

# A Comparative Analysis of the Attitude Resources in Chinese and US Mainstream Media Reports on the Xinjiang Cotton Controversy

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## Abstract

The Xinjiang Cotton industry, which is primarily populated with Uyghur workers, has made headline news across the globe. Its discussion has important ramifications for how the world views China's treatment of ethnic minorities. In this article, I explore how this industry and its workers are represented in one Chinese and one American newspaper. Specifically, I focus on how attitudinal choices are used in 40 news articles on the Xinjiang Cotton industry and surrounding controversies. Using Martin and White's appraisal framework, I explore the similarities and differences between the New York Times and China Daily. Results show a comparable distribution of judgment, appreciation, and affect in both publications. However, the New York Times included more subjective and emotional positions than the China Daily. Furthermore, eight categories of representation were identified, each of which were used to present positive us-representations and negative them-representations. Moreover, strategic uses of attitude included applying affect to direct emotional messages among readers, employing judgment to increase authoritativeness, and creating opposite representations to their literal meanings. The study not only supports previous findings in the use of attitudinal resources in news discourse, but it also extends the scope of appraisal research by analyzing the representations of social and ethnic groups from a micro perspective.

**Keywords:** appraisal theory, attitude system, news report, representation construction, ethnic minorities in news discourse

The Xinjiang Cotton issue is marked by a statement released on March 24, 2021 by H&M, a Swedish fashion brand. Specifically, the brand announced that they would not source Xinjiang Cotton due to allegations of forced labor and religious discrimination against ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Supported by the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), the incident triggered a boycott against Xinjiang Cotton among global apparel brands, which then led to the boycott of Western clothing companies within the Chinese market.

Although, the depiction and interpretation of, and attitude toward the issue are included in the reporting from multiple world media outlets (Zhang, 2019), the coverage of the event may be slanted, depending on the media organization's political allegiance or the reporter's position (Baker et al., 2013). As a result, the representations constructed via news language can carry authors' positions and consequently influence audiences' understanding of the event. Subsequently, in this study I center in on the dispute over the existence of forced labor in XUAR and the Xinjiang Cotton issue from two separate viewpoints: China Daily (CD) and the New York Times (NYT), which are two opposing mainstream media outlets produced in two different countries.

Bednarek (2006) was the first to evaluate media discourse by integrating a corpus-based approach with discourse analysis. She identified a set of evaluative parameters from Hunston and Thompson's (2000) definition of evaluation—that is the expression of the writer's or speaker's attitude towards, perception on, and feelings about his/her own positions in relation to a set of values. Developed upon this definition, Martin (2000) identified the expression of attitude as not only a personal concern in which a speaker comments on the world, but also an interpersonal concern that functions to elicit responses of solidarity from an audience. Based on this dialogic view of language, the appraisal framework was developed, which offers a comprehensive theoretical and analytical system of the linguistic resources used in the construction of social experience. Moreover, the framework enables a more insightful understanding of the mode of interpersonal meaning

than merely demonstrating the emotions in discourse (Oteíza, 2017, p. 458).

The appraisal framework has been applied in the analysis of authorial positions in media discourse (Arunsirot, 2012; Liu & Zhang, 2015; Sabao & Visser, 2015; Sabao, 2016; Soo-Guan Khoo, 2012). More recently, contrastive analysis of media coverage has attracted scholars' attention to the relationship between language and the reason behind the choices made by language producers (Cao et al., 2022; Zhang, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021; Zhuo, 2021). For example, Zhang (2019) found that Chinese and US media use appraisal resources to create competing discursive constructions of three social actors (China, United States, and Philippines) in the South China Sea dispute. These competing discourses rationalized the producer's decisions and actions on this dispute. Likewise, Zhuo (2021) found that differences in ideology between China and US are the reason for the different application of engagement resources in news reports on the Hong Kong National Security Law between Chinese and US media. Zhang et al. (2021), meanwhile, investigated the dialectical link between speech and ideology in news coverage and comments on COVID-19. These previous studies have confirmed the causal relationship between language and ideology in news discourse. Cao et al. (2022), however, also add that differences in journalistic systems and historical and socio-political settings may also explain discrepancies in language use and representation in news pieces.

Although most previous studies have explored the reasons and purposes of attitudes employed in news, the construction of representations, especially those of smaller social groups, is less pronounced. Additionally, previous scholars did not look into the subcategories of the attitude system (the analysis of which may indicate further divisions in the representations constructed in news discourse). As for the selection of materials, few comparative studies have referred to potentially corresponding relationship in news reports in terms of shared content, which may affect the consistency of representations portrayed in news reports.

This study fills this research gap by exploring the representations constructed in news discourse from a micro perspective and investigating the strategic use of attitudes in the construction of representations. Since, to the best of my knowledge, no research has explored the coverage of the recent Xinjiang Cotton issue, this study also extends the application of appraisal theory in media discourse. Accordingly, the research questions for this study are as follows:

1. How are appraisal resources distributed in the news reports of China Daily and the New York Times?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the distribution of appraisal resources in the two media?
3. What are the representations constructed by the appraisal resources in the two newspapers?

## **Literature Review**

Developed from Halliday's System Functional Linguistics, Martin and White (2005) established an analytical framework for discourse evaluation, which focuses on the semantics of evaluating interpersonal meaning, including authorial voice and text position. As Martin and White (2005) state in their volume *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*, "appraisal theory focuses rhetorically on evaluation, interprets how people are disposed by feelings, and looks for ways to negotiate more productive alignments" (p. 261). This theory has been further developed through its employment in academic discourse (Coffin, 2000; Ellsworth, 2013; Fernando et al., 2017; Hood, 2004; Rick Iedema et al., 1994). In China, Wang (2012) expanded on appraisal theory, arguing that the theory might be utilized as a tool to decipher the deeper meaning of words on the surface.

Although appraisal theory has been widely used in discourse analysis since its inception, it is only more recently that it has been applied in contrastive analysis of news broadcasts. Homayounzadeh and Mehrpour (2013), for example, evaluated the effects of culture on journalistic style and strategies used in editorials on Iran's nuclear situation. Specifically, they compared the attitudinal resources found in American and Persian media. Their findings demonstrated that

comparable strategies were employed by both media to retain their own beliefs and to counter the non-cultural effects of rival publications. Somewhat similarly, Bai (2013) compared the graduation resources in China and US press briefings. He found that the distribution of force in the press briefings was more than focus, and all the identified expressions of graduation were sharpened. In Liu and Zhang's (2015) investigation of engagement in China Daily and the New York Times news coverage, they observed that a similar distribution of engagement is used in both publications to communicate ideological orientation. As shown in an evaluation of media discourse, ideological representations of social events were reconstructed in news coverage, with appraisal resources being employed as legitimization strategies to justify the representations (Zhang, 2019).

The representation of minorities in the press has also been explored by previous scholars. Ungerleider (1991) suggested, in his study on the coverage of minorities in Canada, that the media had an impact on how people view minorities as well as their interests and needs. Such influence depends on what and where minorities appear in news items. This view is shared by Mahtani (2001), who referred to the media as a crucial source of information for individuals to learn about their country, and what the media deems to be common knowledge influences societal views and opinions. Despite such acknowledgments, studies have revealed ethnic minorities' scant appearance as voices in the press and an overall lack of actors in news stories (Firmstone et al., 2009). Ethnic minorities are either portrayed as alien outsiders (Saeed, 2007) or villains and victims, rather than "newsmakers, experts, or citizens reacting to contemporary events" (Ungerleider, 1991, p. 158). This was supported by Saeed's (2007) findings that British Muslims are frequently misrepresented as the "other" in the British press due to their rooted ideological thought (Orientalism), which may indicate a "new racist" position (Islamophobia). Similar evidence was presented by Lams (2016), wherein "Islam and Islamic actors are often constructed in the Western press as a foreign threat or the domestic Other" (p. 205). In contrast with the discriminating representation of Muslims in Western media, the representation of Chinese Muslims, or Uyghurs, in the

Chinese media tends to be more neutral, and any narrative that relates religion/ethnic identity to terrorism has been explicitly denied (Lams, 2016).

The marginalization of ethnic minorities in news coverage is also reflected in the limited source of voices from ethnic minority speakers and the lack of relation to the real-life troubles, entitled rights, and routine lives of the minorities (Arslan et al., 2018). The purpose beneath this under- or misrepresentation of minorities has been identified by Ungerleider (1991) as to systemically strengthen social, political, and economic inequality. Even in cases of news coverage where minorities are presented positively, negative effects remain, as such positive us-representation carries a nationwide concept of multiculturalism, tolerance, and “brotherhood”, which puts minorities in a place subordinate (though not opposite) to the majority (Arslan et al., 2018).

Such purposes may be closely related to the population density of minority groups and their control of power. In a comparative study on ethnic minority coverage in Dakota and California (Atuel et al., 2006), more minority than majority headlines were identified in California, where Whites no longer dominated in both number and power. For changing the status quo of the under- and misrepresentation of minorities in the news, Døving (2016) has put forward his hypothesis of building a “universal minority discourse”, whereby media platforms manage to include more minority voices in the negotiation of public debates using a language that involves universal values.

## **Methods**

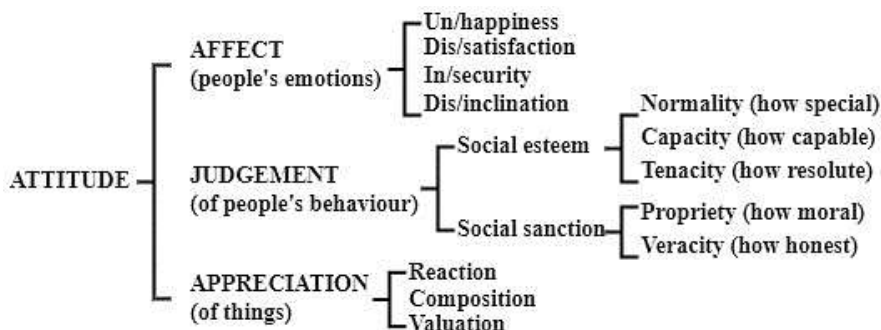
### ***The Three Systems of Appraisal***

The analytical framework adopted for this study is appraisal theory (Martin & White, 2005). The three dimensions of appraisal theory are attitude, engagement, and graduation (see Figure 1). Attitude is concerned with people's emotions, such as emotional reactions (affect), behavioral judgment (judgment), and item evaluations (appreciation). Affect can be further divided into four sub-categories: un/happiness (feelings of happiness or sadness, e.g., “glad”), in/security (feelings of

peace or anxiety, e.g., “confident”), dis/satisfaction (feelings of achievement or frustration, e.g., “anger”), and dis/inclination (feelings of fear or desire, e.g., “hope”). Judgment includes social esteem and social sanction. The former can be separated into normality (how unusual someone is, e.g., “favorable”), capacity (how capable they are, e.g., “strong”), and tenacity (how resolute they are, e.g., “vigilant”), while the latter is composed of veracity (how truthful someone is, e.g., “groundless allegations”) and propriety (how ethical someone is, e.g., “violations of international relations norm”). Appreciation consists of reaction (how people react to things, e.g., “attractive”), composition (whether things hang together or are easy to follow, e.g., “complicated”), and valuation (how things are valued, e.g., “important”).

**Figure 1**

*The system of Attitude from the appraisal framework (Adapted from Martin & White, 2005)*



### **Research Procedures**

Twenty reports from the *New York Times* (25,399 words in total) and twenty from *China Daily* (17,212 words in total) were selected based on the keywords “Xinjiang Cotton or cotton and Uyghur or Uyghurian” from March 1, 2021 to March 1, 2022. The dates were selected because heated discussion had emerged up until late February, 2022 when *China Daily* (CD) and the *New York Times* (NYT) published

their last reports on this issue. Therefore, news reports published within this time range can best cover the whole issue.

Considering a total of thirty-seven reports from CD and thirty-four from the NYT, a sample of twenty news reports from each publication represent data saturation (see Appendix I for all the news reports in the selection process). Both “Uyghur” and “Uygur” were used in the two publications. When replacing the keywords “Uyghur” and “Uyghurian” with “Uygur” and “Uygurian”, however, only sixteen reports in the NYT were found, compared with a total of eighty-four reports found in CD. To obtain a compatible amount of samples from both publications, I decided to use “Uyghur” and “Uyghurian” as keywords in searching, while keeping “Uygur” and “Uygurian” in the headlines and quotations of the news items.

These texts were then categorized into seven types to reduce the influence of text content on the distribution of appraisal (see Table 1). The seven categories were initially identified by analyzing convergence and divergence across the 40 headlines. Further modifications to the categories were made after a closer reading of each news item. Some reports were relocated to ensure that the number of reports from CD and the NYT were the same under each category.

**Table 1**

*Categories and numbers of the selected news reports*

|              | Intro to<br>the event | H&M<br>and its<br>claims | Political<br>evalua-<br>tions | Reactions | Resultant<br>impact | Depicting<br>Uyghurs’<br>life | Critique<br>of source<br>life |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>NYT</i>   | 1                     | 1                        | 5                             | 3         | 7                   | 2                             | 1                             |
| <i>Words</i> | 1544                  | 638                      | 8272                          | 3741      | 7497                | 3160                          | 1910                          |
| <i>CD</i>    | 1                     | 1                        | 5                             | 3         | 7                   | 2                             | 1                             |
| <i>Words</i> | 1155                  | 1810                     | 3543                          | 1860      | 7077                | 1052                          | 715                           |

UAM 3.3 corpus tool was employed to facilitate the linguistic coding of texts. Through the efficient prompting of relevant categories, two projects named New York Times and China Daily were created in



the UAM Corpus Tool to incorporate the selected texts in two separate project layers. A layer of attitude annotation was applied to both corpora based on the appraisal coding scheme predefined in the UAM Corpus Tool. The difficulty in the annotating process was identifying whether a linguistic feature belonged to affect, judgment, or appreciation, considering the overlap between the three sub-categories. The varied linguistic forms of attitude, such as verbs, nouns, phrases, and clauses, also added to the complexity of annotation. After the annotation, statistics about the proportion and frequency of attitudinal resources were exported from the tool for manual analysis. This allowed me to investigate the representations constructed through the attitudes in the news reports.

The manual analysis involved a close reading of news reports by category. Starting with the CD project, I analyzed the representations in each news report by reading every line and marking where attitude appeared. The function of the initial representations was to locate the attitudes involved in the representations in the report. I then grouped all the representations across the twenty reports into eight superordinate categories. Based on these categories of representation, the analysis of representations in the NYT project was made simpler by matching the identified representations with each category. Minor modifications to the eight categories were made to include the full range of representations in both project layers before a deeper analysis of more specific representations under each category.

Due to the complexity of attitudes and the representations they depicted, it was rather difficult to produce a visual correlation between each identified attitude sub-type and each specific representation under each subordinate category of representation. The final analysis of representation was therefore conducted manually by locating the attitudes across the reports and analyzing the representation they portrayed.

## Results

The data on the distribution of attitude resources in *China Daily* and the *New York Times* was used to address the first two research questions: 1) How are appraisal resources distributed in the news reports of *China Daily* and the *New York Times*? 2) What are the similarities and differences in the distribution of appraisal resources in the two media? The third research question—What are the representations constructed by the appraisal resources in the two newspapers?—is answered by the contextual analysis of the annotated attitudes.

### *The Distribution of the Attitude Resources in News Reports*

Based on my coding from the three attitude subsystems, a general description can be illustrated for the attitude resources in the selected news reports. The results of the contrastive distribution and frequency of the three attitudinal resources in the two newspapers are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Attitudinal resources in the New York Times and China Daily.*

| Feature           | <i>New York Times</i> |            | <i>China Daily</i> |            |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
|                   | Number                | Percentage | Number             | Percentage |
| ATTITUDE-TYPE     | 773                   |            | 647                |            |
| Judgment          | 489                   | 63.26%     | 514                | 79.44%     |
| Appreciation      | 171                   | 22.12%     | 96                 | 14.84%     |
| Affect            | 113                   | 14.62%     | 37                 | 5.72%      |
| ATTITUDE-POLARITY | 773                   |            | 647                |            |
| positive-attitude | 232                   | 30.01%     | 222                | 34.31%     |
| negative-attitude | 541                   | 69.99%     | 425                | 65.69%     |

Attitude resources play a significant role in news reports, and the total number of attitude resources in the two corpora is 773 (NYT) and 647 (CD), respectively. According to the statistics, judgment is the most preferred attitude resource, taking up more than half of the total

(63.26% in the NYT and 79.44% in CD), while appreciation ranks second (22.12% in the NYT and 14.84% in CD), followed by affect (14.62% in the NYT and 5.72% in CD). Although both corpora present more negative attitudes than positive ones, negative attitudes appear slightly more often in NYT (69.99%) than CD (65.69%).

**Table 3**

*Judgment resources in the New York Times and China Daily*

| Feature           |           | <i>New York Times</i> |            | <i>China Daily</i> |            |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
|                   |           | Number                | Percentage | Number             | Percentage |
| Judgment-TYPE     |           | 489                   |            | 514                |            |
| Social esteem     | Normality | 36                    | 7.36%      | 31                 | 6.03%      |
|                   | Capacity  | 88                    | 18.00%     | 78                 | 15.18%     |
|                   | Tenacity  | 19                    | 3.89%      | 2                  | 0.39%      |
| Social sanction   | Propriety | 322                   | 65.85%     | 314                | 61.09%     |
|                   | Veracity  | 24                    | 4.91%      | 89                 | 17.32%     |
| Judgment-POLARITY |           | 489                   |            | 514                |            |
| positive-attitude |           | 95                    | 19.43%     | 117                | 22.76%     |
| negative-attitude |           | 394                   | 80.57%     | 397                | 77.24%     |

As illustrated in Table 3, propriety is the most frequently used judgment sub-type in both newspapers, accounting for 65.85% in the NYT and 61.09% in CD. In the NYT, capacity (18.00%) ranks second, followed by normality (7.36%), with tenacity and veracity both below 5%. CD, on the other hand, employs veracity (17.32%) as the second most frequent sub-type, followed by capacity at 15.18%. Normality and tenacity are the least two frequent sub-types at 6.03% and 0.39%, respectively. In terms of polarity, the majority of the attitudes employed in both publications are negative, the proportion in the NYT is 80.57%, which is only slightly higher than that in CD (77.24%). In general, propriety is the most favored judgment resource while tenacity is the least preferred one in both publications. While negative judgment

resources outnumber positive ones in both corpora, they occur more often in the NYT.

**Table 4**

*Appreciation resources in the New York Times and China Daily*

| Feature               | <i>New York Times</i> |            | <i>China Daily</i> |            |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
|                       | Number                | Percentage | Number             | Percentage |
| APPRECIATION-TYPE     | 171                   |            | 96                 |            |
| Reaction              | 52                    | 30.41%     | 22                 | 22.92%     |
| Composition           | 30                    | 17.54%     | 12                 | 12.50%     |
| Social-valuation      | 89                    | 52.05%     | 62                 | 64.58%     |
| APPRECIATION-POLARITY | 171                   |            | 96                 |            |
| positive-attitude     | 104                   | 60.82%     | 81                 | 84.38%     |
| negative-attitude     | 67                    | 39.18%     | 15                 | 15.62%     |

As can be seen from Table 4, appreciation associated with social valuation is the most applied appraisal in both corpora. The proportion of valuation in the NYT (52.05%) is above the sum total of the other two sub-types: reaction (30.41%) and composition (17.54%). In CD, the percentage of social-valuation (64.58%) is almost three times higher than that of reaction (22.92%), followed by the least type of appraisal, composition, at 12.50%. Different from all the divisions in polarity analyzed above, both media present more positive appraisals than negative ones, with CD presenting a higher proportion of positive appreciation (84.38%) than the NYT (60.82%). In summary, appreciation concerning social valuation is most frequently used, while reaction resources remain the least employed appraisals in both corpora. Regarding the polarity of attitudes, positive appreciations take the lead in both corpora.

**Table 5***Affect resources in the New York Times and China Daily*

| Feature               | <i>New York Times</i> |            | <i>China Daily</i> |            |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
|                       | Number                | Percentage | Number             | Percentage |
| AFFECT-TYPE           | 113                   |            | 37                 |            |
| UN/HAPPINESS-TYPE     | 23                    | 20.35%     | 9                  | 24.32%     |
| misery/cheer          | 6                     | 26.09%     | 2                  | 22.22%     |
| antipathy/affection   | 17                    | 73.91%     | 7                  | 77.78%     |
| DIS/SATISFACTION-TYPE | 48                    | 42.48%     | 8                  | 21.62%     |
| ennui/interact        | 0                     | 0.00%      | 0                  | 0.00%      |
| dis/pleasure          | 48                    | 100.00%    | 8                  | 100%       |
| IN/SECURITY           | 18                    | 15.93%     | 6                  | 16.22%     |
| dis/quiet             | 11                    | 61.11%     | 5                  | 83.33%     |
| dis/trust             | 7                     | 38.89%     | 1                  | 16.67%     |
| DIS/INCLINATION       | 24                    | 21.24%     | 14                 | 37.84%     |
| fear                  | 4                     | 16.67%     | 1                  | 7.14%      |
| desire                | 20                    | 83.33%     | 13                 | 92.86%     |
| AFFECT-POLARITY       | 113                   |            | 37                 |            |
| positive-attitude     | 33                    | 29.20%     | 24                 | 64.86%     |
| negative-attitude     | 80                    | 70.80%     | 13                 | 35.14%     |

As can be seen in Table 5, there is a major difference in the amount of affect between the NYT and CD. In the NYT, dis/satisfaction accounts for the largest proportion (42.48%), followed by dis/inclination and un/happiness, both at around 21%, leaving in/security ranking third, at about 16%. In CD, dis/inclination takes up the largest proportion (37.84%).

Regarding the number of occurrences, un/happiness ( $n = 9$ ), dis/satisfaction ( $n = 8$ ) and in/security ( $n = 6$ ) are quite similar in terms of absolute frequencies. Following the polarity pattern of its judgment resources, the NYT again presents more negative resources (70.80%) than positive ones. CD, on the other hand, applies positive affect resources

much more than negative ones. To summarize, dis/satisfaction is the most applied affect sub-type in the NYT, while in CD dis/inclination ranks the first in proportion. However, in/security serves as the least preferred affect sub-type in both corpora. In addition, negative affects take the lead in the NYT, which is just the opposite of CD.

### ***Similarities and Differences***

By comparing similarities and differences in the distribution of attitudes in the NYT and CD, I explore possible connections between the strategic use of attitude sub-types and the underlying content/emotion/function-specific delivery of messages in news reports.

Both newspapers present a comparable distribution of judgment, appreciation, and affect resources. Specifically, judgment is foregrounded among the three attitude subsystems, with affect being the least preferred. Such shared distribution patterns may reflect that judgment resources are major devices to impose authorial positions in news discourse, and are thus more frequently applied than the other two systems. Such dominance of judgment in the appraisal resources, however, can be a threat to the objectivity of news items, as it violates the “reporter voice” configuration theorized in the appraisal framework. In such a view, the occurrence of authorial inscribed judgment should be minimized in hard news reporting (Sabao, 2016). A similar arrangement of judgment sub-types can be identified, with propriety ranking first and normality last. This is because the judicial and ethical evaluation of the participants’ behaviors in the Xinjiang Cotton news plays an important role in both publications.

The ranking of appreciation sub-types presented by both publications is similar, with valuation being the first, followed by reaction and composition. CD uses a larger proportion of valuation (64.58%) than the NYT (52.05%). However, its proportions of reaction (22.92%) and composition (12.50%) are smaller when compared with the percentages of reaction (30.41%) and composition (17.54 %) in the NYT. This may indicate a common focus on evaluating the social influence and individual judgment of the Xinjiang Cotton controversy.

In terms of the polarity of attitudes, both newspapers employ more negative attitude than positive attitude, presenting generally negative positions towards the discussed issue. Such a prevalence for negative polarity may shed light on the strategic use of attitude for certain message-delivering purposes. To be more specific, negative judgments dominate in both publications, and their proportions are only slightly higher in the NYT than in the CD. This may be explained by the fact that both publications tend to deliver their negative positions by evaluating the Xinjiang Cotton issue on ethical and judicial levels.

As for affect resources, the NYT presents more negative effects than positive ones, while the positive effects in CD outnumber the negative ones. Such a difference in affect may be explained by the difference in emotion embedded in the messages each newspaper intends to exert on its readers. Specifically, the NYT focuses on delivering the shared disapproval of sourcing Xinjiang Cotton among Western brands and sympathy towards the Uyghurians, who are depicted as victims of repression in China. This is in stark contrast with CD's focus on reflecting the high quality and popularity of Xinjiang Cotton products that have been recognized by Chinese consumers.

In terms of appreciation, both media outlets present a large proportion of positive attitudes, with CD being more positively oriented than the NYT. This is mainly because appreciation choices in both newspapers are used in the evaluation of China's leading role in cotton exporting, textile manufacture, and the global apparel market. Such evaluation, however, is conducted to support different authorial positions. In CD, it is used to assure its readers that the Xinjiang Cotton issue will not affect China's economy. In the NYT, on the other hand, it is presented as one of the factors that hinder any boycott against Xinjiang Cotton, which is evaluated as a righteous act to combat human right violations.

Overall, the main difference lies in the usage of sub-types under affect and judgment systems. The proportion of affect employed by the NYT is about three times higher than that in CD, which indicates that the NYT pays more attention to delivering emotional messages than CD. Specifically, in the distribution of affect sub-types,

dis/satisfaction takes up more than two fifths of the overall affects in the NYT, which is roughly twice the figure found in CD. This may reflect the NYT's intention to direct emotional messages more precisely to the feeling of dis/pleasure and dis/respect. Besides emotional direction, such distribution of affect in the NYT may also intensify its negative positions toward Chinese participants and its positive positions toward Western participants in the Xinjiang Cotton controversy. Indeed, as Sabao (2016) claims, affect could "further reinforce the position already assumed by the authorial voice." (p. 55) In comparison, the affect sub-categories in CD are more evenly applied, both in number and proportion, presenting a more balanced description of people's emotions/attitudes toward the event.

As for judgment sub-types, apart from the notable application of propriety shared by both media, the NYT places extra emphasis on using capacity to present the competitiveness of the Western apparel brands that supported the boycotting of Xinjiang Cotton. CD, on the other hand, frequently employs veracity in its discussion on the trustworthiness of the allegations about the forced labor issue. As for appreciation sub-types, the slight difference in their distribution between the NYT and CD may not reflect an apparent emotion-specific difference.

### ***Representations Constructed by the Attitudes***

Summarizing the results from the two publications, the representations constructed by attitude can be divided into eight categories, namely Chinese consumers, Uyghurs, Chinese brands, Western brands, Chinese media, Western media, China and its government, and the US and its government. Considering the complex relationship between attitudes and the representations they depicted (as mentioned in 3.2), the following examples were extracted as typical cases based on the eight categories of representation rather than attitude sub-types. The attitudes marked in bold are the most frequently applied and/or the most essential ones that contribute to the representations of the different parties involved. Since the meaning conveyed by an attitude can be affected by the context in which it lies,



the literal meaning and the contextual meaning of each attitude are thus compared.

- (1) (CD): ...as domestic consumers increasingly **favor** homegrown brands said industry experts.
- (2) (CD): Over the weekend, the Chinese public has continued voicing **outrage** on social media or in some cases staged protests starting on Wednesday...
- (3) (NYT): In this moment of **mass fever**, it can be hard to say where official propaganda ends and opportunistic profit seeking begins.
- (4) (NYT): Chinese state media outlets have overtly stoked the **outrage** with hashtags on social media and bold headlines.

In CD, the positive happiness affect, “favor”, which expresses people’s preference, depicts Chinese consumers as patriotic and enthusiastic supporters of domestic apparel brands. The representation of Chinese consumers is further developed as the executors of their right of speech, with “the Chinese public” being the agent of “voicing outrage”. Placed after the active verb “voicing”, the negative emotion exerted by the dissatisfaction “outrage” is reduced. This active narration justifies the public outrage as a result of people's spontaneous acts of expressing opinions on social media, which is also their legal right of speech (see discussions on the right of free expression online in Balkin, 2008; Jackson, 2014; Sorabji, 2021). The NYT does not, however, explicitly evaluate Chinese consumers. Instead, the unhappiness affect of “mass fever”, meaning irrational situation, is construed as indirectly shaping Chinese consumers as irrational and outraged patriots. Compared with the context of the dissatisfaction “outrage” in CD, the negative verb “stoked” is placed before “outrage”, which explicitly intensifies its negative emotion. In addition, “Chinese state media” is placed as the subject of the negative action “stoked the outrage” to attribute such public outrage to Chinese media.

To summarize, CD constructs Chinese consumers as patriotic, rational supporters of domestic brands and lawful executors of their

right of speech. In contrast, the NYT condemns them as irrational patriots controlled by Chinese state media. The latter is also portrayed as the cause of the public outrage.

The following examples show representations of Chinese Brands.

- (5) (CD): They said Chinese enterprises are **poised** to do well in part because of their relatively high production efficiency and manufacturing skills...
- (6) (NYT): Local players **better** know the abilities of the country's supply chains and how to use social media.

The positive security “poised” in CD, meaning “being completely ready”, portrays domestic apparel enterprises as competent manufacturers with bright prospects, which is supported by the later revelation of their high production capacity. In the NYT, the positive capacity “better” may adversely portray Chinese brands as speculators, whose advantage over Western brands comes from its closer relationship with Chinese media. This is evidenced in the frequent negative representation of Chinese media portrayed in the NYT, which has been mentioned in 4.3.1 and will be further analyzed in 4.3.6.

The following examples show representations of Western Brands.

- (7) (CD): However, the company [H&M] remained ambiguous about whether it would use Xinjiang Cotton, only stating that it **wants** to be "a responsible buyer"...
- (8) (CD): These companies operating in China **should strictly abide by Chinese laws**...
- (9) (NYT): ...It was also an opportunity for foreign companies to demonstrate their **support for human rights**.
- (10) (NYT): ... since apparently **fearful** of offending the Chinese government, some companies have proactively announced that they will continue buying cotton from Xinjiang

- (11) (NYT): The H&M uproar has had the **presumably unintended** effect of causing more Chinese Internet users to discuss the situation in Xinjiang.

Although the positive desire “want” (see Example 7) is used by H&M with the intention of being “a responsible buyer”—the message delivered is rather negative, considering the reference of H&M’s ambiguity before the attitude. In this regard, CD portrays the dual identities of Western brands (represented by H&M) as (a) merchants who want to profit from the Chinese market, and (b) evaders of presenting a clear stance on the forced labor issue. In another case, the positive propriety “should” (in Example 8) is used in CD to state requests for foreign companies to abide by Chinese laws. Such a statement casts light on another representation of Western brands as lawbreakers in China.

In comparison, applying the positive propriety “support for human rights” (in Example 9), the NYT depicts a positive representation of Western brands as supporters of human rights. Additionally, in the context where the disinclination, “fearful”, is used (see Example 10), the NYT evaluates not purchasing Xinjiang Cotton as an offense to the Chinese government. In this sense, Western brands are further presented as frustrated supporters of human rights due to the pressure from the Chinese government. Moreover, the positive appreciation “unintended” (in Example 11) is used by the NYT in defense of H&M, whose announcement initiated the dispute over the Xinjiang Cotton issue, to put off the company’s responsibility for the escalating issue.

To summarize, CD portrays Western apparel companies as law-breaking merchants in China. Conversely, the NYT defends Western brands as law observers and righteous defenders against human rights violations, but also espouses that the brands are frustrated by the pressure from the Chinese government.

The following examples show representations of China and the Chinese Government.

- (12) (CD): Although China is a **key** global cotton producer, it actually faces a cotton shortage.

- (13) (NYT): Government officials have sought to depict the outcry as **authentic**...
- (14) (NYT): Chinese officials are being careful **not to let** the anger **out of hand**.
- (15) (NYT): Mrs. Hua appeared to be playing on a phrase traced to Xi Jinping, China's top leader, who in demanding **loyalty** to the party, said in 2014 "Never allow eating the Communist Party's food and then smashing the Communist Party's cooking pot."

In CD, positive appreciation attitudes such as “key”, “irreplaceable”, and “leading” are frequently applied to construct China as a leading cotton producer in the apparel market, which is also acknowledged in the NYT through its application of similar appreciations. Nevertheless, the NYT places more emphasis on building a negative representation of China. This can be seen in the positive appreciation, “authentic”, which is applied to modify “the outcry” with Chinese “government officials” being the agents. It suggests that the outcry is, in fact, unauthentic. Similarly, the positive capacity, “not to let...out of hand”, is used to modify the same agents (Chinese officials). Attitudes like these shape the Chinese government as a manipulator of public opinion and controller of media. Moreover, “demanding”, a sometimes negatively connotative verb indicating a mandatory request, is used to modify the positive security attitude, “loyalty”, which constructs the Chinese government (or the Communist Party of China) as a dictator who “demands” absolute “loyalty” from its people.

In short, although both newspapers share the positive representation of China as a leading cotton producer in the apparel market, the NYT constructs China or the Chinese government as a manipulator of public opinion and a domineering dictator in the case of the latter.

The following examples show representations of the US and the US Government.

- (16) (CD): If the CIA should **want** to destabilize China, the best way to do it is to create unrest and join with those Uygurs in pushing the Han Chinese in Beijing...
- (17) (CD): Tom warned that the US is creating “a **dangerous** confrontation” with China.
- (18) (CD): The remarks came after the Chinese public voiced outrage upon finding out that some big international retail brands have chosen not to source cotton from the region over forced labor concerns **based on lies and false information**.
- (19) (CD): Those politicians have **never intended to verify the facts**, but instead have chosen to quote them to further their own political goals.

Attitudes that explicitly construct the representation of the US are all from CD. In the quotation of the speech made by a former American official (Example 16), the inclination attitude “want” is followed by the intended behavior “to destabilize China”. Such wording effectively portrays the US government (represented by the official) as a schemer who intends to cause destabilization in China by stirring up conflicts between ethnic Han and Uyghurs. Such negative representation can also be seen in the use of the negative social valuation, “dangerous”.

Apart from affect and appreciation resources, judgment attitudes are also employed to construct negative representations of the US and its government. Specifically, the negative veracity, “lies and false information”, indicates a lack of credibility in the forced labor concerns made by the official media outlets. Additionally, another negative veracity, “never, intended to verify the facts”, is used to modify the agents, “those politicians”, portraying US officials and their government as liars who distort facts and fabricate false information.

To summarize, CD portrays the US as an ill-intended troublemaker who aims to destabilize China, and as a liar who distorts facts and

fabricates false information, whereas the NYT does not seem to depict any explicit representation of its own country.

Example 20 illustrates a representation of Chinese Media.

- (20) (NYT): According to tests conducted by China Digital Times, internet platforms have been **diligently** controlling research results and comments related Xinjiang and H&M last week.

In the above example from the NYT, the positive tenacity construed by “diligently” is employed to modify the action of “controlling research results and comments”, which indicates that Xinjiang-related information and public voices are under the control of Chinese media platforms. Referring to the previous analysis of Example 2 and Example 4 for the CD, the representations of Chinese social media are depicted as platforms for people to voice their opinions. In comparison, the NYT tends to shape Chinese state media and social media as manipulators of public opinion controlled by the Chinese government.

Examples 21 shows a representation of Western Media.

- (21) (CD): his works are fraught with holes, misuse of data and **absurd** conclusions that demonstrate a clear political agenda, the report said.

The above example is extracted from a news report in the CD criticizing the credibility and authenticity of the research report written by Adrian Zenz, a German anti-China figure (see the report *Writer ripped over fallacies on Xinjiang* in Appendix II). A clear negative representation of Western media/reporters is shaped by the negative valuation of “absurd”, that is, an irresponsible news reporter who distorts facts and fabricates false information. However, no explicit representation of Western media constructed in the NYT is identified.

The following four examples show representations of Uyghurs.

- (22) (CD): “... Then cotton farmers will **suffer**,” Hua added.

- (23) (CD): Ultimately the large number of **vulnerable** cotton growers in the region were **no longer able** to get certificates from BCI.
- (24) (NYT): Labor activists were charged them with complicity in the **grotesque repression** of the Uyghurs.
- (25) (NYT): Authorities have used coercive labor programs and mass internment **to remold** as many as one million users Kazakhs and other largely Muslim minorities into model workers **obedient** to the Communist Party.

Both CD and the NYT depict negative representations of Uyghurs but from different perspectives. In CD, the insecurity construed by “suffer” and the incapacities signaled by “vulnerable” and “no longer able” represent the Uyghurs as the real victims of the boycott of Xinjiang Cotton. The NYT, on the other hand, tends to shape Uyghurs as sufferers of repression in China, as evidenced in the negative social valuation given by “grotesque”, which is applied to modify the negative propriety construed by “repression”. Echoing the use of positive security attitude in “loyalty” from Example 15, the positive tenacity construed by “obedient” reflects a negative contextual meaning of being meek, which shapes Uyghurs as inferior minorities controlled by the CPC/Chinese government.

In short, the Uyghurs in CD are framed as innocent victims who suffer due to the sanctions imposed on Xinjiang Cotton, yet they are framed as inferior minorities being maltreated and mentally controlled by the CPC/Chinese government in the NYT.

## Discussion

Focusing on the discursive construction of the various participants in the Xinjiang Cotton issue and the two social actors (China and the US) in the media coverage of Xinjiang Cotton, this paper explored how two opposing media outlets differed in the application of attitude resources and how different representations are constructed. Accordingly, the paper found a number of distinctive discursive strategies that function differently in each case.

In terms of the application of attitude resources, the examination of judgment, appreciation, and affect found that judgment was the major appraisal device in the sampled news discourse for the duration of the selected dates. As discussed previously (see section 4.2), the predominant proportion of judgment in both publications can threaten the objectivity of news coverage, because it violates the attitudinal profile proposed by Marin and White (2005), in which “reporter voice” should involve “no unmediated inscribed judgment, no authorial affect, and lower probability of unmediated appreciation.” (p. 178) Moreover, the variations in the employment of sub-types under affect and judgment systems account for how attitudes function differently between CD and the NYT, which may be related to the orientation of authorial positions in news items. One piece of evidence that supports this argument was found by Jakaza and Visser (2016), who identified the discrediting function of propriety that was foregrounded in the news reports.

The analysis also revealed contrasting representations of social actors. In CD, China is depicted as a united nation supported by patriotic citizens. CD also projects China as enacting favorable policies toward the Uyghurian minority and playing an irreplaceable role in cotton production and the global apparel market. The US, on the other hand, is depicted as a liar who fabricates and spreads false information to provoke global outrage against China. In contrast to the representation in CD, the NYT constructs China as an exploiter of Uyghurian labor and human rights and a manipulator of public opinion, while portraying America as a defender of human rights.

Such opposing representation also extends to the social groups relevant to the Xinjiang Cotton controversy. In CD, domestic brands are portrayed as competent manufacturers, and Western apparel companies are represented as lawbreakers. Chinese consumers are depicted as patriotic, rational supporters of local brands, and lawful executors of their right of speech, via social media. Western media outlets, on the other hand, are condemned as irresponsible news reporters who distort facts and fabricate false information. Uyghurs, the cotton growers and laborers in Xinjiang, are depicted as innocent victims who suffer from the sanctions on Xinjiang Cotton.



Contrasting representations are constructed in the NYT. Chinese apparel enterprises are negatively portrayed as inhumane manufacturers who exploit labor in Xinjiang and promote sales via propaganda on social media. Western brands, in comparison, are depicted as law observers and righteous defenders against human rights violations who are frustrated by the pressure from the Chinese government. Chinese consumers are shaped as irrational patriots controlled by Chinese state media, whereas Chinese media are constructed as manipulators of public opinion controlled by the Chinese government. Similarly, Uyghurs are evaluated as inferior minorities being exploited and mentally controlled by the CCP.

The opposing discursive construction of the two parties indicates that perhaps these two institutions develop an ideological picture of us and them in such a way that us is portrayed positively while them is portrayed negatively (Zhang, 2019). A few strategies can be concluded on how attitudes construct positive us representation and negative them representation in news settings. First, the employment of affect, especially negative affect, is used to in deliver and direct emotional messages, as can be seen in the NYT's larger proportion of affect than CD, as well as in its more frequent occurrence of dis/satisfaction sub-type. Second, judgment attitudes are mostly applied to increase the authoritativeness of narratives on ethical and judicial levels. The objectivity of news coverage, however, can be questioned. Specifically, propriety (how ethical someone is), veracity (how truthful someone is) and capacity (how capable someone is) are frequently employed in strengthening positive us-representations and negative them-representations. Third, positive attitudes can construct negative representations and vice versa. In this case, the representations depicted in the press are often more impressing, see the examples of "obedient" and "'intolerant' of all forms of human right violations" in the NYT.

What makes the current study unique is that it reveals the under/misrepresentation of Uyghur minority in the American and Chinese media and supports the findings made by previous researchers. In all the narratives in the NYT, Uyghurs were portrayed as no more than victims of forced labor and institutional repression imposed by

the Chinese government, which is in line with Ungerleider's (1991) results. Although both publications have depicted the working conditions of Uyghurian workers in Xinjiang, neither of them provides detailed and convincing descriptions of the routine life of Uyghurs that may indicate the real needs and challenges faced by the minority under the Xinjiang Cotton dispute. This aligns with Arslan et al.'s (2018) findings in their study on Uyghurs.

The two opposing media outlets also presented explicit authorial positions to achieve different purposes. For the NYT, it aims at casting the label of "committing exploitation and forced labor" upon China and the Chinese apparel industry to justify its call to boycott Xinjiang Cotton and relevant Chinese apparel brands. They most explicitly do this by using sensational wordings (e.g., genocide and human rights violations) repeatedly, without providing convincing evidence that supports its allegations. Its accusation of forced labor in Xinjiang can be questioned by the fact that no case of forced labor has been identified by the investigators from Best Cotton Initiative's Shanghai Branch, which was reported in both publications. For CD, it aims at proving its country not guilty, reassuring Chinese residents that the domestic economy remains unaffected, and firing back at the US by exposing what it deems as groundless slander. Enough evidence has been provided by CD to support the non-existence of forced labor or any form of repression that targets the Uyghur minority. However, it should be acknowledged that CD is so eager to present the evidence that it fails to draw a full picture of the Uyghurs to better support them, leaving a flaw that is later targeted or even distorted by its opposing media. One specific case occurs when the NYT evaluates those Uyghurs who denied the existence of repression in the workforce in an interview conducted by CD. The NYT framed them as being forced or threatened to say so, and evidences their unnatural, stiff facial expressions and body movements in front of the camera.

Similar to the statement by Arslan et al. (2018), the source and the detailed profile of Uyghurian speakers in both media outlets are rarely explicitly listed, resulting in the possibility that the authenticity of the content may be questioned. Due to the involvement of the Uyghur

minority in the Xinjiang Cotton issue (see discussion below), Uyghurs have been heavily covered in the analyzed news stories. However, their appearance in the press has dwindled sharply since March, 2022, indicating that the Uyghurs remain underrepresented in the media when it comes issues outside conflicts or disputes (Arslan et al., 2018).

From the perspective of intercultural communication, a sharp contrast between China's Confucianism and Western Individualism (Helle, 2016) can be seen from the different headlines and focuses of coverage. In the NYT, a specific organization or a group of people, such as "H&M", "YouTube Influencers", "N.B.A", and "One woman", are explicitly stated in the headlines, with the narration of these individuals taking up much coverage (take the report *One woman's journey through Chinese atrocities* as a typical example). Such individualized reporting is in line with Ting-Toomey's (2010) definition of Individualism, which emphasizes the importance of "I" over the importance of "we". CD, on the other hand, seldom refers to a particular group or institution in the headlines. Even the word "Uyghur", which explicitly addresses the very ethnic minority in the Xinjiang Cotton event, does not appear as well. Instead, the involved parties are addressed more inclusively by region and social sector, such as "people in Xinjiang", "Xinjiang Cotton growers", and "clothing firms". In contrast with the NYT's reporting on the limited themes of the fashion industry and the Uyghurs' "sufferings", CD intends to draw a fuller picture by covering more aspects from a macro perspective, including the influence on the global supply chain, the technology supports behind the cotton industry in Xinjiang, and the statistical evidence that refutes the accusations of forced labor. Such emphasis on the importance of "we" over "I" aligns with the nature of Confucianism which stresses reciprocity (Yum, 1988), as well as Max Weber's view of Chinese religion that focus on peace and harmony (Helle, 2016).

## Conclusion

In utilizing Martin and White's (2005) appraisal framework, this study investigated how two media outlets differed in their deployment of attitude resources and the discursive construction of social actors and

participants in the Xinjiang Cotton industry. It explored what discursive strategies attitudes served and how they worked in the construction of representations in news coverage. Despite a similar distribution pattern of the three attitude systems between the CD and NYT, the variation in the employment of affect and judgment sub-types may be related to different orientations of authorial positions. Three strategies were summarized for how attitudes construct discursive representations in news settings. Moreover, opposing representations of the two parties reflected positive us-representations and negative other-representations.

In terms of implications, this study expanded the scope of appraisal studies by exploring the distribution of attitude sub-types, the representations of social and ethnic groups, and the strategic uses of attitudes in media discourse from a micro perspective. It also contributed to news research on ethnic minorities by focusing on and revealing the representations of the Uyghurs in Chinese and US media coverage. Additionally, the results supported several previous findings, such as the shared strategic uses of attitudinal resources between the news media of different countries (Homayounzadeh & Mehrpour, 2013) and the representation of us versus them in news discourse (Arslan et al., 2018; Zhang, 2019). These implications could effectively arouse the awareness of critical evaluation among news readers.

In terms of limitations, this study is a tentative contrastive analysis of news reports under the appraisal theory, considering the limited sample size and the analysis of the attitude resources only, leaving the engagement and graduation resources uninvestigated. Additionally, the interpretation of the attitudes may be superficial due to the author's understanding of the context and its underlying cultural, and ideological values. Although this study has supported some previous findings, the results may not be generalizable to the analysis of other news reports from the New York Times and China Daily or the reports on the same event from other news publications. In order to develop a more comprehensive picture of the representation of smaller social groups, future research could be extended to the analysis of discursive strategies played by engagement and graduation resources in news reporting. With regard to the coverage of minorities in news discourse, existing

problems related to the underrepresentation or misrepresentation of ethnic minorities and the authenticity of news content are still haunting. Much remains to be done for further investigation into the above-mentioned research areas.

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## Appendix I

*Totals of News Reports During the Selection Process (excluding repetitive reports)*

| Search | Keywords          | Number of reports in NTY | Number of reports in CD |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
|        | “Xinjiang Cotton” | 16                       | 31                      |
| Add    | or “cotton”       | 1142                     | 291                     |
| Add    | and “Uyghur”      | 34                       | 37                      |
| Add    | or “Uyghurian”    | 34                       | 37                      |

## Appendix II

*Sources of Data*

| Category                  | New York Times                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | China Daily                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Introduction of the event | What is going on with China cotton and all of these clothing brands? (1544 words; 2021.3.29)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Boycott of Xinjiang Cotton years opposed (1155 words; 2021.3.26)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| H&M and its claims        | H &M faces spoil caught in China over stance on treatment of Uyghurs (638 words; 2021.3.24)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | False claims aim to hurt prosperity of Xinjiang (1810 words; 2021.3.29)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Political evaluation      | China fires up outrage machine as H&M spurns Xinjiang Cotton (1379 words; 2021.3.30)<br>Use of cotton from Xinjiang carries a cost (1876 words; 2021.4.6)<br>China strengthens its muscle to ban compliance with foreign sanctions ( 1768 words; 2021.6.11)<br>With a Musical, China Tries to Rewrite Its Oppression of Uyghurs (1181 words; 2021.6.4)<br>YouTube Influencers Are Tools In Beijing's Propaganda Blitz (2068 words; 2021.12.13) | Ban on Xinjiang Cotton called anti-China ploy (756 words; 2021.4.1)<br>Intentions of the West on shin??? must be questioned (805 words; 2021.4.1)<br>New US law only serves to harm people in Xinjiang (684 words; 2022.1.10)<br>Uniqlo sets example refusing to play US' game (406 words; 2022.1.10 )<br>West using lies to smear Xinjiang Cotton (892 words; 2021.4.19 ) |

## Appendix II

### *Sources of Data (continue)*

| Category                                              | New York Times                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | China Daily                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reaction of consumers, apparel brands and governments | Brands that criticize forced labor in China face consumer fury (1376 words; 2021.3.26)<br>Japan Is Finding It Harder to Stay Quiet on China's Abuse of Uyghurs (1255 words; 2021.9.23)<br>Vote Would Ban Goods Made by Forced Labor (1110 words; 2021.12.8)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Chinese consumers voice support for John cotton to refute smears (561 words; 2021.4.1)<br>Bid to weaken cotton sector fated to fail (794 words; 2021.3.31 )<br>Human rights expert supports claims in white paper on Xinjiang (505 words; 2021.7.17)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Consequent impact                                     | Global brands find it hard to untangle themselves from Xinjiang Cotton (1815 words; 2021.4.6)<br>Fashion retailers face inquiry over suspected ties to forced labor in China (904 words; 2021.7.2)<br>As China targets H&M and Nike, local brands see their chance (1271 words; 2021.4.6)<br>China's Forced-Labor Backlash Threatens to Put N.B.A. in Unwanted Spotlight (1162 words; 2021.4.9)<br>U.S. Bans Imports of Some Chinese Solar Materials Tied to Forced Labor (1300 words; 2021.6.24 )<br>U.S. Joins Allies to Punish Chinese Officials for Human Rights Abuses (748 words; 2021.3.25)<br>Uniqlo shirts were blocked at the U.S. border amid concern over forced labor in China. (297 words; 2021.5.19) | Boycott set to severely harm global supply chain (681 words; 2021.3.27)<br>More countries join China in rebuking Western claims (808 words; 2021.3.20)<br>Clothing firms looking to put best foot forward (1672 words; 2021.5.11)<br>Xinjiang Cotton growers buoyant as prices rise (2149 words; 2021.8.6 )<br>US consumers 'paying for' boycott of Xinjiang Cotton (738 words; 2021.12.27)<br>Despite challenges, opening-up in cotton will continue this year (465 words; 2022.1.15)<br>Xinjiang achieves growth in textile output and exports (564 words; 2021.11.18 ) |

**Appendix II***Sources of Data (continue)*

| <b>Category</b>                         | <b>New York Times</b>                                                                                                                                        | <b>China Daily</b>                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Depiction of individual life of Uyghurs | One woman's journey through Chinese atrocities (837 words; 2021.6.12)<br>China Is Forcing Birth Control On Muslim Women in Xinjiang (2323 words; 2021.12.20) | No 'forced labor' in industry, growers says (560 words; 2021.3.27)<br>Missile-maker gives Xinjiang Cotton a boost (492 words; 2021.4.2 ) |
| Critique of reporter/media              | 'We are very free': how China spreads its propaganda version of life in Xinjiang (1910 words; 2021.6.22)                                                     | Writer ripped over fallacies on Xinjiang (715 words; 2021.5.3)                                                                           |