netizens on Weibo, however, mostly showed sarcastic attitudes. However, it is worth a debate whether nationalism and patriotism conveyed on Weibo during COVID-19 period would lead to growth on Chinese outbound tourism to Serbia and therefore benefit Serbian tourism.

1.2 Hypothesis, research question and objectives

The author begins with a hypothesis that Chinese cyber nationalism on Weibo could have positive effects on Chinese outbound tourists' awareness towards the relevant destination and increase tourists' travel intention. Considering the observation from Weibo, this study will use Serbia as its study objective to test whether Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism would positively correlate with destination awareness and travel intention to Serbia. The author also assumed that the nationalist and patriotist discussions on Weibo which were trigged by COVID-19 would positively correlate with destination awareness and travel intention in the context of Serbia. To be more specific, this study aims at examining the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism and Chinese outbound tourists' awareness and willingness to Serbia and the relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and Chinese outbound tourists' behavior. The author developed three objectives as shown below:

1) To examine whether Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism will enhance Chinese outbound tourists' awareness about Serbia as a tourism destination in the context of COVID-19 pandemic;

2) To test whether Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism have positive influences on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia in the context of COVID-19 pandemic;

3) To reflect how the COVID -19 pandemic changes Chinese outbound tourists' travel behaviour.

1.3 The methodology applied

As requested by the research question of this study itself, positivism was chosen by the author as the research paradigm. Quantitative research method and statistic technology were applied to examine the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism, destination awareness, travel intention and COVID-19.

To detect the relationship between the variables, it was important to understand what the netizens were talking about and what intuitively is behind their comments and posts online. To deal with the massive secondary data from Weibo, natural language processing had been applied to figure out what subtopics were frequently discussed by netizens under the main topic *Serbia.* After the topic cluster, content analysis was used to find netizens' hidden attitudes and emotions.

After this, to identify the correlation between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism, awareness of Serbia, travel intention to Serbia and COVID-19, the author utilizes the data analysis tool SPSS and performs Pearson Chi-square test and correlation tests. Correlation coefficient Pearson's R is used in statistics to evaluate the extent of correlations.

1.4 The significance of the study

In 2018, the international arrivals in Serbia increased by 14.2% compared with the number from 2017 (OECD, 2020). The top 3 international markets were Bosnia and Herzegovina (15.4% market share), Montenegro (12.3%), and China (10.5%) (OECD, 2020). Though China was not the biggest source, it showed the fastest increase of 89% between 2017 and 2018 (OECD, 2020). According to Sebrina Statistical Office (2020)，China became Sabia's biggest tourist resource market in 2019. Things seem optimistic

until the beginning of 2020 when COVID-19 broke out. Countries all over the world closed their own borderline, and tourism paused at an instant. Could Coronavirus affect Chinese tourists' behavior regarding destination choices post COVID-19? It is also an unknown whether the debate about deglobalization and the rising cyber nationalism in the context of COVID-19 affect Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention. For countries like Serbia who had the most tourists from China, answers to the aforementioned questions are vital. Understandings of influences of Chinese cyber nationalism in the context of COVID-19 would help stakeholders in Serbia to better predict what will happen after COVID-19. It alters the destinations who aim at the Chinese market how powerful Chinese cyber nationalism could be.

1.5 The outline of the study

This study is comprised of six chapters, including introduction, background, literature review, methodology, findings & discussion and the conclusion. Following this chapter, Chapter 2 demonstrates the background of the research topic, giving an understanding of the development of Chinese cyber nationalism and the history between Yugoslavia and China. Chapter 2 will also give out a brief introduction of COVID-19 pandemic and Chinese outbound tourism to Serbia pre- and during COVID-19. Chapter 3 reviews the relevant literatures regarding Chinese cyber nationalism, tourism destination awareness and travel intention, pandemic and tourism and nationalism in tourism. This chapter not only identifies the research gap but also offers the conceptual framework of this study. Chapter 4 gives a detailed introduction of the research methodology which has been used in this study. How the author designs this research, population, sampling, data collection and analysis methods are all explained in this chapter. Chapter 5 presents the findings from data analysis, following discussions that explore the possible explanations of those finding through literatures.

Chapter 2 Background

2.1 Introduction

This chapter briefly introduces COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese outbound tourism to Serbia and Chinese cyber nationalism. It initiates an overview of the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic throughout the world and how it affects the tourism industry globally at the recent stage. It then introduces the development of Chinese outbound tourism and Chinese outbound tourism to Serbia before and during this pandemic. Following this, the author demonstrates historic events that involve China, the US and the former Yugoslavia, understandings of which is an indispensable part to evaluate Chinese nationalism towards the US and other western countries in later stages under the context of COVID-19. This chapter is concluded by presenting the history of Chinese nationalism and its impact.

2.2 COVID-19 and tourism

World Health Organization (2020) has defined COVID-19 as an infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus which was unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. This new epidemic could be fatal and spread widely and quickly among people (WHO, 2020; Australian Government, 2020). What is even worse, no immunity in most communities was claimed and no vaccines are available in any country. (Australian Government, 2020). Until 7th August 2020, there have been 18,902,735 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 709,511 deaths global wide (WTO, 2020). To prevent the spread of the virus, countries all over the world locked down their borderlines, implemented travel bans and restrictions and policies regarding home-, self- quarantine (Gössling, Scott, & Hall, 2020). Those restrictions and policies aimed at reducing people's movement internationally and domestically, to stop the spread of the virus. Until August 2020, most of the main-stream western countries, for example, the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc., are still closed for non-permanent residents and non-citizens. In Asia, Chinese government also closes its borderline for non-citizens and publishes "five-one" policy

to restrict the numbers of inbound flights, which intends to reduce and control the number of oversea-Chinese who could enter China (Xinhua News, 2020). Tourism and hospitality industry has suffered from those travel bans and restrictions (Gössling et al., 2020). Cited in Sigala (2020), UNWTO predicted that by September 2020 international tourist arrivals would drop 78%, reportedly the largest decline in history since tourism was first industrialized. Accordingly, this regression in tourism is expected to cause a loss of $1.2 trillion US dollars in export revenues from tourism and 120 million people would lose their jobs. Despite significant negative influences COVID-19 pandemic exerts on other industries, discussions about the influences on tourism are the epicenter of all for its predominant role in creating job opportunities (1 of 10 jobs are directly created by tourism world-wide (Sigala, 2020).

2.3 Chinese outbound tourism to Serbia pre- and during COVID-19

There are three significant milestones in the development of Chinese outbound tourism. The first one happened in 1984 when Approved Destination Scheme (ADS) of China allowed its citizen to travel overseas for leisure purposes in a recognized group tour. (Dai, Jiang, Yang, & Ma, 2017; Law, Sun, Fong, Fong, & Fu, 2016). Before this, only citizens for diplomatic business could travel overseas (Jin & Wang, 2015). The emergence of ADS gave Chinese citizens a chance to participate in outbound tourism at their expenses, even though at that time only Hongkong and Macau were included in the destination countries(Law et al., 2016). Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand joined ADS in the late 1990s and marked a breakthrough in ADS development and Chinese outbound tourism(Law et al., 2016). By the end of 2012, 115 countries and destinations have joined ADS (Dai et al., 2017; Law et al., 2016). The second milestone was the approval of Individual Visitor Scheme (IVS) in 2003 which allowed Chinese citizens to go to Hong Kong and Macau individually (Law et al., 2016). The third milestone happened in 1999 when Chinese government firstly greenlighted individual travel to non-Asian countries for tourism activities (Law et al., 2016). Growth of national GDP and disposable income per capita of Chinses citizens, as well as reductions in travel restriction to China, further facilitate the development of Chinese outbound tourism.

(Dai et al., 2017; Law et al., 2016). China has led the world tourism resource market with international tourism spending at $129 billion US dollar (Xin & Wang, 2015; Dai et al., 2017).

Because of cultural, geographical and economic reasons, Chinese outbound tourists mostly travel to their neighborhood Asian countries (Chinese Tourism Academy, 2019; Andreu, Claver & Quer, n.d.). Europe is ranked as the secondary favorite destination among Chinese outbound tourists, and European countries occupy the largest percentage in the number of countries registered in ADS (CTA, 2019; Andreu, Claver & Quer, n.d.). Eastern Europe is the most welcomed area where 36.3% of Chinese visitors are willing to travel (CTA, 2019). Serbia was the first country in Europe who gave visa exemption to Chinses citizens from 2017 onwards (China-CECC Cooperation, 2016). The friendly visa policy, nice weather and moderate travel expense led to a boom in Chinese tourism in Serbia in recent years (Tourism Review, 2019). According to Xinhua News (2019), the official newspaper of CCP, the number of Chinese tourists who visited Serbia in 2018 has doubled compared to the year before and five times more than in 2016. By July 2019, China had become the second biggest tourism resource market in Serbia (the biggest was Bosnia and Herzegovina) (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2019). In Serbia's Tourism Development Strategy 2016-2025, the bilateral agreements on tourism and economic cooperation with China have been regarded as a great opportunity for Serbia (Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, 2016). Chinese market in Serbian tourism was flourishing before COVID-19 spread out.

Notwithstanding the origin of Coronavirus remains unknown, China, the very first country where the virus was spread and reported, was listed in travel restrictions and bans by a number of destination countries, such as the US, Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, etc. At the same time, "Five-one" policy and public panic about the spread of COVID-19 almost paused the Chinese outbound tourism (Tourism Research Centre, 2020). Although Serbia did not ban the entry of Chinese tourists, considering its own

safety, the government declared a state of emergency on 15 March that its borders to foreigners were closed to halt the spread of COVID-19 virus (the Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2020). OECD estimated that Serbia would lose 1 billion Euro in tourism in 2020 (2020). According to Serbian Statistical office (2020), total Chinese tourists' arrival (include Hong Kong and Macau) in April was 55, and this number slightly increased to 127 in May and 271 in June. During the same period of last year, the total Chinese arrival was 42,384 (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2019).

Reported by Returns (2020), Serbian tourism officials pin hopes of post-coronavirus tourism revival on Chinese – they have initiated cooperation with China's biggest online shopping platform Alibaba to promote its tourism products (China Daily, 2020).

2.4 Yugoslavia and China

In this section, History between Yugoslavia and China is briefly reviewed, which facilitates the understanding of nationalism and patriotism discussions online towards China, Serbia, the US and other NATO countries.

Yugoslavia was a country in Balkan Peninsula, Europe. It existed in three forms from 1918 to 2006, namely Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1945), Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1992), Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (name changed to Serbia & Montenegro from 2003) (1992-2006) (Ramet, 2006). The relationship between Yugoslavia and China could date back to 1949 when PR China just declared its establishment (Pong, 2009). Yugoslavia recognized PR China immediately after its establishment. However, due to the pressure from Soviet, China did not establish formal diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia at that moment (Pong,2009). At the same time, Yugoslavia forged an aloof relationship with China and supported China secretly (Pong, 2009). After the death of Stalin, the relationship between Soviet and Yugoslavia slightly recovered, and it gave China the chance to build formal diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia in 1955 (Pengpai News, 2020). Due to the differences between these two countries on the lines of the international communist movement and socialist

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construction in the late 1950s and early 1960s, China-Yugoslavia relations experienced some ups and downs during this period (Pengpai News,2020). Standing against Soviet expansionism, China and Yugoslavia aliened from late 1960 to 1980s, when China and Yugoslavia entered the honeymoon period. (Pengpai News,2020; Pong 2009)

From late 1980s onwards, Balkan experienced the collapse of communism- Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina declared their independence from Yugoslavia (Pengpai News,2020). In April 1992, Serbia and Montenegro announced their joint formation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Pengpai News,2020). In 1998, as Kosovo War outbroke between Yugoslavia and NATO, China supported Yugoslavia and opposed NATO's intervention on Kosovo (Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2000). In March 1999, NATO declared military action towards Serbia and Montenegro and held a series of air bombing (BBC,1999; Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2000). On May 7, the U.S. bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, killing three Chinese journalists and injuring 27 (Pengpai News, 2020; Dumbaugh, 2000). Less than 12 hours after the air bombing, Chinese netizens hacked the website of the United States embassy in China (Liu, 2016). According to a spokesman for the U.S. National Security Council, 700 American websites including the official website of White House had been hacked by irritated Chinese netizens (Ming 2005, cited in Liu, 2016). 2 days after the bombing, People.cn a website controlled by CCP opened the first national official nationalistic forum in China- Outcry Against NATO's Outrage BBS (later changed its name to "强国论坛", pingyin "Qiang Guo Lun Tan", English " Strong China Forum") (Liu, 2016). Rumors spread fast and widely through internet- for instance, the US bombed Chinese Embassy on purpose because Yugoslavia gave China a downed American fighter plane and China hid it in the embassy. The bombing evoked massive protests against US government in major Chinese cities (Liu, 2016; Dumbaugh, 2000). Meanwhile, sympathy and friendship towards Yugoslavia were rapidly sprouting among the Chinese people.

In 2003, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia changed its name to Serbia and Montenegro (Pengpai News, 2020). On the 3rd June 2006, Montenegro announced its

independence, and two days later the Republic of Serbia announced its succession to Serbia and Montenegro as the subject of international law and became a sovereign nation (Newhua News, n.d.). Since then, Yugoslavia does not exist anymore. China and Serbia established diplomatic relations in 2006 and China backed Serbia's stance regarding Kosovo and refused to recognize Kosovo as an independent country (Xinhua News, 2018; Xinhua News, n.d.). As a return, Serbia claimed its insistency on one-China policy (Pong, 2009). China and Serbia signed the "Joint statement of the PR China and the Republic of Serbia on the establishment of a strategic partnership" in 2009 and "PR China- Republic of Serbia Joint Statement on Deepening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" in 2019 (Xinhua News, n.d.).

On May 7 2009，the Belgrade Government erected a monument in front of the former Chinses Embassy site, commemorating the victims of the NATO bombing and appreciating China for its precious support during this most difficult period over the course of Serbian history. (CCTV, 2016).

2.5 Sina Weibo and internet warriors

Sina Weibo is a Chinese microblog website launched by Sina Corporation in 2009. When people talk about weibo, it usually refers to Sina Weibo, even though Sohu Weibo, Tencent Weibo and NetEast Weibo are still operating (in this study, the author also refers Weibo to Sina Weibo) (Nanjing Marketing Group,2014). Weibo is a platform based on fostering user relationships to exchange and dissipate information. Through either its website or its mobile app, users can upload texts, pictures and videos publicly for instant sharing, and other users can comment or forward the original texts, pictures and videos. In general, Weibo is widely regarded as "Twitter of Chinese edition" (Liu, 2016). With the convenient and friendly user experience and prevalence of smart devices, Weibo becomes one of the most popular social media platforms in China - until Q4 2018 the number of its active users arrived at 462 million (Chiu, Ip & Silverman, 2012; Weibo, 2019). Unlike BBS or online forums that set strict rules on membership sign in, posting and commenting, Weibo allows its users to enjoy more freedom in the way that they can join the communities with simple identity verification

and post almost whatever they like, except for political sensitive, sexually explicit and violent content. Besides, Weibo is easily accessible- It can be logged on via any smart digital devices. According to Weibo, 85% of its users are using Weibo mobile app (Weibo, 2019). Due to the freedom of expression and simplicity of log-on in Weibo, frontlines of Chinese cyber nationalism shifted to Weibo from forums and other channels (Liu,2016).

Chinese cyber nationalists are normally named Internet Warriors by westerners or Angry Youth (Chinese pingyin: Feng qing) (Liu, 2016; Luo & Zhai, 2017; Webber & Yip, 2018). The concept of "Chinese cyber nationalism" was first introduced formally to the public in 2003. However, it could trace back to the 1990s when China just had access to internet (Di & Yuxi, 2006; Liu 2016). At that stage, Chinese cyber nationalism mainly targeted at the US and most of the discussions led to website hacks which were mentioned in Section 2.4 (Liu, 2016).In the 2000s, the main cyber nationalism target shifted to East Asian countries and areas, namely Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong, and it always led to boycott against products and services offered by those countries and regions(Liu, 2016; Luo & Zhai, 2017). In 2005, that one coursebook published in Japan denied its invasion to China during World War II evoked Chinese internet warriors' nationalism and patriotism emotion. They post online to spark protests against Japan and ask for turning down any Japanese products and individual travel to Japan for leisure (Liu,2016). Posts named "Repost/forward this, or you're not Chinese" crazily and rapidly spread over Internet through social networking tools such as Tencent QQ and MSN (Liu, 2016). Later in 2010 and 2012, another two large scale cyber nationalism against Japan occurred due to the Diaoyu Island issue. By this time, social media eg. Weibo became popular in China and it accelerated the speed and width of the information spread. Angry youths rushed to the street, smashing Japanese cars and breaking in Japanese department stores. Ito-Yokado and Istean in Chengdu chose to close in order to avoid violence (BBC,2010). More importantly, those online and offline anti-Japan sentiments and activities significantly and negatively affected Chinese outbound tourism to Japan (Liu,2016). It was not just tourists themselves who started to cancel their travel reservations and stopped going to Japan, but also travel agents

who stopped the business of tours to Japan. (Sina News, 2005; Boxun, 2010; Liu, 2016). For example, China Comfort Travel Group Co Ltd, one of the leading Chinese travel agencies, announced that its 220 branches and 5,500 offices across the country stopped organizing tours to Japan (Liu, 2016). Researchers stated that the online nationalistic discussions in the Chinese network had built a popular impression that "Japan is very dangerous now" and "let's avoid Japan" (The Asahi Shimbun, 2012).

In 2016, the South Korean government announced that it would deploy terminal high altitude area defense (THAAD) at the US military base in South Korea (Zhang, Cho, & Wang, 2020). THAAD aroused spontaneous boycott to South Korean products and tourism among Chinese netzines as Chinese believed that the US would use THAAD to spy China (New York Times, 2017). Articles that contain hatred emotions and encourage boycott tourism to towards South Korea began to spread online on a large scale due to the popularity of internet, especially because of the development of Weibo, Wechat and OTAs (BBC, 2017). Even the authorities did not formulate formal rules against outbound tourism to South Korea nor the business of tourism products, three leading OTAs in China- Ctrip (携程), Tuniu (途牛) and Tongcheng (同程) removed all products and services regarding South Korea, including tours, flights, hotels, cruises etc. (Guancha, 2017). Hashtag #boycott South Korea# was read for 26.909 million times on Weibo (2020). The Chinese official site of Lotte Corporation was hacked right after lands owned by its real estate property department was announced to be used for deploying THAAD. Lotte blamed Chinese internet warriors for this behavior, however, it was refuted by Chinese Foreign Ministry (Sohu, 2017).

Figure 2. 1 "Love China, boycott Japanese products" (BBC,2010)

In 2016, heated nationalism discussions on Weibo were evoked by "Occupy Central". Some news about the conflicts between HK residents and tourists from Mainland led to tourism boycott and left people the impression that "Hong Kong is a very dangerous place, let's avoid traveling to it " (Liu, 2016; Luo & Zhai, 2017).

Most online nationalism discussions in China seemingly focus on only East Asian counties or countries that invaded China. However, it is likely that cyber nationalism would target at European countries, especially for those who supported the independence of Tibet, Taiwan and Xinjiang. For example, in 2008, French advocates of Tibetan independence protested in the Olympic torch relay in France. This irritated Chinese people who were proud of their country as it would host the 2008 Olympic Games. Not long after, a Chinese netizen posted an article titled "Boycott French goods starting from Carrefour" online. In a very short time, the post caused a wide discussion about boycotting Carrefour. What made it worse, the rumor that Carrefour supported "Free Tibet" became fast spread on the Internet. A large number of Carrefour supermarkets in eight major Chinese cities experienced demonstrations from nationalist (Liu, 2016). In the end, the government had to come out and halt the demonstrations (Liu, 2016). Liu (2016) also mentioned that there was a small trend of boycotting French tourism at that time.

2.6 Summary

As a small country located in East Europe, Serbia was not traditionally the most attractive destination for Chinese outbound tourists. However, the importance of tourism industry, the potential of Chinese market and the high purchase ability of Chinese tourists have caught Serbia government's eyes. The government decided to strengthen the development of tourism and set it on the priory list (OECD,2012). Through the efforts of two countries, China and Serbia reached a bilateral tourist visa exemption agreement. Except for the visa-free policy, Serbia has some other advantages in attracting Chinese tourists. Shared memories, histories, and "enemy"- the US reinforce awareness of Chinese tourists. The growth in Chinese tourists indeed took place before COVID-19 pandemic.

Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and France had experienced the dark power of Chinese cyber nationalism. However, it is yet unrevealed whether cyber nationalism and patriotism would increase the travel intention of Chinese tourists to Servia and therefore help Serbia recover its tourism industry after COVID-19 pandemics.

Chapter 3 Literature review

3.1 Introduction

As this study involves two major concepts: Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism and tourist behavior, and it also requires background regarding epidemiology and disease surveillance under the context of tourism, the author set up a theoretical framework to connect those topics.

This chapter begins with an introduction to the concept of nationalism and patriotism, then it narrows down to cyber nationalism/patriotism and Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism. In the second part, the author emphasizes on studies about tourist behaviors at the pre-visit stage, especially on the destination awareness and travel intention. After that, the author moves on to studies about how pandemic affects tourism. Lastly, the author overviews the Chinese cyber nationalism in tourism under the context of the pandemic. The theoretical framework and research gaps are defined by the end of this chapter.

3.2 Chinese cyber nationalism

3.2.1 Patriotism and nationalism

Oxford dictionary defines patriotism as "love of your country and the desire to defend it". This definition shows the core meaning of patriotism; however, it still needs to be fleshed out. Nathanson (1997) defined patriotism as an emotion that contains four main elements: a special affection for one's own country, a sense of personal identification with the country, a special concern for the welfare of the country and willingness to sacrifice to promote the country's good. According to this definition, if one who only shows his or her love for one country but does not show any specific concern nor willingness to sacrifice could not be called a patriot. Orwell (1945) expanded patriotism's definition from a love for a place to a way of life - patriots believed this place or way of life was the best on the earth. Therefore, patriotism is not just about geographic factors but also concerns about cultural activities (Pan, 2006). Though the concept of patriotism came out much earlier than nationalism, discussions

of patriotism and nationalism are often mixed up (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017; Altıkulaç & Yontar, 2019). Pan (2006) criticized that to mix up patriotism with nationalism was to forget one's history and authentic experience. Thus, it is critical to distinguish those two. Sinkkonen (2013) defined nationalism as a view that one's country is superior to other countries and support home country's action unconditionally and uncritically. Patriotism assessed the degree of love and pride in one's country, whereas nationalism reflects one's attitude of national superiority and dominance (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989). Orwell (1945) claimed that by saying nationalism it meant people could be identified to a single nation or other units, labeled it "good" or "bad", while nationalists were only interested in their own advantages and believed that people attached with other places were "bad" and should be transformed to their "good". He pointed out that patriotists also believed that their countries were the best, but unlike nationalists, they had no wish to force others to believe so (Orwell, 1945). Indeed, there are overlaps in definitions of patriotism and nationalism - for example, they are both ideologies about showing love for one's country. However, attitudes that nationalists and patriots hold towards "others" make a clear distinction (Orwell, 1956; Pan, 2006; Sinkkonen, 2013). Sinkkonen (2013, p.1047) said "the key difference between the two was that nationalism compares one nation's qualities with other nations, whereas patriotism relates only to internal qualities". Schleiermacher (cited in Pan, 2006) thought nationalism was patriotism plus xenophobia. Xenophobia is termed as the dislike against outsiders or strangers, and it will not accept outsiders or strangers to entre their unit or community. In other words, xenophobia holds negative views on others (Pan, 2006). Gellner (2002) claimed that nationalism combined one's love for motherland and fear and rejection of others. Mummendey, Klink & Brown pointed out (2001, p.161): " one's country may be regarded favorably (or negatively) compared (1) to other countries, (2) to how that country had fared in the past (or might do in the future, or (3) to some socio-political prototype of an 'ideal' society". According to those comparisons, Patriotism is normally related to point (2) and (3), while nationalism is always connected to point (1) (Mummendey et al., 2001). For nationalists, if there are no "others", then there are no "us". Only the depreciation of the "other" can bring about

positive self-imagination in the unit or group (Mummendey et al. 2001; Tajefl & Tumer, cited in Pan, 2006). As stated by Orwell (1945), nationalism feeling could be totally negative. Nationalists use negative imagination of others to reject all outsiders and depreciate the value of outsiders and exclude ethnic minorities, racial and religious minorities (Pan, 2006). In sum, nationalism is an exclusive ideology (Liu, 2016).

Other researchers distinguish between patriotism and nationalism from different angles. For instance, Liu (2016) argued patriotists love the country as whatever it is, whereas nationalists love the country as it was or as it should be. Wu (2007) claimed patriotism emphasizes on triumphant and victory while nationalism is more driven by wounds and humiliations.

3.2.2 Chinese patriotism and nationalism

Like general patriotism and nationalism, Chinese patriotism and nationalism could also be distinguished (Gustafsson, 2016; Sinkkonen, 2013). Literatures have argued that the Chinese patriotism is more likely a benign love of country, and it is empirically distinct from a malign nationalism (Gries, Zhang, Crowson, & Cai, 2011). In China, patriotic norms are not just obtained from positive patriotic activities, but also negative activities (Gustafsson, 2016), for example, calling people who own Japanese car "Hanjian" (traitors). Because stigmatization helps to set the boundaries of what is regarded as traitorous behavior, it concretes the patriotic behaviors (Gustafsson, 2016). Barme (1995, cited in Gustafsson, 2016) said when the word patriotism becomes popular in China, more people will choose to claim their unconditional and uncritical love for China. What's more, Chinese patriotism is the key to national identity and this makes patriotism education adhere to CCP's agents (Gustafsson, 2016; Sinkkonen, 2013).

Nationalism in China, unlike patriotism that is mainly manipulated by CCP, is more likely spontaneous reactions among the general public toward foreign hostility and pressure (Zhang,1997; Liu, 2016). Researchers believed that the Patriotism Education Campaign (PEC) launched post-Tiananmen period had reinforced the growth of nationalism in China and the appearance of "angry youth" (Gustafsson, 2016;

Johnston,2016). Gries et al. (2011) believed that Tiananmen issue contributed to the emergence of "aggressive nationalism" among Chinese youth. Literatures showed that Chinese nationalism clearly has an impact on Chinese foreign policy references (Gries et al., 2011; Sinkkonen, 2013). Chinese youth showed an aggressive attitude towards government once they thought the government was too weak to respond to foreign threats. For example, the 1999 Belgrade bombing and 2001 Hainan Island plane collision evoked Chinese youth's nationalistic emotion, mostly because they had strong dissatisfaction towards Chinese government's action. To satisfy those emotions, Chinese government needed to show a stronger attitude to the US which was not desired by Chinese government (Gries et al., 2011; Sinkkonen, 2013; Gustafsson, 2016). In general, Chinese nationalism is a grass-root spontaneous nationalism, not significantly different from nationalisms in other countries (Wu, 2007).

3.2.3 Chinese cyber nationalism

Cyber nationalism or called internet-nationalism, online-nationalism is nationalistic activities that people engage online. Before the internet was introduced, mass media were one of the most important channels for Chinese citizen to learn about the world (Feng, 2017). However, since media were mostly controlled by the state, the information which they could receive was carefully picked, cleaned and packaged and the audiences could only passively accept it (Feng, 2017). The development of ICT brings Chinese new ways and resources for communicating and collecting information. This relatively open space provides a breeding ground for cyber nationalism (Wu, 2007). The establishment of "Qiang Guo Forum" (Strong China Forum) in 1999 marked the opening of Chinese cyber nationalism (Feng 2017, Liu 2016). Wu (2007) defines Chinese cyber nationalism as "a non-government sponsored ideology and movement that has originated, existed and developed on China's online sphere in the past decade, which is a natural extension of China's century-long nationalism movement, but different from the CCP's official version of patriotism" (p.155). According to Feng (2017), internet-based chatrooms, forums and communication tools

" became a domain and a vehicle for nationalists to communicate and promote nationalistic causes" (p.26).

Chinese cyber nationalism undergoes three main stages (Feng, 2017). The first stage appeared after the 1999 Belgrade bombing. Tok (2010) claimed that Belgrade bombing evoked strong anti-US sentiments amongst Chinese people and Chinese netizens advocated and organized protest activities such as hacking American websites online. Tok (2010) argued that this event presented the entry of Chinese nationalism into cyber space. The secondary stage began in 2003 and ended in 2008. The main target was Japan, and boycott activities appeared at this stage. Since 2010, Chinese cyber nationalism steps into the third stage where no specific target is focused. Studies have shown that current Chinese cyber nationalism covers a wide range of nationalistic imaginations and opinions and various ways of getting involved (Feng & Yuan, 2014). Any country that has conflicted with China could be a target, but cyber nationalistic activities are relatively temporary compared to in the first and second stages (Gries et al., 2011;). Wu (2007) claimed that Chinese cyber nationalism cares more about historical experiences and internal territorial sovereignty issues, such as Japan, Tibet, Hong Kong and Taiwan; less attention is paid to external sovereignty issues, for example, South Sea problems with Vietnam. That is to say, Chinese cyber nationalism is driven by specific cases and sentiments (Feng, 2017).

Feng (2017) stated in her study "Chinese cyber nationalism is a modern ideological movement, referring to the promotion of basic progressive, liberal, and democratic thoughts" (p.30). Chinese online users are mostly students and young generations who have received education (Wu, 2007). This group happens to be the main force in spreading modern ideology and the backbones of online nationalism. Because they were born after the Economic Reform and Opening, who are strongly influenced by the western cultures and thought, they are seeking for chances to express their ideas and thoughts.

3.3 Tourism destination awareness and travel intention

Tourist behavior is the context of consumer behavior in the purchase, uptake and abandonment of tourist services (Juvan, D.; Gomeselj, D. & Uran, 2017). Thus, for purchasing, tourist behavior naturally involves the process of decision-making (Liu,2016). Tourist behaviors can be divided into three stages: pre-visit, on-site and post-visit (Cohen, Prayag, & Moital, 2014). Pre-visit behavior studies the influence of destination image, motivation and tourist attitude on tourist behavior during the decision-making process (Cohen et al., 2014; Juvan, D.; Gomeselj, D. & Uran, 2017; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). According to Pike (2004), destination awareness can reinforce the destination image and further affect tourist's decision to visit that destination. Thus, tourist behavior theories are applicable to destination awareness and travel intention.

3.3.1 Destination awareness and travel intention

Pike (2002) explained that destination awareness was the first place an individual could think of when she or he wants to take a trip. In tourism studies, awareness means whether an individual could recognize a destination by name or have heard this destination (Milman & Pizam, 1995). The awareness sets can be categorized as three types, namely the evoked, inert and inept set (Woodside & Sherrell, 1977). The evoked set represents all the brands and destinations where an individual is aware of and could probably go to visit (Woodside & Sherrell, 1977). The inert set represents the brands and destinations where an individual holds a neutral attitude and she or he may be aware of this place but needs more information to decide whether it is worth a visit(Woodside & Sherrell, 1977). The inept set consists of the brands and destinations that an individual rejects to visit either because she or he has related negative experiences before or received negative comments from others (Woodside & Sherrell, 1977).

The significance of destination awareness has been studied in multiple literatures. Milman & Pizam (1995) claimed that awareness could evoke people's curiosity towards a destination, and then lead to interest and eventually to trial. Different consumer models have all marked awareness as the first and basic step which will further lead to

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reaction and consumption (Ehrenberg and Goodhart,1989; Russ and Kirkpatrick,1982; Cunningham and Cunningham,1981 cited in Milman & Pizam, 1995). Lewis and Chambers (1989) argued that the main target in the introduction stage of a new hospitality business is to create awareness. To sum up, without awareness there won't be a trail to go visit (Milman & Pizam, 1995). Moreover, destination awareness can influence destination loyalty and satisfaction level (Lai & Vinh, 2013). Lai & Vinh (2013) also states that using the internet and online promotion tools could increase destination awareness.

Also, awareness can enhance destination familiarity and then show an individual's attitudes and intentions regarding the destination (Lai & Vinh, 2013). Yuan & Jang (2008) think that destination awareness plays a key role in a tourist's travel intention. Thus, to encourage the growth of travel intention among potential tourists, it is important to increase destination awareness. According to Murph, Benckendorff & Moscardo (2007), establishment of specific emotions and connections to the destination could help increase destination awareness and travel intention.

By definition, intention could be understood as "an individual's anticipated or planned future behavior" (Swan, 1981cited in Lam and Hsu, 2006, p.466). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, intention could determine the behavior (Ajzen, 1985). Based on this argument, Lam and Hsu (2006) claim when there is a chance, the intention could transform into action, so the intention could be a predictor of behavior. In this study, intention was defined as Chinese netizens' anticipation of a future trip to Serbia for leisure or holiday purposes.

3.3.2 Chinese cyber nationalism and tourist behavior

To understand how Chinese cyber nationalism could influence Chinese tourist behavior, one should begin with consumer nationalism. Wang (2005) defined consumer nationalism as "the invocation of individuals' collective national identities in the process of consumption to favor or reject products from other counties". Liu (2016) further explained that customers may refuse to buy imported goods from other countries, in case that they will cause harm to their motherland. However, the degree of this

influence depends on countries (Liu. 2016). For example, it is more important for Poles than Russians not to buy foreign goods (Good & Huddleston, 1995). Thus, Klein, Ettenson & Morris (1998) stated that nationalism has its own targeted countries. Li (2009) demonstrated the importance of internet in organizing and shaping Chinese customers' nationalistic behaviors by studying the case of how Chinese cyber nationalism could affect the marketing of Japanese goods. As Li (2009) mentioned, Chinese cyber nationalism has significant influences on Japan products due to internet is the only place where Chinese people can express themselves freely with limited freedom. However, the boycott against Japanese products aroused by online nationalism normally does not last long, unless the stimulation from nationalism is consistent (Mueller & Melewar.2001).

Despite prior research on consumer nationalism, the studies on the relationship of Chinese cyber nationalism and Chinese tourist behavior remain unpopular. Chen & Wang (2014) took the 2012 Diaoyu/ Senkaku Islands Incident as a case study, applying qualitative research method to investigate the relationship between Chinese popular nationalism and tourists' travel intention. In their study, they discovered that there were four types of Chinese nationalists, namely core, social, easy and rational nationalists (Cheng & Wong, 2014). More specific, core nationalists refer to visit Japan; social nationalists worried about the social pressure from anti-Japan sentiment; easy nationalists refers to tourists who care less about the social pressure and patriotic behaviors of others, and most probably will still go to visit Japan; rational nationalists are tourists who think tourism researched treated separately from politics (Cheng & Wong, 2014). Inspired by Cheng & Wong's study, Liu (2016) researched on detecting the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism and Chinese outbound tourists' pre-travel behavior in the context of Mainland Chinese visit Hong Kong. Liu's study results showed that Chinese cyber nationalism has negative impacts on Mainland tourist arrival number, travel intention and attitudes towards Hong Kong (2016). More recently, Luo & Zhai (2017) study shows the secondary crisis discussion about "Occupy Central" on Weibo could arouse negative and nationalistic emotions among Chinese netizens and further shift to boycotting tourism to Hong Kong.

Notwithstanding previous scholars have shown there is a distinction between Chinese nationalism and Chinese patriotism (see 3.2.2). However, in empirical studies in Chinese cyber nationalism's influences, researchers tend to regard patriotism as a part of nationalism (Cheng & Wang, 2014; Liu,2016; Luo & Zhai, 2017). This might be arisen by the root of Chinese nationalism is in "the past greatness of successive Chinese empires", over years, the national pride somehow equated with nationalism under the state-controlled patriotism education (Cui, 2012).

3.4 Pandemic and tourism

Pandemic is a worldwide spread new disease that can have devastating results on humans and the world economy (Clark,2016). Tourism as a labor-intensive industry and heavily depends on the movement of people is inevitably affected by the pandemic. Travelers may fasten infection rates because influenza and respiratory diseases spread easily by travel (Karabulut, Bilgin, Demir, & Doker, 2020). From the industry's view, a global-wide flu pandemic could cause illness among staff, cancellations from tourists and collapse of value chains (Gössling et al., 2020; Karabulut et al., 2020). Scholars have explored how pandemics could affect tourism: SARS was considered as a short-term crisis which had significant effects on tourism, especially in tourists arrivals in China (Kuo, Chen, Tseng, Ju, & Huang, 2008; Zeng, Carter, & De Lacy, 2005); foot and mouth disease decreased tourism expenditures in the United Kingdom (Blake, Sinclair & Sugiyarto, 2003); Ebola caused uncertain and negative perceptions for African destinations (Gössling et al., 2020), etc.

Pandemic also has influences on destination images and tourist behaviors (Zenker & Kock, 2020). Zenker & Kock (2020) claim pandemic could leave an unforgettable mark in tourists' minds and changed the way they travel. To illustrate, tourists may avoid traveling to destinations with high infection rates, attending massive tourist events and visiting crowed tourist sites (Zenker & Kock, 2020). Optimistically, researchers believed that there are crisis-resistant tourists who would like to visit pandemic-shaken countries to economically support them (Zenker & Kock,2020;

Hajibaba, Gretzel, Leisch, & Dolnicar, 2015) and those tourists could help to increase destination resilience (Hajibaba et al., 2015).

3.5 COVID-19 and Chinese nationalism

Existing literatures believe the COVID-19, in general, will reinforce the growth of ignorance and anti-Asia sentiments, racism and nationalism (Zhang & Xu,2020; Kloet, Liu & Chow,2020; Woods, Schertzer, Greenfeld, Hughes & Miller-Idriss). The COVID-19 could stir up national sentiments and put pride on themselves in terms of dealing with the virus effectively, showing "we are doing better" attitude (Kloet, Liu & Chow,2020). In other words, the "us" and the "others" attitude of nationalism will increase. Researchers agree that COVID-19 will amplify conflict between China and the United States, and nationalism would be used as a weapon to manipulate the mass and attack the other side (Woods et. al, 2020). Hughes (in Woods et. al, 2020) argued that both China and the US are using COVID-19 to build their national identities. He further explained that CCP used "successful containment of the pandemic to propagate the superiority of the 'China Model' of politics" to hind its mismanagement of the crisis at the earlier stage from people (p.7-8). Weiss (2020) said China may attempt to take advantage of successful containment COVID-19, making the international system more hospitable to the CCP, but the growing nationalism will hurt its international appeal.

3.6 Summary

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework of this study

This chapter reviews essential component of understanding Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism, tourism behavior and how those two aspects interweave. As most scholars believe, Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism can be hardly

separated because information on Weibo is strongly manipulated by the Chinese government. Posts or comments on social media may serve as a tool to promote the political agenda of CCP. The ambiguity of cyber nationalism or patriotism in China leads to uncertainty in whether arousal of such emotions would benefit the tourism awareness and travel intention. Escalation of hatred and encouragement of boycott against destination product and tourism often occur when Chinese cyber nationalism evokes. The nationalism behind current outbreaking COVID-19 pandemic may function as a political or national propaganda to improve the international status of China. The chapter also includes impacts of previous pandemics on tourism, which serves a guide to perceive the future influence of Covid-19 pandemic to Serbian tourism.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Kothari (2004) said the research was a journey of discovery, during a research journey people moved from unknown to known through a more systematic and scientific approach which was called research methodology. Research methodology is about how a researcher designs a study to reach research objectives. To ensure the validity and reliability of a study, it is vital to adapt an appreciated research methodology (Decrop, 1999). Concluded by Kothari (2004), four questions need to be answered in research methodology section of a thesis or dissertation:

1) why was there a research problem,

2) how to formulate the hypothesis,

3) what data had been collected and how to collect them,

4) what techniques had been used to analyze the data and why used those techniques but not others.

In this chapter, the author will discuss the above points and identify the research paradigm and methodology of this study.

4.2 Research paradigm

As stated in Chapter 1, positivism and quantitative research method were applied to this study.

A research paradigm was a set of common knowledge, beliefs and assumptions shared in research groups about ontological, epistemological, and methodological and axiology (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Johannesson & Perjons, 2014). The most two established research paradigms were interpretivism and positivism (Johannesson & Perjons, 2014). Interpretivism believes that truth could not be discovered, it only could be created because human activities were subjective (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Under interpretivism, researchers could get close to or involve in study objects, and qualitative research method was normally correlated (Johannesson & Perjons, 2014). Positivism is used to explain objectives, and it usually begins with theory and

empirically facts and leads to a hypothesis that would be statistically analyzed to confirm or reject this hypothesis (Schaeken, 2017). Ontologically, positivism believed reality existed independently of humans (Johannesson & Perjons, 2014; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Epistemologically, positivism was objectivism and positivists were just observers of the objects that they studied (Johannesson & Perjons, 2014; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Axiologically, positivism emphasized on researchers' personal honesty and integrity as positivism believed researchers should be value-free and required researchers to be objective and to stay away from study objects (Johannesson & Perjons, 2014). Methodologically, quantitative research approach was normally related to positivism (Liu, 2016; Scheaken; 2017). Quantitative research was used to explain a certain phenomenon through computational techniques (University of Southern California, n.d.). The goal of conducting quantitative research was to determine the relationship among variables within a certain population (USC, n.d.).

Considering ontological, epistemological and axiological positions of this study, the author chose to use positivism research paradigm and statistic technology to examine the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism, destination awareness, travel intention and COVID-19 pandemic.

4.3 Research design

The first step in social research should be research design, and then data could be collected and analyzed (de Vaus, 2001). According to de Vaus (2001), the function of research design was "to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible" (p.9). Liu (2016) further explained that the essence of research design was to develop a rigorous logical system to carry out the study and guide the data collecting and analyzing.

The evidence needed to obtain in this study is: 1) the Chinese cyber nationalism's and patriotism's influence on potential tourists' attitudes and travel intentions towards Serbia; 2) the Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism influence on potential tourists' awareness toward Serbia as a tourism destination; 3) the potential Chinese tourists

behavior changes in the context of COVID-19. To obtain the evidence logically, the author designed the research as follows:

Firstly, the author decided to collect original discussions on Sina Weibo pre- and during COVID-19 pandemic to make a comparison study. The aim of this was to detect whether COVID-19 as a variable stimulates nationalism and patriotism talks online. As this study is related to COVID-19, it is reasonable to choose a period after the outbreak of COVID-19 in Serbia. Period 2 is chosen from 1st March 2020 to 21st June 2020 (as the author started to write in June 2020). Accordingly, period 1 is chosen- from 1st March 2019 to 30 June 2019- same months from last year.

After this, discussions under the keyword "Serbia" were collected by GooSeeker. To better understand what netzines were discussing, the author used LDA model which was based on natural language processing to cluster topics and calculate the topic weights. According to the topic clusters and weights, LDA model produced a simple moving average (SMA) over a window of the two periods to show how the topics changed and how new topics emerged.

Thirdly, the author deleted all irrelevant topics such as sports news. Content analysis to evaluate Weibo users' attitudes was applied. The author checked all collected texts in four aspects: destination awareness toward Serbia, travel intention towards Serbia, posts or comments related to COVID-19 and history about Yugoslavia. Texts included those contents would be given a "1" in an excel column, otherwise a "0".

Fourthly, sentiment analysis was performed to detect netizens' emotions. Posts with nationalism and patriotism discussions were marked as "1", and posts without showing any nationalism and patriotism emotion were marked "0".

After this, the data set should be well prepared. To study the independence of variables, SPSS was used to conduct Pearson's Chi-square test. To further study the relationships between variables, Pearson's correlation test was performed.

4.4 Population and sampling

In research, population refers to the sum of all the objects or events of a specific area that researchers try to study (Allen, 2017). It is normally impractical to collect all the data of a whole population, so researchers select subsets to represent the population, namely samples (Allen,2017). Thus, the quality of samples is vital for successful research. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism and Chinese outbound tourists' awareness and willingness to Serbia, and the relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and Chinese outbound tourists' behavior. Therefore, the population of this study should be potential Chinese outbound tourists who acted as "internet warriors" during the COVID-19 period. Based on Kish's (1968) advice on how to select a good sample, the author chose to collect data from Sina Weibo as samples in this study. Four dimensions had been taken into consideration - they were economic, goal orientated, measurable and practical (Kish, 1968). As mentioned in former chapters, Sina Weibo is one of the biggest and most popular social media in China and it provides a platform where netizens can express and share their personal stories and views. Liu (2016) believed that most of Chinese nationalism talks happened on Weibo, because it empowered its users with 'user democratic' culture and the ability to share information. In other words, Weibo gives a platform for Chinese netizens freedom to express their ideas on anything, even including political issues. Besides, research showed that social media had a significant impact on the tourism industry. It has been used as a searching tool for young people to seek travel advice and share travel experience before, during and after their trips (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010; Skift, 2014). Thus, Sina Weibo is a suitable place to collect data where both nationalistic discussions and tourism topics can be both collected. Weibo attracts a large number of users from a wide age and income range with different backgrounds. According to Weibo (2019), its monthly active user reached 462 million. The diversities in users' backgrounds could mitigate the bias arisen by people with a certain background. Technologically, IT tools based on Python make the collection of data from websites possible. Compared to traditional data collection ways in social research, for examples, survey and interview, collecting secondary data from Weibo

would be less time consuming and more funding saving. Moreover, literatures have proved that quantitative study could be applied to Weibo text data in tourism researches (Liu, 2016; Luo & Zhai, 2017).

What's more, there was an overlap between Weibo users and Chinese outbound tourists. According to World Tourism Cities Federation and Ipsos's report (2018), 98.99% of Chinese outbound tourists were from first, second and third tiers, and 95.01% of them were born between 1970s to 1990s. Besides, only 3.35% of Chinese outbound tourists had diplomas from secondary education institutions, others all held degrees or diplomas from higher education (WTCF & Ipsos, 2018). For Weibo users, 89% of its 200 million users were under 40-years-old and 65% came from first tier, second tier and third tier cities (Weibo, 2019). Stated in Liu's study (2016), Weibo users were general younger and better educated than other netizens in China. So, because of the users overlap, it is logical for the author to use Weibo users as representatives of Chinese outbound tourists.

4.5 Data collection

As mentioned in the former section, the author would compare netizens' posts before and within the COVID-19, so 2 sets of data would be required. The first set of data was from 1st March 2019 to 30th June 2019 , marked as Period 1. The second set of data was from 1st March 2020 to 21st June 2020, marked as Period 2. All the data for the two periods were collected from Sina Weibo by using the keyword "塞尔维亚" (Serbia). Unlike hashtags such as #塞维利亚旅游# (Serbia Tourism) or #塞尔维亚到底有多美 # (how scenic Serbia could be) that would show Weibo posts mainly about tourism activities or resources, keyword searching can show all the posts that contain the word "塞尔维亚" (Serbia) regardless what they were talking about. In this way, the author could ensure the diversity of contents. Data scraping tool GooSeeker was used to collect posts on Weibo. GooSeeker is a web crawler based on Python and it has been used in both commercial and academic areas (Luo & Zhai, 2017).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the author used GooSeeker Pro which could offer manual services during the data crawling. All discussions contained the

keyword during Period 1 and Period 2 were collected. Newspaper Global Times posted news on Weibo about Serbia's president's speech (given on 15 March, UTC+1) on 16 March. Later this news was forwarded by Serbia Tourism. Those two posts attracted hundreds of comments and forwards by Weibo users, read by 440 million times in total on Weibo and pushed to the top trending list of 16 March 2020 by netizens (Wangyi, 2020). Due to this significant number and influences, comments and forwards from those two posts were also collected and used for Period 2. Initially, there were in total 1715 posts for Period 1 and 6985 posts (including comments and forwards mentioned above) for Period 2. The author read all the posts and cleaned the data by hand after topic clustering. Posts and comments were regarded as irrelevant and deleted if they were:1) talking about sports and entertainment celebrities and events; 2) meaningless replies like "up", "forward"; 3) advertisements that total had nothing to do with Serbia; 4) with only pictures; 5) talking about other irrelevant topics even there was the word "Serbia". After data cleaning, 204 posts and 1810 posts in Period 1 and 2 respectively had been filtered for further analysis.

4.6 Data analysis

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data to discover useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision making (Seale, 2004 cited in Liu, 2016). The data analyzed in this study contain nationalism and patriotism emotions, awareness and travel intention to Serbia and any other content that might relate to those aspects. To have a more clear and better understanding of the data, the author divided the analysis into four steps.

4.6.1 Topic cluster and LDA model

Understanding what netizens were talking should be the first step of text data analysis. Initially, there were 8700 texts in total for two periods. The author needed to cluster the posts into different clusters to have a general idea of what people were talking about and how the topic trends developed. Natural language processing model Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) was introduced. Similar to ROST CM6 and NLPIR

that were developed by Chinese universities or research teams, LDA was also developed base on machine learning in a wider sense to the natural language processing technology. But unlike ROST CM6 and NLPIR, LDA is more economic to use and easy to find open resources online. LDA, known as a three-layer Bayesian probability model, was a topic generation model which contains a three-layer structure of words, topics, and documents (Blei, Ng, & Jordan, 2003). It uses statistical algorithms for discovering abstract topics. The main purpose of using LDA was to uncover the themes lurking in data (Lettier, 2018). LDA was applied in social science to deal with qualitative data (University of Chicago, n.d.). In tourism and hospitality researches, LDA was also used in analyzing and opinion mining in reviews from websites, posts in social media and other user-generated contents (Annisa, Surjandari, & Zulkarnain, 2019; Situmorang, Hidayanto, Wicaksono, & Yuliawati, 2018; Brandt, Bendler, & Neumann, 2017; Guo, Barnes, & Jia, 2017).

Segmenting a chunk of text into words is usually the first step of processing Chinese text in NLP (Li et al., 2019). To run the LDA model, the author firstly used a word segmentation tool Jieba to divide texts into component words. Jieba is a mature word segmentation tool which is specialized in Chinese language, and it is developed on Python. To save storage space and improve search efficiency, stop word list which was prepared by Harbin Institute of Technology was been applied to filter out meaningless words.

After the steps discussed above, the author can apply the data into LDA model. Here the concept of perplexity needs to be introduced. Perplexity is a statistical measure of how well a probability model predicts a sample. In LDA, low perplexity scores indicate high accuracy of the model (University of Chicago, n.d.). In this study, perplexities of clustering text into 1 group to 20 groups were determined. The lowest score was achieved when texts were clustered into 10 and 11 groups, counting 968 and 983 respectively (Figure 1). Because of the perplexity score difference between 10 and 11 was small, the author checked to these two possible clusters and found that it was clearer when there were 11 topic groups. Thus, all posts from two periods were divided into 11 topic clusters.
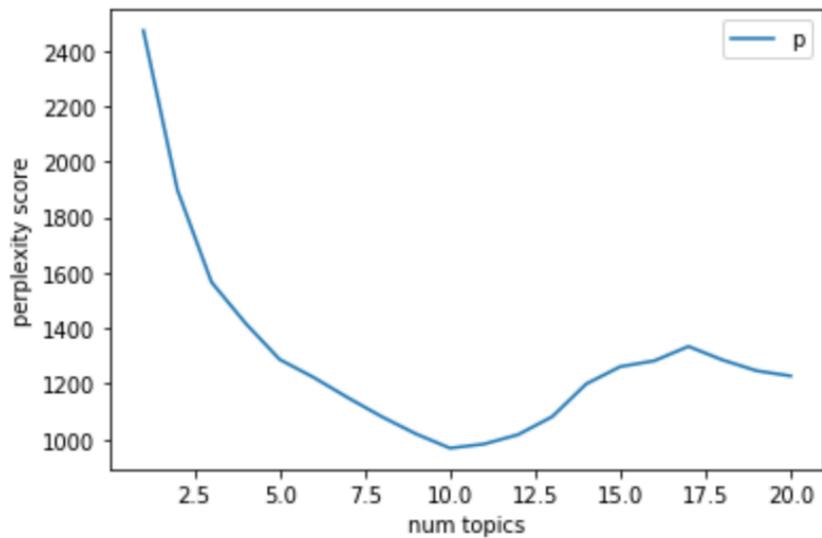
Figure 4.1 Perplexity score for different number of topics

Together with the topic clusters, LDA automatically calculated word frequency under each cluster. In this way, trends in the discussion topic could be discovered.

4.6.2 Content analysis for destination awareness, travel intention, COVID-19 and historical matters

Krippendorff (cited in Drisko & Maschi, 2015) defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 24, 2013). Thus, content analysis can be used to identify and document the attitudes, views, and interests of individuals or groups (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). By applying content analysis, netizens' hidden attitudes and emotions could be revealed. Besides, content analysis gives a possibility to convert the qualitative data into quantitative data which was needed to conduct statistical analysis. In content analysis, researchers will assign codes or labels to the texts. By systematically coding or labelling the content of a set of texts, researchers can analyze patterns of content quantitatively by employing statistical methods. Kerlinger (1986, p. 348) described this as "a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables." Computer technology and artificial intelligence have been applied in content

analysis to automate the coding or labeling of documents. For instance, softwares such as NLPIR, ROST CM6 and GooSeeker all have the function of providing content analysis. The advantage of computer-based content analysis is that it could analyze mass amounts of data in a short time. However, as Chinese language heavily relies on implicit communication and nonverbal cues, computers might not accurately catch the underlying meaning of the texts (Southeastern Univeristy, 2016). For example, "red and blue were quite matched" essentially means China (national flag in red) and Serbia (national flag in blue) are friends. And word "老铁"（Pingyin: lao tie, literal translation："old iron"） meant loyalty and best friend. It was possible to personalize the words bank, but it was time-consuming for training machine learning and also it required advanced knowledge in AI. Besides, after topic cluster, the author had a clear idea of which topics are totally irrelevant and could be deleted. After the data cleaning, the number of texts that were left for analyzing was 2,014 which was not massive for hand analysis. For the above reasons, to ensure validity and reliability, the author decided to do the content analysis by hand.

As mentioned before, the author examined the data from four aspects: destination awareness toward Serbia, travel intention towards Serbia, COVID-19 pandemic and history about Yugoslavia. To be more specific, the author signed sub-themes to destination awareness and history category. They were: general knowledge, political interests and resources attractiveness description for "destination awareness" and the relationship between China and Serbia, issues related to China and America and political fragmentation of former Yugoslavia for "history".

4.6.3 Sentiment analysis for nationalism and patriotism

As one of the study objects of this study, detecting netizens' sentiment was required. Sentiment analysis was a method to study people's sentiment toward certain things (Luo & Zhai, 2017). Same as the reasons stated before for content analysis, the author examined all the data by hand. In this study, two types of emotions were analyzed-nationalism emotion and patriotism. Unlike using sentiment analysis software that normally marks texts as positive, negative or natural, the author simply marked "yes"

to texts with nationalism or patriotism emotions, otherwise "no". And later in SPSS, "yes" was coded as 1, and "no" coded as 0. The reason is that this study aims to detect how cyber nationalism and patriotism relate to destination awareness and travel intention in a general way, not specifically in how negative or positive nationalism. In other words, the author regarded nationalism/patriotism emotion as a set instead of subdividing the emotions.

4.6.4 SPSS for Chi-square test, Correlation analysis and Multiple regression

Computers are widely used in manipulating quantitative data, and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was regarded as one of the most popular quantitative software packages in tourism research (Babbie, 2004; Jennings,2010). SPSS allows researchers to conduct statistical analysis with quantitative data efficiently and conveniently.

Two core in-built functions of SPSS are applicable in this research. First, Chi-square test was performed to investigate whether dependence of different groups of data hold valid in this paper. More precisely, the prerequisite of a successful scientific analysis on the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism and Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia under the context of COVID-19 pandemic is those variables are dependent on others. By measuring how well the observed distribution of data fits with the distribution that is expected if the variables are independent, a Chi-square test pairs the variables and tells the statistical independence between two or more categorical data. As a Chi-square test is designed to analyse categorical data, raw information needs to be counted and divided into categories Through 4.6.2 and 4.6.3, the author already converted the qualitative text data into quantitative code data and categorized them based on the relevance to nationalism/patriotism and preference to travel to Serbia . A very small Chi- square test score means that there is a relationship between the variables. In other words, a given variable depends on others. In SPSS, a Chi-square test will generate a p-value which could tell whether the test results are significant or not according to the alpha level. The hypothesis used for Chi-square test is:

H0: [Variable 1] is independent of [Variable 2]

H1: [Variable 1] is not independent of [Variable 2]

Second, Pearson's correlation test was applied. For two variables x (predictor variable) and y (response variable), the Pearson correlation coefficient is defined as the covariance of x and y divided by the product of their standard deviations. The Pearson coefficient varies from −1 to +1, where negative values indicate that y decrease with x and positive values indicate that y increase with x. 1 indicates a strong positive relationship, -1 indicates a strong negative relationship, and o indicates no relationship at all. As the Chi-square test results could only tell whether two variables are independent, Pearson's correlation test was applied to investigate the extent of influences that cyber nationalism and patriotism exert on Chinese tourists' destination awareness and travel intention. This test was successfully applied, not only because of the weak exogeneity in the model – predictor variables are set to fixed value, 0 as no nationalism/patriotism involved, and 1 as nationalism/patriotism involved, but also due to the well-fit linearity in this statistical prediction. P-value is also used in R test to see whether the results are statistically significant. Based on the results of Chi-square test and Correlation analysis, a multiple regression was applied to detect the association among nationalism, COVID-19 and destination awareness. Multiple regression is used to explain the relationship between one continuous dependent variable and two or more independent variables.

In this section, the relationships between cyber nationalism/patriotism, destination awareness, travel intention and COVID-19 are discovered.

		Travel Intention	Histories				Nationalism	Patriotism
			Total	Relationship between China & Serbia	Issues related to China & America	Ppolitical fragmentation of former Yugoslavia		
Destination Awareness	Total	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	General knowledge	•	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Political interests	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Resources attractiveness description	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Travel Intention			●	●	●	●	●	●
Histories	Total						●	●
	Relationship between China & Serbia						●	●
	Issues related to China & America						●	●
	Ppolitical fragmentation of former Yugoslavia						●	●

Table 4.1 Chi-square test pairs for Period 1 ("●" means there is a pair tested)

| | | Travel Intention | COVID-19 | Histories | | | | Nationalism | Patriotism |
				Total	Relationship between China & Serbia	Issues related to China & America	Ppolitical fragmentation of former Yugoslavia		
Destination Awareness	Total	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	General knowledge	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Political interests	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Resources attractiveness description	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Travel Intention			●	●	●	●	●	●	●
COVID-19		●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Histories	Total							●	●
	Relationship between China & Serbia							●	●
	Issues related to China & America							●	●
	Ppolitical fragmentation of former Yugoslavia							●	●

Table 4.2 Chi-square test pairs for Period 2 ("●" means there is a pair tested)

4.7 Summary

In this chapter the author discussed the approaches to this study's paradigm, research question and objectives. Positivism research paradigm is adopted in this study as it is essentially a quantitative research that heavily relies on a variety of statistical tools. Following that, the author explained how the research was designed and adapted for the scope of this study. Data were first obtained from Sina Weibo in a chronical order and filtered based on the key word 'Serbia'. LDA model was adopted to cluster topics and calculate the topic weights. Clustering into 11 groups was set as the standard because of the low perplexity score. With the support of LDA model, a simple moving average (SMA) was obtained over a window of the pre and during COVID-19 periods. Emergence of new topics and changes in existing topics were present. Content analysis was further introduced and employed so that irrelevant information could be filtered out. Sentiment analysis was performed to detect netizens' emotions. Posts with nationalism and patriotism discussions were marked as "1", while posts without showing any nationalism and patriotism emotion were marked "0'.

After the texts were sampled and filtered, methods of statistical analysis on those ready-to-use data were introduced. Chi-square test was first performed to identify whether variable 1 is independent of variable 2. (Variable 1 and 2 will be detailed in Chapter 5). The Pearson's correlation test was then performed to evaluate the statistical significance of how those two variables are related.

Chapter 5 Findings and discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. Section 5.2 and 5.3 present the results of topic clustering, which aims to filter out the topics that contain the content of Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism and travel intention and destination awareness to Serbia. This is essential that these categories should be carefully selected and collected, making it feasible to conduct quantitative analysis in SPSS. The author applied the content analysis before and during COVID-19 pandemic – comparing topic trends and patterns during two research periods, the author described the topic changes and present the content analysis results demonstrating Chinese netizens' attitudes and travel intention towards Serbia. Furthermore, Section 5.4 demonstrates the results of the Pearson Chi-square and correlation tests, introduced in Section 4.6.4, which deliver the quantitative relationships of Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism, destination awareness and travel intention – the main objective of this paper.

5.2 Awareness towards Serbia

To filter out relevant information to research subjects and convert the post on Weibo to categorical data, the author conducted content analysis using LDA.

Based on LDA, 11 topics are divided. They are:

Topic 0: discussions about the president of Serbia.

Topic 1: histories between China, Yugoslavia and NATO.

Topic 2: events, entertainments, tourism and leisure activities.

Topic 3: discussions about Chinese enterprises i.e. Huawei and Chinese state-owned companies that invest in Serbia.

Topic 4: discussions about bilateral visa exemption policy and Serbian tourism.

Topic 5: discussions about COVID-19.

Topic 6: Sports, mainly focusing on football, basketball and volleyball.

Topic 7: discussions about histories between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.

Topic 8: discussions about China, Serbia, the US, Russian and embassy.

Topic 9: discussions about the friendship between China and Serbia and

relationships between China and other countries expect Serbia.

Topic 10: discussions about medical aids from China and how to make donations

for Serbia

The topic trends and distributions are as following:
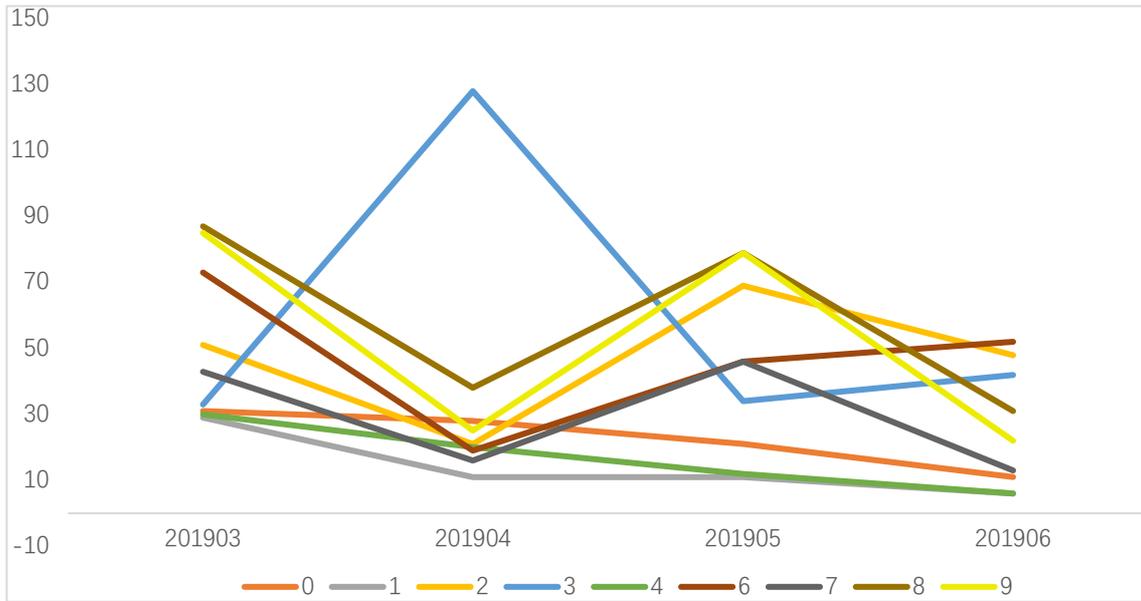
Figure 5.1.1 Topic trends- March 2019 to June 2019
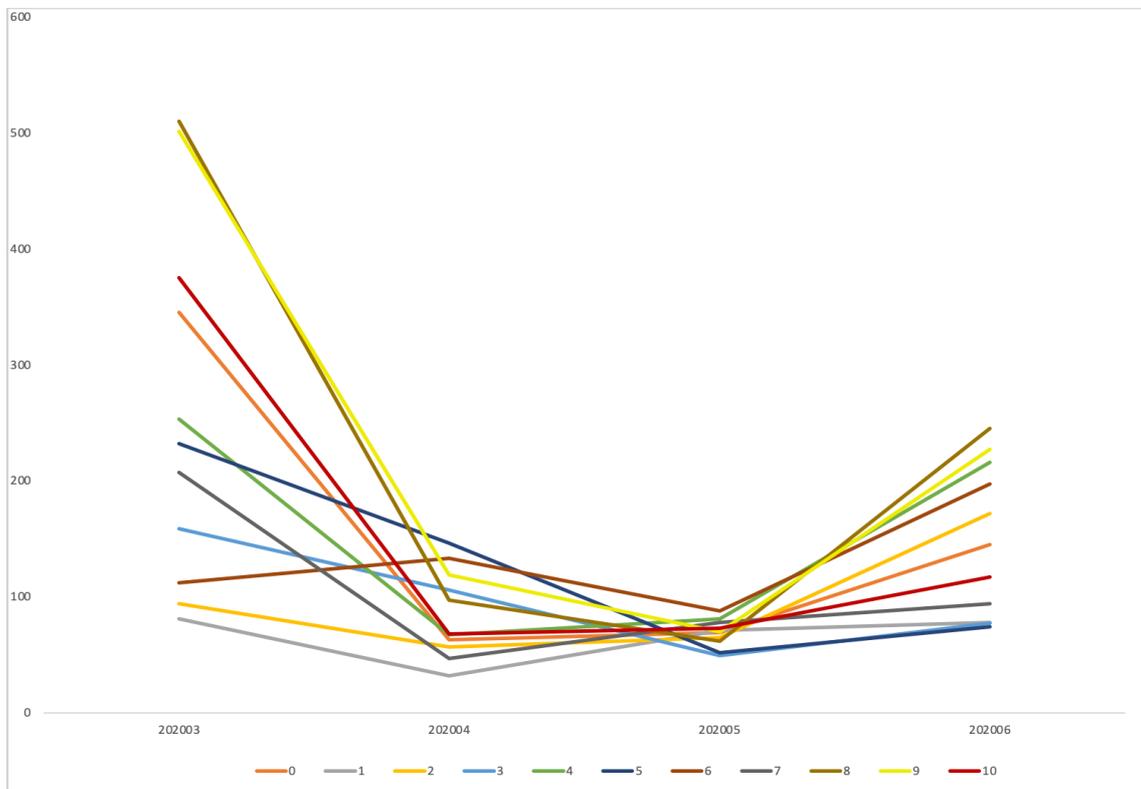
Figure 5.1.2 Topic trends- March 2020 to June 2020

Topic	Month			
	201903	201904	201905	201906
0	31	28	21	11
1	29	11	11	6
2	51	21	69	48
3	33	128	34	42
4	30	20	12	6
5	0	0	0	0
6	73	19	46	52
7	43	16	46	13
8	87	38	79	31
9	85	25	79	22
10	0	0	0	0

Table 5.1.1 Topic weights distribution- March 2019 to June 2019

Topic	Month			
	202003	202004	202005	202006
0	345	63	69	145
1	81	32	71	78
2	94	57	65	172
3	159	106	49	77
4	253	67	81	216
5	232	146	52	74
6	112	133	88	197
7	207	47	78	94
8	510	97	62	245
9	501	119	70	227
10	375	68	73	117

Table 5.1.2 Topic weights distribution- March 2020 to June 2020

In Period 1, the topic distributions were relatively even. Topic 3, which includes discussions of Chinese enterprises in Serbia, was the most popular on Weibo. The weight of Topic 3 went up above 100. This was mainly due to the 5G network war between China and the US. The US tried to block China's development of 5G network by blocking Huawei, a Chinese telecom-equipment maker and a leading supplier of 5G gear in Europe. During that time, Serbian government stated it stood for and chose to continue working with Huawei. Serbia's attitude drew attention from Chinese netizens, and they became to discuss it on Weibo. Followed by were discussions related to the

relationships surrounding China, Serbia and the US. Tourism-related topics, topic 2 and 4, were relatively unpopular during Period 1. In the data set, 129 posts out of 1715 posts with destination awareness were detected, weighted 0.075. The subcategories under destination awareness- general knowledge, political interest and resources attractiveness description- distributed evenly with the post number 47, 54 and 43 separately (there were overlaps between subcategories). During Period 1, tourism remained the least popular topic, with discussions of sports drawing more attention.

In period 2, sports was still one of the hottest topics, however, it fell in popularity. New topics appeared and some discussions were attached to more emphasis. Two new topics, namely topic 5 and topic 10, which were related to COVID-19 came out. Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić's speech bought a lot of attention from Chinese netizens. This speech reached its climax when it just came out. However, discussion regarding the content and underlying political preference of speech did not last long, decreasing sharply in April and May. The same pattern was also seen in most of the topics that were explicitly related to nationalism and patriotism emotions, such as discussions about relationships between China, Serbia and the US. Posts that talked about events, entertainment and tourism resources experienced a relatively steady and continuous rise when compared with Topic 4- posts about visa policy and Serbian tourism. Topic 4 experienced some fluctuations - it underwent a sharp decrease in April, followed by a slight increase in May and ended with a drastic rise. To some degree, Vučić's speech was like a window, which gave a chance to display Serbia. Even discussions were more or less embedded with nationalism and patriotism emotions and bias. For instance, one post said:

"Attention. Serbia is the first and only European country allows Chinese tourists to enter without visa. I will not travel to those countries who are not our friends and treating us badly such as Italy."

In fact, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus and China also reached a bilateral visa-free agreement. Serbia was not the only one in Europe. Comparing with Period 1, more posts in tourism were identified in Period 2. However, the weight decreased from 0.075 to 0.057. To sum, though the number of posts about Serbia as a tourism destination

increased, the proportion went down and this topic became less popular. The subcategories under destination awareness- general knowledge, political interest and resources attractiveness description distributed unevenly with the number of post being 147, 50 and 194 separately (there were overlaps between subcategories). Destination awareness that was evoked by political interest was the least discussed subset.

Posts about relationships among China, Serbia and the US experienced significant growth in June. In Chapter 3, literature has shown that continuous nationalism needs stimulation (Mueller & Melewar, 2001). Prime Minister of Serbia said in an interview that she would like to build a monument to memorize the help Serbia received from China during COVID-19 and the friendship between two countries. Besides, The Minister of National Defense awarded medals symbolizing the highest honor for "defending the country" to Chinese experts on medical aid to Serbia. Those pieces of news stimulated another round of discussions.

5.3 Cyber nationalism and patriotism topics on Weibo

This section defines five types of Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism based on the previous content analysis. The author further linked a given type of Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism to travel intention and destination awareness to Serbia in Chi-square and Correlation tests. By analyzing the potential subtle difference in various types of nationalism and patriotism, its influence on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention and destination awareness to Serbia could be deeply appreciated. Five kinds of nationalism are here identified : 1. showing hatred or strong negative emotion towards the US; 2. showing mockery towards Taiwan and Hong Kong; 3. showing friendship and sympathy on Serbia/Yugoslavia and taking Serbia/Yugoslavia as a tragic example of a country divided by western supremacy; 4.showing negative emotion towards other countries and races; 5. Showing pride and love towards China.

	Period 1(percentage of all posts)	Period 2(percentage of all posts)
Topic 1	N/A	53 (0.0076)
Topic 2	1 (0.0006)	29 (0.0042)
Topic 3	N/A	66 (0.0094)
Topic 4	5 (0.0029)	86 (0.0123)
Topic 5	33 (0.0192)	427 (0.0611)

Table 5.2 Nationalism and patriotism posts number

Patriotism was the most mentioned emotion for both periods. This emotion in Period 1 was aroused by Serbian government' praise to Huawei. Netizens at this period mainly showed their pride in Chinese technology. In Period 2, patriotic discussions came from netizens' pride and confidence in the successful containment of the pandemic. Meanwhile, this pride led to ignorance, and netizens became to attack other countries and their citizens. They also acted like opinion leaders online to decide which country China should offer medical aid. Their standard was simple: assistance should be given to countries who were China's friends and supported China in the past, such as Serbia and Pakistan. In their minds, China should help them with no hesitation and send them the best doctors. And for countries who did not support China on the international political stage, stood against China, held bias on China during when COVID-19 just appeared, or supported the independence of Taiwan, Hong Kong, such as the US, Italy and France, they should be received no help regardless of how severe the pandemic spread out.

Except for showing friendship and even sympathy to Serbia, other groups of netizens used Serbia and Yugoslavia as an example of how imperialism could secede a nation. They claimed that it is necessary to raise vigilance against the US. In Period 1, hatred and negative emotion towards the US was not detected, nor emotion toward Serbia. Though the 5G network was directly related to the US, netizens did not attack the US. Instead, they expressed national pride in Chinese technology. In Period 2, both hatred towards the US and friendship to Serbia appeared due to COVID-19. COVID-

19 was a trigger that reminded netizens of what happened to China, Serbia and the US. Taiwan, refusing to sell masks to China when COVID-19 just broke out, donated myriads of masks to the US, which led to Chinese netizen's mockery that Taiwanese people regard the US as their father. Meanwhile, people from Hong Kong who showed preference over Britain were also taunted that they took Britain as their father, hence they should help their father fight against COVID-19.

In general, posts with nationalism and patriotism continents showed an upward trend from Period 1 to 2.

5.4 SPSS results

This section presents the results of Pearson Chi-square and Correlation tests to 1) verify whether relationships the author predicted in Section 1 between Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism and Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention and destination awareness to Serbia exist; 2) examine how strong those relationship hold and how such relationships change over the course of COVID-19 breakout.

5.4.1 Pearson Chi-square test results

		Travel Intention	Histories				Nationalism	Patriotism
			Total	Relationship between China & Serbia	Issues related to China & America	Political fragmentation of former Yugoslavia		
Destination Awareness	Total	Chi 28.955 P 0.000	●	N/A	N/A	N/A	Chi 10.117 p 0.003	Chi 58.340 p 0.000
	General knowledge	Chi 4.386 p 0.038	●	●	●	●	●	Chi 16.718 p 0.000
	Political interests	●	Chi 58.944 p 0.000	●	●	Chi 65.927 p 0.000	●	●
	Resources attractiveness description	Chi 10.600 p 0.001	●	●	●	●	●	Chi 14.189 p 0.000
Travel Intention			●	●	●	●	●	Chi 7.489 p 0.004
Histories	Total						●	●
	Relationship between China & Serbia						N/A	●
	Issues related to China & America						N/A	●
	Political fragmentation of former Yugoslavia						N/A	●

Table 5.3 Pearson Chi-square results for Period 1

(Chi: Chi-square value, P: P-value, ●: test result non-significate, N/A: not tested; 2-tail test applied, significate level at 0.05)

To obtain the research object 1 and 2, it is necessary to firstly detect whether the targeted variables, especially patriotism, nationalism, destination awareness and travel intention, are related with others. Pearson Chi-square test and correlation test were applied to Period 1 and Period 2 respectively to examine whether two variables were dependent on each other.

The statistical results for Period 1 were shown in Table 5.3. Due to no posts with nationalism emotions towards the relationships between Serbia or Yugoslavia, China and the US found, Chi-square tests were not applied to pair "nationalism" and "Histories". According to the results, travel intention interacted with destination awareness and patriotism respectively. Destination awareness depended on nationalism and patriotism respectively. History, especially those related to former Yugoslavia, interacted with destination awareness that was evoked by political interests. It is reasonable that such dependence holds true as they were both related to political issues.

For Period 2, similar to the analysis on Period 1, the author used Pearson Chi-square test to examine whether there was a relationship. The Chi-square results were shown below (Table 5.4). During this period, the globe was under the influences of COVID-19, so the variable COVID-19 appeared.

		Travel Intention	COVID-19	Histories				Nationalism	Patriotism
				Total	Relationship between China & Serbia	Issues related to China & America	Political fragmentation of former Yugoslavia		
Destination Awareness	Total	●	Chi 268.204 p 0.000	●	Chi 10.041 p 0.001	Chi 9.899 p 0.001	Chi 15.617 p 0.000	Chi 69.539 p 0.000	Chi 109.596 p 0.000
	General knowledge	Chi 40.745 p 0.000	Chi 56.135 p 0.000	Chi 8.153 p 0.003	●	Chi 6.548 p 0.005	●	Chi 24.885 p 0.000	Chi 40.894 p 0.000
	Political interests	●	Chi 18.012 p 0.000	Chi 31.872 p 0.000	●	●	Chi 49.067 p 0.000	Chi 6.201 p 0.007	●
	Resources attractiveness description	Chi 10.416 p 0.001	Chi 190.276 p 0.000	●	Chi-10.756 p 0.000	Chi 7.769 p 0.002	Chi 22.362 p 0.000	Chi 31.184 p 0.000	Chi 62.575 p 0.000
Travel Intention				Chi 9.751 p 0.00	●	●	Chi 8.600 p 0.001	Chi 26.002 p 0.000	Chi 41.594 p 0.000
COVID-19		●		Chi 98.737 p 0.000	Chi 32.670 p 0.000	Chi 28.837 p 0.000	Chi 60.186 p 0.000	Chi 34.239 p 0.000	●
Histories	Total							●	Chi 48.073 p 0.000
	Relationship between China & Serbia							●	Chi 48.105 p 0.000
	Issues related to China & America							Chi 6.761 p 0.014	Chi 48.837 p 0.000
	Political fragmentation of former Yugoslavia							●	●

Table 5.4 Pearson Chi-square results for Period 2

(Chi: Chi-square value, P: P value, ●: test result non-significate, N/A: not tested; 2-tail test applied, significate level at 0.05)

According to the Chi-square test results of Period 2, patriotism and nationalism showed statistical dependence on destination awareness and travel intention perceptively. The new variable COVID-19 also showed dependence on destination awareness, histories and nationalism.

5.4.2 Correlation test results

At this stage, it was clear to claim that there were relationships between patriotism/ nationalism and destination awareness and travel intention. However, more evidence was needed to prove the study objective 1 and 2: there are positive relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism and travel intention to Serbia; Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism could enhance Chinese tourists' awareness towards Serbia in the context of COVID-19.

To further study the interrelationships among variables in Period 1 and 2, Pearson correlation tests were applied to travel intention and patriotism, destination awareness and patriotism. The hypotheses used for the correlation test were shown below, and the results were tabulated in Table 5.5 and 5.6.

H0: There is no correlation between netizens' travel intention to Serbia and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

H1: There is a correlation between netizens' travel intention to Serbia and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

H2: There is no correlation between netizens' awareness of Serbia and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

H3: There is a correlation between netizens' awareness of Serbia and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

According to the test result, both destination awareness and travel intention in Period 1 were negatively correlated with patriotism. That is to say, the more posts with patriotism on Weibo, the lower travel intention and destination awareness the netizens had over Serbia. The Pearson's R or called correlation coefficient is a value that ranges between 1 and -1, where 1 indicates a strong positive relationship, while -1 indicates a

strong negative relationship. Judging from the R, patriotism had larger negative impacts on destination awareness than it had on travel intention. Therefore, the author further divided destination awareness into subcategories of general knowledge and resource attractiveness description. The hypotheses used for Correlation tests were shown below, the results were presented in Table 5.7.

H4: There is no correlation between netizens' general knowledge about Serbia and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

H5: There is a correlation between netizens' general knowledge about Serbia and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

H6: There is no correlation between netizens awareness toward Serbia tourism resources and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

H7: There is a correlation between netizens awareness toward Serbia tourism resources and patriotism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

Correlations- travel intention & patriotism

		travel intention	patriotism
travel intention	Pearson Correlation	1	-.192**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	203	203
patriotism	Pearson Correlation	-.192**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	203	203

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.5 Correlations-travel intention & patriotism, Period 1

Correlations- patriotism & destination awareness

		patriotism	total awareness
patriotism	Pearson Correlation	1	-.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	203	203
total awareness	Pearson Correlation	-.554**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	203	204

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.6 Correlations-destination awareness total & patriotism, Period 1

Correlations- patriotism & general knowledge/ resources

		patriotism	general knowledge	resources attractiveness description
patriotism	Pearson Correlation	1	-.289**	-.265**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	203	200	202
general knowledge	Pearson Correlation	-.289**	1	.971**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	200	201	200
resources attractiveness description	Pearson Correlation	-.265**	.971**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	202	200	203

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.7 Correlations- patriotism & general knowledge/ resources, Period 1

Both subcategories under destination awareness were negatively correlated to patriotism. For nationalism and destination awareness, they are also negatively related as the results were shown in Table 5.8. The hypotheses used for their testing were:

H8: There is no correlation between netizens awareness toward Serbia tourism resources and nationalism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

H9: There is a correlation between netizens awareness toward Serbia tourism resources and nationalism posts over Serbia on Weibo.

Correlations-nationalism & destination awareness

		nationalism	total awareness
nationalism	Pearson Correlation	1	-.230**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	203	203
total awareness	Pearson Correlation	-.230**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	203	204

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.8 Correlations-nationalism & destination awareness, Period 1

To sum, during the Period 1, both Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism on Weibo negatively correlated with destination awareness and travel intention respectively. The stronger the nationalistic and patriotic emotion the netizens had, the lower awareness the netizens had over Serbia as a tourism destination and also the lower intention to travel. Thus, the statistical results of Period 1 were significant to reject H0, H2, H4, H6 and H8. That is to say the evidence from Period 1 proved that there were negative relationships between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism and Chinese

outbound tourists' travel intention and destination awareness. However, as the research hypothesis assumed that the positive relationships between the targeted variables would exist during the spread out of COVID-19, it was vital to examine the relationships in Period 2 after the breakout of COVID-19.

According to the Chi-square test results, dependencies existed between COVID-19 and destination awareness, COVID-19 and histories, COVID-19 and nationalism, nationalism and destination awareness, nationalism and travel intention, nationalism and destination awareness, patriotism and travel intention, and patriotism and destination awareness. Correlation tests were then applied to the last four pairs and the hypotheses used were:

H10: Chinese cyber nationalism has no influence on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

H11: Chinese cyber nationalism has influence on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

H12: Chinese cyber nationalism will not enhance on Chinese outbound tourists' awareness about Serbia as a tourism destination in the context of COVID-19 pandemic

H13: Chinese cyber nationalism will enhance Chinese outbound tourists' awareness about Serbia as a tourism destination in the context of COVID-19 pandemic

H14: Chinese cyber patriotism has no influence on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

H15: Chinese cyber patriotism has influences on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

H16: Chinese cyber patriotism will not enhance on Chinese outbound tourists' awareness about Serbia as a tourism destination in the context of COVID-19 pandemic

H17: Chinese cyber patriotism will enhance Chinese outbound tourists' awareness about Serbia as a tourism destination in the context of COVID-19 pandemic

According to the test results (Table 5.9), travel intention negatively correlated with both nationalism and patriotism. Destination awareness also negatively correlated with nationalism and patriotism respectively. However, compared with the correlation coefficient of nationalism and destination awareness from Period 1, the negative correlation of nationalism and destination awareness slightly declined from -0.230 to -0.196. In the pair of patriotism and destination awareness, there was also a declining trend, the coefficient declined from -0.554 for Period 1 to -0.246 for Period 2.

Correlations

		travel intention	nationalism	patriotism	total awareness
travel intention	Pearson Correlation	1	-.120[**]	-.152[**]	.041
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.082
	N	1809	1809	1808	1809
nationalism	Pearson Correlation	-.120[**]	1	-.208[**]	-.196[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	1809	1809	1808	1809
patriotism	Pearson Correlation	-.152[**]	-.208[**]	1	-.246[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	1808	1808	1808	1808
total awareness	Pearson Correlation	.041	-.196[**]	-.246[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.082	.000	.000	
	N	1809	1809	1808	1809

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.9 Pearson Correlation test results- Period 2

5.4.3 Regression test results

Though the whole Period 2 was within the COVID-19 period, it was still unclear whether COVID-19 was the variable that caused the change. To better test study object 2, a multiple regression analysis was applied to pair 1: nationalism, COVID-19 and destination awareness where nationalism and COVID-19 were independent variables and destination awareness was a dependent variable; pair 2: patriotism, COVID-19 and destination awareness where patriotism and COVID-19 were independent variables and destination awareness was a dependent variable. The hypotheses that were used for testing were shown below and the results were in Table 5.10 and Table 5.11.

H18: there is no relationship between the nationalism, COVID-19 and destination awareness.
H19: there is a relationship between the nationalism, COVID-19 and destination awareness.

H20: there is no relationship between the patriotism, COVID-19 and destination awareness.
H21: there is a relationship between the patriotism, COVID-19 and destination awareness.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.460[a]	.211	.211	.3691

a. Predictors: (Constant), nationalism, COVID-19

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	66.004	2	33.002	242.178	.000[b]
	Residual	246.106	1806	.136		
	Total	312.111	1808			

a. Dependent Variable: total awareness
b. Predictors: (Constant), nationalism, COVID-19

Table 5.10 Multiple regression test results for nationalism, COVID-19 & awareness

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.460ª	.212	.211	.3691

a. Predictors: (Constant), COVID-19, patriotism

ANOVAª

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	66.145	2	33.072	242.747	.000ᵇ
	Residual	245.917	1805	.136		
	Total	312.061	1807			

a. Dependent Variable: total awareness

b. Predictors: (Constant), COVID-19, patriotism

Table 5.11 Multiple regression test results for patriotism, COVID-19 & awareness

Judging from the Table 5.10, pair 1 was statistically significant enough at the significant level of 0.05 to reject H18, indicating there was a relationship between nationalism, COVID-19 and destination awareness. However, the set of nationalism and COVID-19 could only explain 21.2% of the variability of destination awareness. According to Table 5.11, pair 2 was also statistically significant at the significant level of 0.05 to reject H20. But the set of patriotism and COVID-19 could only explain 21.1% of the variability of destination awareness. The R-square values of 2 pairs were not significant enough to claim that the increased awareness was derived by COVID-19. Thus, the author failed to reject H12 and H16.

To sum, the statistical results failed in proving the study object 1 and 2. It is found that Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism have negative influences on Chinese

outbound tourists' travel intention and awareness towards Serbia in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

5.5 COVID-19 and tourist behavior

Based on Chi-square test results (Table 5.8), relationships between COVID-19 and destination awareness existed, whereas relationships between COVID-19 and travel intention did not exist. Though COVID-19, destination awareness, histories and nationalism interacted in pairs, neither of them enhanced travel intention (Table 5.11).

News about COVID-19 in Serbia posted on Weibo might bring back painful memories about what happened in between China, Serbia/Yugoslavia, and further evoked nationalistic discussion. However, statistically speaking, none of this discussion could positively reinforce Serbia tourism. Even the patriotism discussions which were aroused by national pride in containing the virus showed negative influences on destination awareness and travel intention. The author counted the posts that showed the blogger's intention of going to Serbia after COVID-19 by hands. Those posts only occupied 33.7% of all posts related to travel intention and only 0.63%of total posts in Period 2.

Correlations

		travel intention	nationalism	COVID-19	history total
travel intention	Pearson Correlation	1	-.120**	-.021	-.073**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.366	.002
	N	1809	1809	1809	1809
nationalism	Pearson Correlation	-.120**	1	-.138**	-.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.738
	N	1809	1809	1809	1809

COVID-19	Pearson Correlation	-.021	-.138**	1	-.234**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.366	.000		.000
	N	1809	1809	1809	1809
history total	Pearson Correlation	-.073**	-.008	-.234**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.738	.000	
	N	1809	1809	1809	1809

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.12 Correlation- nationalism, covid-19, history and travel intention, Period 2

At this stage, though China seems to control the spread of COVID-19, outbound tourism in China is still paused due to the limitation of international flights and travel restrictions. Apart from this, tourists' concerns about Coronavirus also play a role. Researchers have proved that when a pandemic breaks out, tourists will prefer domestic destinations over foreign ones (Zenker & Kock, 2020). Preference of domestics travel is also a natural response of "staying away from crowdedness", which is strongly promoted in China as keeping social distances is one of the most effective ways to avoid catching Coronavirus. Wang & Ackerman (2019) stated that pathogen concerns and avoiding crowdedness are responses to the threats of infectious disease. This could also shape Chinese tourists' travel intentions.

5.6 Interpretation

This section provides a thorough analysis on explaining the contradiction of research findings against the author's research hypothesis. The original research hypothesis and objectives of this study are here recalled:

1. "Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism that are triggered by COVID-19 positively correlate with Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention and destination awareness towards Serbia"

2. "Chinese cyber nationalism will enhance Chinese outbound tourists' destination awareness towards Serbia", "Chinese cyber nationalism will positively influence Chinese tourists' travel intention to Serbia under the context of COVID-19".

According to Section 5.4 and 5.5, the statistical results showed opposite outcomes - Chinese cyber nationalism negatively correlated with travel intention and destination awareness towards Serbia. Notwithstanding the destination awareness level slightly increased from Period 1 to Period 2, neither evidence from the combination of nationalism and COVID-19 or patriotism and COVID-19 could explain this change.

As implausible it may sound at the first place, considering the uniquity of COVID-19 in epidemiology history and staggering economy around the globe, this significant contradiction holds valid. COVID-19 was generally recognized as an unprecedented new type of disease, and the impact of COVID-19 on tourist behaviors at this stage is quite unpredictable. Though some news media in China claimed that retaliatory tourism activities would occur when COVID-19 was eliminated, there was no clear evidence to support this predication. The current literatures showed that tourists might avoid international travel and crowdedness when a pandemic breaks out (Wang & Ackerman, 2019; Zenker & Kock, 2020). Except for this, unsound financial situation could be another factor. Researches have estimated that COVID-19 will bring negative influences on Chinese firms and economy ("China's Communist Party Plans its COVID-19 Recovery," 2020; Vasiev, Denisov, & Bocharnikov, 2020; McKibbin & Fernando, 2020). With worsening financial situation, Chinese outbound tourists might withhold their travel plans. Besides, the "Five-one" policy and the situation in Europe could also affect Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention.

According to the Chi-square test results for Period 2 (Table 5.4), no relationship was detected between destination awareness and travel intention. Thus, the increased destination awareness did not affect travel intention. This might be attributed to that netizens knew more information about Serbia as a tourism destination, but such perception was not strong or attractive enough to develop a solid destination awareness. For example, some posts mentioned there were no direct flights between their (the post

writer 's) cities and Belgrade, and they would not take layover. This kind of posts indicated that those netizens had no intention to go to Serbia, even though they had general knowledge towards it. During the Period 2, COVID-19 had significant relationship with destination awareness aroused by political interests. However, political interests were not related with travel intension (Table 5.8).

In addition to the weak link between destination awareness and travel intention under the context of Serbia, popularities of travel destinations among Chinese outbound tourists may play some part. Serbia was a niche tourist destination for Chinese outbound tourists. As stated in former chapter, the most popular destinations for Chinese outbound tourists were Asian countries, Serbia was still new and less well-known for mass tourists. Judging from Figure 5.1, tourism related topics (topic 2 and 4) remined less popular for both study periods.

Though the author failed to prove this study's research hypothesis and study objectives, the study results have provided more evidence and supports to the former researches that Chinese cyber nationalism has negative influences on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention. Besides, this study offered a new angle to study Chinese cyber nationalism and its targeted countries. As shown in this study, Chinese netizens actually held positive attitudes toward Serbia and negative attitudes towards other countries. However, nationalistic and hateful posts towards third party countries could bring negative influences on Serbia. This showed that indirect nationalism could also bring negative results. Destination management originations and policy makers who deal with Chinese market should take this indirect nationalism and its influences into consideration when they are making new tourism plans. Moreover, this study indicated that it is necessary to divide the patriotism from nationalism when studying the correlation between Chinese cyber nationalism and tourism. Unlike the current literatures that did not split patriotism and nationalism, this study examined the destination awareness and travel intentions with patriotism and nationalism respectively. And the statistical results indeed showed differences within those two patriotic emotions. In future, with the development of Chinese political system, patriotism education, international political status of China and online public opinion

regulatory system, nationalism and patriotism talks may become more distinct, making it unreasonable to treat those two patriotic emotions as a whole.

5.7 Summary

This chapter presented the research results, followed by discussion. Firstly, it showed a growth in post numbers regarding the topic of Serbia during COVID-19 period. Though new topics came out in the Period 2, the popularities could not last long. In general, all topics showed a decease trend unless there was a stimulation to activate them again. In this case, the stimulation was news about Chinese medical aid team. Secondly, the results showed the patriotic posts occupied a larger part than nationalistic posts. There was no hatred post or post that attacked the US or other countries founded in Period 1. In Period 2, hatred posts against the US and some other countries appeared. This hatred was mainly aroused by an inevitable topic when talking about Sino-Yugoslavia/Serbia relationship – Belgrade booming. Except the US, Chinese nationalism seemed indiscriminately attack countries or areas who did not support or help it when the COIVD-19 just outbroke in China. Moreover, the Sino-Serbia friendship was another most mentioned topic. However, this friendship also contained repulsion to other western countries. Thirdly, the statistic results showed that in Period 1, there were negative relationships between Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism and netizens' awareness. And in the same period, patriotism was negatively correlated with travel intention, while the relationship between nationalism and travel intention was not statistically significant (Table 5.13- Correlation Period 1). In Period 2, both patriotism and nationalism negatively correlated with travel intention and destination awareness respectively (Table 5.13- Correlation Period 2). Fourthly, the statistic results showed that there was no enough evidence to prove that at the COVID-19 period, patriotism and nationalism could enhance Chinese outbound tourists' awareness towards Serbia. Though test results were statistically significant. Finally, the study states that COVID-19 might have negative effects on tourist behaviors.

Correlations Period 1

	Patriotism	Nationalism
Travel intention	-.192**	N/A
Destination awareness	-.554**	-.230**

(**significate level at 1%)

Correlations Period 2

	Patriotism	Nationalism
Travel intention	-.152**	-.120**
Destination awareness	-.246**	-.196**

(**significate level at 1%)

Regression- Period 2

Model	R square	Sig.
Dependent variable: destination awareness Independent variable: Nationalism*COVID-19	.211	.000
Dependent variable: destination awareness Independent variable: Patriotism*COVID-19	.212	.000

Table 5.13 Summary of correlation test period 1&2, regression test period 2

Chapter 6 Conclusion and limitations

6.1 Conclusion remark

This study aims at exploring the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism/ patriotism and Chinese outbound tourists' pre-travel behaviors in the context of COVID-19. To be more specific, this study examines the impacts of Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism on Chinese outbound tourists' awareness and travel intention towards Serbia in the context of COVID-19. The author expected a strong positive relationship between those variables – heated discussions on social media arisen by Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism facilitates the travel intention and destination awareness to Serbia among Chinese outbound tourists.

Dr. Wu who was the pioneer in studying Chinese cyber nationalism once said nationalism was a double-edged sword for China, as it provided safeguards for CCP but also brought social contradictions to China (2016). In tourism research, recent literatures mostly focused on studying the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism and tourism boycotting and its consequences. Besides, existed researches were mainly conducted in the context of Asian countries and areas due to Chinese cyber nationalism its own characters. Moreover, seldom studies tried to exam Chinese cyber nationalism from a positive aspect. In order to detect whether Chinese cyber nationalism could bring a destination positive influences, the author chose to use Serbia that was called "the best and true friend of China" by Chinese netizens as study object. The author used secondary data from Sina Weibo and applied quantitative research methodology in this study. Main findings were:

1) Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism have negative influences on Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to Serbia in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

2) Chinese cyber nationalism and patriotism would not enhance Chinese outbound tourists' awareness about Serbia as a tourism destination in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

3) COVID -19 pandemic could not reinforce Chinese outbound tourists' travel intention to go to Serbia.

Though this study failed in proving Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism could bring positive impacts on Chinese outbound tourists' behaviours. It provided more evidence to support the finding that Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism could have negative influences on Chinese outbound tourists' behaviours. This study was conducted in the context of Europe, to be more specific in Serbia. It filled the blank brought by previous researches that mainly focused on Asian countries which had sovereignty conflicts and historical issues with China. Judging from the observations on Weibo, Chinese netizens seemed hold positive attitudes and good impressions on Serbia. However, Chinese cyber nationalism still played a negative role in Serbian tourism awareness and Chinese tourists travel intention. Thus, this study further showed Chinese cyber nationalism could bring negative influences on a country's tourism industry. Even this country had no direct conflicts or not directly targeted by Chinese cyber nationalism. As Serbian Tourism claimed its interests in Chinese market after COVID-19 (see Chapter 2.3), this study could remind it the importance of Chinese cyber nationalism, and also provide a new angle to develop and review its tourism marketing policy regarding Chinese market.

6.2 Limitations and suggestions

This study has offered an evaluative perspective on the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism and Chinese outbound tourist behavior. The author uses secondary data from Sina Weibo as the study's sample. As a direct consequence of this methodology, the study has a number of limitations. Firstly, the sample was all from Sina Weibo. Though Sina Weibo is one of the largest online communities and the most popular social media platforms in China, it could not be taken the ground that its users cover all groups of people. In other words, there might be some extent of bias due to the group homogenous preference, which was not thoroughly overviewed in this study. Secondly, the data is crawled through online python tool-GooSeeker. GooSeeker, a data mining tool based on prepared uniform codes, might perform better at collecting data from certain types of websites than Weibo. Even that GooSeeker Pro provides manual services, due to the author's limited knowledge in information technology, the accuracy

of the crawling results is difficult to examine. Thirdly, the same uncertainties happen to topic clustering because the author used prepared codes. Fourthly, research about COVID-19 impacts and predication might not be accurate. The globe is still undergoing this pandemic, and past models and experiences might not precisely fit COVID-19 since no global lock-downs ever happened before. Moreover, the study results based on Chi-square and correlation test could only tell the statistical relationships of study objects, but not the causation. Last but not the least, this study was also limited by the shortage of time and funding.

Besides, due to the global-wide lockdowns and "Five-one" policy, Chinese outbound tourism is almost paused. That's why the author did not include any empirical evidence such as Chinese tourist arrival number in this study. For further study, tourist arrival should be involved as it is an essential indicator in tourist behavior study. Besides, studies about how long the Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism aroused by COVID-19 could last and whether it will affect tourist behavior in a long run need to be conducted. Moreover, research findings of this study might not be applied to other countries. Tourists' attitudes and travel intentions vary regionally, so does the nationalism. To fully understand how Chinese cyber nationalism/patriotism affects the destinations awareness, Chinese outbound tourism and tourist behavior, investigations on countries on different continents need to be included.

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