International Student Mobility: Policy and Implications in Chinese Higher Education

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Abstract. China is emerging as a new destination for higher education sector over the past 10 years, as a result of its growing economy great research facilities and a warm welcoming culture. The influx of international students into the Chinese institutions of higher education has exponentially increased over the past years. To understand the short-term movement and contentment of the international students undertaking various courses in Chinese universities, a research was conducted to identify the source of contentment. It was a quantity-based research which entailed the use of questionnaires to collect data from a sample of 772 students distributed in 26 major universities in China. First, we used an exploratory factor analysis to identify the important factors from a range of variables. Thereof a logistic regression was used to identify the factors that determine the overall international student's satisfaction. As a result, a number of themes came up such as financial aid, living conditions, and service facilities. This research reveals how the determination to foster international student satisfaction and their increasing numbers as well as retention through improvement of these factors.

Introduction

The fast-economic growth in Asia has been the major factor that imposes the increase in education trade, since Asian countries such as china, japan, Malaysia and Singapore have illustrated the importance of education in fast tracking economic growth. Constant development in Asia continues to increase the demand for education. This trade has provided a range of choices when it comes to choosing an education as the education trade in the region increases.

International student mobility is significantly important for the economy and higher education as the main contributor to the national capital and economic development. In 2014, there are five million students enrolled in education outside of their home countries. In 2000, the number of international students reached 2.1 million studied abroad more than triple the number in 1990. China has made significant efforts to attract a large percentage of international students from worldwide. In 2002, the number of international students studying in Chinese universities reached to 85829. Afterward, in 2017, the number of international students studying in China has reached 442,773[1]. International student mobility to Chinese higher education institutions remarkably increased in the past few years. International students such as Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Japan sent a large number of students to study in Chinese universities.

Our understanding of the degree of international student’s general fulfillment contemplating in Chinese colleges' is solid, regardless of huge international student’s quick development throughout the most recent decade. Moreover, there is an absence of data about levels of fulfillment between the international students expected in Chinese instructive foundations and what they encountered. In addition, this examination established that international students from Asia especially, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Magnolia, Russian Federation, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, may...
accomplish more fulfillment than other worldwide understudies then other remote international students who are all the more socially divergent from individuals from the host populace because of the idea of social and authentic closeness to the home to the host nation. In the best of our insight, there is an absence of concentrate that has decided this issue inside China. In this manner, we distinguished that Chinese colleges have extremely solid potential to pull in significantly more abroad understudy over the world and especially from the Asian jumper's way of life circle, furthermore, the district is also one of the most powerful locales regarding political soundness and financial improvement.

Many developed and developing countries improving and consolidating their higher education internationalization plans to attract foreign students[23]. While developed countries have been attracted a significant number of international students from Asian countries particularly, from China and India[6]. Historical English-speaking countries (UK, Australia, USA) still providing significant internationalized education[7]. The pattern of international students’ mobility has begun to other emerging competitors such as China, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, and Malaysia[8]. The literature has substantially been consecrated to understanding foreign students within historical higher education market[9-11] much little known about new emerging competitors, specifically non-speaking higher education destination[12] of the emerging competitors of higher education.

Literature Review

Nowadays, student satisfaction is a complicated concept, comprise several dimension[13] define student satisfaction is associated with education and experiences. Whereas describe satisfaction is the total of student’s beliefs, attitudes, and behavior that outcome from the sum of the all incentives that student takes from using the blended system. Recently, the competition among emerging markets in the higher education intensively increased to attract international talent to their universities and increase their market share[14, 15]. Many universities now offering unique and biolinguistics courses and focused more on student satisfaction[16]. Student satisfaction has an important and positive impact on fundraising arranging different academic and extra curriculum activities also student motivation [13]. Student mobility and satisfaction are short-term attitudes, resulting from an assessment of a student’s educational expertise and efficiencies[17]. Student loyalty is a positive antecedent[18]. Previous research shows that student satisfaction may attract new students by engaging in friendly communication to inform friends and acquaintances and back to the university to take other subjects[19, 20]. Moreover, pursing student satisfaction and preferences plays a vital role in using various resources effectively and efficiently[21]. To attract international students from worldwide the Chinese government, take initiatives for the first time in 1997 the Chinese government council (CSC) launched establishing government scholarship for foreign students. The Chinese government officials disclose the country's goals of importing foreign students in repositioning the Chinese higher education in the world and its diplomatic strategy[22].

Student Satisfaction and Retention Model (SSRM)

Student satisfaction and retention model is a general retention model widely using to explain and consider the impact of a distinctive set of variables to illustrate student retention higher education in situations. [25] Describe the measure of student satisfaction and retention model comprise a large set of explanatory variables that were related to student satisfaction. They investigated the model and figured out the links between advising staff performance, faculty performance and classes and believe that these variables were the most important and influencing students’ motivation and
experience with university, which impact on whole student satisfaction. Satisfaction level is determined by the difference between performance and the service perceived by the consumer and what consumer anticipate.²⁶

Data and Methodology

Data for this research were collected using self-administered questionnaires from a sample of international students who are studying at the university level in China in 2018. The international student satisfaction factors and conceptual framework of this study are based on the literature review. This research employs the survey responses of 772 foreign students from 25 countries that are studying at 22 Chinese universities. The questionnaire was designed based on previous studies and literature review to obtain the objectives of the research. A pilot study of the questionnaire was first conducted and the Cronbach’s Alfa was 83% of foreign students that were enrolled at the author’s university. Slight changes were implemented before it distributed among international students to other Chinese universities. Foreign student organizations from different universities that had such organizations where communicated and also asked to assist author the questioners to their members.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

A conceptual framework and research hypothesis of this study was based on the literature review previously discussed. Therefore, the relationship of every individual factor (explanatory variables) and the overall satisfaction of international students’ (response variable) and also the possible sign of relationship has been explained in the conceptual model as shown in (Fig. 1). Here all variables are correlated except employment opportunity and using advanced technology. Here it is notable that Factor analysis is the perfect model to identify the correlation between variables. The conceptual framework and hypothesis of this study as follows:

H₁. All 15 variables (satisfaction and motivation in academic and education quality and research, motivation towards learning, Chinese culture and food, ability to understand chinese language, facilities given by the university, health insurance policy, short-term academic mobility, financial aid, easy migration policy, accommodation and living expenses, Chinese history. H₁. The two factors (employment opportunity, and using advanced technology) are not correlated and have a negative relationship with overall students’ satisfaction H₃. In our third hypothesis is gender (Male and female). The aim of chosen gender variable was because of the researcher want to find out if there are differences man and woman variable although the gender variable is statistically significant and there was not found any differences in the gender variable.

Table 1. Results of Probit and Logit ordered regression.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall satisfaction</th>
<th>Ordered Logit</th>
<th>Ordered Probit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef.</td>
<td>Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall satisfaction</td>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>0.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities given by university</td>
<td>0.328</td>
<td>0.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial aid (scholarship)</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td>0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy migration policy</td>
<td>0.186</td>
<td>0.107</td>
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</table>
The result indicating that the increase of one unit in short-term academic mobility in a 0.324 unit increase in the ordered log-odds put in a higher class of overall student satisfaction while other variables in the model retained constant.

The result also shows that international students’ level of Chinese language understanding and the study duration in Chinese universities are discovered to be statistically significant at the level of 1% and 5% levels. For example, the outcome shows that the increase of one unit (scale) in the international students’ capability of understanding Chinese language could increase his/her overall satisfaction by a 0.186 unit rise in the ordered log-odds while the remaining variables are constant in the model.

Similarly, international students were asked how they are satisfied with their tuition fee and living expenses in China. The results indicated that we could except a 0.336 increase in the log-odds of overall international student satisfaction with every single unit increase one unit in the international student’s tuition fee and living expenses satisfaction, while other variables keep constant in the model. The variable health facility also found to be statistically significant at 5% level. This presumed that a one unit rise in international students’ satisfaction in health facility shall increase international student’s overall satisfaction by 0.255 unit in the ordered log-odds put in a higher class of overall international students’ satisfaction while the other variables keep constant in the model.

The study revealed the Gender (male equals 1 and female equals 2) has found statistically insignificant in this study, it means that gender has no role in influencing international students’ overall satisfaction. Other studies show by [26] the higher education institutions in Singapore the male students are more satisfied than the female with quality education services they received than their female counterparts. The possibility might be that Chinese universities and government commitment to deliver equal opportunity to both male and female. Finally, the study reveals that international students’ satisfaction motivation towards learning Satisfaction and living arrangement with Chinese food was found to be statistically significant at the level of 1 percent and 5%. The result found that a one unit raise in the international student’s motivation towards learning Satisfaction and living arrangement with Chinese food would raise his/her overall satisfaction by a 0.314 unit raise in the ordered log-odds while other variables are in the model remained constant.

**Conclusion**

Understanding the factors influencing international students’ satisfaction could facilitate Chinese education providers and the government to improve and develop their programs to better satisfy potential overseas customers in order to attract more international students to China. Therefore, the
primary objectives of this study were (1) to understand influential factors that have positive effect on international students’ overall satisfaction toward Chinese higher education, (2) to examine the short-term academic mobility of international students in China, and (3) to provide recommendations for both Chinese higher education institutions and the government. The outcomes from the descriptive statistics showed that 63.8% of international students are either strongly satisfied or just satisfied, 24% of the students are neutral and only 11.7% of the students are dissatisfied or very strongly dissatisfied for deciding to study in China.

The study examines that the main factors contributing positively to the satisfaction level of international students and these comprise: facilities given by university, easy migration policy for international students, ability to understand Chinese language, inexpensive daily commodities and living cost, using new technology, motivation towards learning in China, job opportunity in China, Satisfaction and living arrangement with Chinese food, level of motivation, study duration at current university, financial aid such as scholarship, Health facility, this indicates that facilities given by Chinese universities and migration policy for international students was the strongest impact on student satisfaction, new experiences and living cost should not be forgotten.

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References