

Perceived Determinants of Studying in Malaysia Among the Foreign Students

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Abstract

According to the statistics that are currently available, in recent years, as a consequence of the expansion of overseas study opportunities in Malaysia, the number of Chinese private college teachers who choose to pursue their education in Malaysia has been growing on an annual basis. This trend has been observed in response to the growing number of overseas study opportunities in Malaysia. The research may investigate the factors that are contributing to Malaysia's ever-increasing popularity in order to provide the educators with some useful references. The higher education industry in Malaysia is up against tremendous competition pressure on both the international level and the domestic level when it comes to attracting and hiring Chinese private college teacher. Identifying and understanding the key factors that influence the decision-making process of Chinese private college teacher when choosing HEIs is essential because it allows providers of higher education to strategically position themselves both for local and international level.

Keywords: Chinese students; overseas study in Malaysia; higher education

1.0 Introduction

For Higher education institutions (HEIs) in today's society are put under constant pressure to distinguish the courses and programmes that they make available to their students (Altbach, 2005). This is done with the intention of discouraging clients from perceiving the items sold by these establishments as suitable alternatives to those sold by other establishments. If a higher education school is seen as offering a service that is almost identical to another, then that institution's profitability will suffer (Porter, 2008). In order to battle competition and attain strategic competitiveness, HEI has to distinguish its goods from those of its rivals. This may be achieved by providing participants with access to a large range of carefully varied programming options. One of the keys aims of a differentiation strategy is to produce a product or service that stands out from the

competition along dimensions that are unique from those of the competition but are nevertheless appreciated by the market or consumers. This goal is one of the primary goals of a differentiation strategy (Ivy, 2008).

Despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of HEIs are aware of the crucial necessity of having unique goods and services to offer in the market, many continue to struggle with putting together a plan that is both comprehensive and implementable (Qiang, 2003). When working with Chinese private college teacher who come from a variety of countries and socioeconomic backgrounds and have varying requirements, preferences, and expectations, it can be a challenge to look at things from a more holistic point of view. This is especially true when dealing with students who come from a variety of countries (Wilkins & Huisman, 2011). It is essential to conduct research on the primary factors that influence the decisions that Chinese private college teacher make when selecting private higher education institutions in order to construct marketing and differentiation strategies that are effective. This will allow one to build effective marketing and differentiation strategies.

This is particularly true for Malaysia because of the relatively low population of the nation, which results in a local market for higher education that is rather constrained. As a consequence of this, it is absolutely necessary for the nation to increase its share of the global market by attracting students from other nations (Cheng et al., 2013). A significant number of HEIs are actively investigating potential avenues of global collaboration in the belief that doing so would enable them to widen the scope of the educational possibilities they provide while also increasing their footprint in both local and international markets (Cheng et al., 2013). Higher education institutions in Malaysia will have significant challenges in their attempts to meet the new criteria because of the country's status as a latecomer (in compared to important hosting nations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia) (Migin et al., 2015).

The government of Malaysia, which has the goal of making the country into an education hub, has a vision of reaching a target of 200,000 international students enrolled in its domestic HEIs by the year 2020. This target was set with the intention of achieving the government's goal of making Malaysia an education hub. The goal of achieving this desire on behalf of the government was the impetus for the setting of this target. However, recent statistics on the number of international students enrolled in Malaysian institutions as of the year 2017 have shown that the nation is not currently on track to achieve this goal (Ministry of Higher Education, 2018). This may be primarily the result of a decrease in students coming from Nigeria, Yemen, and Iran, which were traditionally the three largest traditional suppliers of international students and used to account for approximately half of the total number of foreign students in Malaysia. This may be the primary reason for this change.

In addition, the increase in the number of students arriving from other countries has not been very remarkable (Migin et al., 2015; Ahmad & Buchanan, 2016). Providers of higher education will need to identify and understand the primary considerations that go into students' decisions regarding private HEIs in order to meet the demands of the market as the market for higher education becomes increasingly competitive and consumer-driven. This is necessary in order for providers of higher education to meet the demands of the market. Higher education institutions (HEIs) may make use of this information to either quickly modify their current marketing strategies or construct new

marketing plans in order to strategically position themselves in the market based on the criteria that are described further down.

According to UNESCO (2011), Chinese private college teachers and educators are still struggling with the aftereffects of the crisis. As a consequence of fear and variance, they would not be able to achieve the level of education reforms and objectives that they have set for themselves. Although China has started to build its higher education infrastructure by granting universities financial and administrative independence and is working on a strategy to convince foreign universities to open their sub campuses in China (Wagdy, 2011), it will take some time for these reforms to become a reality. China has begun to build its higher education infrastructure by granting universities financial and administrative independence. As a consequence of this situation, the phenomenon of the globalisation of education has assumed a very prominent role in China. This is as a result of the fact that the vast majority of students coming from China have been given financial assistance in the form of scholarships to pursue their higher education in other nations.

In addition, Bohm et al. (2004) are of the view that the number of students who opt to continue their education at colleges situated outside of their native country will reach 5.8 million by the year 2020. This estimate is based on projections made by Bohm et al. (2004). This may be seen in the transition that educational institutions of higher learning all around the globe are now undergoing.

According to Petruzzellis and Romanazzi (2010), the worldwide rise in competitiveness in the Higher Education Sector has led to an increase in the number of inquiries that influence a foreign student's choice making regarding higher education in a foreign nation. This is a direct result of the globalisation of the higher education market. Researchers are able to plainly see a decline in the number of international students enrolling in higher education institutions in countries like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Canada when they make a comparison on the strength of international students for popular destinations for study like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Canada. This is mostly attributable to the development of nations like Malaysia, Singapore, and India, which are seeing a meteoric growth in the number of foreign students enrolling in their institutions as a direct consequence of significantly reduced tuition costs and improved educational standards.

Few studies have been conducted on the Malaysian perspective, but those that have been done have mostly focused on the change and causes in Malaysian higher education (Hunag & Li, 2006); the influence of domestic policy (Hunag, 2009); the satisfaction and adaptation of international students (Hunag, 2009;); and the satisfaction and adaptation of international students. On the other hand, there are no studies that analyses the variables that motivate foreign students, especially postgraduate students from China, to pick Malaysia as their destination of choice when they go overseas for their education.

Malaysia is one of the very few nations in Asia that is fast becoming a popular destination for students travelling from other areas of the globe. This trend is helping to make Malaysia one of the most visited countries in all of Southeast Asia. For the purpose of completing their tertiary education, students come to Malaysia have the choice of enrolling in either public or private institutions. The tuition rates

at educational institutions that are run by the public sector are much cheaper when compared to those of educational institutions that are run by the private sector. As a result, these universities are the more appealing choice for students coming from other nations. Students are lured to institutions in the public sector owing to their reduced tuition fees, which attract foreign students. This is true for both domestic and international students.

Adult education has been receiving a lot of focus and attention from the Malaysian government recently due to the importance that it is seen to have for the future of the country's economy (Tan, et al., 2004). These students are considered to be more self-sufficient and autonomous in their decision-making because they actively engage in their graduate education (Mwaura, 2008), as a consequence of which they are able to participate more actively in their graduate education (Shallenberger, 2009). It is vital to bear in mind the relevance of adult learning while doing research on the behaviours and decision-making processes of adult learners in relation to higher education. This research is relevant because of the significance of adult learning.

According to the Annual Report on the Quality of Higher Vocational Education in Guangdong Province, China is expected to have 11,300 vocational schools by the end of the year 2020, with a total of FIVE (5) million instructors. This information is included in the report (2021). There are a total of 50,100 instructors spread over the 87 higher vocational institutions that can be found in the province of Guangdong. Both the number of educators working in higher vocational colleges in China and the number of educators working in vocational colleges in the province of Guangdong are on the increase. This is also true for the number of educators working in higher vocational colleges in China. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the State Council worked together to publish a document under their respective names in February of 2018. This makes it abundantly clear that by the year 2035, significant advancements must have been made in the quality, expertise, and innovativeness of educators. By that time, there must have been produced hundreds of thousands of core teachers, tens of thousands of exceptional teachers, and millions of educators with an educational mindset (Report on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of Teacher Construction in the New Era, 2018).

The vast majority of the teaching staff at the vocational institutions found in the province of Guangdong do not have PhD degrees in their respective fields. After graduating from high school, it will be required for some of them to continue their studies. However, the higher education policy in China is unable to accommodate their requirements in any way. There was a total of 2267,700 students enrolled in private higher vocational schools in China in 2020, according to the official site that was managed by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. At the time, there were 318 private higher vocational colleges in China. The student churn rates that were seen to be the highest at private higher vocational colleges were (MyCOS Center of Chinese Higher Education Data, 2020). In order to further strengthen teachers team construction in colleges and universities, high-level innovative teachers of high quality talent team, and enhance the level of university teachers' degree, together recently, non-government education association of Guangdong province (hereinafter referred to as the "association") joint large bay area of modern industrial development institute (hereinafter referred to as the "institute") held large bay private colleges high-level large

bay private colleges high-level innovative teachers of high quality talent team and enhanced the level of university teachers' During the course of the conference, the two sides reached a consensus to sign a strategic cooperation agreement in order to jointly foster the development of high-level talents at private colleges and institutions located across the Greater Bay Area.

In accordance with the mandates of the Private Education Promotion Law, the Research Institute and the Association have reached the conclusion that it is in the best interest of the country to promote the teaching staff of private colleges and universities and to cultivate high-level talents by combining the respective strengths of their organisations in the areas of policy research, talent construction, academician and expert resources, national projects, and other areas. This has led them to the conclusion that it is in the best interest of the country to promote the teaching staff of private colleges and universities and the two parties have reached an agreement on a number of strategic cooperation projects, some of which are as follows: conducting high-level talent training such as doctoral degrees; selecting outstanding schools and teachers to participate in the sub-subject research of national key projects; carrying out special training for key teachers in private colleges and universities; carrying out high-end talent training; and organizing an annual talent training summary and commendation conference.

In a nutshell, there is a severe lack of medical practitioners, and there is an immediate need to cultivate high-calibre talent in the nation's private colleges and institutions. The shortage of medical practitioners has created an emergency situation. There are a number of studies that concentrate on the intentions of different kinds of groups that want to study abroad; however, there are not as many studies that concentrate on the intentions of college teachers who want to study abroad.

2.0 Problem statement

Since 2006, there has been a steady increase in the number of people interested in doing research on the subject of overseas students attending American universities. This is as a result of the fact that educational establishments of a higher level are becoming increasingly dependent on the enrolment of students from other countries in order to boost revenue and assist in making up for the gradual decrease in public funding for educational establishments of a higher level that has occurred over the years (Abdullah et al., 2013).

The vast bulk of research on pupils attending schools in other nations has been conducted on kids from wealthy countries. In their analysis of 497 journal papers reporting on research studies carried out over the course of 30 years in higher education, Abdullah et al. (2013) found that 77.2% of studies published between 2006 and 2013 focused on developed countries, the most prominent of which were the United States of America, Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Canada, whereas only 10.9% of these studies focused on countries in the Asia region. Because of the increasing need for higher education in Asia, there should be a greater emphasis placed on research that studies the history of the area. It is also very clear that the bulk of study focuses on the institutional level, with the national level acting as the main focus of attention. In a similar vein, the selection of research samples from just a single school adds to the argument that the results of the study cannot be extended to the community of students attending a range of HEIs. This is because the community of

students attending HEIs is not homogenous (Kusumawati, 2013). Studies that are based on convenience samples from a single subject area at a single university further aggravate the issue. This is due to the fact that the results may turn out to be biased towards the specific strengths of the institution where the study is carried out. It's conceivable to argue that the results tell us more about that specific organisation; as a consequence, researchers need to be cautious about the assumptions they make about their findings (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2015).

Within the realm of studies pertaining to higher education, the students themselves, namely undergraduate and postgraduate students, have emerged as the most often researched topic. This might be linked to the widespread belief that students are the most important consumers of educational institutions at the higher levels (Kanji & Tambi, 1999; Eagle & Brennan, 2007; Brochado, 2009; Nicolescu, 2009; de Jager & Gbadamosi, 2013). However, the primary focus of the research is on the factors of motivation that influence the choice of HEI (Briggs & Wilson, 2007), and the influence of the choice of nation is frequently neglected. This is because the research is primarily concerned with the factors of motivation that influence the choice of HEI (Cubillo et al., 2006).

Furthermore, past research studies in this subject have been selective in the coverage of significant contributing factors for other nations, and the conclusions from these studies cannot be generalized to apply to the context of Malaysia (Oliveira-Brochado & Marques, 2007). Students from other countries come from a wide variety of cultural and social backgrounds. The considerations that led these students to choose Malaysia and its higher education institutions (HEI) for their education abroad might not be the same considerations that led students from other countries to choose other countries for their education abroad (Cubillo et al., 2006; Bodycott, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010; Ahmad & Buchanan, 2016). When things are viewed from the perspective of Chinese private college teacher, therefore, the existing body of research leaves a research gap that needs to be continuously updated and searched for a set of comprehensive influencing factors that take into consideration both the choice of country and the choice of HEI. This search should be conducted for a set of comprehensive influencing factors that take into consideration both the choice of country and the choice of HEI.

On the other hand, another subject that draws a lot of attention in worldwide research on higher education is that of the satisfaction of students. In many cases, the goal of these studies is to highlight the post-consumption behaviour of students in connection to the expectations of students and their perceived service performance of the HEI. Students have a tendency to experience a feeling of loyalty toward their institution of higher education if they are pleased with the services that are offered by that institution. Because of this, it is of the utmost importance to have a solid grasp of the degree of satisfaction. According to the research conducted by Arambewela and Hall (2003), there is a very strong correlation that exists between pleased students who have good word-of-mouth (WOM) and the retention of students in an educational institution. Students are more likely to persuade their family members and friends to enrol in the same institution where they have been successful in pursuing higher education if they have a positive word-of-mouth experience after attending that university themselves (Slethaug & Manjula, 2012). Not only does good word-of-mouth have the potential to increase the percentage of students who choose to remain enrolled, but it also helps to promote the university's brand (Arambewela & Hall, 2003). It is probable that this will help the HEI

improve its validity and standing, which will, in the end, lead to a rise in the number of students (Marzo-Navarro et al., 2006).

In the past, the great bulk of research on student satisfaction was conducted independently from inquiries into the factors that inspire students. These studies place the majority of their attention on the time that students spend on campus and in their classrooms; very little thought has been given to the part that the local community plays in influencing the levels of pleasure that students experience (Cubillo et al., 2006). Some researchers argue that the educational experience of Chinese private college teacher is determined not only by their educational experience but also by other experiences, such as their home life, jobs, relationships, sense of security, and meaningful community engagement, all of which are essential to the overall health and happiness of students. Other researchers argue that the educational experience of Chinese private college teacher is determined solely by their educational experience (Council of Australian Governments, 2010).

According to the findings of a comprehensive survey on international student satisfaction that was carried out in 2006 by the UK Council for International Education (UKCOSA), the vast majority of Chinese private college teacher appeared to be content with the quality of their course. On the other hand, they were less satisfied in relation to their overall student experience. This demonstrated that the satisfaction of Chinese private college teacher was not limited to merely academic needs but rather the overall living and learning experience. This is in contrast to the findings of Mavondo et al. (2004), who found that the quality of education clearly plays a significant role in the degree to which students are satisfied with their educational experiences (Chong, 2015).

The debate that was just had indicates that despite the large amount of research that has been conducted on the topic of the selection and decision-making processes of Chinese private college teacher, there are still certain areas that need more investigation. This study investigates students' full academic, social, and living lives within the context of both their home country and the country in which they are studying abroad. This research takes a more holistic approach to analysing the experiences of Chinese private college teacher by investigating students' full academic, social, and living lives. This involves doing research on the major determining factors that foreign students depend on when picking a higher education institution at which to pursue their degree in a country outside of their home country. This research then extends to analyse the amount of satisfaction that Chinese private college teacher has towards the choice that they have made based on the most significant factors that impacted their decision. This part of the study is based on the findings from the previous section. One of the issues that will be discussed in this thesis is the connection that exists between the satisfaction level of a client and the possibility that they may in the near or distant future suggest a company to other people.

Motivation of the Study

Malaysia's most current education plan, titled Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education) 2015–2025, lists the recruitment of international students as one of the country's key goals. Because Malaysia is home to a significant number of educational institutions (HEIs) of a high standard, the country's higher education business is very competitive. This helps to ensure that the sector as a

whole is extremely diverse. Higher education institutions, particularly private ones, are placed under an incredible amount of pressure to attract students from other countries as they compete for these students. Even while research has been done on the subject of selecting a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the context of Malaysia, the vast bulk of this research focuses on the local students who enrol in Malaysian public universities rather than students who enrol in private institutions.

There hasn't been a lot of study done on foreign students in Malaysia, and in particular, there hasn't been much research done on the educational decisions that international students in Malaysia make about private higher education institutions. The amount of study that has been done on overseas students in Malaysia is quite limited (Padlee et al., 2010). In a similar vein, research into the post-choice behaviour of international students is primarily limited to students' levels of satisfaction with their HEI; very few studies have discussed students' levels of satisfaction with the study destination. Similarly, research into the post-choice behaviour of domestic students is primarily limited to students' levels of satisfaction with their HEI (Arambewela & Hall, 2008). The academic experiences of international students are extremely important in determining their subsequent behaviours, such as their desire for further study and job choices, as well as their willingness to promote the HEI to other potential students.

Another motivation for performing the research that will be described here is to include a sound theoretical basis as the conceptual framework of this study. This justification will be discussed here. In order to accomplish this goal, the researchers will combine a number of well-known and well-established student decision-making models. Because of globalization, the already prevalent tendencies among students to pursue educational opportunities in other countries have expanded. In this day and age, it is very necessary for students to get an education that takes into consideration the myriad of different cultures and points of view. In addition, the findings of the study will be helpful to those who are considering continuing their education in a different nation. Because the choices they make now will have a big effect on the rest of their life, the adult learner has to put a high importance on arriving at the right conclusion.

The study would also be beneficial to Chinese education agencies and the ministry because it would allow them to examine the factors that motivate Chinese students to study abroad and develop appropriate strategies to assist Chinese students in finding suitable host destinations for study abroad programmes. At the moment, there is a sizeable contingent of students coming from China to get their education in Malaysia; in fact, they constitute the country's second biggest group of foreign pupils. Because a rising number of students from the Chinese mainland are choosing to pursue their higher education in Malaysia, this Southeast Asian nation is becoming an increasingly desirable location for educational tourism. In addition, the province of Guangdong is home to 87 institutes of higher vocational education, which together employ a combined total of 50,100 teachers. It's possible that furthering their education would be beneficial for all of them. It is estimated that China has awarded roughly 945,300 doctorates ever since the government started keeping track of such accomplishments. China had a total population of 14,449,378 individuals as of the 7th National Census, and the percentage of persons with PHDS was roughly 6.55 per 10,000 people (less than 7 per 10,000, the actual figure may be lower than that). This is a far lower level than the level in other

major developed nations, such as the United States, which has around 1% of its population afflicted by the illness. This is a lot lower level than the level in other mainstream developed countries.

The supply of PhD degrees in China is not sufficient to meet the rising demand for them. Those educators working in private institutions in Guangdong who are required to have further education may benefit from the particular knowledge that this research can supply. In addition, the research may investigate the factors that are contributing to Malaysia's ever-increasing popularity in order to provide the educators with some useful references.

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