Literature Review of International Students' Experience in Asia: A Case of China

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, international students' experience has received attention as an aspect of global student mobility in the rise of internationalization of higher education both locally and internationally. This situation brings the students' experience aspect of international student mobility into the forefront, and this has been an interest for researchers. International student experience in the study destination comes in various forms depending on the specific cultural environment they might be located. Living and adjusting in a new environment requires individual to be prepared for all the uncertainty that may come along their transition period of integrating in their new environment.

The main aim of this paper was to research into previous research on international experience in Asia specifically China. It concluded that, previous studies concentrated on definitions, conceptualization and operationalization of student mobility concepts, whilst others develop and test the psychometric properties of a self-reported rating scale for international students' experience. Additionally, both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used extensively for international students' experience research. More to the point, method and mechanisms of data analyzes have been limited to exploration factor, correlation, reliability and validity, regression, mediation and multi-level analysis.

KEYWORDS: *international student, experience, China, mobility, internationalization*

INTRODUCTION

In line with globalization, internalization of higher education has fuel the mobility of lots of international students around the globe (Safdar &Berno, 2016). 'Study abroad students or 'international students' are commonly used to refer to a particular group of individuals who go abroad to attain their educational goals. According to (Bocher, 2016), international students are described as 'student sojourners' who go abroad for the purpose of their educational goals within a specific time frame. According to UNESCO, 2014, the mobility of international students has significantly increased within the last decades and the number keeps increasing and is projected to shot up to fifteen million in the year 2025 (Altbach & Knight, 2007). The astounding growth of student mobility (Teichler, 2004) accompanied with the wider expansion of higher education which saw an estimated triple increase in enrolment in 2015(Kim and Strandberg, 2013). The development of internationalization and the increase in student mobility still put the traditional English speaking countries (USA, UK, and Australia) as the providers of most substantive amount of internationalized education, though the dynamics of mobility have begun to shift other emerging contenders in such as China, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, and South Korea (Lasanowaski, 2009; Kim and Strandberg, 2013). The then "traditional suppliers" of international students abroad to study have in recent years developed higher education internationalization strategies to attract oversea students (Sidhu, 2005; World Bank, 2007; Chan and Ng, 2008; Ruby, 2010; Wen, 2012, 2013, 2014). Among the Asian countries mentioned as being the emerging contenders of receiving international students especially China, which used to be the major source of supplying international

students to developed Western countries, its share of the international market has boomed recently from attracting quite a significant number of students from Asia and beyond (Hvistendahl, 2008). The number of international students in Asia has increased tremendously especially in China and the number of international students in Chinese higher education has increased from 1236 in 1978 to 397,6351 in 2015 across over 200 countries (MoE statistics, 1978-2016). China, for the past two decades has made it a priority on its agenda to attracting international students along with growing global influence, economic development and international engagement. The central government of China formed policies and strategies aimed at providing national guidance to expand inbound international students. In a state conference on international students held in Beijing 2014, the President, Xi Jinping and the Premier, Li Keqiang, mentioned the significant of recruiting international students as a national strategy in strengthening soft power and international competitiveness. China's ultimate goal is to host 500,000 international students, to become the biggest host country for international students in Asia and a major study destination in the world per their current "Study in China Program". The higher education market provides several reciprocal advantages for both the host communities and international students. For instance, international students have the opportunity to become part of a larger international learning environment, attain development and independence and greater cultural awareness and competence (Bevis, 2002). In essence, the diverse nature of international students enriches the multicultural awareness and appreciation of the host country (Bevis, 2002). Also, the multidisciplinary skills and knowledge of the students significantly enhances the intellectual capital workforce and thereby the knowledge-based economic development of the host country (Bista, 2019, Safdar & Bemo, 2016). Despite all these, international students go through several forms of experiences in the host countries which may affect their emotional and psychological well-being (Smith & Khawaia, 2011). For this and many others, researches have look at the international students' learning and socio-cultural experiences in many countries. Though prior findings may be generalized in Western contexts, this paper helps in gaining understanding in emerging study destinations and compliment knowledge in this field (Hu et al, 2016) and also fills the gap in the reverse mobility literature by reviewing international students' learning and socio-cultural experience in China.

Literature Review
Higher Education Internationalization: the case of China

The number of international students is sometimes used to measure the development of higher of education internationalization and every country has their distinctive characteristics of attracting potential students across the globe. Several ideologies are used to describe the phenomenon of international student mobility per the study destinations. According to (Pan, 2013), the theory of Neo-liberalism and the developmental state have been used to underpin the flow of international students since the 1950s. Additionally, for most emerging study destination countries, their triumph is focused mainly on the development of neo-liberalism, characterized by its export-oriented market driven approach towards higher education (Findlay and Tierney 2010; Marginson, 2009, 2011; Ng, 2012). Pan, 2013, argues that China is not using complete developmental state model to become an emerging destination for international students but however, they acknowledge that China's approach to globalization falls between neo-liberalism and the developmental state theory. Though, the two ideologies are intertwined when it comes to the development of higher education internalization in China. According to (Wen, 2013), giving education to international students has been view as a diplomatic issue rather than an education or economic issue in China. Chinese government preference of recruiting and offering governmental scholarship to students from socialist countries and other ally countries why providing education to foreign students is more of a diplomatic issue than economic. The aim was to train foreign students to embrace China in three ways: "know China", "be friendly towards China", and "love China". China's objective is to import international students to suit their diplomatic strategies and hence reposition its higher education among the best in the world. In order to execute the national diplomatic strategies, there was increase in the state's financial contribution towards subsidizing international students who studied in Chinese universities. According to (MoE statistics, 2010 and 2014), governments input for providing education for international students have increased in recent times, from 80 million RMB in 2010 to 1950 million RMB in 2014. Many government led initiatives including building a global educational network in a form of establishing Confucius Institutes around the world in promoting the essence of the Chinese language and sinology, the 100, 000 Strong Initiative from the United States (U.S. department of States, 2014), the Generation UK program (British Council, 2014), and

the Schwarzman Scholars Program with a $300 million endowment by the Rhodes Trust (Bradsher, 2013). Neo-liberalism being obvious in the process of internationalization in higher education in China and along with marketization of higher education, the government slowly decentralized its power in providing education to international students to individual HEIs in the 1990s. This move gives HEIs the power over enrollment, teaching and management of international students whiles the government takes charge of market access and external quality supervision. With this, HEIs started to enroll self-funded international students in 1978 and what is known as "HSK" which is Chinese proficiency test also was established in 1990 and became the threshold for enrolling international students for individual HEIs. Most HEIs were driven by the economic incentives rather than demand to internationalize higher education. For enrolling every one international student, a university is subsidized by 56,000 RMB.

International student enrollment trends in China
China is not only the largest sender of international students worldwide, it has over the past decade also emerged as a major destination country. Though, the gross number of international students makes China of the top host countries for international education but there are some fundamental variations between emerging study destinations and traditional developed countries like U.K, U.S and Australia. According to government statistics, there were 492,185 international students from 196 countries in China in 2018, a considerably high number in the world. However, it hard to compare this number with other source such as UNESCO, which counts only tertiary degree seekers and not numbers in China. In contrast, the Chinese data include higher school seekers and students in short-term programs which might last for only few weeks.

However, the government data reflect that there were 258,122 international students enrolled in degree programs, making China the world's fifth leading destination country of tertiary degree-seeking students when compared with UIS data—an astonishing development few foresaw just a decade ago. Not only are Chinese universities seeking to boost their international enrollment quotas, the government has set an official target of 500,000 international students in China by 2020—a goal that appears within reach. While growth rates slowed to less than 1 percent in 2018, there are now 227,000 more international students in China than in 2014, and the government is ramping up spending to hit its recruitment target. Monies allocated to scholarships

for international students increased by 20 percent to USD$560 in 2018. China funded 63,041 international students that year.

These efforts are part of China's drive to modernize its education system and become a key player in global higher education. They are also a part of China's soft power strategy in regions like Africa, where Chinese scholarships are embraced with open arms. But China's appeal as a destination goes far beyond scholarships, given that no less than 87 percent of international students in China are self-funded. The growth of inbound international students seems to be tied with the political and economic issues. According to (Constantinescu et al, 2015), the increasing outward investment and slowdown of global trade have had a significant influence in the inflow of international students. Being different from other major developed study destinations which primary attract post-graduate degree students, China's international students are most either non-degree students or undergraduate students. In order to attract higher level academic degree seekers, the government established various scholarships and programs which saw the increase in degree-seeking students in subsequence years. Also the academic subjects and courses were expanded across the HEIs to give room for international students' needs. Before the expansion, international student were limited to courses among the field of Arts, Engineering, Chinese language and Medicine. Regional mobility seems to be more intense than global mobility in regions like Europe and Asia and indicates the level of internationalization (OECD, 2011).

International students in China had more than half coming from Asian countries with South Korea being the major home countries of many international students. This has gradually reduced from 66,000 in 2007 to 62,000 in 2013 and Japan which used to be the second sending country of international students to China has also trended down from 28.6% in 1999 to 4.8% in 2013. This according to (Horie, 2014), this is as a result of the unwillingness of to study abroad among the Japanese younger generations.

As the number of English-taught programs offered by Chinese HEIs grows, studying in China increasingly affords students from developing countries an opportunity to obtain an education of better quality than at home at relatively low cost compared with Western destinations. Other students come to China to learn Chinese or establish contacts amid growing business ties with China. The country is also a major destination for medical education—a sector often underdeveloped and marred by capacity shortages in

developing countries. For instance, 21,000 out of 23,000 Indian students in China were enrolled in medical programs in 2018. Given this surge in enrollments, the Chinese government recently authorized 45 medical colleges to offer programs taught in English.

With the respective policies such as "One Belt One Road", Southeastern and Central Asia have become important markets for China's international education. There has been an exponential growth of international students from shared-border countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, India, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Mongolia. Africa has become the second largest world region for international

students in China in the wake of becoming the continents' largest trading partner and source of foreign investment. The number of international students between the year 2015 and 2018, African students in China shot up to 64 percent with Ghana being the leading sending country. Others include Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Contrary to the increasing market share of Asia and Africa, the number of students from developed Western countries has shrunk rapidly. Despite a substantial number of students coming from United States and Russia since 1999, limited number of students came from European countries such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.
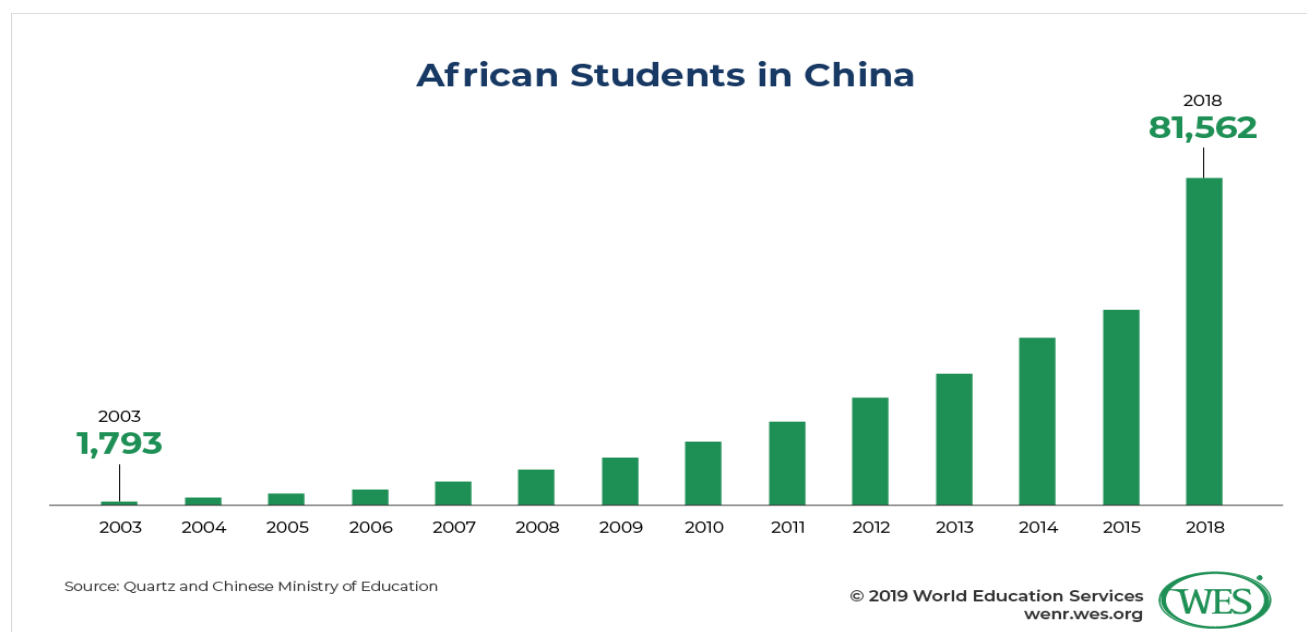
International Students' Experiences: Global Perspective

Per the literature available on international student experience, the subject covers a wide range of areas including numbers and distribution, determinant of student mobility (Knight, 2004; Albach and Knight, 2007; Findlay et al., 2012; Park, 2009; Cantwell et al., 2009;Li and Bray, 2007; Kondakci, 2011), special counseling program on multicultural diversities, sociocultural adaptation, friendship (Basak, 2014), language training, preparation for returning home among others. Despite the vast literature on international student experience, most research focus on the cultural or psychological approach by throwing emphasis on sociocultural and psychological adaptation as a key area for international student experience(Cantwell et al., 2009; Kondakci, 2011; Jon et al., 2014). The sociocultural perspective of international student experience includes students' perception of how they were treated as well as well as cultural and psychological difficulties encountered during studying abroad. Ward and Kennedy (1999),

mentioned there were many factors that could influence international students' sociocultural experience such as length of stay in the new culture, past cultural knowledge, interaction and identification with host country, cultural distance and acculturation modes, language or communication competence(Furnham, 1988), quantity and quality of contact with host countries, friendship networks(Bochner et al., 1977). Some emerging research suggests that cultural norm, language barriers, and the nature of friendships in the host country may hinder international students' ability to form friendships and thus result their feelings of loneliness. Several studies (Sawir et al., 2002; Chataway and Berry, 1989; McLachlan and Justice, 2009; Hechanova-Alampay et al., 2002; Khawaja and Dempsey, 2008) found out usually between 50 and 70% of international students have experienced loneliness in their country of study. According to (Robertson et al., 2000; Andrade, 2006; Briguglio & Smith, 2012; Brown & Jones, 2013), reports in their study that loneliness and homesickness have been

documented in many studies of international students pointing out adjustment issues and challenges such as encounters with racism.

It is also found out that especially some Asian international students may have it hard to make friends in their new environment compared to their counterparts from other countries (Zhang and Brunton, 2007). It is therefore difficult for international students from Asia when trying to make friends and interact with other colleagues with a culture that emphasizes individualism, assertiveness, and self-sufficiency over interdependence and relatedness (Mori, 2000; Yeh and Inose, 2003; and Wen, 2014). Cultural distance, disharmony or gap may extend into feelings of culture shock which Oberg (1960) proposed related to various characteristics such as emotional stress, sense of loss, confusion and anxiety, and indeed depression. A limited ability to speak the language of the host destination is the most common and easily observed challenge that international students encounter when trying to adapt to the culture of the host destination (Robertson et al., 2000). The a lack of language proficiency may lead to other difficulties that manifest in listening, verbal and oral communication skills, such as a limited knowledge of contextual references, difficulty with the use of slang terms and spoken accents (Andrade, 2006; Heng, 2018).

Also, Lee et al., (2004) in a study concluded that, international students from a collectivist culture which is often with close knit family will feel a bit loss when living away from family members. Moreover, international students from collectivist cultures may desire to maintain sociocultural behaviors and values characteristic to their heritage, whilst local students may desire international students to assimilate or integrate their attitudes to align with the host culture. In one example, an empirical study highlighting the importance of cultural context, increasingly multicultural and focused towards catering to a diverse range of nationalities.

For international students, the issue of cultural adjustment and adaptation is a pressing concern (Poelzl, 2012). The idea of being accepted culturally and socially in his or her new community puts the student under the pressure of his host school and immediate community to adjust to the new culture (Poelzl, 2012; Sorti, 2007). For a sojourner to successfully live and function well in his host country he is expected to forgo his acquired culture to learn the new one of his host country. One's failure or inability to quickly learn the culture of his host country can result in various misfortunes and experiences (Poelzl, 2012; Sorti, 2007).

In another study, the sources of conflicts in the student-advisor relationship were a lack of objectivity, lack of time, and different expectations with regard to international students' responsibilities (Adrian-Taylor, Noels, & Tischler, 2007, p. 108). Hence, faculty members, advisors, and international students may encounter some challenges in their relationships. Yet the communication among advisors, faculty members, and international students is of great importance, as guidance provided by faculty can be extremely important and helpful.

A seminal study which explored the lived experiences of international students in Australia (Marginson et al 2010) highlighted the challenges that international students face in terms of personal safety, English language proficiency, finances, accommodation, and issues of loneliness, racism, and segregation. The authors called for a cosmopolitan international education which would involve universities' deepening approaches to intercultural learning (2010: p. 463). Thus, it appears that little progress has been made to address some of the issues. For example, international students still experience difficulty in finding employment due to working regulations, lack of understanding of employment processes, or their English language proficiency (Gribble, 2014; Blackmore et al., 2017) For some international students, their accommodation experiences place their safety and well-being at great risk (Ryan et al. 2016). Some international students live in appalling conditions, sleeping many to a room with little privacy and no lease. Students without leases are exposed to hidden fees and rent increases and often is unable to complain in fear of their visas being revoked (Ryan et al., 2016). In addition, a recent study of student finances in Australia found that international undergraduate students were struggling financially (Arkoudis et al. 2018). While 90% of international undergraduate students are financially supported by their parents, 14% reported that they regularly go without food or other necessities, only slightly below domestic full-time undergraduate students (15%). These findings challenge common assumptions about international students' financial situation. Social isolation and lack of integration are perennial issues for international students and continue to challenge universities (Gomes and Tran, 2017; Arkoudis and Baik 2014).

International students' socio-cultural experience in China

A study by (Ward et al., 2001) found out that similarity between students' culture of origin and their host country's culture as being a significant factor that can determine the less or difficulty during

their abroad experience. Also, Kell and Vogl's (2012) study suggested that international students select a host country with the expectation that there would be cultural and linguistic commonalities with their own experience, but later found out that there actually differences. Similarly, with Muslims choosing Malaysia with the expectation of having commonalities only to find out that the local customs and values are totally form what they expected, which in the long run bring about difficulties and their dissatisfaction about the host country.

Another investigation into international students' experience about educational approach by (Chickeriing and Gramson, 1987, Ewell and Jones, 1993, 1996; Wen, 2014) highlights that language of instruction, pedagogy, and student faculty or student-student academic interactions are likely factors will influence international students' learning and development. This might be a little less used in documents on international students, but a lot of threw light on features of international students' learning experience. In another study by Zhao et al, found that most Asian international students were less engaged in active and collaborative learning and diversity related activities compared to white and Black international students. Asian international students are also less satisfied with the quality of their environment than their other counterparts. Jon et al (2014), in their research on international students in Korea, found similar results that international students from Asian countries, specifically from East Asian countries, tend to feel less satisfied with the university's academic support. Again, Hu et al. (2016), in their study, found out that Asian international students are more likely to interact or socialize more with their own kind than with locals, which in result interfere with their socio-cultural adaptation in a new environment. Ramos, Cassidy, Reicher, & Haslam, (2016), suggest that perceived discrimination among international students is associated with the fact that host nationals belong to an impermeable group, which in reverse predict both greater avoidance of host national and a stronger adherence to one's own culture. In addition, a study by (Leong & Ward, 2000; Ward & Masgoret, 2004), perceived discrimination has been found to be associated with less socialization with host countries in samples of Asian international students. These higher levels of discrimination among international students will predict a lower socialization with host nationals.

Studies by (Hanassab, 2006; Lee & Rice, 2007; Yakaboski, Perez-Velez, & Almutairi, 2017) on international students experience found that students

from non-Western countries account experiencing a wide range of discriminatory treatment in their new environment. Looking with a social identity lens, being a target of discrimination strongly gives the indication that one is not a member of the in-group but belong to a devalued out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1987). Gaertner & Dovidio (2000, 2009), suggest that perceiving would-be out-group members as part of one common, inclusive in-group seems to reduce intergroup bias. Taken it further by the rejection-identification model by (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999) opines that perceived discrimination is related to higher identification with one's own group, and this model is been supported in diverse sample of international studies (Schmitt et al., 2003). Experiencing these forms of discrimination will turn international students from locals and instead towards co-nationals.

Additionally, in a study to examine international students' socio-cultural adjustment by their regions of origin by (Wen, 2014), Japan and Korea with close proximity with China both geographically and culturally, and they are countries with the largest number of international students in China. However, these students from these two neighboring countries couldn't adapt to the Chinese culture as would have expected. The level of adjustment by Japanese and Korean in terms of communication, cultures and values, and environment were significantly lower than other international students from other countries. In contrast, a similar study conducted in the Western context, suggested that the closer the cultural similarity is between the origin country and the host country, the faster the international student will feel belongingness in respect to sociocultural adaptation. This is probably due to the fact that Korean and Japanese students are much more likely to socialize with compatriot friends than with host-nationals in order to obtain a sense of belonging. Also, Qi and Li (2009), in a study on Korean students in China, found that Korean students' social preference causes a hindrance to their interaction with host nationals, and this makes their sociocultural adaptation process slower than other international students. A study on the inclusion problem of Japanese students in China (Hou, 2010) noted an appreciation of collectivism and a tendency to lower self-evaluation as a barrier to their sociocultural adaptation. Many factors might be related to this. For example, Beijing is an emerging cosmopolitan city where the use of English is more common than Korean or Japanese, especially in universities. Few people in China can speak any of these "minority foreign languages." Therefore a lack of proficiency in either Chinese or English may create more communication difficulties for them, which

might be related to their lower satisfaction and sociocultural adjustment levels. Furthermore, China and Japan have been having a complex history and unfavorable diplomatic relationships, and may cause some Japanese international students find it hard to identify with Chinese culture and values. In all, Japanese and South Korean students' lower socio-cultural adaptation levels might be conceptualized in a different angle if we bring the concept "Confucianism culture circle".

Another study by (Gomes, Berry, Alzougool, & Chang, 2014; McIntosh, Goeldner, & Ritchie, 1994), concluded that the ability foreign students to adapt depends on the perceived distance between their culture of origin and that of the host country. As was suggested by (Sousa & Bradley, 2006), cultural distance increases as familiarity decreases, which put individuals with little knowledge about the destination country will have more difficulty to understand and adapt to the foreign country. As explained by (Crotts, 2004; Robertson et al., 2000), cultural distance may be the cultural misunderstanding that most times occur between international students and their hosts. According to (Flanja, 2009), unfamiliarity with behavioural norms and expectations of the hosts couple with difficulties with or inability to speak the local language, differences in religious and political ideologies, stereotypes and cross-cultural expectations may stunt international students' efforts to fit in and be accepted by members of their study destination. Similar findings were reported by Heng (2018), that international students found it hard grappling with unfamiliar sociocultural contexts and that daily life activities are likely to take immense time and effort for international students to understand because things were new and different to them.

Some studies on university identity among international students proves that it a predicting factor for socialization as in the feeling of belongingness to one's university is associated with greater intergroup interaction among international students and local students (Glass & Westmont, 2014; Levin, Sidanius, & Van Laar, 2009). Further, (Kashima & Loh, 2006), found in their research that Asian international students' university identity is linked to social contacts with both host nationals and country mates. Therefore, stronger university identity among international students likely will predict greater socialization with host nationals.

Further, Heng(2018), stated that international students in asserting their opinions and have critical divergent voice. Also, there is the struggle to meet the academic writing requirements due to communication problems with supervisors (Andrade, 2006; Sawir, Marginson, Forbes-Mewett, Nyland, & Ramia, 2012). Due to the lack in the proficiency of the local language, hinders international students from studying in non- English countries (Andrade, 2006; Zhang & Mi, 2010). Further, there is also issue of adapting to teaching methods that uses different learning styles and also represents cross-cultural challenges for international students that can lead to what (Ryan, 2005) term as academic shock. In another opinion, Trans (2011) suggest that reciprocal adaptation of academics and international students would make academic practices and teaching strategies more relevant to the educational values of international students and thus assist in more smooth transition.

While the difficulties related to differences in local languages and customs and political environments are generally able to be managed by individuals who endeavor to learn more about these cultural aspects of a destination, hence the impact of stereotyping is beyond the international student's control (Brown & Jones, 2013). Stereotyping occurs when suddenly the features that are unique to a group of people are suddenly applied to all members of that group. It has been suggested that most stereotypes tend to convey a negative impression (Brown &Jones, 2013) and this lead to social categorization. According to (Mills, 2018; Leerssen, 2003), negative social categorizations gives birth to prejudice attitudes that results in racism. Racial abuse has been identified as one of the key offensive behaviours towards foreigners that result in negative impressions of a host country (Brown & Jones, 2013). Negative stereotypes however can be deconstructed through cross-cultural contact and increased racial tolerance can occur when that contact is of a positive nature (Cushner & Karim, 2004; Hofstede, 2001). From an international student perspective, as students interact within different educational environments, cultures and societies, they indeed develop improved knowledge, awareness, skills and attitudes that enable them to function more effectively in foreign cultures (Gu, Schweisfurth, & Day, 2010).

According to Hofstede (2001), cross-cultural contact can lead to the deconstruction of negative stereotypes, which according to Cushner and Karim (2004) can also lead to increased racial tolerance. Gu et al. (2010) acknowledged and agreed that as international students interact within different educational environments, cultures and societies; they continue to experience improved knowledge, awareness, skills and attitudes which enabled them to function effectively within both their host and home countries. In addition, the university campus offers an important

meeting platform for cross-cultural contact, that allow for frequent interactions between

people of differing national and cultural backgrounds (Gudykunst, 1998). These interactions are useful and necessary as the social support from both the host destination as well as their international peers can play a role in reducing the possible negative side effects of major life events and daily stresses (Lafreniere & Cramer, 2005).

Despite the potential for cross-cultural interaction to enhance cultural tolerance and learning opportunities, researchers have found that in reality, interaction between local and international students occurs at a low level and successful outcomes from the interactions are often difficult to achieve (Brown, 2009; Halualani, Chitgopekar, Morrison, & Dodge, 2004; Sam, 2001; Wright &

Schartner, 2013). Such findings continue to represent the norm, irrespective of the fact that university campuses are becoming increasingly multicultural and focused towards catering to a diverse range of nationalities.

Methodology
There is extensive number of academic papers on international student mobility, which proves the importance of this topic. Considering the international student experience in Asian countries especially China, not much research has been carried out, hence this paper tries to review some literature on the international student experience in Asia placing emphasis on China. Document review was the main method used in choosing the academic papers to include in this paper. Most documents used were published academic papers. In order to overcome the problems associated with large number of published research studies and variation in quality between studies, this paper applied a pre-planned and documented systematic review protocol (Kirch,2008). The use of this methodology implies limiting the number of subjective decisions that must be made during a literature review and increases the probability that relevant studies will be identified.

Discussion
The contrasting interwoven concepts of neo-liberalism of higher education institutions with economic incentives being the key driver have made the international mobility in China a bit complex during the past few decades. Marginson (2011), suggested with strong government established programs which have a concentrated financial investment and strong nation-state policy will give room for more international student market.

International student experiences across the globe have its own uniqueness nature considering the study destination. The many literature reviewed on the international student experience in Asia has showed to some extent similar results from European context.

The racism experience of non- Western international students seems to be a bit greater than other international students especially among locals of the host country. In a research on international students in Australia, it was not surprising to find out that, host nationals displayed less tolerance for cultural groups from Asia compared to other cultural groups (Dunn, Forest, Burnley, & Mcdonald, 2004; Mills, 2018). Also, compared with Indians and Malays, Chinese appear to have encountered the greatest of racism. It really unfortunate that racism is one of the negative experiences international students have to go through while studying in another country.

Furthermore, the inhospitable attitudes of some of the Chinese nationals especially, outside "four walls" of the school of study makes international students feel a sense of not belonging and loneliness. The feeling of being literally outcast by a certain group of people may lead to some psychological issues among international students. In another Australian study, the perceived unapproachable disposition of some Australians was attributed to the feelings of loneliness of some international students as their effort to make friends with Australians were met with inhospitable reactions (Marginson, Nyland, Sawir, and Forbes-Mewett, 2010) and thus loneliness and racism are considered the two main causes of international student dissatisfaction. Also, Brown and Jones (2013) found in their study that almost one third of international students experience some form of racism. The emotional impact of this was shown to be strong and may lead to high rate of loneliness, homesickness, depression and anger. This influences international student satisfaction, leaving negative impressions of the study country and its nationals.

Most international student experience in terms of academic and social life support they receive from their higher education institutions seems to not have reached the level of satisfaction since most universities in China recruit international students to get government subsidies allocated for recruiting a certain number of international students. To maintain respected international reputation, universities must ensure fostering positive learning environment. This according to (Dorman & Adams,2004), a classroom environment perceived as positive by international students creates an enhanced learning opportunities which can eventually impact on levels and evaluation of both the educational institution and host country.

Pedagogically, it is a fact that classroom environments that promote cooperation, collaboration and support are more likely to lead to more positive learning experience (Barr & Tagg, 1995). The learning culture formed in Chinese universities in regards to international students is yet to reach that level where students are satisfied because most teacher focus is on research and thus teaching is not giving much focus not to say it supposed to be taught in English. The core component that influences the learning environment according to (Robertson et al., 2000; Azmat et al., 2013) is the teaching faculty and their attitudes. Hativa, Barak, and Simhi (2001) argue that university teachers who are more approachable are more able to create comfortable learning environments that enhance learning experiences. Today's universities are international in nature with facilities that focus on providing social forums for enhancing students' intercultural competence, skills and confidence (Summers & Violet, 2008). Given this multicultural nature of campuses, the people operating within them are often more tolerant and accepting of other cultures (Barr & Tagg, 1995). At the same time, however, because all cultures carry with them different cultural norms and accepted patterns of behaviour and as classes become more international in composition, both staff and students need to increasingly adapt to different learning styles and cultural norms (Azmat et al., 2013).

Stereotypes convey negative impression and may lead to categorization which breeds prejudice attitudes resulting in racism. Stereotype attitudes being meted out to international students specifically out of the classroom and outside campus is considerably experienced by most students. Similarly in Australia, some international students experience on campus specifically in the classroom a number of perceived racial incidents such as being laughed at in class by native Australian students about the standard of English presentation.

Language competency especially in China is very crucial in order to be able to get along well with teacher, students and even locals. Having good proficiency in the Chinese language gives you the trump to identify with and make acquaintances with locals in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. Language competencies they say paly a large part in confidence of international students to be willing to be interactive and participate in activities organized by locals. Walton & Cohen, (2003), found that most Singaporean students go through a stereotype "lift" where they experience a performance boost that occurs when downward comparisons are made to them. Another effect specific to this stereotype would be that international student would have less Chinese friends as it creates a language barrier that is not there in the first place. This is also supported by a study conducted by Daroesman, Looi, and Butler (2005) and Mills (2018) that revealed that the level of social interaction between international students and host nationals were generally low. This may lead to a poorer study experience as many international students do not have Chinese student friends.

Conclusion

The main aim of this paper was to research into the international student experience in Asia specifically China and others. The previous studies concentrated on definitions, conceptualization and operationalization of international student mobility concepts, whilst others develop and test the psychometric properties of a self-reported rating scale for international student mobility and experience. Additionally, both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used extensively for international student mobility and student experience research. More to the point, method and mechanisms of data analyzes have been limited to exploration factor, correlation, reliability and validity, regression, mediation and multi-level analysis. However, an extension of research on student mobility model could give dynamic and modern analysis such as curvilinear, serial mediation and moderated mediation analysis.

In terms of quantity, student mobility has achieved remarkable progress. With an increasing share of Asian students 240,154 in total and 60.4% and African students 49,792 in total and 12.5%, China has enhanced its visibility as a higher education destination in the world, especially for neighboring Asian countries. In addition to the rapid economic development and its foreign policy orientation such as 'one belt one road' that contributed to such a phenomenon, the gradual improving higher education system helped in creating a friendly and sustainable environment. However areas remain to be improved, particularly from the perspective of student experience, including poor English instruction and limited student-faculty interaction. While students in general experience difficulties in adapting local environment and Chinese cultures, Korean and Japanese students react worse than students from other regions. A number of points from the review bear further reflection. First, a wide strategic plan and a sound quality assurance system for educational programs for international students is lacking at the state level. Chinese government decentralized its power in enrollment, teaching, and managing in

international students in the early 1990s. However, the government has played a weak role in supervision and quality assurance, which results in economic-oriented motivation and consequent misconducts of individual HEIs, such as instances of a low entry threshold for admission and weak internal quality assurance. Although the government recently began to shift its focus in supervising educational programs for international students from quantity- oriented to quality-oriented, this policy transition has mainly been a response to the emerging trend of economic-driven expansion for some second and third tier HEIs. "Quality" only appears in policy discourse as a concept. Without an effective internal and external qualification assurance system, there are concerns about the quality of educational programs for international students in these HEIs. In addition, the culture of emphasizing research while ignoring teaching, so pervasive in Chinese HEIs, is harmful not only for domestic students' academic development, but also harmful for the development of internationalization of higher education. The government's current priority in higher education is to foster a small group of Chinese universities to world-class standards. Individual HEIs regard "world-class" mainly in relation to research, while little effort is made to improve teaching. If any effort is made on teaching, it is focused on nurturing domestic students to be competitive in the local market. Education for international students has not gained much attention. Examination of the learning experience and socio-cultural experience of international students reveals that faculties' poor proficiency of English and the inadequate interaction between student and faculty, which decreased most international students' satisfaction with their learning experiences in China. Last but not least, systematic research on international students is lagging far behind. If there is any research, most of it is focused on internationalization strategy and policy analysis at the institutional level. Systematic research is lacking at two levels: the macro/state level and the micro/individual level. Although this paper has discussed micro-level issues such as student experience, it has also addressed a number of bigger picture issues that need further research, such as estimation of international student inflows, quality assurance, and most importantly, the integration of international students mobility into the more general diplomatic and cultural strategy of China. The scholarly discussion on higher education in the soft power context mainly looks at the countries' rapid establishment of Confucius Institutes (e.g., Flew and Hartig, 2014; Hartig, 2012; Yang, 2010). Investigation of international students in China with a focus on their learning and socio-cultural experience fills the gap by bringing back into the discussion China's efforts to appeal to international students and the country's desire to "enhance its international political and diplomatic relations" (Pan, 2013). Given China's diplomatic strategy of transforming its position from a "rising power" and a follower to a leading role in international affairs, all the aforementioned issues are becoming crucial and need to be incorporated in future studies.

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