Research on Chinese overseas students’ choice to study in the United States and their preference to stay there after graduation

Author: Cheng Yuxin
Sociology BA
Studies in social policy and equal opportunities in social policies specialization
Professor of thesis writing seminar: Dr. Éva Perpék
Abstract

Driven by globalization, there are more and more Chinese students studying abroad, so it is meaningful to research on why are they choosing to study abroad and why they prefer to stay abroad after graduation. I take the United States as an example to analyze my topic. I did online interviews via Skype towards Chinese overseas students studying in the United States to collect information. The analysis of data indicates the reasons why are Chinese overseas students making choice to go abroad, why are they choosing the United States, and their decision after graduation. The research and conclusion can help to better understand the choices of students as well as motives, driving forces, and incentives behind them. Moreover, the analysis provides insights to those Chinese students who are planning to study abroad, to gain the experience to make the decision before going abroad and their future after their graduation.

Key words: Chinese overseas student, study abroad, stay after graduation
Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis writing seminar teacher, Éva Perpék for her help and concern on my thesis. It is my great honor to be directed by her and I really learned a lot through the work.
3.1 Influence of Education

3.2 Expectation to more suitable and equal job opportunities and a good working environment

3.3 Concern for interpersonal

4. The experience of the interview

Conclusion

1. The social background and economic situation of the family have a significant impact on the student's choice to study abroad.

2. Individual thinking and values have a significant impact on the decision to study abroad.

3. Because of more advantageous education and career opportunities, Chinese students choose to stay in the United States after graduation.

References

Appendix(1)

Appendix(2)
Introduction

Overseas students in the United States form the largest group of overseas students in the world. From the late 1970s onwards, the Chinese government became a vigorous advocate for international academic, scientific, and technological exchanges with the purpose to promote the ongoing modernization process. This policy led directly to the increase in educational exchanges between China and the United States (Lampton, D., M., Madancy, J. A., & Williams, K. M., 1986). From 1978, the two countries began to exchange students; in 1988, Chinese students in the United States soared to 20,030 people only in a decade. This figure tripled in 1993 and then once again in 2003. Out of the total number of international students in the United States, Chinese students constitute the largest student group (Institute of International Education, 1981-2006). As of 2009, the total number of students in the United States has reached 95,810. Such a rapid growth of the student group is itself worthy of investigation and, moreover.

This thesis examines Chinese students studying in the United States by means of online interviews. It is found that varies with the change in the leading interests of the students in China and the United States at different times. Whether this behavior changes before or after leaving their home country, it seems to me that long-term interests have always been decisive for the behavior of international students. Even though the role of material interests is obvious, after the completion of studies the effect of non-material interests becomes more prominent. Once the students have decided to return home, material interests rise in importance once again. From the level of individual education needs to guide students, rational and objective face of study abroad. Drawing on personal interviews with students studying in the United States, this paper aims to analyze why they chose to study abroad, whether they would return, as well as a variety of factors to explore in order to help students get used to the changing status quo and their choice of study by means of providing rational recommendations.

The research focuses on Chinese overseas students, who are studying in the United States.
States and currently prefer to stay there after their graduation. It explores questions, such as: what is the reason for them to choose to study abroad; what causes them to stay after graduation; and why they do not want to return to their own country. I will be interviewing the students while giving due consideration to their respective backgrounds. To elaborate, students from different regions of China will have differing personal circumstances that affected their choice to study abroad, including parental advice and their family's economic situation. However, what I find more interesting is their understanding of going abroad and of the United States before and after studying there and whether they have undergone ideological changes.

Due to the particular nature of the study, the research site has to be in the United States, so I can only resort to the online interview as the only available method to complete my project. To summarize, my thesis will test the above questions and my recommendations will be based on the analyzed results. I am very interested in people’s actions and the logic behind their decisions. I am also interested in interpretative approaches which probe into people’s thoughts and perceptions. Therefore, my research methods include:

- First, using a screening questionnaire that will be uploaded on social platforms to seek and select my interviewees.
- Conducting online interviews via Skype with Chinese students who are in different years of study and with different family backgrounds.

So, my methods are those mixed.

I used this methodology last semester in individual and group classes as directed by Dr. Vicsék Lilla Mária. I have now made some modifications, particularly with respect to the depth of the questions.

I have worked on the same topic before and I managed to carry out eight interviews, but I did not record them, unfortunately. Therefore, I manage to carry out 10 new interviews and record conversations.
Literature Review

1. Overview of the push-pull theory

1.1 The concept of the push-pull theory

The theory of push-and-pull is the most important theory used to study the phenomenon of population migration. It is defined by the interaction between the push and pull factors of movement. According to the Western classical push-and-pull theory, labor migration occurs due to different transfers of land and fluctuations in wages. Modern push-pull theory, on the other hand, argues that the causes of population mobility are not only dependent on higher wage expectations, but also on career development planning, living environment needs, better-educated choices, and more stable social development factors (Wen, Y. X., (10):35-38).

On the topic of the causes of population movements, the push-pull theory is one of the most important macroscopic demographic theories. The theory of push and pull was first introduced by Baghdi D. J. Bagne. His research shows that for the outflow country the backward production and living conditions to promote the population outflow, conducive to the survival and development to be positive factors into the rally country, so that the population flows from time to time between pull-push factors. Population flow is the result of the two together (Bagne, D.J., 1969). Later on, a number of scholars commented on Bagne's theory with a view to amend it, while a number of international labor organizations sought to verify it. By 1960, the British scholar, E. S. Lee developed and extended Bagne’s observations and thus the push-pull theory became one of the most influential theories of population mobility and migration. E. S. Lee was the first to clearly distinguish the factors that affect population migration and classify them in two categories – of pull factors and push factors – based on the prerequisites for population movement enunciated by Baghdi. Lee pointed out that in the market economy, under the conditions of freedom of movement, the main purpose of population movement are to ensure survival with development status as pull factor and limit the development of individual as push
factor migration thrust is completed under the combined action of these two factors. More importantly, with the development of the theory, it became clear that the input and output areas are both sliding and thus the two forces have a common role (Lee, E. S., 1966). In addition, in E. S. Lee’s theory of migration demography, the emphasis is placed on intermediate barriers under the role of pull and push at the same time. The latter mainly include the distance between the destination and the difference in the cost of life, the difference in cultural customs and in the language, and the individual's judgment on the value orientation of the various intermediate obstacle factors. Consequently, the flow of population combined with the above three factors, although a bit complex, is still rather organized (Liu, H. L., & Xu, P. J., 2009).

1.2 Application of the push-pull theory in the field of education

1.2.1 Scholar Lee, J. J.

The push-pull theory developed rapidly in the field of education and has been recognized by most international educators as an appropriate international educational research theory. Therefore, the study has a significant meaning for cross-disciplinary development and interdisciplinary research.

Scholars believe that the push-pull theory cannot fully explain how students studying abroad choose their study destination; it can collect and integrate a variety of factors affecting their choice, but cannot identify which one has the most weight in the selection process. The psychological factors of the selection process are included in the push-pull theory, but no logical and systematic scientific model has been formed (Lee, J. J., 2007).

1.2.2 Scholar Chen, L.H.

The scholar categorizes the push-pull theory as one based on external factors and, therefore, as one unable to reflect the internal reasons for studying abroad. In order to explore the internal factors that affect the rate of movement of international students, the scholar adopts the three-step theory developed by Hossler (1989), which uses the
method of choosing three factors that affected students' inner choice to go abroad on a process of psychological level (Chen, L. H., 2007).

1.2.3 Scholar Park, E. L.

The scholar criticized the model of the push-pull theory and proposed that only for the national macro level, as opposed to the individual micro level, a 2D (Driving Force Factor and Directional Factor) theoretical model should be adopted. In the latter, the “Driving Force Factor” will refer to the domestic circumstances, whereas, in order to focus on factors inducing students to study abroad, the “Directional Factor” would refer to individual students’ intention and expectations. In this way, the push-pull theory is divided in two layers (Park, E. L., 2009).

1.3 Summary of the push-pull theory

Through observing the development of the "push-pull theory" in the field of education over several decades, it can be seen that the theory has gradually developed from simple to complex, from recessive to explicit, and from general to concrete. In addition, while initially relevant only on the political level, now the theory has also expanded over the economic social, and cultural levels; from the home country unilaterally "pushing" and the host country unilaterally "pulling", it has now moved to the two countries mutually pushing and pulling; from the national macro level to the individual micro level; from observations on the effect of external and internal factors it has transformed into a comprehensive and systematically developed theory. The developed push-pull theory combines the national macro-level with the individual micro-level to overcome both internal and external problems. At the same time, both countries employ push and pull forces and there is an accent placed on the individual, because personal circumstances can heavily influence the decision to study abroad, and personal push factors are divided into two levels, decision to go study abroad and the decision to return after finishing your studies. In addition, the process factors for personal selection will also be reflected in the individual push-pull process. In addition, the new developed model also separates all pull factors from all push factors in order to
clearly distinguish between the two parts of the internal relations, can be compare them from horizontal and vertical those two perspective. Finally, it can be clearly seen that the factors that affect the movement of international students are multilevel and complex and are accompanied by the changing reality, the stage of China's political reforms, the United States’ open policy to recruit international students; the rapid economic growth of China, the global economic recession, as well as students’ personal circumstances.

Examining the moving rate of students to the United States will also reveal some new tendencies.

2. The push-pull theory and factors influencing the process of studying abroad

2.1. Overview of data concerning Chinese overseas students

With the continuous increase in the number of Chinese students studying abroad, examining the problems arising in the context of such study has become a topic of concern for academic and policy circles. From 2003 to 2013, the number of Chinese students studying abroad has been increasing every year, especially since 2008 when the rate of increase suddenly accelerated. In 2008, China had 180,000 people who had chosen to study abroad and by 2013 there was an increase of 13,900 students. Within the study abroad group, the proportion of self-financed students has always remained above 90%*. At present, China is the country with the world's largest student body. According to a report of UNESCO (UNESCO report, 2009), in 2007, more than 2.8 million international students received their higher education overseas, of which Chinese students accounted for 15% of the global total, exceeding by far the second largest proportion – that of India. According to an OECD report (OECD report, 2011), in 2008 mainland Chinese students accounted for 17.1% of all OECD international students. Their first choice of country was the United States and their second – Japan, accounting for 21.6% and 15.3% of the total number of Chinese students going abroad, respectively. The report also shows that students from China form the highest proportion of international students in higher education institutions in many
developed countries. Out of the Chinese students who choose to study abroad, the biggest group is that of higher education students, followed by the group of high school graduates. According to the US "Open Door Report" (International Students by Academic Level and Place of Origin, 2011/12), between 2011 and 2012, the number of Chinese graduates in United States institutions amounted to 88,429 people and the number of undergraduate students fell at 74,516 people. In contrast to younger students, students who choose to study abroad after graduating from China have already received full education – from basic education to higher education. Therefore, they are usually much more mature and independent in their choice to study abroad. They have a better idea of why they are choosing to go abroad, which institution they would apply to, and what subjects they would like to explore. The existing research mainly focuses on the external factors (national, geographic, nature-related, economic, and education-related) and individual micro factors (personal characteristics, family background, values) affecting the students' choice.

2.2 Macro factors

The existing literature offers the "push-pull theory" as an explanation for the cross-border movement of home students, especially with regards to the number of students and the direction of their movement. The "push" factor is associated with the country of receiving students and the institution of receiving students, which makes the student choose to accept foreign education rather than national one; and the "pull" factor is associated with the receiving country and institution, which attract students and persuade them to complete their education there. Not other countries and other institutions. The research mainly focuses on the behavior of foreign students as one cluster and uses macroscopic data to identify the actual influence of the push-pull factors in students’ selection process. In study by Agarwal and Winkler, the scholars discuss the flow of students from developing countries to developed countries in Europe and the United States (Agarwal, V. B., & Winkler, D. R., 1985). The study generally found that if the destination country has political interests in the home country, this will promote the provision of foreign aid, including in the sphere of
cultural exchange. The support provided to international students through scholarships or other means of assistance and the size of tuition fees are of paramount importance in determining the flow of students from developing countries to developed countries. In addition, other important factors are the historical link between the developing and developed countries, whether their share the same language, the state of educational opportunities in the destination country, the higher education supply capacity of the country of origin, the per capita income of the origin country, its participation in the global economy, the priority of education development. The Gravity Model, which was developed in the context of exploring human migration, was also applied to the process of choosing to study abroad.

Going to study abroad can be seen as a transnational migration movement of the population and, according to the "Gravitational model", the role of space is increasingly considered to be an important factor influencing population migration. The "Gravitational model" is a standard population migration model, in which the home and the destination countries are characteristic variables, whereas the spatial distance between the two is an important explanatory variable. Karemera etc. (Karemera, D. & Oguledo, V. I., & Davis, B. A., 2000) established that the "Gravitational model" can reveal transnational population movements very well. While examining the topic of studying abroad, the researchers also found that the factor of distance is crucial for determining the student flow (Spiess, C. K., & Wrohlich, K., 2010).

2.3 Micro factors

The study of micro factors focuses on the reasons behind the choice of individual students to study abroad. The economic interpretation on the choice of education, including the decision to study abroad, concentrates on a combination of factors, among which are: the rational choice of individual maximization; the utility in obtaining foreign education for the individual or the family function of the individual or the family; and the cost-benefit ratio. The microscopic research has two main aspects. One aspect focuses on the relationship between the student’s choice of
education and the socioeconomic background of the family. The typical study concludes that the economic status of the student's family and the educational situation of the parents affect the student's choice of education significantly (Acemoglu, D., & Pischke, J. S., 2001). The second aspect focuses on the economic incentives that each choice provides. This aspect discusses the impact of expected wages and available student funding on the selection of an educational institution. A study by Lauer found that the potentially high return on investments in higher education has a significant positive impact on the choice an institution (Lauer, C., 2002.). Furthermore, research carried out by Hoxby found that student funding also has a positive impact on the choice of university (Hoxby, C. M., 2007).

In view of the lack of microcosmic research on the choice of higher education by students in China, scholars have concentrated on the choice of high school instead. In a few empirical studies, researchers found that the family income, the degree of urbanization of the student's home, and the degree of parental education all have a positive impact on the student’s decision to study abroad, irrespective of whether the family has any relatives or other connections overseas. On the other hand, being admitted to one or more of the top universities in China is a negative factor affecting the decision to study, especially if the latter would be at the student’s own expense.

The existing research has vastly covered the topic of external variables (such as family factors, economic factors, geographical conditions, macroeconomic policies, etc.) that affect the choice to study abroad. However, studying abroad as a self-selection process, influenced both by the impact of external variables and the individual’s internal considerations, is a relatively complex topic.

3. Brain drain and cultural identity

3.1 America’s Social Phenomenon

The United States is a miniature image of the world. The lack of a uniform culture and the existence of multiculturalism, the widespread acceptance of humanism, such as personal freedom and democracy, the infinite obsession with science and technology,
and the strong national pride of their own economic forces make the United States an ideal laboratory for modern culture (Bock, P., 1970). The cultural and intra-racial relations in the United States are characterized with rapid adaptation and disintegration of cultural identity within each race. On the one hand, the American society's assimilation of non-mainstream races or populations is already an ideal, rather than the reality. Structural assimilation, meaning the subjection of immigrants to mainstream social forces, has rarely occurred in the United States (Gordon, M. M., 1964). Over the past two centuries, the American society has changed from a "melting pot" society to "mixed salad" society (Archdeacon, T. J., 1984). On the other hand, the behavior and way of life of immigrants have become even more homogeneous. Due to the ubiquitous high-tech and interdependent industrial situation, it is hardly possible to avoid influence from every corner of the United States, even from every foreign cultural individual (Wang, X.L., 1992). The outcome of the opposition between the immigrant culture and the mainstream culture is that the external behavior and the way of life of foreign-culture individuals change rapidly and come closer to the mainstream cultural model. At the same time, their racial identity, as well as the origin of their traditions. The cultural anthropologist Handelin pointed out that the cross-cultural adaptation and transformation of the United States is a personal choice, rather than an external social framework (Handelin, 1951). In the process of cross-cultural transformation, immigrants can both take risks and attain benefits.

3.2 Cultural characteristics

Most Chinese students' cross-cultural experiences are accompanied by tension, confusion, and uncertainty. The syndrome of feeling marginal has enveloped Chinese students. The have lost their sense of cultural belonging and are wandering between the Chinese culture and Western ideas. On the one hand, despite the interest in Western ideas, the real life in the West remains unfamiliar and alien for them. Still, Chinese students are, in general, positive towards the idea of finding overseas wives (Wang, X-L., 1992). On the other hand, although the Chinese culture is difficult to
break away from, as there is a strong hometown complex, after studying for several years in the United States, students develop special and deep feelings towards the country. In terms of culture, the US poses social challenges to Chinese students which can be rather difficult to overcome. Chinese students usually face a cultural psychological dilemma: on one hand, they need to change and adapt to American culture, and on the other, there is a feeling of reluctance to change. In the face of the American social and cultural challenges, Chinese students mainly change their external profile, such as clothing, behavior, lifestyle, and English language skills, but keep their internal cultural characteristics, such as religious beliefs, ethnic values, and cultural traditions. Most Chinese students display an American profile, both on the outside and on the inside. When it comes to their inner cultural identity, however, Chinese students are swayed between the polar opposition of Chinese and American cultures. They cannot adopt only one of the cultures completely, nor can they be fully accepted by either one of them. However, most students in the United States pay more attention to their personal survival problems and rarely engage in cultural reflection. In many cases, their cultural identity is obliterated by professional demands and economic considerations.

3.3 Social characteristics

For Chinese students, the United States is unfamiliar and alien. The unfamiliarity of the American life results from the huge contrast between the two cultures and cannot be eliminated through living in the United States for a short period of time. The shipping of the United States is largely a result of the attraction to the development of technology and humanism there. A real cultural and religious infiltration can very rarely affect Chinese students (Yan, K., 2008). Thus, Chinese students inevitably find themselves in a bifurcated situation – the main guides in the professional world are the West and the United States, whereas the main orientations in the individual world are the East and China. In the United States, student groups and Chinese social group mainly committed to academic affairs. Their organizational behavior depends mainly on the American academic atmosphere and research facilities, and there is not much
dialogue within China's academic organization.

### 3.4 Employment and immigration

Chinese students are filled with uncertainty concerning future employment and immigration. On the one hand, Chinese students are unsure of their employment prospects in the United States, since following the US economic meltdown, the job market does not look optimistic. The global economic crisis, which swept the world in 2008, led to the devastation of the US economy. Consequently, regardless of their professional skills or specializations, Chinese students have difficulties finding a job and obtaining a green card (Xu, X., 2006). In addition to the unfavorable market, the immigration policy of the United States makes Chinese students’ prospects of securing employment after graduation even more bleak. The immigration policy in the United States is known for its ambiguity and unpredictability. Immigration law changes are very frequent and unpredictable. In the face of such uncertain policies, most Chinese students realize that while it is possible to achieve their own American dreams in the short term, they cannot predict what is going to happen in the long term. At the same time, Chinese students are uncertain about the prospects of returning home. China's economic “take-off” and the Chinese attitude towards "returnees" renders returning students increasingly passive in the job market. These circumstances make the issue of returning home rather difficult for Chinese students. The final decision to remain in the United States or return to the home country is not only affected by employment and immigration considerations, but is also depended on social and cultural factors. The strong hometown complex and the heterogeneity of American culture make it unlikely for the majority of Chinese students to apply for permanent residence in the United States. However, the hometown complex is balance out by the idea of the American dream, so the proportion of students returning home immediately after graduation is not very high.
Methodology

The main research methods used in this thesis include literature review analysis and interview data analysis those two research methods, and on this basis, the theoretical summary. I already did the literature review in last 10 pages.

In common parlance, interviewer is a journalist who gathering for news, for the purpose of mass communication, through interviews and interviewees, may receive information that may widespread attention and not well-known information. Is the premise of news writing, is a special investigation and study; in addition is a research method at the same time. Interview is the interviewer's understanding of the object of the process, the interviewers use their own news point of view, knowledge accumulation and way of thinking, through personal observation, listening, thinking and make the process of analysis and judgment (Yang, X. W., 2010).

As noted in the introduction, I used online interviews as a tool to collect data. My interviews were semi-structured. According to this logic, I provided some options to several questions but the respondents were asked to expound their own views, arguments, reasoning and opinion as well. This approach makes the answers more comparable; at the same time personal attitudes and voices can be analyzed too.

At first, I was using screening questionnaire included 10 simple questions put on social platforms to seeking and selecting my interviews:

Screening Questionnaire

1. What is your gender?
2. How old are you?
3. Which city are you from in China?

...
8. Do you want to stay in United States after you graduated?

9. Do you have any relatives or families in United States?

10. Would you like to join me for a conversation to discuss this topic?

Than I did online interview via Skype with Chinese students, who are in different year of study and with different background.

In the choice of the interviewees, I received reply from my friends who are in the United States, and I also listened to their recommendations, selected some students who have more different family background, education level and study in the different city, school and major, that can help me under the limited number of interviewees, to get more information, to draw my analysis. This process can be regarded as a kind of snowball sampling.

All three groups of questions are in Chinese, because the survey object is Chinese students. After the discussion with the instructor than to modify, we divided 20 interview questions into three parts, so that the questionnaire is more accurate, simple, focused. For the interview, the more accurate of the question, the higher the probability of a satisfactory answer.

The interview included 20 interview questions with 10 interviewees.

During the development of the interview, although there was a certain understanding of their personal basic information, such as name, gender and age, I have already known before using the screening questionnaire to collect respondents, but in order to ensure the integrity of the interview, I still included these basic questions into my interview.

For short look:

The First part is social demographic questions - Chinese times

E.g.
5. Why did you decide to go abroad before leaving China? What is your original purpose of going abroad? What motivates you to go abroad?

6. Is there more your own opinion or your parent’s opinion or together to make a decision to go abroad? Have you ever considered staying in the United States after graduation in China?

The second part will be concern about why are they have chosen to go abroad and the then we shifted to the United States time:

6. Did you get any certification of your English language level like TOFEL or IELTS or others? (If yes, I will jump to next question. If no, I will ask one more question) Did you attend any English Language Matriculation?

7. Which university are you studying in? What is your major? Which year?

…

The third part will be talking more about future life after their graduated than stay in United States – Farther life

15. What is the attitude of you to return or not?

16. According to the 5th question, (if he/she did consider it before) after going abroad, is your changed, may I ask what caused you to change your mind to stay?

According to the 5th question, (if he/she did not consider it before), after going abroad, what makes you have the determination to stay?

…

In my expectation, I did not want to be too rigid in interviews and influencing the interviewees’ answer, I asked them questions by phone, it must be relaxed atmosphere but will be let them talk with what they wanted to focus on and more talkative. This open and discursive process takes a lot of time but it helped me get more accurate
answers, because they were not bounded and/or limited in how to answer questions.

I made interviews in the Chinese language, because my interviewees were Chinese students. Using Chinese language in the interview made the conversation more fluent. I translated all the words in the interview and counted key words. I also took care about gender balance, I tried to invite equal proportion of male and female students.
Analysis

My analysis is mainly based on the theory of push-pull and my literature review. China as a “push” factor, the United States as a “pull” factor. Among them, the factors that affect the students make decision to go abroad (external factors, internal factors, macro factors, micro factors). Although the argument is not very comprehensive, but to a certain extent, can be find a basis. In addition, there are some new arguments that differ from those of some scholars mentioned earlier in the literature review.

1. Basic information about 10 interviewees

Unfortunately, in the first step of my project, I have encountered a lot of difficulties, only a few reply on my social platforms, in these replies, and only one willing to accept the interview recording, my investigation encountered a bottleneck, so in this case, I can only send my screening questionnaire to my friends in the United States, let them indirectly help me to search for the interviewee, and then through the scope of their friends, continue to expand. In sociology, is called snowball effect. Finally, I collected the respondent who I needed.

Therefore, before I analyze the data which I have collected, I will simply summarize some basic information about my 10 interviewees including: sex ratio, age range, personal education level, family background, and the cities they are living in the United States now, and their universities and majors.

Among the 10 interviewees, in order to ensure the privacy of personal information, I will use their English names in the all analysis part, and for those who do not have English name, I will only use their pseudonyms. They are:

Table 1: Basic characteristics of 10 interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Current Status</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlene</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Irvine</td>
<td>PhD student in UC Irvine</td>
<td>Engineering with concentration of Materials and Manufacturing Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>PhD student in Fordham University</td>
<td>Global Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Master Degree, Used study in Boston University</td>
<td>MSC in Mathematical Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wu</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Master Degree, Used study in New York University</td>
<td>MSC in Data Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niles</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree, Used to study in UCLA</td>
<td>Mathematics/Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoebe</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree, Used to Study in UC Berkeley,</td>
<td>Environmental Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Undergraduate, Study in De Anza College</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We can see from the table very intuitively, their age is between 20-25 years old, education level is undergraduate or master students, studying in popular universities in the United States, and they are living in more developed areas or cities in the United States.

There were five male and five female students, which also achieved the balance of men and women that I expected in my original methodology.

2. Interview Dialogue and Analysis of Data

The basic question of the study is (1) why contemporary Chinese students make the choice of going abroad to the United States when they are in China? And: (2) after their graduation why do they choose to stay abroad in the United States? In order to more effectively explore their ideas in different periods of time and the interests of the demand, I divided my interview questions into three parts as I mentioned before, the three stages of the interview was: before they are going abroad, when they are studying abroad and after they are completing their studies. So that the research problem can be also divided into three parts, the first is why they go abroad; the second refers to their study period in United States, for example, their personal situation, learning life, and interests; the third is that why they make this kind of choice after completion of their studies to stay in Unites States or return to China.
Most of the interviewees are rented a flat near the school, and have the experience of working, but the cost of learning and living is basically covered by the parents.

2.1 Why are Chinese student going abroad

The basic assumption of this problem is that students move to the United States because they do not willing to meet the relevant domestic conditions; their specific interests are their intrinsic motivation to study abroad. I further divided the problem into two sub-problems about what kind of domestic factors motivates them to go abroad.

I will analyze the factors of why they go abroad first, then analyze why they especially choose the United States, because we need to understand why they choose to go abroad, then on the basis of such a decision, which countries they prefer to go.

2.1.1 Affecting factors

The factors that include “the background of the family and class of the family”, “the educational background of the interviewees”, “the interpersonal relationship in high school”, “the individual's ability and the satisfaction of life” and “learning satisfaction when they are in high school”, and according to the strength of each element, I use “Excellent”, “Good”, “General”, “Bad” and “Very bad” by assignment.

All of my 10 interviewees basically from developed areas in China, two of them from Shanghai, three of them from Zhejiang, one of from Jiangsu, two of them from Guangdong, one of them from Wuhan, and one of them from Yinchuan. Their family economic background is basically all in the middle class even above, can be all assignment by “Good”. Two of the interviewed families have immigrant backgrounds. In addition, two interviewees have been admitted to the international high school, the others were studying in China's ordinary high school.

In order to avoid other three indicators difficult to cover the analysis of affecting factors about Chinese students going abroad, I summarized those three questions,
specifically added a question during my interview "Overall, are you satisfied with the domestic study and life in your high school," according to my interview feedback I will be divided into five grades “Very satisfied”, “Overall satisfaction”, “General”, “Not very satisfied” and “Very dissatisfied”. To my surprise, more than half of the interviewees chose “Not very satisfied”, which shows that in addition to the five indicators we are involved; there are other factors for the satisfaction of domestic learning life, even if not directly linked with the study or life itself.

In the conversation with the interviewee, I integrated all the reasons for dissatisfaction with domestic study and life, those who are not satisfied with the domestic life and is that learning time is too long, too much pressure, and intense competition, after you graduated from high school, If you want to be admitted to the domestic university (of course the good university), you have to first fill out the volunteer table, after the college entrance examination, and finally by your score, you can be expected by your university admission, different scores of different schools, different fractional line of different specialized subject. There is a great sense of urgency for them whether they can be admitted to an ideal university in the future. For example, Ye said: “I was a person who loves outdoor activities, but this kind of learning life almost deprived me of all my extracurricular time, I needed to use them to preview all nine subjects, reviews all nine subjects, complete the homework and prepare for the exam. I felt that everything was in the hands of others and that I became very passive.”

And, Niles said: “I was not satisfied with the overall high school life, because my grades were not very good, lack of motivation for learning, then thought to give up, sophomore is the first time and parents to discuss the topic of going abroad.”

But in another regard, about the “interpersonal relationship with high school friends”, basically all respondents gave “good” marks, they have contact with high school friends after going abroad, if they go back to China they will have a meeting with them as well.
Then remove those who are dissatisfied with the domestic study and life of the interviewee, among the remaining four interviewees, I think two of the interviewee's learning background can be used to do a good comparison.

Charlene said: “In fact, I might be different from others, because I attended an international high school when I was in China, in my high school, I have a lot of classmates from all over the world, and I can communicate with them in Chinese or English. In this type of high school, the school for the management of students and students of self-learning is absolutely not the same, compared to the words, certainly be more flexible, I can better arrange my own time, do my favorite staffs, so I was satisfied with my high school life.”

But it is precise because of this reason, her initiation of the idea of studying abroad, coupled with the background of her family; her parents had immigrated to the United States in the early years, although now they are still living in Shanghai.

The other interviewee has a similar personal situation.

Phoebe said: “When I was in high school, my father had a friend, he was doing immigration matters, my father asked friends to apply for a green card, in fact, at that time I did not think about to go abroad, and later I graduated from high school, my father has a multinational business, and coincidentally, the green card just done, because of this opportunity, so I intend to go abroad.”

According to those two answers, we can see parents' affecting also account for a large proportion.

Finally, on the question of affecting factors, through my interview, although most of the interviewees had the different background, had different experiences, but all the factors laid a foundation for the future decisions of their study abroad.
2.1.2 Direct motivation

In order to research the motives of study abroad, the interview raised two questions, “What is your original purpose of going abroad to the United States? “What motivates you to go abroad to the United States?” The reason for leaving abroad is more concentrated, according to the interview results show that the top three are “to change the way and environment of learning (get rid of traditional education model in China)”, “same degree level but more ideal career opportunities” and “improve the treatment in the future and make a better living conditions”.

Before analyzing this problem, according to my summary of the answers, this situation I have been mentioned in the decision factor to go abroad is about their parents. Any one of the respondents deciding to go abroad to the United States before, because of their current age at that time is too young, they are basically 16-18 years old, so no matter how strong is their desire to study in the United States, parents have a large proportion of their recommendations. And then, about the first feedback “to change the way and environment of learning (get rid of traditional education model in China)”.

Ye said: “I had visited one of the local universities in Ningbo, before I decided to go abroad. First of all, about the environment, I felt that the domestic university is a closed campus, although the learning atmosphere is not so high when in the high pressure, and more community activities as well, but on the whole, I preferred the US campus environment, more fresh and open as I expected although I only saw some picture on website at that time.”

Here another answer can be provided,

Charlene said: “I had visited one of the university in Shanghai before I went abroad, and I found that because of China's universities were much freedom compared to junior high schools and high schools, all the students, when they went to the university, they liberate of themselves, actually every Chinese student know it before. The Chinese university students usually do not learn, only before the exam rush to
start preparing, after the test, they put all the knowledge behind. I know may be study really depends on personality, but I really cannot accept spend your precious four years in such way.”

From the above, through their answers, I have shown that many Chinese students are dissatisfied with the pattern of Chinese universities, both from the external environment, or from the internal learning methods, they are more inclined to the United States, I think this is one of the important reasons that led them to choose to go abroad.

As for the other factors that I mentioned, which is “same degree level but more ideal career opportunities”, they told me: In China it is hard to find an ideal job if you only got the bachelor degree, but if you got bachelor degree in the United States, the result may be quite different.

In China, thousands of undergraduates are faced with jobs that cannot be found after graduation, many national units, state-owned enterprises and private enterprises have the lowest threshold for graduate students, which is must be get Master Degree. Even China's current general employment tends to pay attention to overseas education degree, attention to overseas study experience. Lose the opportunity to work, not to mention the accumulation of work experience, and such a vicious cycle, it is easy to cause their lives and even lose their confidence in their own.

For “improve the treatment in the future and make a better living conditions”, I think this problem is interrelated with the former, there is a progressive relationship, can be simply understood from two aspects of when you return from overseas and get the degree, can get better treatment than the original treatment, such as housing, wages, titles, etc. Those are also the reasons of studying abroad to provide the possibility of emigrating, because income and living conditions in the United States are also much higher than those in China.

Among the three most important factors, “to change the way and environment of learning”, as the primary reason is easy to understand, because it is the overall
situation of education level of the United States is more flexible than China, students try to seeking a totally different way to study. “Same degree level but more ideal career opportunities” and “improve the treatment in the future and make a better living conditions” has their own specific meaning, because these two factors are actually implied that students studying abroad is to choose an effective way to change the learning and working conditions in China, change the learning and working conditions in domestic China is fundamental motivation for studying abroad.

In recent years, China's rapid economic development, the living standards of domestic residents increased significantly, but the overall living pressure is still large, high income, good housing conditions and other superior material living conditions for most people, it is difficult to get in a short time. Since the beginning however, the Chinese government implements preferential policies for abroad students to return home to provide a relatively generous treatment, combined with domestic institutions of higher learning, scientific research institutions and other abroad higher education preferences such as promotion title, access to research funding, get the opportunity to upgrade, etc. With a higher degree of foreign qualifications is easier to find their own satisfaction with the work, at the same time in the promotion of titles, access to research funding, access to enhance the advantages. People are rational “animals”, “the behavior of the actors according to their beliefs about the environment and other actors, the environment and other acts of behavior will re-create such a belief to judge.” (David Alexander, 2012) Before leaving, students will be able to balance the gains and losses after their leaving. If the losses greater than the gains, they will choose to continue to work in the country or get out of the country if the gains are greater than the losses.

2.1.3 Before going abroad, decided to return or not

Do students consider about stranded in the United States before they are going to study abroad? I put the feedback of interview on this issue is also divided into three parts “return to China”, “after a period of time according to the situation in the
Through all the interviewees, only 2 interviewees said return to China, 4 students said that according to the completion of the specific circumstances of the school and then decide, such as whether there is a suitable job, 4 students said that after completion of their studies, do not return home, at least get green card to stay first. The results show that most students before they are plans to go abroad, most of them already consider about it.

They keep waiting and see attitude to complete their studies and then decide. For those interviewed before going abroad who decided to go back after graduation, they changed their minds after. The reason for this situation is that, first of all, most students are skeptical about whether they can live abroad before they go abroad. For those who do not go abroad to study and life experience, the awareness of foreign life is quite limited, so whether their immigration decision is not for sure. Second, because of long-term domestic life, the domestic situation, although not very satisfied, but there is no foreign and domestic intuitive contrast obtained by the contrast information is often in the media contact, often indirect and intuitive, so even if full of longing for abroad life, but do not sure that go abroad is a wise choice. For example:

*Phoebe said:* “Before I went abroad, I knew nothing about the American society, because I was alone to go abroad, I was very afraid, even if my father has a business in the United States, but he cannot always accompany me, think of leaving the familiar environment and friends, I still very resistant to go abroad at that time.”

Phoebe's situation is special, so for those who decided to stay in the United States after graduation for a period and 4 of them sure about that, I think it has long-term interests about this issue. Whether themselves or their parents. For example:

*Niles said:* ”My parents told me that in the United States, because the population base is small, the pressure of competition is not so big, after graduation to find a relatively satisfactory job will not be as difficult as in China, so I can get more work...
experience, but also to apply for Master, get a higher degree.”

And:

Pan also said: “I have also considered the problem of work experience with my parents, because both in the United States and China, work experience is important to find an ideal job, and since I have the choice to study abroad, then after graduation, find a job to accumulate experience, if the work goes well, I will consider to stay, if not, I will communicate with my parents to determine the next step.”

I think this point become popular because the they want “first be successful in the United States and then be successful in China”, to a certain extent, reflects the Chinese students want to be able to do a good career in foreign countries, and then return to the success of the ambition, for many overseas students, the existence of American opportunities will not only make them successful, and also contribute to their success in China.

Finally, In the case of green card and whether they want to be citizens of the United States, the rest of the interviewees have agreed that they only want to get a green card and do not want to change their nationality, except for those interviewed with immigrant family backgrounds.

The reason for this question I did not ask during the interview, but according to my guess, because China is a country not accepts dual nationality, if you change your nationality to any other country, it is equivalent to automatically abandon the Chinese nationality. For those Chinese students who have family and relatives in China, they need to go back to visit their families and relatives every year, if they are immigrants, they have to apply for a visa return to China, and China is more strict in managing foreigners in this respect, the program is more cumbersome. So for them, get a green card, get permanent status is the best choice.

2.1.4 Why United States and no other countries

Why did they choose to go to the United States and not to other countries? The
answer to this question is basically hidden in answers to other questions asked before. If I had a chance to repeat my research, I would put more emphasis on this issue and ask this question more explicitly.

Through their answers, I summarize the following reasons:

Family background and parental advice: parents already immigrated in early years, pave the way for their children in the United States. They have relatives living in the United States, parents feel that their children can be take care of by their uncle or aunt abroad.

Influence from friends: They have friends already went to the United States to study, will refer to their views. At these points we can touch upon the influences of strong ties (Granovetter, 1973).

Reputation and excellent quality of education of American University: the United States has world-renowned Ivy League schools, such as Harvard University, Yale University and so on. In addition, there are public universities in the United States, there are private universities, comprehensive universities; liberal arts colleges, and community colleges; also four-years university, two-years university; a comprehensive education, but also vocational education. They offer Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree, Master Degree and PhD Degree. Almost every student can choose according to their own situation to their most suitable school. Many Chinese students without good English basics will give priority to community colleges as a springboard, and then transferred to four-years University. High quality of teaching, wide range of courses and ranges, and great deal of room for students to choose before commencing. So far, more than 70% of all Nobel Prize winners are Americans, most of whom are professors at American universities.

The popularity of the United States: The United States is the first country open up to China of studying abroad, China has a long time to send students to the United States, in recent years the number is growing rapidly, Chinese students as the largest base of students in the United States.
The Visa condition: The visa of United States immigration visa is broadening, especially the previous year president Obama visit to China, the US immigration office liberalize the Chinese students to the United States to study and even many other countries refused to accept the students finally succeeded in getting a US visa. I believe that in the elimination of the US visa difficulties and misunderstanding, the United States will become the first choice for more Chinese students to study.

The Currency situation: RMB exchange rate against the US dollar increased, cost-effective and value-added for study abroad. This is also a very important reason, in recent years; the RMB exchange rate against the dollar has been improving. At present, the exchange rate of RMB against the US dollar is 6.72 yuan for 1 US dollar, more than a few years ago; the RMB exchange rate increased a lot, which is equivalent to a significant reduction in the cost of studying in the United States, prompting many families will send their children to the United States as destination.

3. The choice after graduation

Since all the interviewees lived in the United States for at least six months, they already had some consideration after graduation. At this stage, we focus on analyzing the changes that they have made before and during the period of stay in United States, and then determine the characteristics of their interest needs and their causes. My question is like: “what is the attitude of the student to return or not, after completing the study”, and “whether the decision at this time has changed with the plan before going abroad” and if yes: “why this change has occurred and why they have to make such decision”.

At first, it is expected that all the interviewees stand by neutral for returning or not after graduation, they think this really depends on personality. For example:

Wu said: “Everyone's family background and living environment is not the same, so everyone's choice is not the same, some people feel to stay in the United States can live a self-sufficient kind of small farmer life, more stability, some people feel that after graduation must go back to China break some big business, this is their own
choice. I think it is understandable.”

And Also:

Rebecca said: “I am holding a very neutral attitude, that is, to see what kind of development you want after the graduate, I support all the graduates back to China or stay in the United States, I hope they can have a good prospect, not regret for their own choice.”

Second, for the “whether the decision at this time has changed with the plan before going abroad”, I mentioned before, there was two interviewees told me they want to go back to China before they go abroad, but now, they changed their mind choose to stay. And for the rest for interviewees, they still keep their original decision to stay in the United States after they graduate, even more firm.

According to my own abroad experience, at first I guess, language will be a big obstacle for Chinese students in a foreign country to affect their choice, the language is often affected by new immigrants to adapt to a new level of education and process, perhaps they study life in the United States Period, despite the successful completion of their studies, but because of language barriers, cannot be well integrated into the local social environment. However, according to the interviewees results, the language impact for students is extremely limited. I think that the cause of this phenomenon is mainly related to the object of the interview we selected, our samples are in the study or have access to the degree, they have passed the SAT, GRE or TOFEL exam, English foundation is better, even though they arrived in the United States, spoken language may be an obstacle, but the vast majority of Chinese students can overcome language barriers in a short period of time. It is precisely because they have such English foundation, so even there is more Chinese students in class, it will not affect their contacts with American students and get along with them.

Then run to the next, for “why this change has occurred and why they make such decision”.

35
I listed a few items that have an impact on the retention of students in the United States, the reasons for their own do not return: “Western learning life model, the ideal job opportunities and satisfactory working environment, interpersonal relationships, the opportunities to change job, living standards, the natural environment, it is difficult to go abroad again, it is difficult to adapt life again in China”. Of the 8 influencing factors, the 4 most important reasons for returning to China are “Prefer Western learning life”, “more suitable and equal job opportunities and satisfactory working environment”, “Interpersonal is complex in domestic China” and “Natural environment is poor in domestic China”. Then I will analyze these points one by one.

3.1 Influence of Education

I heard a lot of very valuable answers, not only let me know why the interviewees choose to stay in the United States, but also let us understand better the American education system bringing to them completely different learning experience, they also enjoy the learning process, so that they have a greater expectation of future life in the United States.

I set a question in my interview, which is “Until now, do you think, what is the difference between Chinese education system and American education system? Would you please list some pros and cons of these two countries?” This question is aimed to understand that they are experiencing, what do they think of America's education system after studying in the United States? Compared with China, what is the advantage? Because I think that up to four years or even longer learning life is an important factor in whether or not they remain to stay in the United States after graduation, and only if they enjoy the years of study and life, they will have the idea of staying in the United States, which is a very straightforward factor. The following example may have some particularity, because the background of the interviewee, but can be very intuitive to obtain the answer which I want:

Charlene said: “Because I began to accept from high school is biased towards to the Western education system, so when I came to the United States, I can be better and
faster integrated. For example, the United States undergraduate is for four years, I was majoring in chemistry, but I also have to choose some of my professional and completely irrelevant disciplines, we called "General Education", the school allows you to choose, basically includes physiology, philosophy and so on, and even some schools will have religion, humanities, art analysis those kind of the class. That is, every aspect should be involved. I started to feel very meaningless, but then my idea changed, if is not the school's request, during your whole life you may not be able to contact with those knowledge, now here a chance to contact with them, to expand your vision. Like me, if I tell you that my majors is chemistry, you will never thought I actually learned Archaeology, I also know the human migration in Africa, I feel so interesting, later if I chat with others, I can say a lot of interesting things. Perhaps in the future work, I will not use them.

I listened carefully to her answer to this question, from her tone I can feel she is satisfied with the Western education model, and she is enjoying her undergraduate life. I also heard a lot of similar answers from other interviewees, and from here we can see that Chinese students have accepted and recognized Western model very well. Although when they are in the beginning is not such understood for them, but the real start of contact, their teaching model for Chinese seems very fresh and also meaningful. According to the same respondent:

"Which makes me in deep impression is that I have been elected a course called "Sociological Imaginati", our teacher is one of the interesting person I have ever seen, when he taught something is about the American society, when I had little knowledge of the American society, but this lesson helped me to understand, including our class games, including he let us watch movies and write paper, that movie is about “A Kazakhstan to the United States”, is an exaggerated funny movie, it shows the culture difference and culture shock. So I think it is very interesting, these things are my professional involved, but it gives me a refresh feeling."

3.2 Expectation to more suitable and equal job opportunities and a good working environment
Job opportunities and a good working environment is also an important factor in attracting Chinese students to stay in the United States after graduation. Many interviewees have already started to find a job on their eve of graduation and when they get a satisfactory response, they will decide to stay in the United States.

Niles said: “I cherish the current job opportunities, good treatment, the environment is also very good, if there is no accident, I will continue to do so, although my income is not a lot, but the daily life still be guaranteed, feel free, I like the present state of life.”

In addition, in terms of work, there is no such a big competitive pressure in the United States, they do not need to compare the level of wages, the number of bonuses there, and they can follow their own rhythm to do all staffs. And the environment of work place also better than in China, China at the development stage nowadays, in some large cities, industrial waste generated a serious impact on the quality of the air, China is suffering from haze now, young people yearn for some big cities: like Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, those places hardest hit of haze. And some of the professional facilities in the United States are more advanced than China, many of them in the United States to participate in research projects, but in China, they cannot continue and complete the projects because of the technology and equipment cannot keep up. Working environment, facilities are so important I think main reason of this it is because of the interview selected samples are based on the degree of students to receive, and major in economics, engineering, natural sciences and computer science students accounted for the majority, so they are considering returning whether or not to pay special attention to working conditions and related facilities.

Here, one of my interviewee Charlene also mentioned an important issue is gender discrimination.

Charlene said: “My major is Engineering with concentration of Materials and Manufacturing Technology, this is a very professional discipline, that is, after graduation, I have more than 90% to choose work related to my major, such as
engineers or participate in some research projects, and then if I go back to China to find this kind of job, many units or companies will brush me down when they read my CV, because I am a female.”

Charlene’s concerns are not without reason, now is very common concept in the traditional mind of the Chinese people, women should do some relatively easy work or to compare the secondary work, or stay at home with child, many units and companies, under the same qualifications and work experience prior choose male. An important reason for this problem is that they believe that women in the rise of the work period around 30 years old will face a series of issues such as marriage and fertility, will seriously affect their own work even the company.

3.3 Concern for interpersonal

The last factor will be related to interpersonal is complex in domestic China”,

Phoebe said: “Before I went abroad, I was very worried that I had no way to integrate into the American society, but I did not realize that after several years, adapted to my own country will awkward, more indifferent between two person, such as in the United States, if you meet a person you have never seen before on the road, you are on the view, then the two person will be invariably smile, but encountered the same situation, you smile on each other, they will think you are a strange person.”

Firstly, at this point, people in the daily life of cultural differences slowly affect the Chinese overseas students.

Second, because of the difference between China and the US political system, students who have lived in the United States for many years are not suited to the efficiency and style of work of Chinese government agencies. Although they have been accustomed to these styles before going abroad, they still have problems such as the “Social relations network”, “Cultural re-adaptation”, and “Corruption” returnees on these issues have a high degree of recognition (Wang, X.L.,1992).
Third, the most important reason why China’s complex interpersonal becomes the most effective might be, despite the fact that most people can handle it properly, it is very rewarding in this complex interpersonal network compared with foreign countries, personal promotion opportunities and development prospects to a large extent dependent on interpersonal relationships rather than personal ability, so that students worry about that. China is a country that attaches importance to “relations”, we can often hear such a sentence, which is said “In the Western countries, the business drives relationship, but in China, is the relationship drives business.” (Granovetter, 1973). Relations play a very important role in Chinese life. Both in daily life and in business, the relationship helps to strengthen the link between people and promote mutual understanding and trust between each other. Many students choose “complex interpersonal relationships” as one of the reasons not to return home. The reason for this might include: First, for highly educated people, they are not good at dealing with these complex interpersonal relationships, because of their high degree of education, they are more willing to rely on their own ability to achieve their own goals, rather than relying on the relationship between people. Second, these students have been adapted to foreign life, they are not willing to spend time on relationship, but as long as living in China, these relationships are particularly important, because these relationships affect the individual development, promotion opportunities and so on. Many returnees tell us that they are not suited to domestic relationships, do not want to participate, but many times have to adapt. For example:

Pan said: “In China's workplace, are basically higher-level guidance of the lower, lower orders to the higher, giving a strong sense of hierarchy, the bureaucratic atmosphere is very strong, dealing with and leadership, and the relationship between colleagues, is more important than the work, but in the United States there is not, although you are a freshman, you just have to try your best to do your own work.”

At the end, all the interviewees - who have whether or not completed their studies or already start working in the United States in the next few years they all have great deal of expectations, for those who have not yet graduated, hope they can successfully
complete their studies and for those who have already found their job hope gradually improve the work ability in a few years, to prepare long-term life in United States.

4. The experience of the interview

Contrary to my expectations, the first difficulty encountered was in the process of finding the interviewee, as I mentioned before, but after solving this problem, in the process of dialogue with each interviewee, I felt a great hindrance, lead me to a great deal of concern about the survey.

First, because we have never met the interviewee, unlike face-to-face interviews, although the atmosphere is more relaxed, to avoid embarrassment of face-to-face, but less a lot of interaction, most of the interviewee’s performance is not with, given the answer is relatively simple, effective information is less. But there are several interviewees who are very talkative, such as Charlene, her interview time is twice of other people, and much valuable information is obtained from her. Second, because the interview questions may involve more privacy issues, many questions will refuse to disclose detailed information. Third, due to the difference between geography and time, with their appointment interview time has become a relatively long process.
Conclusion

High school students and undergraduate students constitute the main group of students studying abroad. However, the sample of this survey is somewhat restricted, since the age range of the participants is mostly between 20-25 years. Therefore, it should be stressed from the onset that the study can benefit from a further investigation of a larger sample of students. Though the research is not representative, and the findings are not generalizable, we can still map some behavioral patterns of Chinese students living in the US.

The study has three main results:

1. **The social background and economic situation of the family have a significant impact on the student's choice to study abroad.**

   A higher family income and a more developed home city make it more likely for a student to choose to study abroad. There is a greater possibility of an early family immigration as well. Thus, the family background has a key role in forming the student’s intention to study abroad. This conclusion means that the future of study wave in China may be even more turbulent. With the increasing pace of urbanization in China and the increasing population of large and medium cities, there will be more and more students born in urban families within such cities. Moreover, with China's sustained economic growth, the national average household income has increased, allowing for the rapid development and popularization of higher education. All of the above are important factors that lead to an increase in the willingness to study abroad. It is expected that in the near future, due to the development of the economy, society, and education, the willingness of our students to study abroad will continue to rise and this may become an inevitable trend.

2. **Individual thinking and values have a significant impact on the decision to study abroad.**

   Those students who are satisfied to a high degree with their learning and living
conditions in high school are less likely to go study abroad. Based on my interview analysis, most of the interviewees’ satisfaction in this regard is relatively low. This result means that different ideologies for our young people will become increasingly fierce competition. With the continuous opening of China and the acceleration of the internationalization process, the impact of different ideological values on China has gradually intensified. Young people will be exposed to a number of competing ideologies. Dissatisfaction with their own situation, the lack of recognition of the domestic education system, the prospects for their own development concerns, and the expected future instability in the working conditions will significantly improve the probability of choosing to study abroad.

3. **Because of more advantageous education and career opportunities, Chinese students choose to stay in the United States after graduation.**

The main factors that lead foreign students to the decision to stay in the United States are: more flexible and free educational models, better career prospects, good living and working conditions, more equal job opportunities, and high-end research facilities. In addition to these factors, the family's geographical distance and psychological alienation also work in favour of students’ decision to stay abroad. According to some scholars from the perspective of cultural psychology, if students stay in the United States for many years, domestic strangers will make them back to the psychological counter-cultural shock. This is also an important factor cause them stay in the United States after graduation (Ward, C., Bochner, S., & Furnham, A., 2001).

From the study, I suggest that Chinese students should take full account of their wishes and parental advice before they go abroad, as well as should obtain comprehensive and accurate information concerning life in the United States. One can gain some international experience in advance, such as travel abroad, or apply for six months to one year student exchange programmes. One can also enhance cross-cultural knowledge and skills by getting in touch with American exchange students in China, through visits to American families in China, or through watching American movies and documentaries. These methods will enable students to have a
more comprehensive grasp of the reality of the American society and will reduce the unrealistic expectations of students, bridging the gap between the social settings and diminishing the frustration and pressure. In order to study abroad, one needs to lay a solid foundation.

After arriving in the United States, Chinese students should actively engage in social interaction and strive to integrate into the American culture. Chinese students should consciously carry out the "deep structural social and cultural transformation." When the deep understanding of American-style behavior becomes part of their cultural mechanism, Chinese students will make a positive individual behavior adjustment. Aspiring to a choice of cross-cultural mentality, they should adopt the integration strategy, learning both from Chinese and American positive cultural elements, while abandoning the negative ones. Students should actively move away from the Chinese cultural and educational model, fully adapting to the American academic and cultural ideas. These will help Chinese students mitigate cross-cultural stress, academic adaptation cycles, and long-term work and life challenges in the United States.
References


Academy Press.


Liu, M. C., 2013. THE RESEARCH OF CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS’
MOBILITY. Higher Education Research Institute.


Appendix(1)

*Screening questionnaire*

1. What is your gender?
2. How old are you?
3. Which city are you from in China?
4. Where are you studying in United States?
5. Which university are you studying in United States?
6. Which grade are you in?
7. When did you go to the United States?
8. Do you want to stay in United States after you graduated?
9. Do you have any relatives or families in United States?
10. Would you like to join me for a conversation to discuss this topic?
Appendix(2)

Online interview Questions

Prologue: short self-introduction and tell the interviewers what we are going to ask in general.

*Social demographic questions – China times*

1. What is your name? (If they don’t want to tell the actual name, English name will be accepted as well) How old are you?

2. Where are you from i.e. China?

3. Would you talk a bit about your family background? Does your family belong to lower, middle or upper class?

4. Are you satisfied with your high school? How are you getting along with your classmates and friends in your high school?

5. Why did you decide to go abroad before leaving China? What is your original purpose of going abroad? What motivates you to go abroad?

6. Is there more your own opinion or your parent’s opinion or together to make a decision to go abroad? Have you ever considered staying in the United States after graduation in China?

*United States times*

7. Did you get any certification of your English language level like TOFEL or IELTS or others? Or did you attend any English Language Matriculation?

8. What is your education level? (Type of school, educational performance/attainment). Which university are you studying in? What is your major? Which year?

9. How long have you been there? Are you living in a dormitory or you rent an apartment? With whom or you are living alone?
10. After you come to the United States, can you adapt quickly and well to life here?

11. How do you finance your studies? Do your parents support all the expenditure of you? Did you find part-time job?

12. How many Chinese classmates do you have? Is there more Chinese student or American student? How do you get along with your classmates?

13. Are you being in touch with more American friends or Chinese friends after school? How do you get along with them?

14. What kind of thing do you like to do after school? Is there anything different from when you were in high school?

Farther times

15. What is the attitude of you to return or not?

16. According to the 5th question, (if he/she did consider it before) after going abroad, is your opinion changed, may I ask what caused you to change your mind to stay?

According to the 5th question, (if he/she did not consider it before), after going abroad, what makes you have the determination to stay?

17. Until now, do you think, what is the difference between Chinese education system and America education system? Would you please list some pros and cons of these two countries?

18. Did you already get the green card; if not, do you want to get American citizenship? Do you think it was easy to get the green card for you? Why?

19. What kind of job you want to do? Why? Is it well related to your major?

20. What do you expect of your life in the United States in the next few years? If it is not like you expected before, will you consider going back to China?