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การสำรวจปัจจัยการตัดสินใจของนักเรียนจีนสถาบันอุดมศึกษาของประเทศไทย

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Yan Ye¹

หยาง ยี่

¹Graduate School of Human Sciences Assumption university, Thailand. 592/3 Soi Ramkhamhaeng 24
Ramkhamhaeng Rd., Hua Mak Bangkok 10240, Thailand .

E-mail : norayeyan723@hotmail.com

¹บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย สาขามนุษย์ศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยอัสสัมชัญ, ประเทศไทย. 592/3 ซอยรามคำแหง 24 ถนนรามคำแหง
หัวหมาก กรุงเทพฯ 10240, ประเทศไทย. E-mail : norayeyan723@hotmail.com.

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Abstract

Most of the research objectives of the study are to examine the factors affecting the decision of Chinese students to study in higher education institutions in Thailand; and to what degree these factors impacted on their decision making in the process of applying. Questionnaires were distributed to a total of 402 Chinese students who currently study in different programs of 20 universities during August 11, 2017–March 11, 2018. The findings showed the students confirmed the influences from economical, political, social, cultural, personal factors in their decision making process; also proved that all these five category factors were positively impacting on the Chinese students' decision to study in Thailand's Higher Education Institution from high to low, as they were able to predict 78.9% of variance of the model. Meanwhile, the study also reported the top 5 information channels that Chinese students used in their process of applying for the Thai University, which were educational agent, joint program, friend referral, online applying and education exhibitions.

Keywords : Factors Exploration; Chinese Students; Decision-making; Thailand's Higher Education Institutions

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์ เพื่อตรวจสอบปัจจัยที่มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจของนักเรียนจีนในการศึกษาต่อในสถาบันอุดมศึกษาของประเทศไทย และปัจจัยเหล่านี้มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจในระดับของการใช้งานในระดับใด แบบสอบถามถูกแจกจ่ายให้กับนักเรียนจีนจำนวน 402 คนที่กำลังศึกษาอยู่ในโปรแกรมต่าง ๆ ของมหาวิทยาลัย 20 มหาวิทยาลัย ระหว่างวันที่ 11 สิงหาคม 2017 - 11 มีนาคม 2018 ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นักเรียนยืนยันว่าปัจจัยด้านเศรษฐกิจ การเมือง สังคม วัฒนธรรม และปัจจัยส่วนบุคคล มีผลต่อกระบวนการตัดสินใจ ยังพิสูจน์ว่าปัจจัยทั้งห้า ด้านนี้มีผลกระทบเชิงบวกต่อการตัดสินใจของนักเรียนจีนที่จะเข้าศึกษาต่อในสถาบัน

อุดมศึกษาของประเทศไทยเรียงจากมากไปหาน้อยที่สุด และสามารถทำนายความแปรปรวนของแบบจำลองได้ ร้อยละ 78.9 ในขณะที่เดียวกันผลการศึกษายังพบว่า 5 อันดับแรก ที่นักศึกษาชาวจีนใช้ในกระบวนการสมัครเข้าเรียนมหาวิทยาลัยไทยซึ่ง ได้แก่ ตัวแทนการศึกษา โปรแกรมร่วม การอ้างอิงเพื่อน การสมัครออนไลน์ และนิทรรศการการศึกษา

คำสำคัญ : การสำรวจปัจจัย นักเรียนจีน การตัดสินใจ; สถาบันอุดมศึกษาของประเทศไทย

Introduction

Higher Education, also known as tertiary education, usually refers to the learning that takes place at universities, colleges, or institutions. It is a kind of service business and it is “people-based” (Mazzarol, 2002). In this highly globalized world, the success of Higher Education institutions in acquiring their graduates to a large degree depends on the capability of an institution to recognize the needs of the educational market. Higher Education Institutions should always improve the ways to make themselves more competitive in the educational markets, as well as to study consumer behavior and service satisfaction, so as to understand what are the factors that foreign student considers when making a decision to study in a Higher Education Institution the marketers.

With the largest population and the great success of the Chinese economy, Chinese students studying abroad has become common practices. According to China’s Ministry of Education data (2007), China has the world’s largest student exporter. However, for students, in addition to study in Western countries, as a gateway to ASEAN, Thailand, is also popular for Chinese students. According to Thailand Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC, 2013), 171 recognized universities in the country offered undergraduate programs in a variety of academic disciplines. The growing number of institutions in the Higher Education sector has generated competition among Thai universities, especially in terms of student recruitment. It is necessary and important for universities to analyze and understand the factors that students in deciding their university choice.

Previous studies have identified student perceptions regarding studying aboard especially in the western country, but not many recent studies focus on why Chinese students’ decision to study in Thailand’s highereducation institutions. As the Chinese students were ranked as the major international students for Thailand, this study tried to analyze the attributing factors for Chinese students’ decisions for China and Thailand’s Higher Education market.

Therefore this research was conducted to identify the personal factors relating to Chinesestudents’ decisionmaking to study in Thailand’s higher education institutions; then to determine the information channels for Chinesestudents’ decision-making to study in Thailand’s higher education institutions; as well as to examine what are the economical,



social, political, cultural factors affecting the Chinese students' decision making to study in Thailand's higher education institutions, and lastly to determine to what degree the attributing factors for the Chinese students' decision-making to study in Thailand's higher education institutions.

Literature Review

Trend for Chinese Students' Studying Abroad

About a hundred years ago, Chinese Students and scholars started to study abroad (Hui, 2005). All of them were sent by Chinese government or governmental foundations with scholarship at that time. Nowadays, more and more Chinese students chose to study abroad, which was as a result of the worldwide trend to globalization particularly at the higher education level (China's Ministry of Education, 2016). It also impacted on the market of international higher education especial in Asia. Wang (2007) pointed that in particular, among the tertiary students studying overseas, four out of ten Asians, and China is among the largest sourcing countries for international students.

According to the Annual Report on the Development of Chinese Studying Abroad 2017, China continues to play a crucial role in global education, as the No.1 place of origin for international students. The majority of Chinese students still were the ones went to study in America, Canada, Australia, Japan, South Korea, and UK, although the increase has slowed down over the past year. More and more students now went abroad to study the programs such as foreign language and literature studies, education and business management, while engineering science and technology, computer and information science, math and statistics, and social sciences subjects were running out of steam (Annual Report on the Development of Chinese Studying Abroad 2017, 2018)

Factors Affecting Chinese Student' Decision to Study abroad

Factors affecting Chinese students' decision to study abroad from previous studies were reviewed by this researcher. Some of them like, Bodycott (2009), Chen (2007), and Mazzarol(2001) perceived the low educational quality in China, students' ability to enter domestic universities, desire to gain international experience and the expectation to find a better career were key drivers for Chinese students to study their tertiary education abroad. Others like Chen (2007); Mazzarol&Soutar (2002) believed that immigration consideration, universities' reputation and content of program, and job prospects in the host country were the important factors influencing the Chinese students' direction and magnitude to study abroad.

Also there was scholar (Liu, 2016) thought that Chinese students enjoy exploring the world and studying abroad, also due to Chinese cultural roots. Liu (2016) found three main cultural aspects of Chinese studying abroad including Chinese education-first culture, the saving culture, and the extended-family culture. According to ASIA-PACIFIC NEWS (2017), though China's government started the "two child" policy since 2015, which allowing Chinese families to have a second child, for the concerns of China's aging population problem. However, for many ordinary Chinese families, they were hesitating, as the child-raising and education cost were so high, so many of them could like to save and spend the money on their only child firstly (Mark & Eric, 2017). Therefore, the educational first concerns and saving culture would together push Chinese families to save more money, but whenever they need to spend on their only child, such as sending the only kid abroad, they would not hastate.

Dong (2012) took a macro-environment analysis approach to study the reasons for Chinese students to study abroad; focused on analyzing the direction of Chinese government policy, which supported Chinese students study abroad for recent many years. Dong (2012) depicted that the Chinese government produced many different policies to diversify the Chinese students' educational choices and encourage them to study in different countries and programs in the world. This could also be an important factor to inspire more Chinese students to study aboard.

Researcher from the social and psychological area perceived Chinese students' decision to study abroad was due to their national nature. Yao (2004) stated that Chinese students' nature was to explore and experience the different foreign culture, learning new knowledge and skills. According to her, when Chinese students noticed that more and more peers study abroad, they too would like to choose to study abroad to prevent being end up at a competitive disadvantage position. Attracted by foreign countries' favorable conditions, Chinese students who completed their tertiary education abroad became a popular trend as Yao (2004) analyzed.

Lastly, another very important push factor as Yang (2007) discussed, was the diminishing credibility of the study abroad agency's services, as more and more institutions set up their websites in Chinese or using more direct online application. Thus, the well-designed university website that provides quality service information simplified the process for Chinese students to contact the university directly, which to some degree also let them make a quick decision.

Brief Introduction to Chinese Students' Studying in Thailand

Office of the Higher Education Commission (2009) conducted a survey on the enrolment of international students in Thai higher education institutions, the survey reported that by



the year of 2008, there were 16,361 international students enrolled in 96 Thai higher education institutions, while Chinese students had become the major source of international students for Thailand Higher Education Institutions since year of 2006.

Why so many Chinese students enjoyed choosing to study in Thailand? Yin & Chen (2015) had studied this, they interpreted this phenomena based on Thailand's advantages including Thailand's long term friendship with China, its geographical location, its cheap education cost, and possible business opportunities for Chinese, and other international educational business. All advantages could bring more opportunities to this region; as well as attract Chinese students to come and study in Thailand, especially with Thai Government's open policies and after the establishment of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015.

Since Chinese students had become a majority and the main source of foreign students for Thailand, its education services also becomes one of Thai's important export markets for Chinese customers. However, as the international education industry became so globalized and competitive in this era, studying and improving the quality of the international education service market played a very significant role in terms of attracting more potential Chinese students to come and study in Thailand. Hence, a study of the variety of factors affecting Chinese students' study in Thailand Higher Education is necessary and un-doubly helpful, not only for Thailand higher education institutes and Chinese customers, but also for the Thailand and China's governments.

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Factors affecting Chinese students' decision to study in Thailand

Few studies concerning the affecting factors of Chinese students' decision to study in Thailand had been conducted recently, as more and more Chinese students coming to study in Thailand.

An (2013) tried to investigate the main factors influencing Chinese students' choice of studying in Thailand universities. According to him (An, 2013), most Chinese students decided to study in Thailand, as they found that most Thai higher education institutions used of English as a medium of instruction, like the institutions in the western countries, but they did not require very high IELTS or TOEFL scores before they entered the institutions, which could allow the Chinese students to be enrolled easier at the beginning stage, but also strengthen their English proficiency as they studied more. The Chinese students believed that an international studying environment in Thailand let them consider to study here possibly.

Songsathaphorn and Chen (2014) studied the Chinese students' satisfaction in Thai Universities and analyzed the related factors. Their findings indicated that there were four factors, which were summarized as education, safety, image and prestige of institution, and

student's preparation before they came to Thailand; positively influenced on Chinese students' satisfaction of studying in Thailand's Higher education institutions.

Yin, Rungkanjanases and Chen (2015) further more found that the factors such as recognition of the degree from China' government, family affiliation, the National Matriculation Exam scores, language improvement consideration, students' self-knowledge about Thailand and its society, could impact on Chinese students' choice of studying in Thailand institutions.

Different previous researchers used their own ways trying to explore the factors affecting Chinese students' decision making to study in Thailand. However, as they used their own ways, the factors that they studied were either overlapping or lack of systematic classification, thus, this researcher attempted to investigate further about what are the roots of factors by using PEST analysis and to measure their effects upon the Chinese students' decision making process when considering to study in Thai Higher Education Institutes.

PEST Analysis

PEST analysis has been used frequently in the last 20 years in the area of business and market exploring. This tool and technique used to apply for 'scanning the business environment' is by Aguilar. According to Aguilar (1967), PEST Analysis is a measurement tool for assessing markets for a specific product, a business or service within a particular time frame. PEST Analysis usually could help the leaders from various organizations make better business decisions and improve efficiency by analyzing different factors from political, economic, social, and technology aspects. Though PEST analysis was used very often in business areas, but it was also the major theoretical steam and an important strategy tool for educational sociologists to study the education phenomena in the scope of social sciences.

Sociologists of Education like Ballantine & Spade (2001) believed that "society was held together by share values and collective agreement, and the glue of society is economic, political, cultural and military power" (p.19).

Sadovnik (1991) pointed that Contemporary approaches in the sociology of education were concerned with how the Marco-level (social, political, and economic structures and institutions) is dialectically related to the way in which people understand systems of meaning. In particular, assessing the impact of political, economic, social and cultural influences is becoming a trend in studying in education sociology, so as to understand a group of social behavior. As recent political, economic, social and cultural developments in the practice between Thailand and China associated highly, more and more Chinese customers even realized the impact from these perspectives, therefore, they would also consider the factors before they make their decision to study abroad.

For this regard, this research also decided to apply PEST analysis for studying the Chinese



students' decision making behavior, which included investigating their concerned Political, Economic, Social and cultural, and Technological factors that may affect their decision making in studying in Thai institutions.

Research Methodology

This study used the qualitative and quantitative mixed design with four main objectives. The researcher started interviewing the Chinese students who were currently studying in different Thailand's Higher Education Institutions in Bangkok for about one year at least, in order to investigate what kind of factors they considered before they made the decision to study in Thailand. Their concerned factors recorded by the interview process were classified into five categories including social, economical, political and cultural factors, then each category factor was analyzed reflectively. The content analysis of the interview results was made into the questionnaire part 3 after the validity and reliability were ensured. Then in the quantitative process, descriptive statistics were used to report the information channels for Chinese students' decision-making to study in Thailand's higher education institutions as the technological factors' exploration. Multiple regressions were then used to determine the significant attributing factors for Chinese students' decision-making to study in Thailand's higher education institutions.

A questionnaire was developed by this researcher based on the interview results and previous research was composed of 4 parts. The questionnaire part 1 and 2 required the participants to report their demographic factors and the information channels that they used in the process of decision making. The questionnaire part 3 contained the questions with a five-point-Likert scale; the participants were required to indicate their agreement of the factors. The last part of the questionnaire surveyed the Chinese students' overall satisfaction of their decision to study in Thailand institutions, which was adopted from previous studies of An (2013), Yin (2015), and Sankham (2016).

The questionnaire was checked for content validity by a panel of 15 experts from China and Thailand High Education Institutions. All of them are senior researchers with doctoral degrees and at least 10 years of working experiences in Higher Education Institutions. The questionnaire content was analyzed using averaged scores of the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) from all experts. As the overall IOC result was 0.76, which was considered appropriate. Meanwhile, the instrument was also tested through a pilot study with 30 Chinese graduate school students who studied in Thailand. The alpha coefficients for questionnaire part 3 reached .86 and .89 for the pilot test and for the current study. As for questionnaire part 4, the coefficient alpha value was reported .73 as reported by An (2013), and Yin (2015), was .83 for the current study.

The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the Chinese students who study in different Thailand’s Higher Education Institutions by emails or hardcopies during August 11, 2017–March 11, 2018. A total of 402 Chinese students who currently study in different programs of 20 universities in Thailand during 2017-2018 completed the questionnaires, and 48 of them were also interviewed before they did the questionnaires.

Data Analysis

1. Personal factors reflected by the participants

The details for participants’ Demographic information were shown in Table 1. The results showed that most Chinese students came to Thailand were from the families of parental monthly income about 10,001-20,000RMB, they mostly studied at undergraduate level at the age of 19-23 years old, and had no work experiences in China or Thailand.

Table 1. Summary of participants’ personal information

Demographic Information	Categories	Number	Percentage
Study level	Undergraduate	282	70.2
	Graduate	120	29.8
Parental incomes (Monthly)	Less than 5000	53	13.2
	5001-10,000	126	31.3
	10,001-20,000	204	50.7
	20,000 and above	19	4.8
Age	Less than 19	30	7.5
	19-23	187	46.5
	24-28	110	27.4
	29 or up	75	18.6
Work experiences	No work experience	215	53.6
	Part time working now	162	40.3
	Fulltime working now	25	6.1

2. Information channels that Chinese students used for decision-making to study in Thailand’s Higher Education Institutions.

Table 3 showed the information channels that Chinese students used to make their decision to study in Thailand, the data indicated that when the Chinese students decided to study in Thailand, there were 5 information channels, the rank form high to low, namely, educational agent, joint program, friend referral, online applying and education exhibitions.

**Table 2.** Information channels for Chinese students' decision-making to study in Thailand

Information channels	Number	Percentage
Educational agent	146	36.2
Joint program	97	24.3
Friend referral	75	18.6
Online applying	68	16.8
Educational exhibitions	16	4.1

3. Identification of the economical, social, political, cultural factors affecting the Chinese students' decision making to study in Thailand's higher education institutions.

The researcher examined the factors that Chinese students considered before they decided to study in Thailand's Higher Education Institutions. Those factors were obtained from the interview process with the total of 98 Chinese students who were studying in various Thai higher education institutions for more than 2 years. The research did a semi-structured interview in terms of the possible factors based on the PEST analysis model and the previous studies (An, 2013; Yin, 2015).

The interviewed results were summarized and classified shown in the Table 3. As seen, there were 4 categories including social, political, cultural, economical factors mentioned by the interviewees when they talk about their decision to study in Thailand. The detailed factors of each category were also listed as the Table3 shown;the sequence of the listed factor is based on the mean scores with the relevant interpretation. Meanwhile, this researcher also assessed402 participants' agreement of each mentioned factor. Therefore, Table 3also showed the level of Chinese students' agreement, as a result, the agreement level for over-all of these 4 categories of factors was high.

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviation for the level of Agreement of Each Factor

Factors	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Social factors:			
1. Beautiful touring country	3.98	.93	High
2. Safety of Thai society	3.89	.98	High
3. Land of smile, Thai people are kind	3.87	.97	High
4. Many Thai has Chinese family background	3.68	1.01	High
5. Curriculum strength of Thai institutions	3.56	1.12	High
6. English is highly used in Thai speaking setting	3.32	.89	Moderate
Economical factors:			
1. The Belt and Road Initiatives	4.56	.88	Very High
2. Easy for applying compared with western countries	3.96	.98	High
3. Cost of living is not very high	3.67	.99	High
4. Tuition fees can be afforded	3.56	1.03	High
5. Not far between 2 countries	3.52	1.07	High
6. Many business opportunities for Chinese students studying in Thailand	3.24	.87	Moderate
Political factors			
1. Degree recognized by China's government	4.54	.94	Very High
2. Stable Sino-Thailand relationship from history	4.17	.77	High
3. Easy for apply and get a visa	4.09	.89	High
4. ASEAN + China impact	3.51	.79	High
5. Joint programs are established	3.50	.79	High
6. China government support oversea study	3.41	.81	Moderate
Cultural factors:			
1. Buddhist culture	3.84	.86	High
2. Chinese Education-first thinking	3.56	.78	High
3. Chinese exploring the world thinking	3.51	.81	High
4. Both cultures are close and get easy integration	3.50	.89	High
5. Cultural communication among people in both countries are often	3.48	.82	High
6. Multi-cultural experiences	3.45	.78	Moderate
Overall	3.73	.91	High



4. Attributing factors for Chinese students' decision-making to study in Thailand's Higher Education institutions.

Combing with all the factors that this study investigated, multiple regressions were used to test to what degree these factors attributing to the Chinese students' decision-making to study in Thailand. Figure 1 below indicated the results of the analysis. The adjusted R^2 was .789, the five category factors were significantly impacting on the Chinese students' decision to study in Thailand's Higher Education Institution, as the p values were less than .05; and they were able to predict 78.9% of variance of this model. According to the degree that attributing to the students' decision making from high to low, the factors were Economic factors ($\beta=.374$, $P=.000$); Political factors ($\beta=.293$, $P=.000$); Social factors ($\beta=.237$, $P=.001$); Cultural factors ($\beta=.137$, $P=.002$); and Personal factor ($\beta=.078$, $P=.023$).

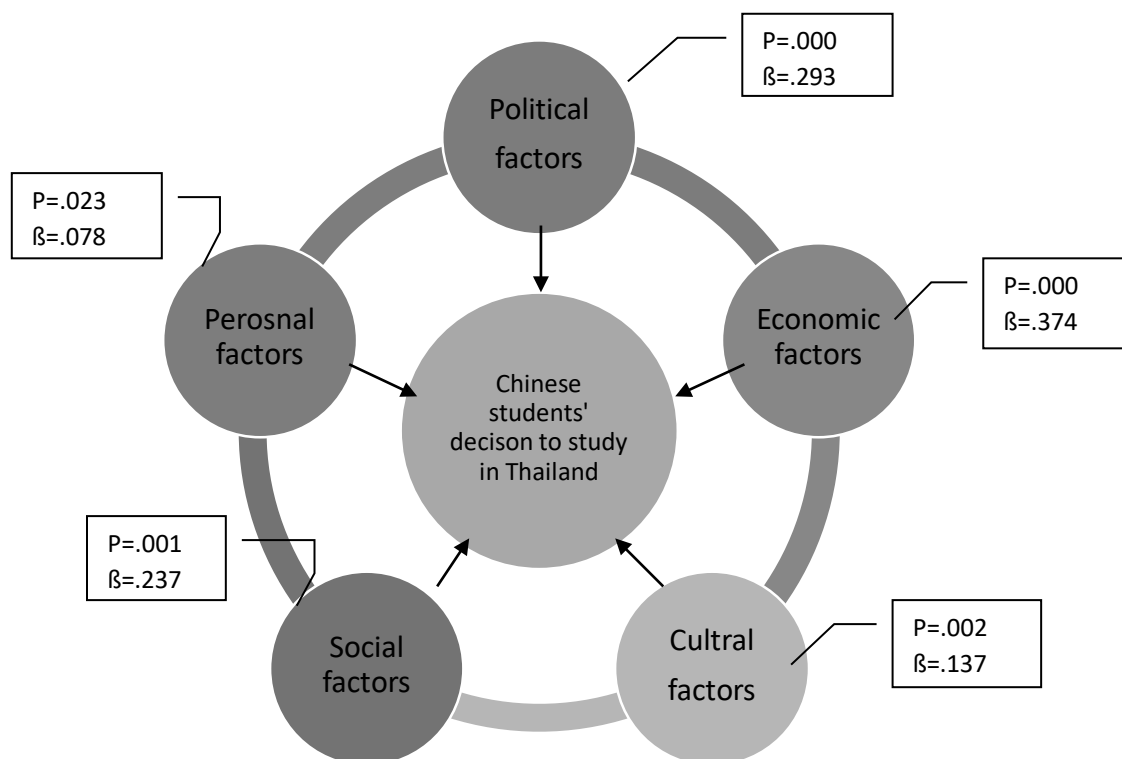


Figure 1. Correlation between all the Attributing Factors (N=402), $p<.05$

Conclusion And Discussion

The study mainly analyzed the economical, political, social, cultural, personal factors' influences on Chinese students' decision-making of choosing Thai Higher Education Institutions. These five predictive factors were proved to positively affect the Chinese students' decision to study in Thailand's Institutions from high to low, and could predict 78.9% of variance of

the model. Meanwhile, the top 5 information channels that Chinese students used in their process of applying for the Thai University were educational agent, joint program, friend referral, online applying and education exhibitions.

This study also found that most Chinese students came to Thailand were from the families of parental monthly income about 10,001-20,000RMB, they mostly studied at undergraduate level at the age of 19-23 years old, and had no work experiences in China or Thailand. Previous study (An, 2013) had reported that 84.9% Chinese students studied in Thailand's universities at the undergraduate, only 15.1% of them studied at the graduate schools level. Compared with An's (2013) finding, it could be concluded that more Chinese students came to study at the graduate schools level in Thailand's Higher Education Institutions in recent 5 years, as the percentage of Chinese students studying the Thailand Higher Education Institutions increased to 29.8 as this study identified. What were the reasons behind this, the reports of some Chinese Medias tried to explain this to a certain degree. Wang(2016) reported on HuaxiDushi Newspaper (Oct 31, 2016) that the job market for Chinese students' with bachelor degrees became more fierce and competitive, so the number of Bachelor degree students who chose to study in the graduate schools were increasing stably in recent three years. Wan (2017) also focused this and published his concerns in another famous Chinese newspaper named China Youth. He reported that to the year of 2018, the number of Chinese undergraduate students will reach 8.2 million, which could be the highest number in the history, and he believed the major reason was due to delay the job search in the job market (Wan 2019).

The study's findings about the top 5 information channels that Chinese students used in their process of applying for the Thai University were consistent with the findings of Yin, Rungkanjanases and Chen (2015). Their report at the year of 2015 showed the percentage for online applying was 8.4%, and the percentage of educational exhibitions was 6.4%, however, the percentage for online applying increased to 16.8%, and the educational exhibitions dropped to 4.1% as this study found. Annual Report on the development of Chinese oversea study abroad (2017) confirmed this trend, it has pointed that more joint programs resulted from "one belt and road" project and online application made the Chinese study aboard more conveniently.

This study revealed the economical, social, political and cultural concerns that Chinese students and parents were considering before they decided to study in Thailand. Previous researchers from different angles and aspects studies and discussed the possible reasons that influenced the Chinese students' decision making for studying in Thailand Higher Education Institutions, some of the detailed reasons were consist with this finding, though



they didn't classify them as economical, social, political and cultural factors(An, 2013; Yin, Rungkanjanases and Chen, 2015) .

The study's last finding confirmed that Economic factors, Political factors, Social factors ,Cultural factors, and Personal factors were all positive impacting on the students' decision making from high to low, as predicting 78.9% of variance of this model. Since China government starts the "Belt & Road" Initiative, the Chinese students studied in the countries along "Belt and Road" became very popular, and Thailand was one of the important ports in this "Belt and Road" routine, thus, it was very necessary and important for Chinese students to consider the economic factors, political factors, social factors, cultural factors, and personal factors before they decided to study in Thailand. The similar finding as Lv, Zheng and Li (2017) depicted were three aspects' consideration including background conditions, development characteristics and policy environment.

Thailand, as one of the important studying abroad destinations, not only have its own advantages in international tertiary education, but also are developed a closer economic and social relations with China under the development of ASEAN. Therefore, considering the economic factors, political factors, social factors, cultural factors, and personal factors, it was a fact that Thailand had attracted and still would attract a large number of Chinese students to study in this country, because of higher level of education internationalization and adjacent location advantage with China, as Lv, Chen and Fei (2017) also confirmed. They also pointed that popular destinations for studying abroad in Asia along the route of Belt & Road Initiative, beside Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand would be a popular choice still for Chinese students. As the Chinese students were ranked as the major international students for Thailand, the analyzed attributing factors for Chinese students' decisions were expected to assist Chinese students' consideration to some degree; and drive the Thailand's internationalized Education service to a better future.

Recommendation

Based on the discussion, the researcher provides the following recommendation for Chinese students, parents, agents, Thai universities and education department of Chinese embassy in Thailand:

Chinese students and parents were suggested to consider all the economical, political, social, cultural, personal factors that existing between Thailand and China, and make sure the students had enough knowledge for their learning in Thailand's Higher Education Institutions and living in Thailand. They were also recommended to design their future career plan during the time they studied in Thailand, check more information directly from the website of targeted institution, and direct contact with the schools would be encouraged as well.

The institutions were recommended to provide international students more information on their website in English or Chinese language if possible. As more students were likely to apply through online tools, the institutions should build a team to facilitate the application and consultation through different channels, including Wechat, Line or University website. If some institutions had a lot of Chinese students already, a student affair or Chinese student union may need to be established to improve the better management and guidance for the Chinese students.

This study only surveyed and interviewed the Chinese students who were currently studying in Thailand’s Higher education Institutions, in order to know the real concerns from the ones who plan to study in Thailand institutions, future researchers may need to go to China and study the Chinese customers’ perception and consideration directly before they made decisions. Perhaps future studies could also compare the Chinese students’ decisions to study in Thailand and in other countries, so as to understand fully about what the Chinese students’ real concerns were and what the real strengths of Thailand’s institutions were.

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