

# The Representation of Traditional Chinese Culture in Emojis and Sticker Design

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Received Date: **18.11.2023**; Accepted Date: **05.02.2024**; Available Online: **19.03.2024**

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## ABSTRACT

Emojis and stickers design have become essential elements of digital communication, enabling users to convey emotions and ideas through concise visuals. Since these emojis and stickers are not only entertaining additions but also have a significant cultural impact, their design is vital in influencing cross-cultural interactions and viewpoints. Traditional Chinese culture, with its profound history and diverse heritage, occupies a significant place in the global cultural mosaic. Therefore, it is vital to comprehend how to faithfully represent traditional Chinese culture in these digital symbols in today's increasingly globalised society. This research delves into the portrayal of traditional Chinese culture in emoji and sticker design, scrutinising its impact on cross-cultural communication and perception. Employing a qualitative research approach encompassing content analysis and user perceptions through interviews, this study examines a broad spectrum of emoji and sticker collections available on prominent messaging platforms and social media. It analyses the visual elements, symbols, and motifs utilised in these designs. The insights garnered from this research will be invaluable for designers, developers, and digital platforms striving to create culturally inclusive and respectful communication tools. This study contributes to a deeper comprehension of how traditional cultural elements adapt and circulate in modern digital communication, either fostering or hindering cross-cultural understanding in our interconnected world. The findings also offer valuable guidance for designers, developers, and digital platforms.

**Keywords:** *Emoji, Sticker, Traditional Chinese culture, Digital communication.*

## INTRODUCTION

According to Miller (2018), various digital platforms around the world use millions of emojis every day. At the same time, Susanto (2018) also stated that these visual communication tools are very popular, with a staggering 380 million stickers exchanged daily on platforms like Facebook Messenger. In addition, data shows that approximately 90% of internet users worldwide use emojis or stickers in digital communication (Stefanescu, 2019). This information highlights the significant influence of stickers and emojis on contemporary digital conversation. As stressed by Zhou and Chen (2020) in their thorough study, the importance of emojis and stickers in revolutionising digital communication cannot be overestimated. This revolutionary evolution provides users with a dynamic and aesthetically stimulating way to convey a wide range of emotions, thoughts, and even cultural nuances. According to Yang (2021), the blending of traditional Chinese culture with the quick-paced world of digital media makes this evolution even more exciting. She highlighted that the digital sphere has been skillfully adopted by traditional Chinese culture, which is well known for its extensive historical tapestry and diverse practices, and it has cleverly combined pieces from its rich history to produce various types of emojis and stickers. Furthermore, Xiao (2023) pointed out that the design of these digital symbols is crucial in influencing cross-cultural interactions and views since they are not only fun additions but also have considerable cultural importance.

It is crucial to comprehend how traditional Chinese culture is accurately portrayed inside these digital symbols in the increasingly globalised society of today. This study seeks to explore how traditional Chinese cultural representations appear in emoji and sticker designs and to determine how these representations impact users' cross-cultural communication experiences. With the aid of content analysis and user perception interviews, this study makes an effort to explain the intricate details of these digital representations. It aims to shed light on the visual elements, symbols, and patterns typically seen in emoji and sticker collections in addition to investigating how users' impressions of traditional Chinese culture are affected by these images.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

With their ability to communicate emotions and cultural references across linguistic barriers, emojis and stickers have become a crucial aspect of digital communication (Sadia & Hussain, 2023). According to Yang (2021), the fascinating role of emoji and sticker representations of traditional Chinese culture in modern digital communication, which carries significant implications for cross-cultural understanding due to the rich historical heritage of this culture. The three sections of this literature study offer an overview of the major ideas and themes in emoji and sticker communication, traditional Chinese culture, and cultural representation in Emoji and Stickers.

### Emoji and Sticker Communication

Emoji and stickers have become essential parts of modern digital communication, completely changing how individuals express their feelings, opinions, and ideas in the digital age. According to the study conducted by George et al. (2023), these small, iconic images, which have their origins in Japanese culture and have achieved global popularity, have undergone a remarkable evolution. They serve as a concise and versatile means of expressing complex thoughts and emotions, which are often challenging to articulate using words alone (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019). Their wide use in digital communications is partly due to their capacity to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries. Furthermore, unlike emoji, stickers include more extensive and in-depth graphics that frequently represent complicated emotions, cultural

allusions, or even narrative sequences (De Seta, 2018). Xu (2022) argued that stickers provide users with a versatile and visually captivating means of communication. They provide a wider spectrum of expression than emoji and can represent humour, the spirit of a dialogue, or even tell a tale. The usage of stickers has become more widespread, particularly in messaging apps where users can choose from a wide variety of sticker packs to customise their interactions.

Emoji and sticker usage have significantly changed how people express themselves when using digital communication. The usage of stickers and emojis in online communication and human-computer interaction has received substantial research. A large number of studies show that stickers and emojis play an important role in promoting emotional expression. For example, Boutet et al. (2021) demonstrated that emojis and stickers provide a more expressive and complex way to convey feelings and reactions, enriching online conversations. Online conversations have become more interesting and culturally relevant because to the ability to use stickers to express humour, sarcasm, or cultural references. Emoji and stickers have developed into key components of digital storytelling, assisting users in narrating stories, exchanging experiences, and establishing common cultural allusions. In addition, one of the most important benefits of emoji and stickers, highlighted by George et al. (2023), is their capacity to promote cross-cultural communication. These visual signals enable users to express themselves and interact with others globally in a globalised society where people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can communicate effectively. This universality is evidence of their potency as tools for communication.

In conclusion, emoji and stickers are now essential components of contemporary digital communication. Stickers offer a more complex and expressive type of visual communication than Emoji, which offers a universal language of symbols. Users may now express feelings, reactions, and ideas with more depth and nuance thanks to their inclusion into digital dialogues, which has improved online relationships. Additionally, these visual tools have promoted cross-cultural communication, making it possible for people in the digital era from different backgrounds to connect and converse efficiently. In addition to transcending their cultural and linguistic limitations, emoji and stickers have changed how we communicate ourselves in the current era.

## **Traditional Chinese culture**

Chinese traditional culture is a rich storehouse of history and customs that have developed over many centuries. It affects a wide range of aspects, leaving an enduring imprint on the nation's personality and continuing to influence the ideas, attitudes, and behaviour of its citizens. Until today, traditional Chinese culture such as festivals, classical literature, ancient poetry, idioms, songs, prose, ethnic music, traditional drama, folk art, traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy have all influenced people's attitudes and behaviours (Yang, 2021). Several studies have shown that these traditional cultures can be incorporated into emoji design. For example, each traditional Chinese festival has its own unique customs and symbolic meanings. Festivals like the Lunar New Year (Chinese New Year), Mid-Autumn Festival (Moon Festival), and Dragon Boat Festival are not only celebrations but also moments for family reunion and emotional connection. The cultural significance and decorative elements of these holidays can serve as inspiration for emoji creators and sticker designers (Huo & Liu, 2023). In addition to this point, Wang and Huang (2023) pointed out that traditional Chinese folk arts such as paper-cutting artistry embroidery, and porcelain painting exhibit outstanding craftsmanship skills with exquisite complex patterns which can be integrated into emoji and sticker designs. According to Yang (2021), these cultural components might be used in stickers and emojis to communicate not only Chinese identity but also ideals that are shared by all people. China's traditional culture is made up of a polyhedron of inherited traditions, works of art, and philosophies. They can serve as an inspiration for more contemporary artistic expressions like emoji and sticker designs since they capture the essence of Chinese culture and its timeless allure. For one to appreciate the significance of how traditional Chinese culture is portrayed in emoji and sticker design, one

must first comprehend it (Chen, 2020). A fascinating topic for research and exploration is where tradition and modernity meet.

## **Cultural Representation in Emoji and Stickers**

Emoji and sticker design for cultural representation is a challenging and developing field, which involves the selection and adaptation of cultural symbols, icons, and patterns into the limited visual vocabulary of emojis and stickers (Kimura-Thollander & Kumar, 2019). Emojis and stickers can be effective tools for cultural expression and representation, enabling people to enjoy and share their heritage and generating a sense of pride and belonging, as emphasised by Chen (2020). The cultural meanings of symbols can differ greatly across communities and regions, forcing designers to take into account various viewpoints. However, without careful design and interpretation, they can also reinforce stereotypes or cause misunderstandings (Kimura-Thollander & Kumar, 2019).

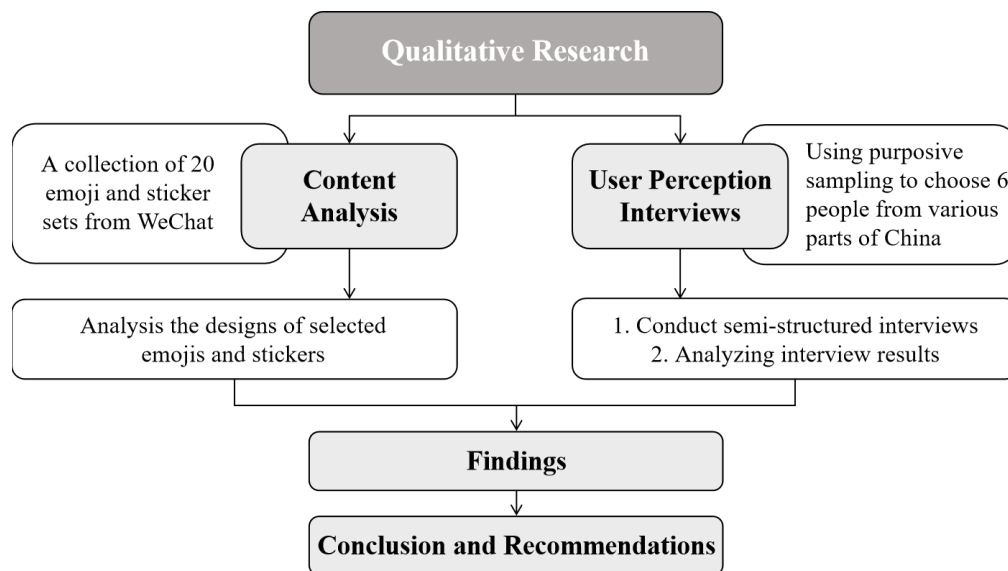
Within the larger framework of cultural representation in digital communication, the portrayal of traditional Chinese culture through emojis and stickers offers a distinctive case study. These visual forms can incorporate a wide range of symbols and ideas from traditional Chinese culture. It also has the duty to fairly represent the breadth and diversity of Chinese heritage (Yang, 2021). Evaluating the cultural influence of digital communication tools requires an understanding of how traditional Chinese culture is represented through emojis and stickers, as well as how users interpret these representations. It shines light on the difficulties of intercultural communication and the possibilities for emojis and stickers to facilitate or obstruct understanding in a globalised environment.

Moreover, from a semiotic perspective, the study of emojis and stickers becomes particularly interesting in the context of traditional Chinese culture. Saussure (1989) put forward the concept of "semiotics" for the first time in "Course in General Linguistics". He pointed out that a sign is a whole produced by the connection of the signifier and the signified. Pierce, the founder of semiotics, divided the relationship between signifier and the signified into "Icon", "Index" and "Symbol" in more detail (Guo, 2004). From the perspective of symbol form, emojis and stickers in the network is a kind of visual symbol, which is a visually recognized impression symbol, which can convey language and emotion, and be used to establish interpersonal relationships on the network (Wu, 2023). Semiotics is the study of signs, symbols, and how they are understood. It offers a useful framework for comprehending how these visual components communicate cultural meaning (Alshenqeeti, 2016). Emoji and sticker creators must take into account not only the visual components but also the cultural and social environment that influences how these symbols are interpreted. Since the meaning of an emoticon or sticker might vary depending on the viewer's cultural background, semiotics is a crucial lens through which to evaluate these representations (Adams, 2017).

Emoji and stickers have, in conclusion, proven essential to digital communication, bridging linguistic divides and providing a singular platform for cultural representation. It would be worthwhile to learn more about the cultural significance of stickers and emojis. Traditional Chinese culture offers an intriguing case study for how these technological instruments can affect cross-cultural encounters because of its rich history and symbolism. This literature review lays the groundwork for additional investigation into the complexities and ramifications of depicting Chinese culture in emoji and sticker design.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In accordance with the research proposed by Creswell and Creswell (2017), a qualitative research approach was carefully chosen since it was most suited for exploring the many intricacies of cultural representation in the context of emoji and sticker design. Interviews with users about their perspectives and content analysis make up this multidimensional approach's essential components. By allowing for a thorough evaluation of how traditional Chinese culture is portrayed in emoji and sticker designs, content analysis offers a solid framework for comprehending the visual and symbolic aspects used. In parallel, user perception interviews explore into the dynamic world of cross-cultural digital communication by eliciting insights from users about how they experience, interact with, and understand various cultural representations. By using a dual-method approach, this study aims to provide a thorough examination of the complex interactions between design decisions and user perception in the field of cultural sticker and emoji design, shedding light on the wider implications of such representations in modern digital communication. The specific research method framework is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Research Methodology Framework**

### **Content Analysis**

The content analysis approach used in this study is based on tried-and-true methods used in social and cultural studies (Krippendorff, 2018). This approach involves a systematic examination of visual components, symbols, and patterns utilised to symbolise traditional Chinese culture in the collected emoji and sticker sets.

According to data from March (2023), WeChat stands as one of China's most popular messaging apps, making it a valuable source for this study. To conduct a comprehensive content analysis, a collection of 20 emoji and sticker sets representing aspects of traditional Chinese culture was taken from WeChat in order to undertake a thorough content research. Each emoji or sticker was meticulously scrutinised for its use of colours, figures, elements, and thematic choices. Researchers identified and documented the visual components, symbols, and patterns used to symbolise traditional Chinese culture by examining the designs of the amassed emojis and stickers. This required analysing the selections made for each design's hues, figures, elements, and themes. The study team sought to find common themes and patterns in the representation of traditional Chinese culture through a careful analysis of the collection. This entailed

classifying designs according to prevalent cultural components and aesthetic movements. The investigation also considered the cultural context of the emoji and sticker designs, including their historical and cultural authenticity as well as their ability to reinforce stereotypes or provide misleading information.

### User Perception Interviews

To better explore user perceptions of the representation of traditional Chinese culture in emoji and sticker designs, semi-structured interviews were done in conjunction with the content analysis. Purposive sampling procedures were used to choose the participants for these interviews about user perceptions, guaranteeing a variety of viewpoints. Based on inclusion and exclusion criteria in Table 1, six people from various parts of China took part in these interviews; their identities were properly anonymised and marked with the letters P1 through P6 to ensure anonymity.

**Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria of Participant**

No	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1	Frequent Users of Stickers and Emojis	Non-Users of Stickers and Emojis
2	Participants should identify as Chinese	Individuals who do not have a significant cultural connection to China
3	Age 18 to 40 years old, the primary user group for emoji and sticker (Yao, 2021).	

The semi-structured interviews were created to allow for flexible exploration of the participants' ideas on how traditional Chinese culture is represented in emoji and sticker designs and to encourage open-ended talks. Emoji and sticker usage, perceptions of traditional Chinese cultural representations, and interactions with cultural representations were the main topics discussed in these interviews. Participants were first questioned about their habits and experiences with utilising stickers and emojis in digital interactions. This included inquiries on usage frequency, preferred software or platforms, and particular contexts in which they utilise stickers and emojis. Second, participants were urged to express their opinions and sentiments regarding the way traditional Chinese culture is portrayed through emojis and stickers. This includes learning about how they felt about the truthfulness, sincerity, and cultural sensitivity of these depictions. Finally, the interviews explored participants' first-hand encounters with cross-cultural digital communication utilising stickers and emojis that incorporate traditional Chinese cultural features. Participants were urged to share particular occasions in which they interacted with people from various ethnic backgrounds and how these representations affected those encounters.

The semi-structured format of these interviews allowed for a thorough examination of the participants' points of view while also allowing for the discovery of any new themes or insights (Magaldi & Berler, 2020). A deeper knowledge of how consumers interact with and perceive traditional Chinese culture within the context of digital communication through emojis and stickers was provided by the information acquired through these interviews, which supplemented the content analysis findings.

## FINDINGS

### Diversity, Symbolism, and Artistic Styles in Traditional Chinese Emojis and Stickers

Table 2 shows the selected 20 emojis and sticker sets. Via content analysis, these emojis and stickers featuring elements of traditional Chinese culture revealed four key findings.

**Table 2. 20 selected emojis and sets of stickers**

No.	Emojis	No.	Sticker sets	No.	Sticker sets	No.	Sticker sets
1		6	 新年祝福春节大字	11	 兔年春节快乐	16	 兔八爷新年3
2		7	 猪你新年快乐	12	 甜兔酱春节篇	17	 中秋祝福雪萌兔4
3		8	 糖宝虎新年春节	13	 元宵节快乐大字	18	 中秋祝福雪萌兔篇
4		9	 端午大粽子	14	 吉祥鼠的春节	19	 剪纸风格日常表情a
5		10	 小鸚鵡bebe新年篇	15	 新年剪纸拜年	20	 你的红包会说话

(Source: WeChat App, 2023)

First is the diversity of cultural themes. Emojis generally represent traditional culture in relation to festivals due to system restrictions. For instance, the emojis in figure 2 depict red envelopes, prosperity, good fortune, and fireworks, all of which are customary Chinese New Year celebrations, from left to right. As opposed to this, sticker sets cover a wide range of traditional Chinese cultural themes. Popular ones include traditional festivals (such as the stickers in Figure 3 depicting the Lunar New Year theme and Figure 4 featuring Dragon Boat Festival themes), various types of cuisine (such as zongzi in Figure 4), traditional clothing (as seen in Figures 3 and 4 with cartoon characters wearing traditional Chinese attire), and so on. By providing users with a huge selection of symbols and phrases, this diversity showcases the depth and richness of Chinese culture.



**Figure 2. Emoji related to Chinese culture in WeChat**

(Source: WeChat App, 2023)



**Figure 3. Chinese New Year Wishes Sticker sets**  
(Source: WeChat Sticker Gallery, 2023)



**Figure 4. Emoji related to Chinese culture in WeChat**  
(Source: WeChat Sticker Gallery, 2023)

The second is the application of distinct symbolic patterns and meanings. The blending of traditional Chinese symbols and patterns into emoji and sticker designs is a standout example of how different symbolic meanings and patterns are used in these designs. These symbols, which include things like Chinese knots, gold ingots, and the auspicious colour red, are deeply ingrained in Chinese culture and each has a plethora of symbolic meanings. The emoji and sticker sets' deliberate integration of these symbols elevates them beyond simple representations of Chinese culture and transforms them into carriers of fortunate messages that ingrain cultural richness into their very being. This imbues them with a deeper layer of cultural significance, rendering them not just visually appealing but also profoundly meaningful and engaging for users. This provides them with a deeper cultural value, which renders them more relevant and compelling to consumers while also making them more visually appealing (Liu, 2018).

The third factor is the artistic style, with noticeable differences in the art styles of emojis and various sticker sets. While other designs adopt more contemporary and funky aesthetics, some designs take a more conventional and classical one (Figure 5). A wide range of user tastes and cultural understandings are catered to by this aesthetic diversity. Users can pick from a variety of expressive forms, depending on whether they like a more traditional and timeless representation of Chinese culture



or a modern and humorous version. Emojis and stickers representing traditional Chinese cultural features are included into daily communication in a flexible and unrestricted manner to accommodate users' needs (Yang, 2021).



**Figure 5. Rabbit Year Spring Festival Stickers in Different Styles**  
(Source: WeChat Sticker Gallery, 2023)

Overall, the investigation shows that most emoji symbols and sticker designs have a high level of historical and cultural correctness. This precision may be seen in the authentic visuals, which are depicted in great detail, and the faithful rendering of the symbolic meanings that are closely related to Chinese traditional practises and aesthetics. These emoji and sticker sets are real due to their dedication to historical and cultural correctness, which makes them a trustworthy and respectful portrayal of Chinese culture.

### **Bridging Cultures and Fostering Understanding of Traditional Chinese Culture**

The user perception interviews gave us important new information on how people view and use emoji and sticker representations of traditional Chinese culture. There are four major discoveries.

First off, stickers and emojis act as a bridge across cultures. Their universal appeal crosses linguistic boundaries, making them priceless tools for promoting intercultural dialogue (George et al., 2023). Emojis and stickers with images from Chinese culture, in particular, act as catalysts for important conversations and can be considered as doors to knowing and respecting Chinese traditions. Participant P1 mentioned that

*“The use of stickers and emojis can serve as visual conversation starters. My international acquaintances frequently express interest when they see me using a sticker commemorating the spring celebration. In response to their inquiries, we have the chance to talk more in depth about our culture. It's like being acquainted with Chinese customs in a welcoming way.”*

It may be argued that emojis and stickers are the perfect way to introduce and promote Chinese culture because of their visual character. People from many backgrounds can learn about and delve deeper into the rich fabric of Chinese traditions through these vivid and passionate emblems. Whether it's a Chinese knot, the Chinese paper-cut pattern, symbolic red lanterns, or any of the other Chinese zodiac animals, these visual expressions neatly and easily capture the spirit of Chinese heritage and culture. Emojis and stickers' capacity to cross linguistic and geographic boundaries is one of its many important benefits for communicating aspects of Chinese culture. These symbols communicate generally recognised feelings, concepts, and cultural nuances whether or not you can read or speak Chinese. This universality inspires people from many backgrounds to have discussions about Chinese culture, igniting their interest and creating a sense of community.

Emojis facilitate emotional expressiveness, which is the second discovery. Beyond the constraints of words alone, the use of emojis and stickers in communication has revolutionised the way people express their emotions and cultural identity (Mei, 2019). In the digital age, these graphical components have developed into potent instruments for self-expression, allowing people to convey their emotions, opinions, and cultural affiliations more clearly than before. Jin et al. (2022) have also brought up this viewpoint. The fervour with which people embrace emojis depicting Chinese New Year is one notable illustration of this phenomena. The emojis used to express this yearly holiday serve as a way to spread its joy, excitement, and cultural significance to the millions of people who participate in it throughout the world. Users can improve their communications by adding these festive emojis to them rather than just text, which will enable them to more effectively portray the joy and celebration of Chinese New Year. As participant P2 noted that

*" I make use of the festive emojis, such as the ones with the lanterns, fireworks, and red envelopes, during Chinese New Year. With friends who are far away, I can still express my enthusiasm and excitement to them this way. It excels words in every way."*

Emojis and stickers are somewhat equivalent to a universal language that add a visual and emotional component to communication, allowing users from different racial and ethnic backgrounds to connect more deeply. These digital symbols, which can be used to indicate joy, grief, love, or cultural pride, have become a crucial aspect of contemporary communication, enhancing talks with a wider range of emotions and cultural subtlety.

Authenticity matters is the third point. Recent years have seen a considerable increase in the popularity of stickers and emojis that faithfully portray Chinese culture. This increase in popularity can be ascribed to participants' conviction that authenticity raises these visual expressions' cultural worth, which makes them more significant in online conversations. Participant P3 made this point clear that

*" Authenticity is important since it gives these visual representations more dimension. Emojis and stickers that truly represent our culture are like digital heirlooms that keep our customs alive. The talks we have become more authentic and meaningful as a result of our culture."*

Growing understanding and respect of other cultures in the digital age is a significant factor influencing the adoption of culturally accurate emojis and stickers. Online chat participants from various backgrounds frequently look for visual cues to express their feelings, thoughts, and cultural identity. Jia (2021) emphasised that it is important to capture the essence of Chinese traditions, symbols in Chinese emojis and stickers, which will resonate strongly with users. Authenticity plays a crucial role in this phenomenon. Users develop a stronger sense of empathy for the sender and the content when they come

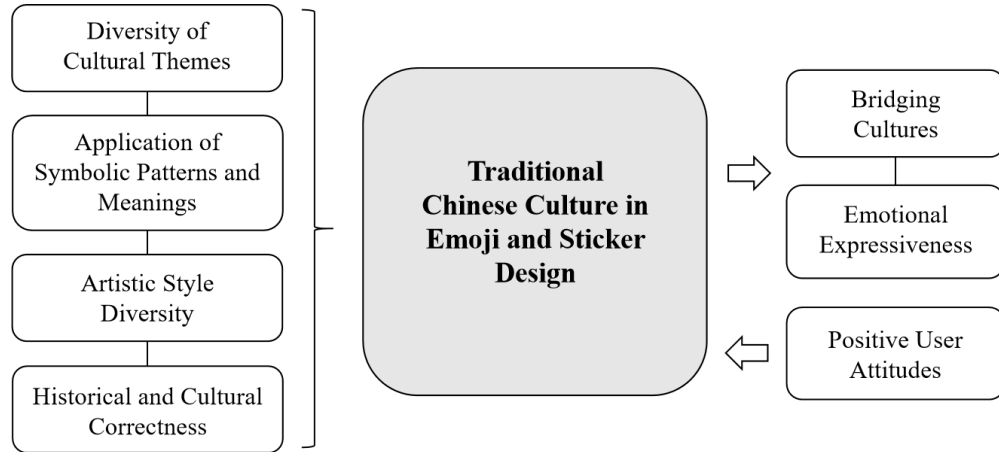
across emojis and stickers that accurately depict Chinese culture. This association is based on the understanding that the visual expressions faithfully represent Chinese traditions, beliefs, and experiences. Authenticity creates a respect for and awareness of the culture that is being represented, making the online conversation more meaningful and culturally enlightening. Furthermore, the wider trend of promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity in digital communication can be connected to the popularity of genuine Chinese emojis and stickers. Users actively seek out visual expressions that adhere to these ideals as they become more aware of the need to avoid cultural appropriation and stereotypes. Yang (2021) also mentioned a similar point of view in her research. She emphasised that emoticon designers should fully grasp and comprehend the profound connotation of good traditional culture, renounce the influence of materialism, and create visual symbols that really represent the intention of traditional Chinese culture. Emojis and stickers that are truly Chinese offer a respectful and welcoming approach to express and enjoy Chinese culture.

Lastly, participants generally have a positive attitude towards the portrayal of Chinese culture in emojis and stickers. They appreciate the efforts taken to authentically represent their cultural history and the attention to detail. The majority of participants think these representations are courteous and helpful for fostering intercultural understanding. Some participants emphasised the educational importance of these representations, particularly for users who are not Chinese. They contend that including cultural references in emojis and stickers helps clear up misconceptions and encourage cultural awareness. For instance, participant P5 pointed out that

*"It's kind of like a little window into our culture. Seeing these emojis and stickers can pique someone's interest in China who may not be very familiar with the country. They might inquire and discover more about our practises and traditions. It's like an enjoyable, nonthreatening method of fostering cross-cultural understanding."*

The use of emojis and stickers integrated into traditional culture in communication can arouse audience emotions and psychological resonance, while promoting the spread of culture to the outside world, as underlined by Yao and Song (2021).

In summary, as shown in figure 6, this study has presented that emoji and sticker designs are effective methods for conveying traditional Chinese culture because they offer a variety of subjects, include symbolic meanings, and accommodate different artistic styles. Additionally, authenticity and positive user attitudes contribute to their effectiveness in promoting cultural awareness and intercultural dialogue. Those emojis and stickers promote understanding and connections between cultures by acting as both cultural ambassadors and vehicles for emotional expression.



**Figure 6. Summary of findings**

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The few shortcomings of this study should be addressed in subsequent investigations. First, this study's content analysis is based on a relatively small sample of 20 WeChat sticker and emoji sets. The spectrum of cultural manifestations in digital communications may not be fully represented by these collections, despite the fact that they were chosen to reflect different facets of traditional Chinese culture. The phenomenon might be better understood with a larger, more varied sample. Moreover, WeChat, a well-known messaging app in China, and its emojis and stickers were the main topics of the content analysis. The emojis and stickers used to represent Chinese culture may vary between platforms and geographical areas. For instance, the emojis in the Chinese social media site Bilibili were mentioned in a study by Zhang et al. (2022), while De Seta (2018) discussed the emojis and stickers in QQ, another Chinese social media platform. With care, the results should be extrapolated to different platforms or cultural settings. The qualitative character of the interviews made it difficult to generalise the results to a larger audience, even while user perception interviews gave insightful information about how people interpret and utilise emojis and stickers. The study did not examine any differences in how users from various cultural backgrounds interacted with Chinese cultural emojis and stickers in terms of cognition. Future research in this field could conduct cross-cultural comparison studies to get a better grasp of how emoji and sticker expressions affect Chinese culture. Discover how various ethnic groups perceive and engage with Chinese cultural stickers and emojis. Understanding how these representations affect cross-cultural communication and the likelihood of cross-cultural misunderstanding will help us better understand how emojis and stickers can advance cultural understanding and harmony on a global scale. Again, creating design standards for emoji and sticker representations that are culturally inclusive may be a worthwhile future endeavour. Design professionals can use these standards to produce respectful, real-world, and instructive representations that advance cultural understanding in digital communications. By taking into account these aspects, it may be able to better understand how emojis and stickers influence intercultural dialogue in the future and promote cultural diversity in the digital era.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study examined the intricate representation of traditional Chinese culture in emoji and sticker design, shining light on its significant influence on intercultural communication and perception. To thoroughly investigate how Chinese culture is represented in these digital symbols, the study used a qualitative research methodology that included content analysis and user perception interviews. The content analysis of the traditional Chinese-themed emoji and sticker sets showed a wide range of cultural topics, symbols, and aesthetic preferences. It emphasised the significance of authenticity and historical precision in the creation of these representations, ensuring a respectful and significant portrayal of Chinese heritage. Furthermore, the information gleaned from the interviews highlighted how effective emoticons and stickers are at bridging cultural divides. The feedback from the participants demonstrates how well these symbols span linguistic divides and foster cross-cultural understanding. Participants expressed their gratitude for the emotional depth these symbols provide to digital communication, enabling them to successfully communicate feelings, cultural identity, and complexity. Since they increased user respect and admiration for different cultures, authentic depictions were highly regarded.

Overall, this study advances knowledge on how traditional Chinese culture adapts to and circulates in contemporary digital communication, promoting or impeding cross-cultural understanding in our globally interconnected society. The results highlight the significance of authenticity, diversity, and cultural sensitivity in the creation of emoji and stickers and provide insightful advice for designers, developers, and digital platforms aiming to produce communication tools that are culturally inclusive and respectful.

The crucial role of emojis and stickers in influencing cross-cultural relationships will grow as the digital world develops. Future studies in this field should examine how these representations affect users from different cultural backgrounds and create standards for designing emoji and sticker images that are inclusive of all cultures. This will not only deepen our understanding of how visual symbols promote cultural awareness on a worldwide scale, but it will also support the digital age's efforts to cultivate cultural variety and concord.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to the successful completion of this study project. During the user perception interviews, the participants generously shared their expertise and experiences, without which it would not have been possible to conduct this study. It also shows appreciation for the guidance and support provided by the advisors during the research process. Last but not least, we would like to show our gratitude to the numerous academics whose work formed the basis for our analysis, especially those in the fields of emoji and sticker communication, traditional Chinese culture, and cultural representation in digital communication.

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