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Examining the guidelines and directives issued by the Chinese government for enlisting and aiding foreign students

CHENG LE[1], DR. NIDHI AGARWAL [2a]

[1]PhD. Research Scholar in Education, Lincoln University College Malaysia
[2]Professor in Lincoln University College Malaysia
Contact Details: dr.nidhi@lincoln.edu.my

Abstract

Increased national competition in the global economy boosts the need for highly qualified people within the context of globalisation. Higher education in particular has emerged as a potent source of national competitive advantage. IHE is a by-product of globalisation that has helped speed up the process of globalisation. As a result, IHE has become a nationally recognised leader in the expansion of higher education. China's reliance on globalisation increased as the country developed.

Internally and externally, the IHE plays a crucial role in China's economic growth, soft power in Asia, and links with the West.

Very few researches have focused on China's IHE and ISM, especially the inward ISM. The topic of this article is one I explore in my study of ISM in China. By combining national and institutional perspectives with the first-hand accounts of international students, this research offers the Chinese government, universities, and policy makers valuable information for improving the country's internal ISM policies.

Because of my studies, we can evaluate the ISM phenomenon in China in relation to the OECD countries, which have received far more attention. IHE and ISM in China may be evaluated by comparing it to the practises of more traditional host countries, such the West.

Keyword: globalisation, higher education, competitive advantage

INTRODUCTION

Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE) has accelerated as a result of globalisation. International Student Mobility (ISM), which is an important aspect of IHE, has also gotten increased attention. China, which has traditionally been a student exporter, is increasingly becoming a favourite host country for overseas students. This study creates a complete portrayal of ISM in China by examining pertinent policies and international students' experiences. Globalization is defined in this study by En new and Greenaway (2012) as a series of broader economic, social-cultural, and political processes that increase interconnection and interdependency between and beyond nation states. "The blurring of

national boundaries, the remaking of identities, and the cross-national integration of economic, social, and cultural activities" are some of the fundamental elements of this process, according to this approach (p. 2).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Massive capital flows in global markets are reliant on facts, figures, and skill (Carnoy, 2014, p. 21). Information is a key component of globalisation, allowing it to be very knowledge-intensive.

Knowledge, goods and services are delivered by internationalised and rapidly increasing information industries, which support and push the global knowledge economy. Thus, higher education, particularly "Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE)", has moved to the forefrontof this environment. "The key social and economic dynamics that are driving globalisation more broadly have also produced the conditions that have spurred a step shift in international engagement at institutions of higher learning," Ennew and Greenaway (2012) contend (p. 1).

According to Lasanowski and Verbik (2007), over 89% of global students choose nations in the "Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)" as their primary end point (Zheng, 2010). China is the greatest exporter of foreign students in this asymmetric flow, accounting for 15.2 % of all globalapprentices enrolling in higher education external of their home countries (Institute of International Education, 2013).

"The rise of new students to China, Japan, and Southeast Asia has considerably surpassed that of traditional destinations," according to Shields and Edwards (2010) and Welch (2010). (Shields, 2013). According to this information, at least some Asian countries have become popular destinations for overseas students.

 China has a long history of importing overseas students. There have been many foreign students from other countries, including as Japan and Korea, as well as Russia and many Middle Eastern countries since the Sui Dynasty, according to Tao (2012). (AD 581- 618). It was a great age for international students studying in China during the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907) since the Tang Empire was a worldwide force. Because of China's advanced culture and technology, many foreign students have come to study there. As a result, Tao feels that international student mobility has been an essential part of China-other-country interaction as well as a reflection of China's strong power and worldwide standing. According to official figures from the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 377,054 foreign students from 203 countries and/or territories studied in 755 higher education institutions on the Chinese mainland in 2014. (hence referred to as MOE). Since 2013, the number of international students has grown by 5.77 percent (2015). Chine comes at tenth in the official UNESCO rankings (2015). Seemingly overnight, China has become as one of the most popular ISM host nations across the globe. Due to the increasing number of international students, the Chinese Ministry of Education developed the Studying in China Project (MOE, 2010). In order to reinforce China's status as Asia's largest host country, the initiative aims to increase the number of international students arriving in China to 500,000 by 2020. This has resulted in Chinese IHE tactics becoming increasingly focused on attracting overseas students.

In light of China's modernization and rapid financial expansion, it can be clearly understoodabout the significance of this trend for educational scholars. This research examines China's developing inward ISM phenomenon. This will include an examination of the conditions and policies that have led to (and continue to lead to) this transition, as well as the motives and experiences of international students who choose to study in China. Determining the IHE landscape in China, as well as the global knowledge economy and cultural flows, is possible using such an approach.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

IHE development has become a prevailing trend – particularly in China – within the larger framework of globalisation, in which China is a significant actor. In the case of ISM, the number of new international students has risen in tandem with the number of outgoing students. As a result, in order to gain a more complete knowledge of IHE in China, researchers must look into both the policy background and the motives and experiences of international students who choose to study in China. On the one hand, the current study investigates the bigger aims and methodologies by evaluating key government and university laws and rules for importing overseas students. From an individual standpoint, however, this research focuses on the factors and expectations that encourage international students to choose China as their destination. Furthermore, the researcher deliberates the contradictions between China's official policies and their enactments as experienced by students by connecting and comparing these two levels. This method can be used to demonstrate how official policies and guidelines succeed and fail to fulfil their goals.

Objective of the Study

- To investigate the tensions between these policies and their enactments as experienced by students.

Research Questions

- What are the tensions between these policies and their enactments as experienced by students? What are the alignments and misalignments existing between policies and practices?

Research Methodology

According to Creswell (2007), methodology refers to the research process. According to Martino (2015), methodology relates to how the study is conducted and includes justification and explanation of the procedures utilised in executing a certain research project (p. 7). This is a qualitative study, defined as a set of designs that elicit verbal, aural, observational, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory information from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, audio, film, documents, and pictures, and that it draws heavily on direct experience and meanings, which may vary depending on the style of qualitative research undertaken (Cohen et al., 2011). This research not only focuses on policies, which are a type of document adopted by a government or institution, but also elicits students' perspectives on their experiences. Both of these aspects of the study are well-suited to qualitative approaches.

In addition, the majority of research on incoming international students in China is quantitative, according to the literature review. Thus, qualitative research is required to acquire an elaborate

and deep understanding of these kids, which can supplement some of the limitations of quantitative research.

Research Design

  Three theoretical frameworks guide my investigation of inward ISM in China: Knight's (2004) rationales approach to IHE, the push-pull explanatory model of international student flows, and Stier's hypothesised ideological roots of IHE (2004).

Knight (2004) suggests four ways to IHE, each of which reflects or characterises the values, priorities, and activities that comprise IHE forms. One of the ways is the rationales approach, which defines internationalization in terms of its goal or expected outcomes at the national and institutional levels. According to Knight, internationalisation of higher education is presented in terms of why it is important for a national higher education sector to become more international, with rationales relating to human resources development, strategic alliances, commercial trade, nation building, and social/cultural development at the national or sector level (p. 19). IHE is characterised with relation to the primary objectives or rationales driving it at the institutional level, which can include academic standards, income production, cultural diversity, and student and staff development (p.19). Additionally, these rationales at both levels can be divided into four categories: social/cultural, political, economic, and academic. Social/cultural rationales are linked to national cultural identity, intercultural understanding, citizenship development, and social and community development at the national and institutional levels. Foreign policy, national security, technical aid, promoting peace and mutual understanding, and forging national and regional identities are all examples of political rationales. Academic rationales are related to international dimension to research and teaching, extension of academic horizon, institution building, profile and status, enhancement quality, and international academic standards, while economic rationales are driven by economic growth and competitiveness, labour market, and financial incentives (p. 23). This study employs the rationales technique to examine the reasons of the Chinese government and higher education institutions to import international students based on the policies and norms in place.

The push and pull concept will be used in this study as the second framing. The global pattern of international student flows may be described by a mix of push and pull variables that attract students to study abroad, Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) write (p. 82). They describe push variables as those that work within the source country and originate a student's desire to study abroad, whereas pull factors function within a host country to make that country relatively appealing to foreign students (p. 82). They also underline that there are three stages to the decision-making process for studying abroad. First and first, the student must decide whether or not to study abroad, which might be influenced by a variety of push circumstances in the home country. After a student has agreed to study abroad, the next step is to choose a host country, where pull considerations play a significant role in making one host country more appealing than another. In the third stage, the student should choose the educational institution to which he wishes to apply. A number of pull variables make a specific institution more appealing than its competitors. This study's push-pull model serves as a framework for analyzing the elements that influence international students' decision to study in China.

According to Stier (2004), difficulties in implementing internationalisation strategies in higher education are caused by higher education institutions' numerous and divergent understandings

of the term internationalisation. He identifies three main internationalisation ideologies: idealism, instrumentalism, and educationalism, in order to map these possibly divergent understandings. Idealism is based on the normative idea that internationalisation is beneficial in and of itself (p. 88). This ideology emphasises that higher education may help to the building of a more democratic, fair, and equal society through international cooperation (p. 88). The higher education institutes that promote this ideology aspire to develop people who adhere to an emancipatory worldview (p. 88). Instrumentalists, on the other hand, see higher education as one way to maximise profit, ensure economic growth and sustainable development, or to impart desirable ideologies of governments, transnational businesses, interest groups, or supranational regimes as an alternative (p. 90). Internationalizing higher education is thought to meet the needs of a capitalist, global, and multicultural world, as well as boost higher education institutions and countries global competitiveness (p. 90-91). The goals of IHE extend beyond mere idealistic and professional aspirations of policy-makers, according to educationalists, because educationalist views education as lifelong learning with a strong emphasis on the value of learning itself rather than organized education with the goal of acquiring a specific set of skills (p. 92). IHE, in this light, may aid personal development and self-actualization. This study uses this mapping of these three internationalization ideologies to examine both the purposes of governments' and institutions' policies and rules, as well as the individual motivations of international students. I discuss the alignments and misalignments that exist between them, which represent certain tensions between them, by analysing and comparing their internationalization ideologies.

Data Analysis

The documented laws and norms to which I refer in this research are those of the Chinese government and S University regarding the education of foreign students. In his research, Sun (2001) concluded that China's educational policies could be broken down into four distinct categories: organisational structure, funding, faculty, and qualification regulations. Liu (2010) concludes from his research that this categorization is useful for investigating policies pertaining to international students. She describes organisational system policies as those which seek to "understand the reasons and key goals behind the policies and coordinate the responsibilities and interactions between different connected institutions in the affairs pertaining to foreign students," among other things.

The allocation, disbursement, and expenditure of monies are the primary concerns of funding policies. To best serve and assist their foreign students, institutions should have policies in place for recruiting and retaining a sufficient and excellent faculty. A school's qualification policy should outline the requirements for recruiting and nurturing international students, as well as the criteria for meeting those objectives. The policies of the underlying organisational structure provide the foundation upon which other policies can be established. This study, using Liu's description and categorization, organises all policies into these four categories. Meanwhile, policies are always contextual, therefore it's important to begin with the foundational ones since the People's Republic of China was established in 1945.

Guidelines for the structure of the organisation

Agreements between China and other communist-aligned nations were regarded as the foundation of early policy. There were four major accords (referenced in Li,

Specifically (2005, page 16)

Table 1: *Four agreements in 1950s*

Year	Country	Policy
1950	Romania	*A memorandum about exchange of students*
1953	North Korea	*An agreement on North Korean students studying in Chinese higher educational institutions and secondary specialized schools*
1954	German Democratic Republic	*A protocol on exchange of students and graduate students*
1955	Vietnam	*A protocol on cultural cooperation*

During this time, all Chinese students must abide by these regulations.

The majority of the "democratic republic" and socialist state recruits hailed from. All these countries shared close diplomatic ties with China and a commitment to communist ideals. China's government adopted relevant policies internally rather than establishing agreements multilaterally and began to attract foreign students from a wider range of nations as the number of international students entering China increased.

Three major policies were implemented as a result of this change: the Trial regulations on the affairs of incoming international students (1962), the Rules of accepting international students studying in Chinese higher education institutions (1963), and the Amendments of accepting international students from capitalist states (1956). In "The rules," the emphasis is on "the exchange of students is a vital aspect of the collaboration between nations," while the overarching topic in "Trial regulations" is that "accepting international students studying in China is China's incumbent internationalist obligation" (p. 34). And numerous nations at this time period recommended establishing student exchange programmes with China, viewing this as a significant step toward improving ties with China.

China has been through a succession of economic reform initiatives and a slow but steady openness to the outside world since the 1970s. Due to these broader developments, there were also significant shifts in the regulations governing the admission of overseas students. The Vice

Minister of the MOE stressed educational possibilities as an essential aspect of the mutual openness during the Second Conference of Incoming International Students in 1979.

when it comes to countries that can help China flourish at home (Li, 2005). Expanded 'opening up' processes in the 1990s served to China has aggressively created diplomatic connections with other emerging and developed nations and regions, creating a peaceful condition for the growth of its domestic economy. The potential and real educational interchange between China and other nations was greatly facilitated by this circumstance. The State Council of the People's Republic of China adopted the Program for the Reform and Development of Education in China in 1993. Article 14 of this plan reads, "It is essential to expand access to education, increase collaboration with the wider community, and improve outcomes for all students."

the sharing of educational resources and methods across nations through international channels of communication and collaboration. It also suggests changes to the educational system to accommodate international students, including creating the China Scholarship Council, altering the single scholarship system, administering the HSK (Chinese Proficiency Test), enacting more policies and laws to govern international education, and streamlining the application process for a Chinese visa.

This policy framework demonstrates that international and Politics and the economy at home play significant roles in shaping these policies and how they evolve over time. At first, ISM was thought to be a promising strategy for China to strengthen the state and improve the country's position in the international political arena.

That was a big step towards becoming more open to the world at the time. Now it's offering to strengthen reform in China's higher education and foster international partnership. Regardless of how the globe and China evolve, ISM will always be viewed as a means by which China may open its arms to the world economically, culturally, and politically.

opening up China to the rest of the globe.

CONCLUSION

Supporting and driving the global knowledge economy are the internationalised and rapidly expanding information industries that produce knowledge goods and services. Because of this context, higher education has become increasingly important, especially "Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE)". This research, grounded in the applicable laws and regulations, investigates the motivations behind the Chinese government's decision to allow its higher education institutions to accept students from outside of China.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
Firstly, policy analysis is limited to policy papers. The researcher examined the rationales for recruiting overseas students in this study by analysing and classifying the contents of associated policies. "This study lacked direct engagement with policymakers, who could have provided me with richer and more direct information and interpretations regarding the rationales and reasons for their policies' adoption, as well as how they could be understood less literally." Secondly, because this is a qualitative study with a limited sample size, the results may not be generalizable. The researcher proposes to conduct the current study at only one university and

 CHENG LE: PhD Research Scholar in Education, Lincoln University College, Malaysia

to use volunteer sampling to select 10 international students as potential respondents. As a result, the findings may have limited repercussions at other Chinese higher education institutions.

Thirdly, misinterpretations are likely when capturing information from face-to-face conversation since we communicated in English or Chinese, yet none of these languages is our mother tongue for the majority of us. Meanwhile, the researcher's own values and understanding, as well as the values and understanding of existing international students, may unwittingly be imposed on the research findings. During data analysis, the researcher's own experiences and background may be brought into play. Again, the researcher intends to use various sources to reduce bias.

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