Forces, connections and imagination at work in studying overseas:
Chinese parents and students’ reasons for choosing Australian universities

QI Demei

A research thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Western Sydney University

Research Education Team
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Date: 1st October, 2017
Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my family in China who have supported me during my study period in Australia.

In particular:
My mother: Qifeng He, father: Hongcai Qi, sister: Deying Qi without whose love and support this thesis would not have been possible.
Acknowledgement

Although I had been accepted as a PhD student in other universities, I chose to complete a doctorate at WSU after one interview with Professor Singh. Professor Singh and Dr Han have continued to vindicate that decision. This thesis owes its existence to the patience and support of Professor Michael Singh and Dr Jinghe Han. I also acknowledge the editing work of renowned children’s author Sandy Fussell and Tim Baker who refined the thesis.
STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

Any material that has been presented by any person or institute is duly referenced, and a complete list of all references is in the Reference List.

Signature ________________________________ 19/10/2017
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Abbreviation of Key Terms

Other Key Terms and Abbreviations used in this document include:

1. **AGDE**: Australian Government Department of Education and Training.
2. **AUD**: The Australian dollar.
3. **AUSTRADE**: Australian Trade Commission, agency to assist Australian companies/organisations that wish to export goods or services.
5. **CCIEE**: China Centre for International Educational Exchange. A large Chinese Educational institution, CCIEE is an affiliate of the MoE and the director of CCIEE is also member of the MoE.
6. **CEAIE**: China Education Association for International Exchange.
7. **ChAFTA**: China-Australia Free Trade Agreement: Agreement between the two countries to remove many of the existing tariff taxes that restrict trade. Export education is one area of agreement.
8. **Choice**: (or selection) A decision or course of action after evaluation of the available options.
9. **CIFTIS**: China (Beijing) International Fair for Trade in Services.
10. **Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students** (CRICOS): All universities in Australia have CRICOS approval and a CRICOS approval number.
11. **CPC**: Communist Party of China.
12. **Cultural Immigration**: Facilitating immigration through the medium of student study visas.
13. **CYN**: Chinese Yuan (Currency of China)
14. **DCE**: Discrete Choice Experiment, survey technique generally used to measure reasons behind consumer’s choice.
15. **DFAT**: Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
17. **Educational Institution**: Refers to a school, college or university.
18. **Educational Provider**: Refers to a school, college or university.
19. **ELICOS**: English Language Intensive Course of Study.

20. **Export Education**: Charging a fee to a foreign student for providing a service in education.

21. **Foreign student**: Any student whose nationality is different to the nation in which he/she is studying. In Australian terms, non-Australian students are foreign students.

22. **Global Financial Crisis (GFC)**: Global economic downturn that started in 2007 in the USA with bank defaults. Did not have a significant impact on Australia or China.

23. **HEI**: Higher Education Institution; generally universities and colleges.

24. **Higher Education**: Post-secondary education refers to education by a vocational college, TAFE, or university. In general, in Australia, the term refers to universities.

25. **Higher Education Sector** (H.E.S.): Refers to post-secondary education in general, but more commonly refers to university education.

26. **HMQRC**: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, a policy document on international education released by the Canadian Government in November, 2014.

27. **HNWI**: A Chinese national with a “family wealth of no less than 6 million CNY (US$1 million)”.

28. **Host country**: Refers to a country where the student undertakes studies.

29. **Host university**: Refers to the institution where the student undertakes studies.

30. **Import Education**: Paying a fee to a foreign educational provider in return for an education.

31. **International student**: Any student whose nationality is different to the nation in which he/she is studying. In Australian terms, any non-Australian students are foreign students.

32. **MoE**: Ministry of Education, China. Could also be used in the singular to refer to the Minister of Education.

33. **MU**: Macquarie University.

34. **OECD**: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

35. **Options**: Range of choices available from which one must be chosen as part of a decision making process.
36. **PISA**: Programme for International Student Assessment.

37. **PR**: Permanent Residency (Visa status in Australia).

38. **PRC**: Peoples Republic of China.

39. **RTO**: Registered Training Organisation.

40. **STEM students**: Undergraduate or postgraduate students enrolled in courses of science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

41. **Student**: A person studying at a school, college or university.

42. **Study Abroad**: To study in a country different to your home country.

43. **The USD**: The US dollar.

44. **The UK**: The United Kingdom of England, Scotland and Wales.

45. **Thick Face, Black Heart**: The Warrior Philosophy for Conquering the Challenges of Business and Life. Hide true meaning behind a thick face, and be ruthless in pursuit of goals.

46. **USYD**: The University of Sydney.

47. **WSU**: Western Sydney University.
ABSTRACT

Forces, connections and imagination at work in studying overseas:
Chinese parents and students’ reasons for choosing Australian universities

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A research thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The purpose of this thesis is to report on the identification of selected forces, connections and imagination influencing Chinese students to study in Australia. Previous research has investigated the ranges of drives generating the burgeoning number of students from the People’s Republic of China seeking to complete their tertiary education overseas. However, little research addresses the role of parents in decision making when they study the question of “Why choose Australia?”

This research is based on a study using a focus group in Sydney in 2014 (n = 21), Internet questionnaires in Beijing and Lianyungang (n = 635) and follow-up telephone email interviews in Beijing, Shanghai, Lianyungang and Sydney (n = 12). The participants in this study were all students from the People’s Republic of China, mainly
the children from High Net Wealth Income families. The analyses of the evidence from the focus group interviews produced five themes, namely; quality of education, cost, lifestyle, environment and labour migration opportunities. These themes were further investigated by the Internet questionnaire and refined in follow-up interviews with parents and students after the data had been analysed. In addition, evidence regarding these themes was collected through media and government reports regarding corruption in China and Australia.

The findings from this research revealed four insights unrecognised by previous research into the main research question:

1. It is the parents who in many cases decide the host country destination and choice of university.
2. Interviewing students may not uncover the motives that influenced the parents’ decisions.
3. Overseas education per se is a prime driver of choice, rather than quality of education.
4. Corruption, especially money laundering, and transcultural immigration are the main motives driving many families’ choices of university in Australia.

This thesis has changed directions many times throughout the investigation. It brings a fresh perspective on the forces, connections and imaginations influencing students to study in Australia, but at the same time it has raised questions that it was not able to completely answer.
CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THESIS STRUCTURE
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Chinese students are flocking to Australian universities in record numbers.

Federal Government data shows a 13 per cent increase in the number of international students from all countries (studying in Australia) but by far the biggest number were from China - a record 46,400 in total (Dodd, 2016, n. p.).

International student numbers in Australia grew by 15 per cent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2017, figures show.... Overall, 30 per cent of the international students were from China (Grove, 2017, n. p.).

The value of international students to their domestic economies has been published in policy documents produced in countries such as the US (The U.S. Department of Education International Strategy 2012-2016), the UK (H.M. Gov. UK, 2013), Australia (DNSIE, 2015) and Canada (Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2014, HMQRC). China is by far the largest supplier of international students¹ and Australia is “a major education destination for Chinese students” (Australian Government, 2016, p. 1).

Australia’s reliance on Chinese students to support its export education industry has prompted research on the construct of motives influencing students from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) to choose Australia as a study destination. Researchers such as Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013); Marginson (2007); Yang (2010); Bodycott (2009); Oleksiyenko et al.’s (2013) and Guo et al. (2013), have concluded that the main reasons are educational.

Gong and Huybers (2015, p. 196) assertion “that university ranking and destination safety are key decision drivers for Chinese students,” is challenged by the comparison between Australia and the UK. The UK attracts fewer Chinese university students than Australia (10% compared to Australia’s 12%, see Table 5.1), despite having universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, and “The London School of Business” which

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¹ The MoE (Minister of Education), reported that over 523,700 Chinese students went abroad to study in 2015 (Australian Government, 2016, p. 1).
provide a far better university ranking than Australian universities. Wu (2014) disagrees with the construct that educational issues are the main influencing factors, citing the complexity of competing forces involved in the decision making process.

This research has been able to explain the anomalies published in the findings of Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013); Marginson (2007); Yang (2010); Bodycott (2009); Oleksiyenko et al. (2013) and Guo et al. (2013), by analysis of credible media reports and government publications which indicate that more sinister motives are involved.

The parents of Chinese international students are the high net worth individuals (HNWI) who have the wealth to fund their study. Wealth accumulation in China accompanies guanxi and corruption, (Chung, 2017a; Cornwall, 2014), practices that the present Government in Beijing has vowed to stop (De Jong, 2014). The fear of retribution arising from corruption, and the desire by HNWI from China for wealth protection has been confirmed in the Panama Papers, which have revealed their widespread money laundering practices using facilities set up by German bank Mossack Fonseca (Olesen, 2016).

Immigration, achieved through student visas, a practice referred to as transcultural immigration, is an ideal solution for the HNWI Chinese family seeking to start a new life in a country offering a better lifestyle than the one enjoyed in China. Australia is an ideal choice because at the moment it does not have an extradition treaty with China, nor is it likely to have one in the future (Dziedzic, 2017). The heavy investment by wealthy Chinese in the Australian property market and the existence of corruption in the purchase process is further evidence corroborating the construct of transcultural citizenship to Australia (Thornton, 2016).

The constructs of this research are the forces, connections and imaginations influencing the decision by Chinese students to study in Australia. Previous researchers referred to in this thesis have exclusively used data supplied by Chinese international students, however, this research has discovered that it is often the parents, not students, who make the decision regarding the destination for study abroad. Linking the role of parents in the decision making process, and the evidence of
1.1 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

The critical issue of this research is the motives influencing the decisions made by Chinese families to send their children to study in Australia. There are two key questions involved in analysing those motives; who makes the decision, and what are the factors motivating the decision maker? The evidence discovered at the latter stages of this investigation revealed that in many cases it is the parents, not the students who are the authors of such decisions. The findings of Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013); Marginson (2007); Yang (2010); Bodycott (2009); Oleksiyenko et al. (2013) and Guo et al. (2013) have relied exclusively on data supplied by students; ignoring the possibility of parental involvement in the decision making process. Furthermore, some of the various forces influencing those parental decisions are linked to corruption in both China and Australia.

This research has solved some of the problems confronting it, but further research into the connections between corruption issues, money laundering and their combined links to immigration is required.

1.2 RESEARCH FOCUS

The focus of this study is the factors that have influenced Chinese families to choose to send their children to study at an Australian university. Previous research has collected data from the Chinese students only, whereas this research has recognised that students may not have been the decision makers, and that some students may have supplied erroneous data.

This research also focuses on Chinese business practices of guanxi and corruption, which may have been preludes to making family immigration possible. The above two points of difference have been overlooked by other researchers. However the findings of noted researchers Gong and Huybers (2015), Bodycott, (2009); Yang (2010) and
Marginson (2002 & 2007) in general support the unique findings of this research, when they are interpreted within the paradigm of evidence supplied by the Hurun Report (2016); Olesen, (2016); ICAC (2017), Bretag (2016) and others. This evidence is in the form of student and parent data supplemented by private and governmental reports and reputable media publications.

The motive for any endeavour is linked to reward and advantage; when exploring the factors motivating Chinese students to study at Australian universities, the advantages of this activity are weighed against its alternative options. Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013); Marginson (2007); Yang (2010); Bodycott (2009); Oleksiyenko et al. (2013) and Guo et al. (2013) made findings which suggest that the educational issues are the main advantages recommending study in Australia, even though other countries such as the UK and Canada, with better educational options, attract fewer Chinese university students than Australia. Quality of education is perceived to be important insofar as a certain level and reputation is a necessary condition for study choice, but quality alone is not perceived to be a sufficient condition. Australia has a well-respected university education system, providing education in a safe, friendly environment in a country that enjoys a warm and friendly lifestyle. Parental and student balancing of these attributes with the influential factors emanating from the corruption involved, was the focus and the main challenge confronting this investigation.

**Purpose of this Research**

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this research was to discover the prime forces, connections and imaginations that influenced students from PRC China to complete tertiary degrees in Australia. A key purpose of this research was to isolate the unique factor(s) that enticed more Chinese students from PRC China to study in Australia than could be expected if the traditional assumptions concerning quality of education, safety, etc., were applied logically to include the US, the UK, Canada and Japan. Many other researchers have listed a range of influences that are generic to the four mentioned nations above, but they have not definitively named the unique factor(s) that attract more than a “fair
share” of Chinese students to study at Australian universities.

**Research Participants**

The investigation was an ethnological study and the size of the population under examination presented a major challenge. A number of different methodologies were considered before deciding to conduct a case study with a critical interpretative methodology, as outlined in Chapter Four. The case under scrutiny was students from the PRC who have decided to study overseas. The participants included under-graduate and post-graduate students currently studying in Australia, and international students in the last year of study at a Chinese international high school in Lianyungang. The former group were volunteers selected by snowballing, whilst the latter group also volunteered under a reward inducement offered by the school administration. The volunteers were queried to ascertain their reasons for choosing a host nation for tertiary study.

**Practical Problems**

Gong and Huybers’ (2015) research shows that Chinese students’ higher education destination decisions were based primarily on quality of education and safety. Previously, Bodycott (cited in, Zhang, Sun and Hagedon, (2013, p. 141)), found “the three most important factors motivating students to study abroad: 1) immigration to the hosting country after graduation, 2) a perceived better quality of education, and 3) a competitive tuition.” Yang’s (2010) report argued that there are four reasons why Chinese students choose to study in Australia:

1. To obtain international qualifications.
2. The difficulty of gaining entry to a university in China.
3. The high quality of education overseas.
4. The wide range of programs overseas.

The other reason was immigration. There is a contradiction across these research findings. None of this research has accounted for the UK’s higher education sector
(HES), supposedly offering a better quality of education and safety than Australia\(^2\) (see Section 7.6.2); yet attracts fewer Chinese tertiary students than Australia. The research problem that is the focus of this thesis concerns the identification of the complex factors that accounts for Chinese university students choosing to study in Australia. Previous studies have relied on data supplied exclusively students, whereas this current study has include the parents of students as research participants.

### 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**Main Research Question**

The main research question is:

What are the forces, connections and imaginations informing Chinese parents and students’ reasons for studying overseas, in particular for choosing Australian universities?

Succinctly, ‘Why Study in Australia?’ Specifically, why does the UK, which enrols far more international tertiary students than Australia, attract fewer Chinese tertiary students, and why does the US, with four times as many international students as Australia, only attracts twice as many tertiary students from China?\(^3\)

The initial focus group interviews identified a number of subsidiary factors, which were expected to produce contributing questions that answered the refined main question: Does corruption, in China and Australia, account for the disproportionate number of Chinese students choosing to study at Australian universities? Early in the research, 2014, the revelations of corruption by Olesen (2016) were unidentified, and the contribution of parents in the decision making process remained unknown. Nevertheless, data from the focus group interviews, Internet questionnaire and the

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\(^2\) NationMaster (2016), fear of crime in Australia is slightly higher than expressed in the UK. Murders with firearms per million is 3 in Australia while the UK statistic is 0.236. Other statistics on crime safety also favour the UK over Australia.

\(^3\) During 2014, in excess of 900,000 international students were studying in the US HES, with fewer than 300,000 being of Chinese origin whilst Australia’s HES hosted more than 230,000 international students of which approximately 100,000 were from mainland China (Maslen, 2017, n. p.). OECD figures, (cited in Gong and Huybers, 2015, p. 3) reveal that in 2011, 24.7% of Chinese international university students studied in the US, 12.5% in Australia, 10.0% in the UK and Japan had 13.1%. 
evidence from reputable media publications combined with government reports, produced five contributory research questions, which underpinned the main research question.

**Contributing Research Questions**

The contributing questions are listed in Table 1.1 along with the evidentiary chapters that have answered those questions.

In what ways do Chinese parents and students’ concerns about quality education, costs, lifestyle, environment and, immigration and employment, inform their reasons for choosing Australian universities?

**Table 1.1 Contributory Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributory question</th>
<th>Evidentiary chapter</th>
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<td>1 Quality education</td>
<td>Chapter Seven</td>
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<td>2 Costs</td>
<td>Chapter Eight</td>
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<td>3 Lifestyle</td>
<td>Chapter Nine</td>
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<td>4 Environment</td>
<td>Chapter Ten</td>
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<td>5 Immigration</td>
<td>Chapter Eleven</td>
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The focus group questions that produced the above five supplementary questions are listed in Appendix 1.

There are a number of key terms in the subsidiary questions that are listed below.

**Definition of Important Terms**

1. **Influence:** The ability to create an affect because of a position of power, authority or respect.

2. **Quality of Education:** Relates to universities and refers to the reputation of the university, which is a reflection of the NY Times rankings of all the universities in the world.

3. **Cost:** In this thesis refers to all the fees and charges of the attending university plus living costs in the city in which the university is situated.
4. **Lifestyle**: Refers to general standard of living of the host nation, includes community expectations and freedoms, safety of its citizens, civil rights and environmental factors such as freedom from overcrowding, ease of transport, weather and air and water quality.

5. **Environment**: Included are such attributes as weather, pollution levels, the presence or otherwise of overt racism, and the habitability of a country.

6. **Environmental Issues**: These include large-scale pollutions (such as air and water quality), over-population and over-crowding or resources.

7. **Employment/Immigration Opportunities**: Refers to the ability of the international student graduate to be able to gain employment in the country providing his/her degree and/or whether he/she is able to immigrate to that country.

The supplementary questions were expanded into the 48-paired questions that formed the Internet Questionnaire. Inconsistent answers to the Internet Questionnaire and evidence of acquiescent bias in the responses hinted at alternate motives, which at this stage were hidden from the researcher. Revelations that emerged from follow-up interviews with parents in China and Australia changed the focus of the whole research, and identified ‘transcultural citizenship’ as a significant factor influencing an *inordinate* number of students from the PRC to study in Australia.

### 1.4 DELIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The focus of this study is the factors that have influenced the decision makers to choose to study at an Australian university. Previous research has collected data from Chinese students, whereas this research has recognised that students may have not been the decision makers and that some students may have supplied erroneous data.

This research also focuses on Chinese business practices of *guanxi* and corruption, which may have been a prelude to family immigration. The above two points of difference have been overlooked by other researchers. However, the findings of noted researchers Gong and Huybers (2015), Bodycott, (2009); Yang (2010); and Marginson (2002 & 2007) in general support the unique findings of this research, when they are interpreted in a paradigm of evidence supplied by the Hurun Report (2016); Olesen,
Evidence for this research is student and parent data supplemented by private and governmental reports and reputable media publications.

**Assumptions of the Research**

This research assumes that there are motivating factors influencing a disproportionate number of university students from the PRC to study in Australia. These motives, which this research has discovered, are a complex mix of competing purposes, many of which are entangled in corruption in China and its spill over to Australia. Thus it is disclosed in the findings that generally no single influence, on its own, will determine Chinese students’ choice of study destination. Gong and Huybers (2015, p. 17) referred to this when they opined that Chinese students did not limit themselves to the top safe nations, but they would not study in a country with a low safety ranking. This thesis was unable to discover the exact level of corruption involving international students from China, but all the evidence shows that the extent is significant. It is accepted that the large majority of international students from China are motivated solely by educational reasons, which has created tension as these parents believe that the corrupt practices of the few have undermined the decent aspirations of the many. Nevertheless, this research contends that it is the corrupt few that accounts for the extra students producing an inordinate number of Chinese students studying in Australian universities.

**Scope and Delimitations of the Research**

The scope of this research was to identify why Chinese university students chose Australia as a study destination and to discover the unique set of influences that gave Australia an advantage when seeking to attract these students. The delimitations were in three fields:
1. The focus group volunteers were restricted to graduate and undergraduate students that were, at the time, studying in three different universities in Sydney. The respondents to the Internet questionnaire were Chinese students either studying at an international school in Lianyungang, or else were 37 pots GaoKao students still living in China. All the students in China were over eighteen years of age and all had indicated that they would study abroad.

2. The issues investigated in the Internet questionnaire reflected the top five most popular responses to the focus group interviews. Unfortunately, safety, one of Gong and Huybers (2015, p. 1) key drivers, did not feature significantly in the focus group responses and was not interrogated by the questionnaire.

3. Australian Government policies, and the educational policies of all of Australia’s major competitors in the market to attract Chinese university students, are detailed and analysed in Chapter Five, but this research did not investigate the influence that Government policies have on Chinese students’ study destination choices.

4. This study is not about investigating racism against Chinese, nor is it intended to promote racism against Chinese. It is intended to deal with concerns expressed by authorities such as ICAC concerning corruption associated with some Chinese international students.

Other researchers have adopted similar delimitations and have arrived at very similar findings. Having considered the delimitations of this research the next section situates this study in the literature.

1.5 SITUATING THIS STUDY IN THE LITERATURE

Previous research regarding international students has focused on four main areas, which include the flow of international students, the influencing factors that drive this flow, the value and quality of education bought by the students, and the relevant government policies involved. Although corruption has been researched as a separate matter this is the first study that connects these two issues. The mounting evidence available in government reports and reputable media publications of corruption in China, (Chung, 2017b, Thornton 2016), and other reports detailing corruption linked to international students studying at Australian universities by Marsden (2008),

**Flow:** Numerous articles and surveys concerning the flow of international students have been both quantitative evaluations, (Guo, 2010) and qualitative (Wong & Wen, 2013) and even marketing firm Shu & Scott, (2014) has investigated the influence that the Chinese social media exerted over study destination choice. Li and Bray’s (2007) large survey (n = 323) on the push/pull factors encouraging Chinese students to study overseas supports Oleksiyenko et al.’s claim (2013, p 1080), that student globalisation generally “has been an integral component of economic integration and competitiveness” (see Section 2.2). Kwek and Preisis (2013) speculated on the reasons behind the reduced flow of international students to Australia in 2013, while the flow of university students from China continued to increase.

Almost 50,000 Chinese students started courses in Australian universities, colleges and schools this year, up 23 per cent on last year, making students from China more important than ever to the booming education export industry (Dodd, 2016, n. p.).

Many nations now rely on the certainty of the flow of international students, and the factors influencing the largest cohort of international university students, the Chinese, have national implications.

**Influencing Factors:** Researchers Yang (2010) and Wong and Wen (2013) have reported that supplementary factors do exist, (such as culture and costs), unfortunately omitted by Marginson, (2002, 2007), which also influence their choice. Zweig and Rosen (2003, p. 1) have documented Deng Xiaoping’s plan “to rebuild China's scientific community” as a patriotic factor. Guo et al., (2013); Phakiti et al., (2013); Thorniley (2010); Ramburuth (2001); and Andrade (2006), have investigated the acquisition of spoken English as a prime motive influencing Chinese students to study abroad. The learning of English and the quality of education are the most frequently cited influences motivating Chinese students to study abroad.

Yang (2010), whose thesis looked at the factors influencing students from the PRC to
study overseas from an economic point of view, concludes her findings with:

This research is the first study of its kind that uses Mainland Chinese students in China, who were considering or deciding to study university overseas, that was conducted prior to their decision to study (Yang, 2010, p. 163).

Yang’s (2010, p. 163) findings listed educational influences as the main drivers of choice of overseas study destination.

**Quality of Education**: If the purpose of becoming an international student is education, then the quality of that education is paramount. Yang (2010), agrees (see page 6).

None of Yang’s (2010) findings are peculiar to Australia and her findings do little to distinguish the option of choosing Australia rather than either the USA or the UK. Perhaps her third ranked finding, future migration, is the main reason that more Chinese university students choose to study in Australia than the UK. She concludes that there is a need for “a deeper understanding of how students make decisions, for their choice is critical” (Yang, 2010, p. 163). She argues that,

It is well documented in the literature that future migration opportunity has become one of the most significant reasons for Mainland Chinese students coming to Australia (Yang, 2010, p. 163).

Unfortunately, she was unable to link cultural factors and the desire of the parent(s) to create a harmonious future for their offspring.

Gong and Huybers (2015) found that ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’ were the main drivers when selecting a host country for a foreign education, but also admitted that other considerations such as cost, migration benefits and environment were motivators. They agreed that their prime drivers were not absolute and accepted that the host country need not be the safest study destination, but countries that were ‘unsafe’ were avoided.

**Policy**: Finally, the revelations by Olesen (2016), (see Sections 2.2.2.1 & 2.2.5) show
that HNWI Chinese are seeking safe havens outside China for their wealth, and migration to Australia does provide a solution to their problems. Past Government policies, in both China and Australia, are recorded and evaluated in Chapter Five. The present Government educational policies of Australia, and of its main competitors for students from China, are fully examined in Chapter Five. See Ball, (1995); Moniz, (2006); Yanow, (2007); Shao, (2008); Knight (2011) (see Table 2.1, Section 2.4.1 and Section 2.5); Baird (2010) (see Section 2.5), Owen, (2013); (see Section 2.5), HM Government (2013); Zheng, (2011) (see Section 2.9 & 5.6), Chaney, (2013) (see Section 2.6) AUSTRADE, (2014) (see Section 2.4.2), Matchett, (2013) (see Section 5.6); Abbott, (2014) (see Section 5.6) DNSIE, (2015) (see Section 5.6), Pearcey, (2014) (see Section 5.6), DFAT, (2015) (see Section 5.6), The Hurun Report 2, (2014) (see Section 5.6), Kakuchi, (2014) (see Section 5.6), The U.S. Department of Education International Strategy 2012-2016 (2012) (see Section 5.7), Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, (HMQRC) (2014) (see Section 5.9) & Chubb (2014) (see Sections 5.2 and 5.9).

This research was initially guided by the current literature available in 2014 and published during the life of the thesis. The theoretical frameworks of other respected researchers had some influence in developing the unique theoretical framework, which is discussed in the next section.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of this research is shown as figure 3.1 in Chapter Three. Researchers Marginson (2002 & 2007), Mazzarol and Souter (2002), Li & Bray (2007), Guo (2010), Yang (2010), Gong & Huybers (2015), and Dodd (2016), provided the antecedents for this study and their input is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

Below the dotted line in figure 3.1 are all the inter-related forces, connections and imaginations relevant to this research. A key feature is that all data and theory are subject to testing and validation using Wallace’s flow chart (cited in Seale, 2004, p. 39), (see figure 3.2, Section 3.2.1).

The kernel of the research problem was to find why more than expected (in terms of
the main influencing factors) Chinese university students have chosen to study in
Australia.

The concepts of social theory, Kitching (2008), Baert and da Silver (2010), (see
Section 3.2 & 3.2.3) were utilised in the research and led to the theory that
‘transcultural citizenship’ was a major influence accounting for the inordinate number
of Chinese university students studying in Australia.

The core feature of the Theoretical Framework is adherence to Wallace’s model, which
dictates that all data has to be questioned and verified. Professor Michael Singh was
one of this researcher’s supervisors, and his encouragement to question, compare,
analyse, evaluate and interpret, led to follow-up interviews with the parents of students,
and it was this data that fills the gap left by other researchers (see figures 3.1 & 3.2).
A complete explanation of the research methodology is given in Chapter Four.

Chapter Three examines the uniqueness of Chinese culture, particularly the concept of
FACE and the practice of guanxi, (see Sections 7.1 & 8.0), and explores in detail the
transition from Confucianism to Chinese Capitalism. Data interpretation for this
research was guided by an understanding of the paradigm of the wealthy family unit,
which has made a joint decision to send the one child to study overseas. Confucianism,
guanxi, FACE and other aspects of Chinese culture have influenced this decision and
affected the integrity of data collected concerning the motives for study abroad.

The next section investigates the reasons for selecting the chosen options for this
research and the methodology and methods used to conduct the research. The findings
from this research were unanticipated, because not enough attention was given to some
aspects of Chinese culture covered in this section.

This section has given a general review of the theoretical framework underpinning the
research project; the next section gives a broad outline of the research methodology
and methods that were used to propagate the research.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS
The research methodology used was a case study, which is a process of research that focuses on a particular person, group, or situation over a period of time (Jensen and Rogers, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Noy, 2008; Easton, 2010). “In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed” (Yin, 1995, p. 1). The reasons why a case study was chosen and the alternatives that were considered are fully explained in Chapter Four. The theoretical framework and Wallace’s flow chart (cited in Seale, 2004, p. 39), which underpin this research, are explained in Section 3.1 with accompanying figures 3.1 and 3.2. The integrity of the collected data was justified by using a Likert Scale and Cronbach’s Alpha (see Section 4.7.5.1). Methods of data collection are fully examined in Section 4.3.1 & 4.3.2. Data analysis and interpretation, based on an intimate knowledge of Chinese culture and other evidence, introduced the new element of ‘transcultural citizenship’ (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3).

This research sought to find out why Chinese students have chosen to study in Australia. Jensen and Rogers (2001, p. 237) explain, “a case study can take many different forms and use many different methodologies”. The methodologies used in this case study research were focus group, Internet questionnaire and interview.

This researcher’s study of Jensen and Rogers (2001); McDonnell, Jones and Read (2000); Flyvbjerg (2006); and Easton (2010) indicated that a case study would be the better methodology for this research than ethnographic research because it involves fewer resources, takes less time and will produce a valid result. An ethnographic research requires the research team to live within the society under investigation, to make long-term observations and to devise their theory based on evidence supported by being part of that society. The diversity of Chinese culture and my Chinese heritage render an ethnographical study impracticable and unnecessary. In addition, Jensen and Rogers (2001, p. 244) argue, “that the knowledge-accumulation issue cannot be resolved without case studies”.

It was impossible to attract participants from all over China. The focus group (n = 21) volunteers, already in Australia, were randomly chosen using the ‘snowballing’ technique, with no respect to their origins in China. This data was line by line coded, themed and analysed to produce five main influencing factors attracting students to
Australia.

The 48-paired questions that formed the Internet Questionnaire were developed to address the contributory research questions emanating from the initial focus group (n = 21) interviews. The questions investigated: the quality of education, cost of overseas study, lifestyle conditions in the host country, environmental issues associated with the host country, and employment/immigration opportunities in the host country after graduation.

The Internet questionnaire volunteers consisted of two different groups; the smaller (n = 37) were post GaoKao students with intent to study overseas, chosen by CCIEE. The larger group (n = 597) were students who attended an International School whose main purpose was to prepare students for international study. In both cases these students were drawn from all parts of China. The Internet data was first validated and this process eliminated 195 students from the list of respondents. Once the students had been validated, every question was individually validated. The lack of clarity from the answers to the Internet questionnaire and the evidence of acquiescent bias in the answers hinted at alternate motives, which at this stage were hidden from the researcher. To correctly interpret and understand the contributory research questions’ answers, follow-up interviews were conducted with parents of international students (n = 12) and recruitment agents in China (n = 2). The follow up questions probed in these latter interviews were:

1. Who decided that your son/daughter should study overseas?
2. Who had the most influence in selecting the host country?
3. What was the main reason for choosing Australia?
4. Do the parents intend to migrate to Australia in the short or long term?
5. Have the parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?

Revelations that emerged from these follow-up interviews with parents in China and Australia changed the focus of the whole research and identified ‘transcultural citizenship’ as the main reason that an inordinate number of students from China are studying in Australia.
The findings from this research show the danger of relying on data, collected from Chinese students, to investigate study abroad choices that are often made by parents, who may have hidden other motives from their offspring.

The following section exposes some gaps in previous research in this field and highlights the significance of the value of these findings to Australia’s HES and to the Australian economy.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS RESEARCH STUDY

The significance of this research is encapsulated in the words of Australia’s former Minister for Trade, Andrew Robb; “The growth drivers in Australia will lean very heavily on services and education is the leader,” (cited in Fickling, 2016, n. p.). Evidence of the continued growth in the number of international students in Australia is shown in Figures 1.1 and 1.2. The innovation of this research is the inclusion of all the elements that have coalesced in the imagination of the decision makers, (either parents or their children) for the choice of study-abroad destination. The practice of guanxi and corruption (see Section 7.2.1) in the execution of Chinese business has introduced a powerful motive that has not been referred to by most other researchers.

Corruption is not one-dimensional; it is multi-faceted and pervasive. Along side the genuine students there are some Chinese students who have been able to fund their study abroad programs through funds that have been derived through the facility of corruption and guanxi. Those students, and their families are the beneficiaries of this corruption. However, the institutional educational providers to those students have actively recruited such students to study in Australia, and they are also the beneficiaries of the corruption.

Corruption at one level often leads to other instances of the same practice. Globally this is an endemic problem for all universities. Thirty years after entering foreign markets, the Australian higher education sector is beginning to recognise that a short-sighted and ill-planned grab for revenue has had long-reaching and potentially
disastrous effects on academic standards, integrity and reputation (Bretag, 2016, n. p.).

The most common reason for corruption is the simple truth that many foreign students, particularly those from Asia, are unable to cope with the English language requirements to complete their degree (Phakiti, 2008; Bretag, 2015; ICAC, 2015). The subsequent lowering of entry standards and English language proficiency tests (ICAC, 2015) to accommodate these foreign students will eventually have flow on effects, compromising the quality of education. This thesis is the first research into how the widespread corruption and guanxi prevalent in China has provided the opportunity for hundreds of thousands of Chinese students to gain an overseas degree. My research will enable Australian universities to better know their customers from China, while ensuring that Australian universities are attracting the right students for the right reasons.
This research will enable political and educational leaders in Australia to better understand and manage the corruption issue for the betterment of both Australia and China. The innovativeness, unique in comparison to other inquiries investigating the same questions, is the interpretation of the responses through an understanding of Chinese culture and consideration of the new evidence produced in the Panama Papers.
(Olesen, 2016). As a Chinese citizen from Beijing I am acutely aware of the penalties for expressing dissenting opinions, as would have been the respondents who contributed to this thesis. Further complications to the evidence arose after the Internet questionnaire, when follow-up interviews were conducted with parents who identified themselves as the decision makers for study destination. These factors and their consequences are fully explored and explained in the evidence chapters of this thesis, and ultimately produced the findings recorded in Chapter Twelve.

The thesis statement in the next section is an appraisal of the value of this research. A phenomenon has been recognised and the influences causing that phenomena have been tested and analysed.

1.9 THESIS STATEMENT

This thesis argues that much previous research has ignored the significant role that parents have in selecting destination countries for study abroad. The missing piece in the puzzle as to why ‘a disproportionate number of students from China choose to study at Australian universities’ is explained by the parents desire to create wealth protection through immigration. Many parents in China have accumulated their wealth through guanxi and corruption, and for some, sending their children to study abroad provides an opportunity for money laundering and possible immigration. This thesis will also argue that corruption initiated in China has implications in Australia. Further evidence will show that Australia and its universities offer a favourable mix of all the elements that make study in Australia the best option for such families.

This thesis also agrees with previous research that quality of education, safety, employment/immigration opportunities and lifestyle may be key drivers for the genuine students who have chosen to study in Australia for the most altruistic reasons.

1.10 OVERVIEW OF THESIS STRUCTURE

This section provides an overview of the structure of the thesis as shown in figure 1.1 on page 28.
The figure shows this thesis has been structured into five distinct sections, which are summarised below.

1.10.1 Section 1

Section 1 compromises Chapter One, which provides a complete overview of the thesis.

1.10.2 Section 2

Section 2 consists of Chapters Two – Five; the general theory underpinning the investigation.

**Chapter Two** summarises much of the current literature that charts the phenomena of the ever-increasing numbers of Chinese students studying abroad. The practise of sending Chinese students to study overseas started when Deng Xiaoping, in 1980, “made a strategic decision to send 3,000 students and scholars from the People's Republic of China overseas for further education each year. His plan was to rebuild China's scientific community” (Zweig and Rosen, 2003, p. 1).

In tandem with this rise has been the globalisation of both Australia’s and China’s Higher Education Sectors. During 2015, 136,097 Chinese students commenced study in Australia, up 13.3 per cent on the previous year’s numbers. Chinese students now account for 27.3 per cent of total international students in Australia (Colbeck, 2016, p. 1).

Chapter Two also examines the market forces underpinning the export education industry in Australia. This year students from China will contribute approximately $AUD 20 billion to the Australian Economy, (Colbeck, 2016), emphasising the Australian Economy’s reliance on export education in general, and international students from China in particular. Many universities now rely on their foreign student intake for survival because, as noted in 2013,

The Federal Government (of Australia) has announced a $2.8 billion cut to the university sector to help pay for its school education reforms as recommended by the Gonski review (Hawley, 2013, n. p.).

Agents in both China and Australia help to fuel this economy, but as Chapter Two
explains; “The quality of agents varies enormously” (Knight, 2011, p 107). The Chinese Government has reacted to the ‘quality of agents’ dilemma by creating its own large Governmental agencies, of which two, BIEE and CCIEE, were previous employers of this researcher.

Government policies in both China and Australia have also played a role in the continuation of this trade, dating back to the Knight Report (2011); Baird’s “International Student Survey for Australia, 2010-2014”, (Baird, 2010); the Draft National Strategy for International Education (Australian MoE, 2014), and the China Australia Free Trade Agreement, ChAFTA 2015.

Chapter Two will show that despite increased competition from traditional rivals such as the USA, the UK and Canada (de Wit, Ferencz & Rumbley, 2013; Vickers and Bekhradnia, 2007; Luo, 2013; Becker and Kolster, 2011), Australia’s share of international students from China is escalating. The reasons behind this extraordinary growth can only be explained by the findings that are more peculiar to Australia. Transcultural citizenship, the practice of obtaining PR or citizenship through student visas, is one important reason behind this growth. The other desirable attributes that would attract migration are also found in Australia, and this thesis concludes that the lure of future migration is a key-influencing factor attracting many students from China to study in Australia.

Chapter Three explores the ‘social theory’ relevant to China and the parts that guanxi, Confucianism and social Capitalism have played in producing the rapid and dynamic changes that have occurred in China during the past four decades. The works of Giddens (1986); Baert and da Silva (2010, 2011); and Kitching (2008) are used to record the progress of China from a failed Communist state, through various stages of modernism and post modernism to its present state known as the Seventh City (or Globalisation).

Section 3.2.2, of Chapter Three (Theory Component of the Methodological Process) fully explains the logic behind the scientific process used in this research. Wallace’s flow chart, (as cited in Seale, 2004, p. 39), justifies the process of the feedback analysis that was critical to the evolving theory that emerged in this research.
Chapter Three gives a detailed analysis of the meaning of key terms, forces, connections and imaginations used throughout this thesis. Burawoy, et al., (2000), and Gille & O’Riain, (2002), provide the required definitions that are then attributed to the social situations in China during the various stages of its development.

**Chapter Three** shows that since 1978 China has embraced Capitalism, which in the words of the then Premier, Deng Xiaoping, is a “development of socialism with Chinese characteristics,” (cited in Wang, 2013, p. 3), often referred to as State sponsored capitalism (Zheng, 2014). The collision of Chinese culture with modern Capitalism, with their opposing philosophies, and their relevance to the findings of this thesis, are fully explored in Chapter Three. The data of this research are generally compatible with the findings of Gong and Huybers (2015), however, there are several areas in which they differ. In relation to Australia, researchers have over-estimated the importance of the ‘quality of education’ as an influencing factor, while at the same time diminishing the desire for immigration.

**Chapter Four** outlines the methodologies used in this research, giving detailed reasons behind the decisions reached in relation to the research, and fully explaining how data was collected and interpreted. This chapter explains how adherence to Wallace’s Theory Component of the methodological process has been sustained throughout the experiment and how this produced the findings revealed in the evidence chapters.

The chapter outlines how the integrity of data collection was maintained and how the data supported the theory developed in this thesis. Publications by Woolgar (1988), Gutiérrez1 and Penuel1 (2014), Andrews (2005) and Bradley et al., (2008) gave a better understanding of the problem researchers’ experience in designing experiments that reveal truth. Chapter Four explains why a critique interpretative approach was adopted, emphasises the importance of culture and why a case study strategy was employed (see Section 4.1.2 – Section 4.2).

Chapter Five examines the educational polices of Australia and its major competitors in the international student market.
1.10.3 Section 3

Section 3 of the thesis consists of Chapter Six, the first evidence chapter that records the collection and analysing of data collected from focus group interviews in Sydney. The methods of collecting, theming, analysing and displaying focus group data are fully covered in this section. Twenty-six themes were identified from the first analysis, with ‘quality of education’ being the most commonly mentioned with seventy-six occurrences. However, more than half the mentions of ‘quality of education’ refer to negative aspects of this attribute in Australian universities, and this contradicts Gong and Huybers’ (2015) assertion that ‘quality of education’ was the “key driver” influencing Chinese students to study at Australian universities (see Section 6.1.5.1 and Table 6.2).

1.10.4 Section 4

Section 4 consists of chapters Seven – Eleven, in which each of the influences ‘quality of education’, ‘cost’, ‘lifestyle’, ‘environment’, and ‘employment/immigration opportunities’, are examined in detail. The results from this penultimate section are distilled in the final section.

1.10.5 Section 5

Section 5 consists of Chapter Twelve in which the findings of this research are presented.

1.11 CONCLUSION

The value of this investigation is the advantage that it gives to recruiting universities
in Australia and other countries. More importantly, the findings will alert further researchers into this field of the dangers of relying too heavily on the traditional means of data collection. When carrying out investigations of this nature most researchers assume that:

1. The volunteer respondent knows the answers to questions being asked. Further evidence in this thesis raises the possibility that this may not be the case.
2. The volunteers will reveal their true reasons but many are reluctant to disclose their true motivations because doing so places them in a dangerous situation.

The following chapters in the thesis account for the possibilities specified in points 1 and 2 above, and comprise the first enquiry in this field of study based on those two premises. On the following page figure 1.1 gives a complete layout of the overall thesis structure.
Figure 1.2 Overview of thesis structure
CHAPTER TWO

RECRUITMENT OF FOREIGN STUDENTS BY AUSTRALIAN EDUCATIONAL PROVIDERS: REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH LITERATURE

Chinese Proverb: Do not fear going forward slowly; fear only to stand still
2.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter One outlined the parameters surrounding this research. Included in the previous chapter were the main question of the inquiry and the contributing questions supporting the main question. The importance of this research, namely Australia’s Higher Education Sector’s (HES) dependence on international students, and China’s role in helping to fulfill that need, was sufficiently covered in the previous chapter. The importance of immigration as a motive to study in Australia, and links to corruption by high net worth individuals (HNWI) from China, were also introduced in Chapter One.

Chapter Two analyses the literature and findings of other researchers who have investigated the export education trade in relation to Australia and China. Table 2.1 below contains the works most cited in this thesis.

Table 2.1: Recent research by others regarding Chinese student inflow into...
This chapter examines the motives influencing Chinese students to study in Australia through a new lens, giving a different perspective of motive when the influences of corruption are considered. Included in this chapter is supporting evidence from official statistics made available by Government instrumentalities and private research organisations. Chapter Two demonstrates how correct data validation and interpretation has revealed the gap in the findings of previous researchers Gong and Huybers (2015), Guo (2010), and Yang (2010). Their findings generally agree with similar studies done for the UK and the US, and confirm the prevailing perceptions of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Title of Research</th>
<th>Publication Medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knight (2011)</td>
<td>Strategic Review of the Student Visa Program, 2011</td>
<td>Australian Immigration Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the reasons students from China elect to study in Australia.

The key element of this chapter is to explain the paradigm of HNWIs Chinese families that has emerged in the past two decades and to examine the paradoxes embedded in the literature of other researchers. Central to understanding motives guiding the decision of host nation destination for overseas study is appreciation of the desires of HNWIs from China expressed in the Hurun report\(^4\) (2016), and also the fears generated with the release of the Panama papers (Olesen, 2016). Northcote (2012, p. 99) and Labaree (2011, p. 623) have given compelling arguments to dispel the notion that objectivity, validity and reliability are essential for correct evaluation of data related to qualitative research. Other considerations such as “transferability, generalizability, ontological authenticity, reciprocity, dependability, conformability...” (Northcote, 2012, p. 99) may give more meaningful findings. Understanding the relationship between the data suppliers and the data that they have provided, and the global forces that have shaped the imaginations and connections of students and parents in China, was crucial to the constructs of this thesis, which explain the paradox of why an inordinate number of Chinese university students have chosen to study in Australia.

Chapter Two has been segmented into a number of sections. The first section; Global Forces Driving the Internationalisation of Higher Education, charts the coincidence of increasing numbers of Chinese students desiring international degrees with the simultaneous expansion of Australian universities. The next section, The Role of Policy-Market Factors In Internationalising Higher Education, investigates the influence of government policy on student mobility and the interpretation of other researchers about this influence. Use of Educational Agents in Recruiting International Students from China follows in the next section. The section entitled Reasons Chinese Students Have Undertaking International Studies, examines the literature concerning the five themes introduced by the focus groups: quality of education, cost, lifestyle, students from China who are studying at universities in Australia are predominately the children of HNWI and of that cohort:

- 64% of wealthy Chinese have or are seriously considering emigrating overseas.
- 42% of China’s HNWIs intend to invest abroad in next 3 years - 66% who plan to buy residential properties.
- 83% of wealthy Chinese intend to educate their children overseas (Hurun News, 2016, n. p.).
environment, and employment/immigration opportunities. This section also assesses the literature concerned with Chinese culture and its importance to this research. The Discussion and Conclusion sections at the end of this chapter refocus on the original research question and emphasises the points of difference between this research and similar studies.

2.1. GLOBAL FORCES DRIVING THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

When Deng Xiaoping, in 1980, “made a strategic decision to send 3,000 students and scholars from the People's Republic of China overseas for further education each year,” (Zweig and Rosen, 2003, p. 1), the forces driving the process were the ‘quality of education,’ learning the English language and connection with the West. Australia was well placed to respond to these requirements, but so too were the US, the UK and Canada. On balance, these three forces, or push factors, do not fully explain why a disproportionate number of Chinese students have chosen to study in Australia. Findings related to Hong Kong Chinese show that

“major motifs of persons studying outside Hong Kong in … 2005 were ‘to improve English proficiency, 25.6%; better learning atmosphere outside Hong Kong, 13.0%; better jobs prospects, 10.7%; to learn to be independent, 10.2%; unable to get a good place in good schools of Hong Kong, 9.2%. Sources: HKCSD (2002, 2005, 2011)” (Oleksiyenko et al., 2013, p. 2091).

Wong and Wen’s (2013, p. 73-74) study (n=888) of Chinese university students studying in Malaysia concluded that most of the 10,000 Chinese student cohort had a high failure rate “and many return to China without a certificate, or with a fake one. Much time, it would appear, was spent in ‘having a good time’ rather than on studies.” This research indicated that most of the Chinese students studying in Malaysia did so because they could not gain entry into universities in either the US, the UK, Australia or Canada, their preferred options.

2.1.1 Globalisation of China’s Higher Education Sector
Deng Xiaoping’s drive to modernise China began with restructuring its education system in 1978. Quality of education became the key motivator influencing parents to send their offspring to study abroad (Wu, 2014, p. 427). Australia was a suitable study destination because it offered a superior education to that available in China and learning English was a vital component of that education.

When Deng Xiaoping changed China’s economy to market Capitalism in 1978, many things had to change, especially education, and part of that change was the study of English language, the language of the world market (Guo et al., 2013, p. 244).

Over the past two decades the quality of tertiary education in China has improved dramatically through internationalisation and partnerships with Western universities, (Olcott, 2009, Liyanage and Badeng, 2016). China’s entry into world markets, and the internationalisation of China’s H.E.S., have grown simultaneously. Economically China has grown from lowly beginnings to its present position as the number two economic powerhouse in the world. The new market economy of China has impacted on its educational development with ‘the rise of private or non-government schools, funding from non-state sectors, an increasing number of self-paying students and market-driven curricula’ (Guo, et al., 2013, p. 259).

During the period 1980 – 1990, the majority of students seeking to study abroad did so with government support or the financial backing of their employer company (Wu, 2014, p. 427). This gradually changed as a middle-class developed and more families elected to send their one child to study overseas, and in the process learn English. “Since the late 1990s, the reasons reported by individuals for studying overseas have become more complex,” (Wu, 2014, p. 427). China’s economic miracle has produced glaring inequalities, which are now evident in its educational system, (Guo, et al., 2014 p. 259) and it is the wealthy that have the funds to send their children to expensive private schools prior to an overseas education.

2.1.2 Globalisation of Australian Higher Education
Initially the quality of education and the benefits to China derived from that education were the key drivers that influenced parents to send their children to study overseas. The Chinese students’ desire to return to China waned because of the influence exerted by “the magnetism of the West and its ability to (entice and) keep China's best and brightest” (Zweig and Rosen, 2003, p. 1). Even at this stage, migration possibilities were an evident influence in the decision making process when study abroad options were being considered.

Australia was well prepared to meet the demand of all international students seeking quality of education in an English speaking country.

**Globalisation of Australia’s Higher Education Sector**

Globalisation and student mobility have provided a windfall to the Australian economy as a whole and specifically to the higher education sector (HES) (Chaney, 2013; DNSIE⁵, 2015; Deloitte Access Economics, 2016; Colbeck, 2016). “Australia is well recognised as a major host nation in the internationalised education market” (Widegren and Doherty, 2010, p. 9). The rise in student mobility has not been a localised experience nor has it been uniform, either in time, speed and size throughout the world, but rather a collection of haphazard occurrences happening in different countries for diverse reasons.

There has been considerable volatility in enrolments in recent years overlaying the fact that an increasing number of countries are now competing for international students (Deloitte Access Economics, 2016, p. 7).

Australia anticipated this market, and the importance of international students to the Australian HES is covered in Chapter One. Marginson, (2002, pp. 409-411), highlights Australia’s global prominence in this market, using data supplied by the ABS and DETYA. The rapid rise to international prominence of Australian universities is shown in Table 2.2:

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⁵ DNSIE: Draft National Strategy for International Education
Table 2.2 Growth of Australian Higher Education 1955-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students</td>
<td>30,792</td>
<td>83,1320</td>
<td>273,137</td>
<td>370,016</td>
<td>604,177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of doctoral</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public spending (1955 =</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>4076.6</td>
<td>3829.5</td>
<td>5469.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100AUD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public spending per</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>459.6</td>
<td>318.7</td>
<td>278.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student (1955 = 100AUD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Australia’s growth rate continues; “almost half a million international students from nearly two hundred countries studied in Australia in 2015,” (Colbeck, 2016, p. 1), an increase of 10% on 2014 figures (Colbeck, 2016).

Australia appeals to the Chinese export market on many fronts. Specifically it satisfies the key drivers, ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’, as identified by Gong and Huybers (2015) and Yang (2010); it is an English speaking country, and it has liberal immigration laws which allow the Chinese family of the student to create a future life in Australia. (see section 2.5 in this Chapter). Although not an exhaustive or definitive list, these key drivers show that Australia had all the elements in place to take full advantage of globalised education when it began to gain full momentum.

Marginson (2007), Bodycott (2009) and Huang (2013) agree that the global position of Australian education is based on the reputation of its universities with respect to research credentials and the overall experience of living in Australia. They have based their research on the benefits to the student, without considering the motives of the parents who are the possible decision makers. Other potential benefits to the parents revealed by other findings (Olesen, 2016) and the Hurun Report (2016) show that many HNWIs in China are relocating their capital from China, and this offers different motives for study abroad. These are discussed later in this chapter.
2.2 THE ROLE OF POLICY-MARKET FACTORS IN INTERNATIONALISING HIGHER EDUCATION

Australian Government policy has helped to create the circumstances of Australia’s pre-eminence in export education. The regulation of Australian universities guaranteed a certain ‘quality of education’ and Federal Government gun control laws send a message of safety in Australia. Its immigration policy offers skilled migration visas whereby foreign graduates with the appropriate skills can be employed (sponsored) by Australian businesses. These visas can lead to PR and citizenship and satisfy the requirements of families seeking transcultural citizenship. In the past five years the Australian Government has appointed four different commissions to look at all aspects of the international student market in Australia (Knight, 2011; Baird 2010; Chaney, 2012; DNSIE, 2015) (see Section 5.11.2). Although all four of these reports emphasised the necessity of an expedient student visa process and that commitment to quality education was critical, there have been no real changes in either of these two areas. In April 2015, the DNSIE was published to allow stakeholders in the international education industry to comment and make submissions to the Australian Government. This could yet prove decisive, but other Australian Government initiatives, such as reducing funding to universities, run counter to DNSIE’s stated aims.

The high cost of international education in Australia, blamed on the high Australian Dollar (AUD), has been accepted as the reason behind decreasing numbers of international students studying in Australia between 2010-2013. However, there were other contributing factors, such as visa application difficulties, that the Australian Government was keen to resolve. Baird (2010) and Knight (2011) investigated these issues and the latter report shows the trend in growth over a nine-year period, 2002-2010, and analyses the shifts in the types of education being sought and accepted during that timeframe.

Table 2.3 shows that over the period 2002 to 2010 higher education enrolments have grown steadily. By contrast the VET sector experienced explosive growth and quadrupled in size over the period 2005 to 2009. Overall enrolments peaked in 2009. However higher education enrolments continued to grow in 2010. VET, ELICOS and
Other Enrolments peaked in 2009 while schools peaked in 2008. The Other category covers non-award courses, predominantly university run Foundation courses, study abroad and exchange programs.

Table 2.3: Enrolments by Sector (2002-2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>124,666</td>
<td>146,128</td>
<td>164,008</td>
<td>177,864</td>
<td>185,449</td>
<td>192,223</td>
<td>202,270</td>
<td>226,011</td>
<td>243,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>44,786</td>
<td>45,991</td>
<td>45,547</td>
<td>50,919</td>
<td>67,018</td>
<td>101,988</td>
<td>153,881</td>
<td>207,985</td>
<td>206,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>23,223</td>
<td>26,945</td>
<td>27,311</td>
<td>25,096</td>
<td>24,479</td>
<td>26,765</td>
<td>28,303</td>
<td>27,380</td>
<td>24,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELICOS</td>
<td>57,452</td>
<td>62,101</td>
<td>61,743</td>
<td>64,560</td>
<td>76,905</td>
<td>102,214</td>
<td>127,247</td>
<td>137,539</td>
<td>113,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>23,933</td>
<td>25,949</td>
<td>25,952</td>
<td>26,257</td>
<td>26,437</td>
<td>27,331</td>
<td>30,122</td>
<td>31,748</td>
<td>31,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>274,060</td>
<td>307,114</td>
<td>324,561</td>
<td>344,696</td>
<td>380,288</td>
<td>450,521</td>
<td>541,823</td>
<td>630,663</td>
<td>619,119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Strategic Review of the Student Visa Program”, (Knight, 2011, p. 9)

Knight (2011), acknowledges the importance of Chinese students and the diversity of international students in Table 2.4, and he contrasts Chinese student numbers with the decline in the number of students from India.

Table 2.4: Enrolments by Nationality of International Students in Australia 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>95,581</td>
<td>113,680</td>
<td>134,641</td>
<td>157,262</td>
<td>167,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>38,670</td>
<td>62,861</td>
<td>96,589</td>
<td>120,496</td>
<td>100,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>30,888</td>
<td>34,256</td>
<td>35,145</td>
<td>35,656</td>
<td>33,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>6,710</td>
<td>9,634</td>
<td>15,853</td>
<td>23,713</td>
<td>25,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>17,719</td>
<td>19,749</td>
<td>22,242</td>
<td>26,380</td>
<td>24,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other nationalities</td>
<td>190,720</td>
<td>210,341</td>
<td>237,353</td>
<td>267,156</td>
<td>266,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>380,288</td>
<td>450,521</td>
<td>541,823</td>
<td>630,663</td>
<td>619,119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AEI Statistics

Knight (2011, p. 10)

A significant feature of this table is that only China and Vietnam increased in numbers
from 2009 (when foreign enrolment peaked) to 2010. The peak enrolments in 2009 coincided with the appointment of Baird (2010) to investigate a government strategy for maintaining Australia’s prominence in the export education market.

The Baird (2010) Report instigated a greater adherence to government regulations by educational providers, and some of the less efficient providers exited the market. Consequently a greater proportion of students choosing to study in Australia have enrolled in universities rather than with other ELICOS registered providers.

A key recommendation of the Baird report was the creation of a *Study in Australia* website ([https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au](https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au)), which was subsequently developed by the Commonwealth Government; with links to all State, Territory and international educational sites. The main purpose of this site is to attract students to study in Australia, but more importantly, it provides a guideline as to what should be an acceptable level of service and quality of education, with redress options if promised services do not materialise.

The figures for December, 2013 from the Australian Government (Australian Education International) spreadsheet, published on the AUSTRADE website, show that:

As at year-to-date (YTD) March 2013, there were 338,916 enrolments by full-fee paying international students in Australia on a student visa. This represents a 3.2% decline on YTD March 2012 and contrasts with the average YTD March growth rate for enrolments of 5.6 per cent per year in the preceding ten years (Kwek & Preiss, 2013).

**Table 2.5: Breakdown by Nationality of International Students Studying in**
When Table 2.5 compared with Table 2.3 from the Knight (2011) report, it is evident that the greatest decrease is the number of Indian students (now about 9%) whilst the number of Chinese students has remained consistently high at about 31%.

Since 24th March 2012 Australia has streamlined the student visa process for applicants who have an electronic confirmation of enrolment (ECOE) issued by a registered educational provider such as a college or university. This has reduced the visa waiting time on average from 3 months to 2-3 weeks. In comparison, a visa application to the USA or the UK could be finalised in about one week, and many Chinese students previously accepted these visas rather than risk ultimate refusal of an Australian study visa.

Unfortunately, at the present time all secondary schools and many ELICOS colleges cannot participate in the streamlined visa processing scheme and it still takes 3 months for students from China (category level 3) to obtain a study visa for Australia. School students account for 22% of all students from China who elect to study abroad each year. The Level 3 visa restriction on these students will affect the number of these students entering Australian schools and ultimately impacts on the number of students from China entering Australian universities.

Government policy, in any country, can influence the number of foreign students studying there. In Chapter Five we discuss the policies of the UK, where its newly
elected leader, Theresa May, has a history of being unwelcoming to international students. In the same chapter we examine the xenophobic comments of the newly elected president of the US, Donald Trump and speculate whether these two leaders will influence the number of international students studying in their countries. Both have indicated that they are against immigration by graduates and this could result in even more students seeking transcultural citizenship to choose Australia.

2.3 USE OF EDUCATIONAL AGENTS IN RECRUITING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM CHINA

The use of educational agents in the recruitment of international students is a worldwide phenomenon (Hagedorn and Zhang, 2012; Huang et al., 2016; Hulme et al., 2013). Chinese students in particular rely on agent recommendation and help for choosing a host country (Hagedorn and Zhang, 2012, p. 14) and many other services. The quality and range of services delivered by agents varies significantly (Huang et al., 2016; Knight, 2011; Hagedorn & Zhang, 2012) and the influence that agents have on students’ choice of host nation is discussed in the following section. The whole process is open to corrupt practices, unscrupulous agents who advise students to attend the educational institution providing the highest agent’s fees, and some educational institutions making exaggerated promises in their advertising.

Australian universities are paying more than an estimated $250 million each year to unregulated middlemen for the recruitment of international students, despite widespread acknowledgement that a number of these agents are corrupt and deal in fraudulent documents (Besser et al., 2015, n. p.).

2.3.1 Australian Agents

Many of the top universities, including most of the Go8 universities, have international departments, which are maintained for the dual purpose of recruiting foreign students and providing care and support for the students that they have already recruited. These departments house the recruiting agents of the university and administer all the agents acting on behalf of the university. These dedicated university agents package their
product around the quality of education they offer, the lifestyle on campus and the uniqueness of their institution. Cost, for most universities is not a selling feature, but universities with attached techno parks, or corporate centres such as the Werrington Park Corporate Centre (WPCC) at WSU is certainly a feature that could attract students from China.

Knight (2011, p 107), acknowledges that almost every provider of ELICOS courses in Australia uses agents. He further makes the salient point that whilst most, if not all of these agents, act within the law, the quality of the service provided and the value of the advice given vary enormously. Knight elaborates on the windfall that agents had at the peak of the boom in student visas, whereby agents in collaboration with some educational providers were able to supply a service that ultimately led to their students gaining PR.

Knight saw the use of agents as good for ‘Education Export’, recognising that nearly all Indian and Chinese students come to Australia through the services of an agent, either an Australian agent or a foreign agent. The most respected Australian agency, according to Knight is IDP Education, and comparing the quality of different agencies Knight proclaims that

The quality of agents varies enormously. At one end of the spectrum are groups like IDP. This company is owned by 38 prestigious Australian universities and SEEK Limited, Australia’s leading online employment and training company. IDP has over 40 years’ experience in student placement services.

This paragraph is also quoted in two different locations on the IDP website. The other end of the spectrum is the sole trader whose office is a car and mobile phone, according to Knight (2011).

Migration agents derive their income by charging students for assistance during the education visa process, and also earn a commission from the educational provider who supplies the education to the student. These fees are arbitrary with large variations, but the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA) publishes a fee schedule for different visa services on its website, and this schedule can be used as a guide for students and agents. Although the MARA recommendations tend to be
followed in Australia, overseas agents can, and sometimes will, charge any fee that they wish. The value of the commission paid by learning institutions is determined generally by market forces, according to Knight (2011), with some agents able to extract a commission of 50% of the tuition fee paid by the student to the educational provider. Where such high fees are paid Knight (2011) speculates that the quality of the education delivered by the provider may suffer.

### 2.3.2 Chinese and Other Overseas Agents

China has many education agents who operate to place Chinese students abroad. It has also morphed agencies into education companies such as Beijing International Education Exchange (BIEE), the China Centre for International Educational Exchange (CCIEE), the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE), and the China (Beijing) International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), which run expos and organised events throughout China to recruit Chinese students for foreign educational providers. In China all agents have to be approved and registered by the Ministry of Education (MoE).

BIEE, CCIEE, CEAIE, CIFTIS are supported by the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the PRC, and as such they attract high profile exhibitors such as AUSTRADE, Harvard University, IDP and many other government supported organisations. Many Provinces in China organise their own Education Expos, dedicated to the students in their region. AUSTRADE actively supports Australian education providers, mainly universities and TAFE, at a number of events in China, principally expos hosted by the CCIEE, or the CEAIE. Every year CCIEE produces large education expos in both Beijing and Shanghai and on a rotation basis in many other cities such as Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dalian, and Wuhan.

Chinese agents are more effective in China because Chinese students consider them to be more honest, and they know that a local agent will always be available and

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6 Knight, p. 108, cites Baird (2010) when making this claim, although I was unable to find any reference to student fees when studying Baird.

7 I was employed by CCIEE for three years (2003-2005 inclusive) as chief director of the international department. Austrade exhibited at CCIEE every year during that time.
convenient to contact if necessary. In the first instance, many Australian universities (and universities from other foreign countries) maintained a dedicated office in China, which was staffed by both Australian and Chinese personnel. However, the costs of supporting such an arrangement was expensive and proved to be less effective in attracting students than using existing Chinese agents, who already worked for the university. This anomaly couldn’t continue as universities sought more efficient ways to recruit students and balance the budget. Consequently many Western universities have abandoned their offices in China in favour of having a Chinese agent, (or agents), as their sole representative(s) in China. Often the Chinese agency will be given exclusive rights to be the sole recruiter for the particular university, and the agency will reciprocate by allowing the university to claim the agency’s office as their office in China.

A large number of educational providers in China are effective recruiting agents for foreign learning institutions. The process involves foreign universities creating partnerships with Chinese universities and offering courses where the student studies at a Chinese university for a number of years and subsequently completes their degree at a foreign university. Such pathway arrangements are designated as 2+2, 3+1 or 1+3, where the numbers represent the number of years at each institution. Creating such a pathway program is quite difficult, particularly when both sides want to protect their reputation, and curriculums have to be articulated so that there is a smooth transition between the two learning institutions. Generally speaking, under such arrangements, the student gains a qualification (degree) from both universities. Some countries, notably South Korea, the United States and Canada, have set up university campuses in China and use these centres to attract students to a mother campus in the foreign country.
2.3.3 Other Overseas Agents

The commercialisation of the HE sector has provided an opportunity for educational agents and Hulme et al., (2013, p 1) have investigated “the role of the international recruitment agent as a key broker in emergent market relations”. Although Hulme’s (2013) study focused on agents in Africa recruiting students for the UK market, the findings and specifics of the evaluation are applicable to Asia as a supplier of students and other Western countries as the host country destinations for those students.

Educational agents can be defined from two different perspectives:

an education agent as ‘an individual, company or other organisation providing services on a commercial basis to help students and their parents gain places on study programmes overseas’ (Lwein and Krasocki (cited in Hulme, et al., 2013, p. 4)).

It seems that agents operate within a very loose framework:

“(Krasocki) lamented a ‘free for all situation’ where most countries exercised ‘no government or official control over agents... Even where an agents’ association exists, the element of self-regulation is often weak” (Krasocki, cited in Hulme, et al., 2013, p. 4).

The role of agents and

“the use of agents has been (and possibly remains) one of the most controversial aspects of current business practices in the recruitment of international students” (Vincent-Lancrin, et al., cited in Hulme, et al., 2013, p. 4).

Despite these negative perceptions, the use of educational agents continues to grow in step with the responsibilities given to them. Many Australian universities now employ Chinese agents in China as the preferred method of recruitment, although Hulme et al., (2013) allude that this practice invites future problems. Hulme et al., (2013) raise questions in their conclusions about the benefits to the developing nations which send their best and brightest students, (and students with the financial means to do so), abroad to study in a foreign first world country. Robertson (2011) and Shah et al.,
Agents are employed to sell a product, export education, and understanding the buyers’ reason for purchase will determine the success of the agents; more reasons for study destination choices are discussed in the next section.

2.4 REASONS CHINESE STUDENTS HAVE UNDERTAKEN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The original 1980’s reasons for Chinese students to study abroad have changed and become far more complex. Even the five main themes provided by the focus group interviews are deficient by omitting any reference to wealth protection and corruption. The next session discusses the five themes produced by the focus group and tested by the Internet questionnaire.

2.4.1 Quality International Education

Initially the quality of education and the benefits to China derived from that education were the key drivers that influenced parents to send their children to study overseas (Gong and Huybers, 2015; Wu, 2014). Australian universities attracted Chinese students because they offered high-level education, a good lifestyle while at university and safety. Recently, the global ranking of universities using certain key performance indicators (KPI) have allowed students to make more informed decisions on the merits of the quality of education delivered by their educational provider.

Measurement and comparison by statistics has become universal practice since the beginnings of the twentieth century, and it was only a matter of time before this scrutiny was applied to universities on an international scale. Marginson (2007, p. 131) identified potential problems with worldwide university rankings after it became clear that “Global university rankings have arrived, and they are likely to substantially influence the long-term development of higher education across the world.” Marginson (2007, p. 131), perceived weaknesses in the two most acceptable ranking
organisations, “Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the composite rankings from the *Times Higher Education Supplement*”, while at the same time finding more merit using the methodology of university comparison developed by the German Centre for Higher Educational Development (CHE).

Instead of list comparisons Blanco-Ramírez & Berger (2014, p. 89) have advocated ranking universities on the quality of their education using Quality Assurance, ISO-9000, (QA) guidelines. Their article, developed from a US system is centred on three main practices:

“(1) the development of quality assurance mechanisms around the world;
(2) the expansion of US accreditation to other countries; and
(3) the emergence of international rankings”.

Blanco-Ramírez & Berger (2014, p. 98) have investigated universities under the four attributes, ‘quality, investment, access and relevance’ and their findings reveal more questions than answers.

Blanco-Ramírez (2014) illustrates how the field of QA has grown internationally over the past thirty years by examining its impact on the Chile university systems. His findings support Alcott’s (2009, p. 3) assertion that the success that universities have in attracting students is linked to the quality of education provided; and that “Quality assurance oversight agencies,” are integral to the monitoring and comparative analysis of university performance. While Australia’s ranking by all these measures is below the standards of the US, the UK and Canada, Australia still attracts more international university students from China than any other country except the US. Australia’s preparedness and being an English speaking country are part of the reason for this success, but these two attractions alone do not explain why Australia has enticed the inordinate number of Chinese students studying at Australian universities. Other factors such as lifestyle and immigration potential have contributed to this anomaly.

### 2.4.2 International Education & Lifestyle

In a few decades China developed from a semi-rural society into an industrial
powerhouse, changing the population demography in the process. Guo (2017, p. 311) reports that only 4% of China’s urban population was middle class in 2002; but this percentage had reached 68% by 2012. The new wealthy middle class, predicted to reach 630 million by 2022, embrace the consumption of luxury goods, and have a fervent desire for a superior lifestyle, says Guo (2017, p. 311). An Australian education offers the opportunity for luxury consumption and the enjoyment of an Australian lifestyle; strong motivators for any Chinese parent seeking transcultural citizenship. Student S5 in the focus group sessions opined “Australia is the country, which is the closest place to the Heaven, if there is a Heaven,” and this imagination would excite the Chinese parent intent on emigration.

China’s economic miracle brought welcomed riches to the middle and upper classes but at a price of widespread industrial pollution. Through Internet and social media contact most Chinese are aware of the derogation of their environment and its consequences. Fifty-six per-cent (56%) of all international students travel from developing countries to developed countries (Choudaha, 2015, p. 16) and after graduation many are reluctant to return to their home country, (Zweig, and Rosen, 2003, Barnett, et. al., 2016). However, except for the wealthier HNWI Chinese, other Chinese students studying in Australia face the option of a better lifestyle in Australia or potentially more wealth in China (Qin, 2012, p. 14).

Lifestyle improvement, as a motivator influencing study abroad options, has received more attention recently from other researchers, (To, et al., 2014, p. 65, Qin, 2012, p. 14, Guo, 2017, Wu, 2014). It was also the most frequently mentioned attribute in the focus group discussions. Australian lifestyle offers a clean environment, safety and a high standard of living, strong motivating influences for both a short study abroad program; or immigration.

2.4.3 International Education Cost

Cost and location matter when choosing a study-abroad destination (Wu, 2014, p. 435, Olcott, 2009, p. 5). The cost to international students for tertiary education in Australia
has always been comparable with Australia’s main competitors, despite the findings of Ruby (2013, p. 1) that “Australia’s costs, on some measures, are now higher” (than the US). This was a temporary situation for a short period in 2013 when Australia was “the most expensive country in the world for foreign students” (Kwek and Preisis, 2013, n. p.).

The cost of education had increased because of the high value of the Australian dollar (AUD). At that time $1AUD = $1.1 US dollar (US) compared to the norm when the ratio is nearer $1AUD = $0.75US. During this brief period the rate of international students arriving in Australia did decline slightly in comparison to its main competitors, (Kwek and Preisis, 2013, n. p.), but the comparison ratio quickly returned in Australia’s favour after traditional parity between the AUD and the USD was established in 2014. Thus global forces influence cost, but in terms of choice to study in Australia, cost is only significant when global markets either over value or undervalues the Australian dollar.

2.4.4 International Education and the Environment

“Understanding how Chinese students perceive higher education institutions, their programmes, locations and other environmental and social factors is crucial” (To et al., 2014, p. 64). Chinese students, when choosing a host nation for international study, can consider environmental factors on two levels. On a macro level is the national environment of the host nation, including such features as climate, standard of living and the general lifestyle of the population. On a micro level is the culture and lifestyle associated with the university and its immediate environs. Wu (2014, p. 435) agrees that a comfortable environment, where the students feel safe and can relax does matter when choice is being made. Wu (2014, pp. 435-6) continues that local weather conditions and community reputation are researched through social networking tools, and these findings play a part in their final choice of host country. Irrespective of the difference between the realities of the situation verses the perception of the persons supplying the data; it is the imagination of the Chinese students created from that data that ultimately influences their decision. Blanco-Ramirez and Berger (2014, p. 98)
argue that there is connection between the quality of university education and the environment in which it operates. This connection manifests itself through societal expectations, government policies and professional standards.

Australia has always presented itself as possessing some of the most pleasant habitations on the planet, and this, coupled with a safe pleasant lifestyle, could excite the imagination of the Chinese parent seeking to emigrate. The immigration possibilities are discussed in the next section.

2.4.5 International Education and Immigration

Olcott (2009, p. 5), argues that ‘streamlined immigration and visa requirements and procedures,’ are having an increasing influence on student destination choices for international study. The immigration option gained more prominence after Olesen’s (2016), revelations of wealth protection schemes, which were propagated by HNWI in China and involved capital flight through the German Bank Mossack Fonseca. (see Sections 4.1.2, 7.1.1, & 7.2.2).

Aside from the benefits of immigration for certain sections of the HNWIs in China, there are other motives, known as moral geography or the cultural imaginaries of places (Hansen and Thogersen, 2015, p. 3). They contend that the imagery of a moral geography is strong in China and that this would influence those swayed by this perception to succumb to the temptation of a better lifestyle.

Australia’s declining birth rate provides opportunity for skilled workers to seek employment leading to immigration through the ‘skilled migration program’ (Hawthorne, 2014, p. 1). These increased employment prospects occur within a background, where researchers such as Brown, Lauder and Ashton, (2011), have begun to question the employment benefits to graduate students, both foreign and domestic alike, who have been trapped in what they describe as a “Global Auction”
for talent and employment, leading to lower wages and fewer job opportunities in Australia, the UK and the USA.

The lure of immigration as a motive by Chinese students (families) for choosing a particular country for an overseas study destination is expressed by Zhang and Hagedorn (2011, p. 11) when they acknowledge the increased competition to the US for international students, from countries like Australia who offer “improved services in college application, transition of life, accommodation of learning, and even immigration after graduation.” Immigration, coupled with employment is a key motive for students from China electing to study at Australian universities.

2.4.6 International Education & Employment Opportunities

Replacing an aging workforce through the medium of skilled migration using international students has launched a ‘war for skills’ that is intensifying (Hawthorne, 2014, p. 1). Information concerning employment opportunities, accompanying international study, is ubiquitous on Chinese social media, and used by educational agents who see increased income streams when Chinese students complement their student visas with work visas after graduation. Overseas employment opportunities are more important now because of reduced employment opportunities in China for students with a degree from a Western university, (Hansen & Thogersen, 2015, p. 5).

A critical part of any higher education system is its mandate to serve the higher education sector to the best of its ability while simultaneously providing “a skilled workforce for economic and civic development” (Blanco-Ramírez & Berger, 2014, p. 100). Universities play a far greater role than merely being degree factories for commerce and industry, but as far as international students from China are concerned, providing employment opportunities is their prime responsibility.
Chinese parents send their children overseas to study in order to provide a better future for them. An inordinate number of students have elected to study in Australia, thus confirming that Australia offers the desired outcome, and citizenship is certainly possible in Australia. Culturally speaking, Australia offers many opportunities for the Chinese immigrant to retain his own culture whilst at the same time assimilating the Australian culture. This is discussed in the next section.

2.5 CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS

The contemporary Chinese student who decides to study abroad generally comes from a middle-class or wealthy family and as the only child, has enjoyed a life of privilege and comfort. Study in a foreign country provides a different social experience and often, social expectations for the learner, are unfulfilled. Hazen and Alberts, (cited in Urban & Palmer, 2013) have asserted that: “In addition to career-related reasons for studying in the United States, the desire to experience a new culture is a highly motivating factor for studying abroad”. The same authors have cited Obst & Forster, (2007), when discussing all the hopes foreign students anticipate when they start their scholarship in the US. Job opportunities and language skills have been investigated by other researchers, but there is a growing body of evidence to indicate that part of their expectancy is a more rounded education and the opportunity to build intercultural friendships and networks. Urban and Palmer (2013) ignored immigration as a reason that students from China chose to study in the US.

The importance of international students to the welfare of universities in Australia makes it imperative that more is done to satisfy student expectation and to make the international experience a fully rewarding one for both the student and the educational provider. Chaney, (2013, p. 44) agrees: “Integration of international and domestic students in universities and colleges, as well as in broader local communities, is a vital component of the overall international study experience”.

Universities presently are more focused on commercial interests than learning outcomes and educational best practices, claim Coryell, et al., (2012). Despite attempts
to introduce internationally acceptable syllabuses in Australia (Wylie, 2008), and a
special international curriculum in the UK, the education departments in most
countries “tend to focus on ‘the desire to secure a role in this new global knowledge
economy’ and often the result is “McDonaldisation of the state education system”,

Zhao et al., (2005) (cited in Andrade, 2006, p. 133) advocates that more needs to be
provided for the foreign student and that ‘Accomplishing educational goals, as
opposed to economic goals, also requires more than merely increasing the number of
overseas students.’ Whereas the situation described by Andrade and Urban et al may
be regrettable, improvements on the system may be difficult to implement. According
to Urban & Palmer (2013), much more can be done to assist the graduate and under-
graduate student to improve his/her self-worth and maximise their experience during
the whole international episode. Urban and Palmer (2013) have looked at international
students as a cultural resource (for the USA), and how the students’ self-perception
influences their cultural growth and adaptation. If the international student’s self-
perception can be improved, it should lead eventually to a healthier international study
program. Urban and Palmer (2013) argue that to diffuse the negative scenario
presented by Coryell et al., (2012) more research into the socialising aspects of the
international students need to be explored. They claim that, prior to their studies,

Most previous studies (on international students’ welfare) have focused on
international students’ transition into higher education and related
interpersonal and intrapersonal adjustment difficulties, as well as language,
academic, and social challenges (Urban & Palmer, 2013, p. 5).

International students value and expect a rewarding socialising life-style because
everyone has social needs and wants to feel valuable (Urban and Palmer, 2013).
Further, the student adds more value to the host country than just their contribution of
fees. Clarifying the US situation:

According to the Institute of International Education (n. d.), in 2009–2010,
there were 293,885 international students pursuing graduate education in
the United States. ... These international students are a source of financial
(Andrade, 2006; Davis, 2002), as well as intellectual and technological
Phakiti et al., (2013, 2008, p. 243) examined “the extent to which personal variables (i.e. self-efficacy, ... motivation and self-regulation) contribute to the academic learning of international students”, and concluded that these personal values were drivers influencing study abroad choices. Coupled with the circumstance that many students from China seek possible immigration as an end result, it is easy to understand the importance placed, by the student, on personal values. It may also explain why the USA attracts more international students than any other country. Former President Obama (USA) is on Public record as actively enticing students to stay in the USA after graduating, and at the same time urging Congress to facilitate that immigration (Curtin et al., 2013, p. 210). President Trump has a different attitude.

In comparison, the Australian Government is regarded in China as one of the more difficult countries to obtain study visas for, and that after graduation it is often difficult to find work and emigrate to Australia.

There are numerous instances of Chinese students who have studied in an English speaking country at a foreign university, and after graduation, found employment and ultimately settled in their host country. Various researchers are now investigating the difficulties that international students face on their journey from international student to successfully employed immigrant. Investigations of this nature are important because their findings should lead to better outcomes for both the educational provider and the scholar of the future. A further investigation shows that:

many higher education institutions are reconsidering where to invest limited resources to create educational environments that support international students’ adjustment to the social and academic demands of college life (Schweitzer, et al., cited in Glass, 2012, p. 229).

There are many reasons why a foreign student elects to study in a particular country.

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8 In the school year ended in May, 819,644 foreign students studied in the U.S., up 7.2% from the previous year, according to an annual report released Monday by the Institute of International Education, a nonprofit organization. Reported by Porter C., & Belkin B., on Wall Street Journal website Dated 11th November, 2013 (see: http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304868404579190062164404756) the title page of the article “Record Number of Foreign Students Flocking to US. The news story continues “The number, which includes undergraduate and graduate students, represents the seventh increase in a row and the steepest rise in four years.” A table shown in the article shows that the number of Chinese students increased from 194,029 to 235,597.
Universities that have focused on the quality of education that they offer must now consider cultural effects and student welfare if they want to remain competitive in the export education market. Australia is a multi-cultural society with well-established Chinese communities in all of its major cities; compelling attractions influencing students from China to study in Australia.

2.6 ENGLISH AND OTHER LANGUAGES

China’s economic growth is linked to learning English because China now regularly interacts with the West through trade in goods and services (Olcott, 2009, p. 1). China confirmed the importance of learning English in June 2001 when the Minister of Education of China launched the new curriculum reform as part of China’s globalisation strategy, a key element being making English language study compulsory to all students from year 3 onwards (Guo et al., 2013, p. 244).

On a national level, the learning of English language is a key element in China’s globalisation of education strategy. China has plans to become an exporter of services rather than a net importer as explained by previous Premier Bao at the 2012 CIFTIS Conference. English language proficiency, the international language, is a crucial precursor to the success of China’s plan. Taking advantage of this trend, there are now an estimated 30,000 organisations or companies offering private English classes in China. The market has nearly doubled in size in the last five years and is now worth around $3.1bn (Thorniley, 2010, p. 1).

English is now taught at all schools in China and many Chinese students travel overseas armed with an IELTS score that suggests they will be able to cope in the English-speaking host country. Unfortunately many of these students from China are inadequately prepared for the level of English required for a degree in an English speaking university (Andrade, 2006, p. 134; Hagedorn and Zhang, 2010, p. 8).

The net result is that:

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9 I attended the CIFTIS Conference as the China executive for AEA, the company which organised all the booths from Australia. I was granted a seat at Premier Bao’s address May 29th, 2012.
International students at various institutions have identified English-related skills, such as listening ability, lecture and reading comprehension, note taking, oral communication, vocabulary and writing, as being problematic (Andrade, 2006, p 138).

However, the ESL acquisition, rather than mitigate the globalisation of Chinese education, actually accelerated the process as it became obvious that while learning English was a challenge when studying in an English speaking country, it was far more difficult while remaining in China. This is the current status quo, even though Thorniley (2010, n. p.) reports “Chinese children with affluent parents are packed off to classes staffed by American, Canadian and British teachers as soon as they can speak.” The net result of this effort by state and private education institutions still does not produce Chinese students fully equipped to study in English speaking universities (Hagedorn and Zhang, 2010, p. 8).

The rise of English language schools in China with the attendant foreign teacher is the other side of educational globalisation of China. For many of these teachers, their only qualification is that they have a “white face” (Thorniley, 2010).

With the teaching of English in all schools and extra tuition for many, most Chinese students leaving school today have some understanding of English, and many have an IELTS score which allows them to commence study at an English speaking university without further language studies. Nonetheless, acquiring an acceptable level of IELTS might not be a guarantee of success in overseas study for Chinese students, as Phakiti, (2013, p. 250) confirms, “English language proficiency is necessary for academic content success of international students.”

Australia is an English speaking country with highly reputable universities and will always be contemplated as a host nation for study abroad by Chinese students who “want to go to countries where English is the official language” (Yamaguchi, 2013, n. p.).

2.7 THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED MARKET ORIENTATION IN THE
HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

University export education markets are highly competitive and success often depends on university reputations shaped by clever marketing strategies. Australian universities have increased their marketing budgets to protect their export education sector against strong competition from within Australia as well as from foreign rivals in North America and Europe.

Sugimoto, (2014) places the emergence of a market/customer service focused business model, adopted by most universities in Australia, near the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century. This business practice has been refined and expanded over the following two decades. The market/customer focus of universities compounded with the

“recent economic downturns and government funding cuts experienced throughout the world have further intensified the competitions within the education sector. This, coupled with the increasing student mobility, ... have necessitated the need for universities to adopt a market orientation philosophy” (Sugimoto, 2014, p. 2).

The purpose of Sugimoto’s (2014) study was not so much to examine the need and value of marketing, but rather to examine the perceived market orientation (PMO) as she interprets it. Her main focus is the perception of students of the general thrust of the marketing, and as a consequence she sought to accomplish two objectives:

(i) To examine the relationship between PMO, satisfaction, loyalty, and post-enrolment communication behaviour and,

(ii) To examine the mediating effects of satisfaction on loyalty and post-enrolment communication behaviour.” (Sugimoto, 2014, p. 1)

Sugimoto’s (2014) findings fill a void in educational-research; ‘this is the first and only study done to examine the measurement invariance of the constructs of perceived market orientation, satisfaction, loyalty, and post-enrolment communication behaviour in the higher education environment’ (Sugimoto, 2014, p.7). She asserts that student satisfaction is the key element that unites the constructs of student loyalty, post enrolment communication behaviour. Students who are happy with the service
provided by their university will overtly give word of mouth recommendation about the university. This may be self-evident, but verification of the obvious is still important.

Sugimoto (2014) admits that her findings are based on data collected from students asked to rate the university that will confer their degree. Although all replies were anonymous she acknowledged that there may be some bias in the data.

### 2.8 ANTECEDENTS TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INFLOWS TO UK HIGHER EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The UK was one of the first countries to have benefited from the globalisation of the higher education (HE) market. However, competition from other English speaking countries in North America and Australasia meant the “UK market share of international students fell from 16% in 1998 to 13% in 2003 and further down to 10% in 2009 (Green & Boone, 2005; OECD, 2011)” (Zheng, 2014, p. 136). Similar to its competitors, the UK HE sector relies on strong support from foreign student fees to sustain its budget, and fulfill its educational and research goals for the nation as a whole. Zheng, (2014), is able to cite a number of authorities (Adnett, 2010; Bashir, 2007; Chellaraj, Maskus, & Mattoo, 2008; Gribble, 2008) to illustrate the many benefits that flow on from exporting HE services to foreign students. They include “financial effects, employment and spillover effects, and economic growth effects” (Zheng, 2014, p. 137) and other budgetary assistances such as improvements in balance of trade, and current account repayments. Although not mentioned by Zheng (2014), another important benefit is that strong HE export trade raises tourism revenue created by visitations to the international students. According to Zheng, (2014), science and statistics have identified three main antecedents for international student mobility, ‘the gravity model, the push–pull model and the three-category model’ (Zheng, 2014, p. 137).

The existence of these different models emphasise the importance of data interpretation, which is germane to this thesis. Zheng’s (2014) findings identify present government policies, visa restrictions and lack of diverse and imaginative programming in the HE sector as contributing to the reason for this decline in
international student numbers studying in the UK. Zheng’s conclusions relate directly to the UK, but they are equally applicable to Australia.

The data from this research suggests that the main influencing factors for Chinese foreign study destination choices are some permutations of the quality of education; learning English, safety, employment opportunities and immigration. Further evidence in the research concerning the involvement of parents in the decision making process and the parent’s desire for wealth protection have complicated the analysis. The implications arising from this further evidence are discussed in the next section.

2.9 DISCUSSION

The review of existing research literature has identified many of the generic reasons given by international students from China for selecting a particular host country for study abroad. Other evidence, from respected media sources and Government publications has pointed to corrupt practices in China and the desire by HNWIs from China to protect their wealth through capital flight and immigration. The main research question: ‘What are the forces, connections and imagination informing Chinese parents and students’ reasons for studying overseas, in particular for choosing Australian universities?’ has been answered by both bodies of research, but this research is the first study that connects these two issues, which to date have been treated separately. Wu (2014) highlights the complexity of motives influencing Chinese families when study abroad options are under consideration; this research has further complicated the problem by including corruption, in both China and Australia, in the mix.

The initial literature review in this study, by researchers Marginson, (2002; & 2007); Guo (2010); Yang (2010); Guo et al., (2013); and Gong and Huybers, (2015), identified cognitive reasons for host country selection supplied in every case by Chinese international students. However, these early findings have given scant recognition of the forces, connections and imaginations supporting those reasons. There are two unique findings of this research:

1. In many cases it is the parents who make the decision as to where their children will study.
2. There is evidence that many wealthy Chinese parents have obtained their fortune through corruption and are now seeking to safeguard that wealth by overseas investment in Australia (Chung, 2017b; Olesen, 2016; Thornton, 2016; De Jong, 2014;).

These more recent findings surfaced during the latter stages of the research, and suggest the need for further forensic investigations.

The main focus of prevailing literature concerns the quality of education provided by the host nation and this produces a paradox in that the UK, with far better quality of education than Australia, attracts fewer Chinese university students than Australia. Lifestyle issues, leading to transcultural citizenship, explain this anomaly.

Also missing in previous literature is any reference to corruption, which is often the means by which wealthy Chinese families have been able to fund their children’s education in Australia. Corruption in China has led to corrupt practices in Australia (Bretag, 2016; Chung, 2015; Dean, 2014; Bochenski, 2015), where ‘cheating at major Australian universities may be easier than many supervisors realise’ (Belot, 2016, n. p.).

Australian universities, reliant on international student funds, are tacitly complicit in cheating by international students by imposing soft penalties for offenders, as shown by the Australian National University, (ANU). The Times ranked ANU in the top 100 universities repeatedly, while only suspending two of the 51 students caught plagiarising in 2015 (Belot, 2016, n. p.).

In addition, previous researchers have based their findings on data generated that relates equally to the top five nations and does not isolate the advantage that has given Australia a disproportionate share of Chinese students. Other researchers have successfully identified plausible reasons that have influenced Chinese students to study in Australia. This research has discovered an important driver that was previously not considered, but which answers the main research question.
2.10 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to acknowledge and appraise the findings of other researchers who have investigated the motives influencing Chinese students to study in Australia. The findings of early researchers, that educational issues were the main influences relating to the choice of host country as a study destination, has been confirmed in more current studies. However there have been some recent dissenting voices emphasising the complexity behind these motives. The dissention concerns the motive of immigration, largely ignored by many researchers, but a few researchers consider immigration reasons as being significant.

The HE sector in all the major countries that rely on international students is also complex and in a continued state of flux. Its highly competitive nature is constantly being challenged by world events such as the GFC and trade agreements. The key drivers of ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’ still apply as strong attributes recommending Australia as a host nation, but these attributes only put Australia on parity with its main competitors. Cost of education in Australia is approximately equal to costs associated with its main competitors. Nonetheless it is the other factors such as lifestyle, environment and transcultural citizenship that have fuelled the inordinate number of students from China who have elected to study in Australia.

Globalisation has infiltrated all nations and has permeated their cultures. Chapter Three explores the effects of globalisation on Chinese society, and how it has moderated the forces, connections and imaginations of HNWI Chinese parents, the quintessential focus of this research. The importance of understanding the psychology of the suppliers of data is vital to correct data interpretation has been fully explained in this chapter. Encapsulating the effects of globalisation on the psychology of the HNWI from China, and adapting existing social theory to this new paradigm is examined in Chapter Three.
CHAPTER THREE

FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS’ DECISION TO STUDY ABROAD: GLOBALISATION FORCES, CONNECTIONS AND IMAGINATION
3.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to determine why an inordinate number of university students from China choose to study at Australian universities. Chapter One produced five contributing research questions aligned to the main research question. The emergence of export education as a major revenue raiser for a number of Western nations, principally the US, the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand was also covered in Chapter One. Reasons behind Australia’s reliance on international students to fund its Higher Education Sector, (HES), and China’s dominance as a provider of students was acknowledged, and possible influences compelling university students from China to choose Australia as a host destination for overseas study were introduced.

Chapter Two analysed the research by others who had probed the reasons influencing an inordinate number of university students from China to study in Australia and related their research to the main research question and the five contributing research questions in the footnotes. The findings of other researchers were critiqued along with their acknowledgement. Chapter Two reaffirmed Chapter One’s claim that corruption in China and Australia, contributes an influence on the decision to choose Australia as a host nation for study abroad. Supporting this construct were Bodycott (2009); Olesen (2016) and the Hurun Report (2016) which exposed the high proportion of HNWIs from China seeking to emigrate and the desire of many HNWIs to provide wealth protection through capital flight; Chung (2013, 2015, 2017), Cornwall (2014), De Jong (2014), Thornton (2016), Dziedzic (2017), and Kumar (2017). These are motives for the parents. All other available research relied on data exclusively derived from interrogation of Chinese students who frequently were not the decision makers.

Chapter Three will support the contentions made in the previous two chapters and

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Was the quality of education crucial to your decision to study in Australia?
2. How much influence did the cost have on your decision to study in Australia?
3. Was the Australian lifestyle a factor influencing your decision to study in Australia?
4. Are environmental issues a factor influencing your decision to study in Australia?
5. How much influence did employment/immigration opportunities assert on the decision making process?
present the theory employed to prosecute this research. A conceptual framework figure 3.1; outlines the logic for the methodology engaged in the research. Chapter Three justifies and explains the appropriateness of the decisions on choice of methodology used. In addition, the concepts of globalisation, global forces, connections and imaginations, and the influential impact these attributes exert over the Chinese population will be explored in detail.

This chapter studies the many different influences that are woven into a pattern of ‘social theory’, and how these diverse reasons have interacted with this research. The decision, either by Chinese students, or their parents, to study in Australia, was taken under the paradigm of the diverse and dynamic social changes that have occurred in China during the past four decades. Globalisation, increased use of the Internet in China and the use of the Internet in the recruitment of international students, (Ihme, et al., 2016, Gai et al., 2016), have also alerted the same students (and their parents) to the advantages of migration to the host country of their choice. A case study involving Chinese students in Australia and China was used to answer the main research question of “why an inordinate number of university students from China has chosen to study in Australia”. Follow-up interviews with some of the parents of the original volunteers provided the key to the interpretation of the data collected and identified the gap left by previous researchers.

Chapter Three builds a logical framework for the prosecution of this research based on an understanding of Chinese culture and knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of all epistemological studies. The chapter has been partitioned into the following sections:-

**What is Social Theory**: This first section of the chapter creates the theoretical and practical framework used throughout the research. Adherence to the paradigms established in this chapter reduced the failings, evident in some epistemology research projects, because the investigators may have been misled about the motives and actions of another person, (Scott, 2014, p. 36).

**The Uses of Social Theory**: Section two explains the importance of Social Theory in any epistemology research and how it was practically incorporated into this project.
**Employing Social Theory:** The implementation of Social Theory involves an in-depth understanding of the society under investigation. Various crucial aspects of Chinese culture; Confucianism, Modernism, Postmodernism and Connectionist Theory, (Globalism) are scrutinised for their relevance to this research. The practice of *guanxi*, entrenched corruption and adherence to the culture of ‘thick face, black heart’ are pivotal in the final analysis of the data.

**Global Forces, Connections, and Imaginations:** This section defines the terms used throughout the thesis and explains the global position of modern China. The significant events that have caused China to be the largest supplier of international students in the world is explained by examining China’s journey through the various stages from Marxism, Communism to finally Chinese Capitalism.

**Discussion:** The points raised in this chapter are discussed and conceptualised.

**Conclusion:** The conclusion to Chapter Three restates the aim and focus of the chapter, linking corruption in China and Australia as influencing factors motivating corrupt parents to choose Australia as a study-abroad destination.

3.1 **WHAT IS SOCIAL THEORY**

The theory used in this research and the prevailing theories connecting the scientific process to ethnological research are shown in concept map, figure 3.1 on the next page.
The push factors precipitating study abroad from China constitute the top half of the map while the corresponding pull factors are shown in the lower section.
An understanding of the principles of Social Theory guided this research and produced evidence of the influence that corruption fed into the motives for study abroad options. Baert and da Silva (2010, p. 1) define Social Theory as “a relative systematic, abstract and general reflection on the workings of the social world.” Kitching, (2008, p. 1-2), warns that social theorising “does active intellectual damage to able young people” and that “‘theoretical’ parts of Poststructuralists and Postmodernists Political Theory consist of very poor, deeply confused and misbegotten philosophy.” Kitching (2008, p. 19) further identifies the credibility dilemma facing research students when they seek to devise a theory for their research, noting that, “most of them (are) unoriginal when true, and clearly false when original”. This conclusion suggests that research students will have difficulty in devising an original theory, but they may benefit from their own theorising. The theory that corruption is a key-driver influencing Chinese university students to study in Australia is based on strong circumstantial evidence discovered during this research and supported by similar findings of Chung (2013, 2015, 2017), Cornwall (2014), De Jong (2014), Thornton (2016), Dziedzic (2017), Kumar (2017), and Scott, (2014, p. 36). There is evidence that in some epistemology research projects data is wrongly interpreted because the investigators may have been misled about the motives and actions of another person (Scott, 2014, p. 36). Reinterpretation, based on an intimate understanding of Chinese culture, and corrections for data irregularities are the keys to the findings of this research.

Social Theory, on a macro level, is an attempt to explain the workings of a society. On a micro level Social Theory encompasses such units as schools, families, and finally the psychology of the individuals that occupy the different strata within the society. The purpose of this micro level investigation is to explore the motives behind a very small part of Chinese society, the High Net Worth Individuals (HNWI) and their families who have decided to continue their child’s tertiary education in a foreign country. Discovering evidence that many of these HNWI Chinese families have obtained their wealth by corrupt practices is significant to the findings of this research.

Understanding how Social Theory applied to China was crucial to the gestation of the theories that evolved from the research. The value of an ‘Eastern’ perspective advocated by Singh & Meng (2011) in their research showed that many research students from China now studying in Western universities may have much to offer to
Western knowledge by introducing Chinese theories to their theses. This applies to Social Theory where the social dynamics between East and West are quite different. A cogent component of this research is the effect of guanxi and Face, relatively unknown attributes in the West. Confucianism, originally banned in China by Mao, is now politically acceptable and influences Chinese thinking today. According to Confucianism, “To be a scholar is to be top of society: all occupations are base.” Combining this thought with ‘Thick Face, Black Heart,’ it is understandable that many parents, and students would cite ‘Quality of Education’ as the default reason for their choice of host nation.

Although this inquiry was confined to wealthy Chinese, the only people able to afford study abroad, class conflict was not part of this study. Giddens (1986, p. 235) argues that traditional class conflicts diminished within societies during the middle stages of the twentieth century to the level, which may now be described as ‘tacit consensus’.

When writing about theory Kitching (2008, p. 20) lists a number of one word and two word metaphors that are ubiquitous to the writings of most authors. Included in the list are such single word metaphors as “matrix, space, flows, domain, system, apparatus(es), bodies” and two word metaphors such as “of transformation, create space, transposes movement, movements of desire, waves of offerings”. Because of their frequency of use, these words have a legal tender in writings on theory, but whether the implied meanings are readily apparent to every reader, or the author, is open to conjecture. However, the point that Kitching emphasises is that students, when learning to do theory, will be subtly induced to use these metaphors. To parody Kitching, this study is in the educational space, it measures a matrix of reasons behind the flow of students from China to Australia, and how these reasons have been generated in a moment of desire created by a false wave of offerings as asserted by Robertson (2011).

The theory component of this research is an integral part of the methodology used; its hierarchy and value to the methodological process is explored in the next section. **Theory Component of the Methodological Process**

This section places Social Theory as the hierarchical centre point of the
methodological process. The research framework presented in the previous section follows Wallace’s (cited in Seale, 2004, p. 39) schematic figure 3.2.

**Figure 3.2 Flow Chart of Wallace’s Critique-Interpretative Approach to Educational Research**

The diagram shows the principal information components, methodological controls and information transformations of the scientific process.

“Note: Information components are shown in rectangles; methodological controls are shown in ovals; information transformations are shown by arrows” (Wallace, cited in Seale, 2004, p. 39).

According to Wallace (cited in Seale, 2004, p. 35) “There are at least four ways of generating, and testing the truth of empirical statements: ‘authoritarian’, ‘mystical’, ‘logico-rational’, and ‘scientific’”. The original theory of this research was the assumption that Australia attracted a disproportionate number of the Chinese international university students because of the quality of education and the benefits that can be derived from that education. The logical deduction from the proffered
theory suggested that Australia’s quality of education was disproportionately better than its main competitors, the US, the UK, Canada and Japan. According to the Shanghai and The Times world universities’ rankings, Australian universities are ranked lower than those of the four mentioned countries.

During the process of this research, new evidence of corruption in China detailing the acquisition and disposal of wealth emerged, (Olesen, 2016; the Hurun Report, 2014; 2015; 2016; Chung, 2013; 2015; 2017; Cornwall 2014) which changed the focus of this research. The evidence from these investigative journalists indicates that many Chinese students are studying in Australia because of the lifestyle/immigration opportunities available in Australia. In accordance with Wallace’s model, this theory has been tested and accepted, with the conclusion that corruption may account for the disproportionate number of Chinese students now studying at Australian universities. These latter findings of corruption do not dismiss the motives identified by Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun & Hagedon (2013); Yang (2010), and Bodcott (2009) that a large proportion of Chinese university students are studying in Australia because of the overall quality of education provided and the opportunities emanating from that education. These previous researchers were unable to discover evidence of corruption, in Australia as well as China, because they relied solely on data supplied by students. Corruption, lifestyle/immigration opportunities and the failure of Australia to ratify an extradition treaty with China, (Dziedzic, 2017, n. p.), does account for a small proportion of Chinese students that study at Australian universities.

3.2 GLOBALISATION, NOW

This section gives a brief overview of the present state of globalisation now, but particularly in reference to export education. Globalisation commenced twenty-five years ago when the Maastricht Treaty was signed, creating the European Union (EU); it gained momentum when the World Trade Organisation (WTO) was created three years later, and this momentum became unstoppable courtesy of the Internet (Saren and Malik, 2017). The first two of these phenomena are often referred to as ‘globalisation from above’, while the latter, the Internet and all the social media spawned by the Internet are referred to as ‘globalisation from below’.
Despite these initial proclamations Saren and Malik (2017), and Patman (2017) see resistance to globalisation in the US, where President Donald Trump’s initial policy pronouncements on migration and his determination to create American jobs onshore, have created uncertainty about the future of globalisation. Brexit, which is the term used to describe the UK’s withdrawal from the EU, has added to that uncertainty.

Export education relies heavily on the global economy, and the porous borders created by globalisation. Educational policies, which previously focused on pedagogical issues, are now “connected to economic, political, and cultural forces of ‘globalisation from above.’” (Singh, et al., p. 10). Globalisation’s uncertainty could limit graduates, from poorer nations, of the chances to find employment within multi-nationals of the West. If this is a long-term situation then the scale of export education will decrease to reflect that loss of benefit.

However, the famous American author, Mark Twain’s quip ‘The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated’ may be equally applicable to the imminent demise of globalisation. Patman (2017) refers to the Trump appointed Cabinet, which contains many traditionalists not sympathetic to his anti-globalisation stance. Tselichtchev (2017, n. p.) contends that globalisation is not dead even though “Anti-globalisation sentiments are spreading in America and Europe,” but this situation “will further amplify Asia’s role as the world’s major globalisation and economic integration engine.” Globalisation from above, previously supported by the failed Trans Pacific Partnership, (TPP), of twelve nations, of which the US had been the key member, has been replaced by the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which includes the remaining eleven nations of the TPP plus five new nations. Changed relationships show the adaptability of globalisation and emphasises its survival skills because now national economies are inextricably linked to the world economy.

**Education**

The ancient Greeks regarded education as a process of “producing people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world” (Boman et al.,
Higher Educational Institutions (HEI), which have been internationalised for many decades are an important part of the engine driving globalisation, (Olcott, 2009). Global career imaginations, the desire to provide a happy life for their progeny, all play a role in influencing HNWIs in China to consider study abroad options for their one child. Universities exploit these desires in their quest to attract international students, which are required to fill funding gaps as governments in Western countries seek to lower expenditure on tertiary institutions (Doherty, 2009, Gul et al., 2010). The combination of the push factors in China, not all related directly to educational outcomes, the pull factors from international universities, blended with global career imaginations of the students and their parents, are part of the hidden motives described in the Research Framework for this thesis (figure 3.1). Incorporating these facts and the uses of Social Theory in this study is covered in the next section.

The next sections define the terms global, forces, connections and imaginations and their relevance to this research.

3.3 GLOBAL, FORCES, CONNECTIONS, AND IMAGINATIONS

Burawoy et al., (2000, p.2) introduced his readers to a world where “information technology promotes a network society of global reach in which the space of flows-flows of information, technology, and finance – replaces the space of places.” He further contends that traditional ethnography based on studying the confined life of the village is either dead or seriously imprisoned, and has been replaced by the seeming oxymoron of global ethnography. Written before the proliferation of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, today his words seem powerfully prophetic.

This present research is in fact a type of ‘global ethnography’ prosecuted as a case study. The unit of analysis is the large body of students from China who have chosen to complete tertiary studies in Australia or are contemplating such a decision. These students are theoretically linked by their various desires for foreign education, and practically connected through social media and the Internet. The global forces that drive their opinions and the opportunities that fire their imaginations are shared through these global connections.
The research was global, because it included the reasons of those PRC students who have decided to not study in Australia, but instead chose the USA or another country. The reasons for not choosing Australia help to isolate and develop a theory of the influences that have convinced students from China to choose Australia. The globalisation of this research required deconstructing the circumstances surrounding the student at the time of their decision; “the re-composition of time and space – displacement, compression, distanciation, and even dissolution.” (Burawoy et al., 2000, p. 4). The next section plots the rise of globalisation by looking at some examples of its impact on some societies and situates export education within its framework.

3.3.1 Globalisation and Education

Global and local are juxtaposed, yet inter-related. According to Bulawoy et al., (2000, p. 1), “it begins with early Capitalism, where the global is directly accessible from the local, from spinning jenny, (cotton mills in Manchester), the country manor, or even the stock exchange.” Haney (cited in Burawoy et al., 2000, p. 51-52) contends that the opening up of Hungarian society, for example, developed a “global discourse of need”, that while it was a local study, it “was global in its appeal and effects”.

Herzfeld, (2002, p. 1408), in reviewing Burawoy et al., (2000), highlights the difficulties and limitations “of persuasively relating ethnographic analysis to global processes.” This research was a case study, but “case studies are much more similar to ethnography than dissimilar,” (White et al., p. 21), and the same difficulties and limitations will apply. However, Burawoy (2000) illustrates many connections between global forces and the behavioural impact on local societies and economies; such as ship workers in the USA losing jobs and industries to cheaper Asian manufacturers; miners in Broken Hill being displaced by cheaper labour in Northern Rhodesia (today Zambia); many relate to cheap labour which is a global force affecting Western economies. Blum’s portrait of the San Francisco shipyards, where US workers are paid wages “comparable to those shipyard workers in South Korea” and where the shipyards themselves are “just an accident waiting to happen” (Burawoy, et al., 2000,
There are many global events that have changed the social landscape in China, since the end of the ‘cold war’. These include improved communication capabilities through mobile phones, (now smart phones), the widespread use of computers and the internet, free trade agreements and cheaper travel and transport costs. The desire for China to be part of this global economy has led to its need to learn English and this single wanting has led many Chinese students to study in the West. Globalisation is a force influencing the desire for study abroad by Chinese university students; the meaning of force as applied to this research is examined in the next section.

**Internationalisation and education**

The internationalisation of universities has been a feature of higher education development since the inception of universities (Liyanage and Badeng, 2016, p. 1). With the advent of globalisation in the past three decades universities have become global and have tapped into the global market to attract students and investment. As global trends proliferate, social, political and economic forces "leave higher education with little choice but greater international involvement" (Liyanage and Badeng, 2016, p. 1). The struggle for financial survival, in the wake of higher education funding cutbacks in many countries following the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) in 2007 has seen "international higher education (HE) move towards marketisation (Ek et al. 2013) and commodification" (Huang, et al., 2016, p. 1333).

The internationalisation of higher education has delivered far greater benefits than the financial contribution made by fees, with the establishment of university partnerships and " Its contribution in academic, cultural and diplomatic terms is understood” (Huang, et al., 2016, p. 1334). Australian universities have tapped into this rich vein investment.

### 3.3.2 Global Forces and International Demand

Force is defined as anything that causes a change. Burawoy, et al., (2000, p.29), defines
global forces as “the product of contingent social processes,” and they hold a reciprocation relationship with local societies because even though global forces affect the local society, the aggregate of local societies help to define global forces. Forces can be examined “as the product of flows of people, things and ideas, that is, the global connection between sites” (Burawoy, et al., 2000, p. 29). Global forces have the power to completely alter societies, as Burawoy (2000) recounts and exemplifies, citing global crises with different but significant local manifestations in Broken Hill (Australia) and Northern Rhodesia (Southern Africa). However, unwanted global forces can be challenged at the local level by appealing to “local solidarities, identities, images and interests” (Burawoy, et al., 2000, p.239).

“Most ethnographic analyses of global forces begin with a construction of an external force or overarching structure---Capitalism, Modernity, Science---which is then examined at work within the site(s) being studied” (Gille & O’Riain, 2002 p. 280). Every society in itself is unique, but the most powerful force within the society is the structure of the society, whether it is Communism, Capitalism or some other form of social structure. These forces are best studied from within the society.

The forces that drive Chinese students to study in foreign countries are the push from the domestic situation in China, and/or the attraction from the host country. A social force is a set of circumstances that exist that promotes a change in social patterns of behaviour. In the early 1980’s, graduates from China’s middle schools automatically expected to enrol into Chinese universities according to their Gaokao score and financial situation. Deng Xiaoping’s aspiration for China to embrace Capitalism and emulate the best that the West had to offer became the primary push force for students to study abroad. Most of the original students went to the USA or the UK, but after these initial programs other forces pushed students to alternate destinations such as Japan, Australia, and Canada.

Life-style, standard of living, and pollution problems in China have generated forces that encourage Chinese people to solve these domestic problems in a personal way by emigration.

Forces and pressures change with time, and the relevant drivers of choice of host
Countries today will be the result of the evolving situation, as it exists today.

**Students Perceptions of Global Forces**

Students’ study destinations for international higher education are based on many factors including "quality of the academic program, job and income expectations, the availability of alternative and/or more attractive programs at other universities", (Ihme et al., 2016, p.1025). Imagination and expectation are powerful motive generators when overseas study destinations are under consideration by Chinese families. Perceptions fuel imagination. Ihme et al., (2016, p. 1025) allude that the Person-Organisation (P-O) fit extends beyond such factors as climate, diversity, respect and pride. Although this may be a general case, for the purpose of this thesis these global perceptions, including lifestyle, would be key elements of consideration when transcultural citizenship is the main purpose for study abroad. The global perception, accepted in China, is that Australia is a safe, friendly environment, ideally suited for a happy life.

**International Student Demand**

The increasing numbers of international university students has been coincidental to the higher proportions of students gaining tertiary qualifications; the “global gross tertiary enrolment ratio (which measures the percentage of young adults in tertiary education) increased from 14% in 1992 to 32% in 2012 (Brooks et al., 2012, p. 282). Among the many reasons for this increase can be attributed the actions of politicians and policy makers, who see higher education as chief elements conducive to ensuring economic competitiveness and growth (Brooks et al., 2012, p. 282). The ever increasing internationalisation of higher education has exposed the need to think through how demands for educational equality and justice, which are often inadequate at the national and sub-national level, should be conceptualised at a global level.

Brooks et al., (2012, p. 283) rails against the “documented consistent inequalities in young people’s access to higher education," in the UK, while in the same article she refers to university graduates in Canada who experienced “hidden injuries because of
class distinction”. Brooks et al., (2012) continues that higher socio economic students are more likely to apply for the more prestigious universities, and on graduation receive more favourable employment offers than their lower socio-economic cohorts. The inequalities between social strata also appear with inequalities existing between national and international students.

Chinese university students studying in Australia could benefit from one of these inequalities because they are most likely the offspring of HNWI Chinese parents and therefore belong to the wealthy upper class. Also Australia has a history of multiculturalism and assimilation of migrants, an attraction for Chinese students to study in and ultimately immigrate to Australia. Irrespective of its success at attracting students from China, Australia is in fierce competition for students because of the global demand for international students and skilled migrants.

Global Demand for International Students/Skilled Migrants

The Global demand for international students and skilled migrants has intensified because of low fertility rates in OECD nations (Hawthorne, 2014, p. 1). In response to the demand "Higher education systems are expanding rapidly around the globe in order to satisfy the greater need and demand for access" (Blanco-Ramírez & Berger, 2014, p. 88). The demand for international students is also being driven in OECD nations because of cutbacks in educational funding and the growth of a new phenomenon that has emerged in university education, the educational hub (Wilkins & Huisman, 2011, p. 300). These hubs, prominent in Singapore, Malaysia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates and are in direct competition with the three largest suppliers of export education, the US, the UK and Australia because they offer degrees in English. Educational hubs have changed the pattern of student flow from East to West with more students flowing from East to East, and even West to East (Wilkins & Huisman, 2011, p. 300). In 2012 Malaysia hosted 6484 Chinese students (see Table 5.1 and Section 5.11.2) with enrollments increasing every year. Singapore, with two highly ranked universities, the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University, offers greater competition to Australia. "In 2006, some 80,000 international students were studying in Singapore; the target is for around 150,000 by 2015"
(Gribble & McBurnie, 2007, cited in Wilkins & Huisan, 2011, p. 302). This trend was supported by the Premier of China, Wen Jia Bao, (in May 2012) at the opening address of the China International Fair for Trades and Services, (CIFTIS), where the Chinese Premier revealed that China's stated aim was to become a net importer of services, especially in higher education.

Australia, the US, the UK and Canada have for many years relied on international student graduates as skilled migrants (Hawthorne, 2014), and this eventuality was attainable in Australia when, after “Australia’s 2006 skilled migration review, international students applying to migrate had a ninety-nine percent (99%) chance of being selected, unless failing health or character checks. Sixty-six percent (66%) of all Indian students and thirty-eight percent (38%) of Chinese students converted their status to stay. (Hawthorne 2014, p. 6). This liberalisation of visa restrictions produced a serious ‘dumbing down’ of the study migration pathway. ...Instead of degrees, large numbers of international students had enrolled in low-grade rapidly proliferating private vocational colleges, which were minimally quality assured. Many of these colleges had compromised English, academic entry and progression standards” (Hawthorne 2014, p. 8).

If Australia wishes to compete, as a host destination for students from China, it may have to rely more and more on the motive of transcultural citizenship to maintain the high proportion of such students.

Punctuated Intervention by International Organisations

The HE sector in all the major countries that rely on international students is complex and in a continued state of flux. Its highly competitive nature is constantly being challenged by world events such as the 2007 GFC. International student numbers fell in both the US and the UK in 2007 in the wake of the GFC (see Section 5.6). International organisations, such as the IMF, G-8 or G-20 et al., respond to global problems by moderating the flow of commerce, (Maldonado-Maldonado, 2012) and this will include the flow of international students.

International student numbers in the UK declined again in 2013 (HEFCE, 2014) because increased UK visa fees reduced the number of students from the EU by nearly
25% (HEFCE, 2014, p. 5). These increased fees can be directly attributed to the value of the pound sterling as calculated by the IMF. Despite the ability of international organisations to cause punctuated interventions, both supply of and demand for international students remains strong.

**International Education Supply and Demand**

Higher education systems are expanding rapidly around the globe in order to satisfy the greater need and demand for access" (Blanco-Ramírez & Berger, 2014, p. 88). Simultaneously, the number of international students has continued to grow on a yearly basis (Gong and Huybers 2015, Hawthorne 2014, Gai et al., 2016, Ruby 2013) without noticeable changes in education quality in host nations. However, universities in various countries, aware of accelerating global competition for international students, recognise the need for better marketing techniques. (Zhang and Hagedorn, 2014, p. 721). In the case of US education “agents (have) suggested that U.S. community colleges should act more aggressively in the Chinese higher education market” (Zhang and Hagedorn, 2014, p. 729).

Supply and demand of and for export education are in a competitive upward spiral but the fortunate times are not guaranteed to last, as the GFC showed, and global phenomena can change in an instant. While the demand is strong, Higher Education Institutions (HEI)s intent on attracting international students have to provide proven quality education and prove adapt in effective recruitment of international students. The newly developed traditional methods of “promotional videos, university Web sites and interactive online approaches can reach a large pool of students in a cost-effective way, but many international students in target markets favor a physical presence” (Zhang and Hagedorn, 2014, p. 9).

**International Education Supply and Demand: Forecasting the Future**

Since international student supply continues to increase, (Gong and Huybers 2015, Hawthorne 2014, Gai et al., 2016, Ruby 2013), then the question becomes, where to place these additional HE students? (Ruby, 2013, p. 2). Ruby (2013, p. 3) believes the
“Australian market is approaching saturation, Canada is planning for growth at current rates to sustain market share, and U.K. capacity is constrained by price and visa policy.” However, I disagree. If the demand is there then the supply in Australia, Canada and the UK will inflate to meet that demand, in a similar fashion that has driven expansion to date. Albeit the change of leadership in the UK, (May), and the US, (Trump), may affect future demand in those nations.

The UK Prime Minister, May, who is overseeing Brexit, was notoriously hostile to international students in her previous role of Home Secretary. Her previous attitude coincides with the US President Trump's xenophobic rhetoric prior to his election, thus both of these leaders are likely to deter some Chinese students from studying in those two countries, providing an advantage to other nations seeking international students. However, Prime Minister Turnbull's recent rhetoric (2017) in announcing changes to the skilled migration 457 visa may have discounted any advantage that Australia could have gained from Brexit and Trump. These are forces against attracting students to the three countries mentioned.

Ruby (2013), prior to Trump’s election, forecasted increased international student numbers finding fewer opportunities in Australia, UK and to a lesser extent Canada, with the US being the ultimate beneficiary of these increases. However, given the reliance of Australia, the UK and Canada on their export education markets it is very likely that these three will rise to the challenge presented by increasing potential supply. Furthermore, the same three countries who are actively pursuing policies that are designed to attract international students, have immigration as a potential part of their policy considerations.

Globalisation/International Openness of Universities: Cutbacks in Public Funds

Proposed changes to funding of Australian universities could see cost emerge as an issue affecting Chinese student choice regarding Australia as a study destination. “Between 1995 and 2003 public funding per student (in Australia) fell by 30 per cent, the largest such fall in the OECD (OECD, 2006). The Federal Government now “supplies only 41 per cent of the total income of the funded higher education
institutions” (Marginson, 2007, p. 5). The funding situation has not improved; rather the 2014-15 Australian Federal Budget proposed to introduce a number of tax measures for funding HEI’s. These would have restricted the ability of universities to attract foreign students. Key among these is “expansion of the demand driven system” whereby:

“current caps on the student contributions that higher education providers are able to charge will be removed from 1 January 2016 for students who accept an offer to commence a course from 14 May 2014. Higher education providers will be responsible for setting their own course fees” (Federal Treasury Department Budget Paper 2, 2014, n.p.).

At the time of writing, July 2017, these measures have not been introduced. Given Australia’s dependence on international students, and that China is the most significant contributor of such students, it is appropriate to analyze the effect that such measures would have on influencing PRC students’ decision to study in Australia.

**Globalising job search strategies**

Graduate employability is a key concern for many students particularly at a time when education is increasingly available for the masses (Yizhong, et al., 2017, p. 223). Students graduating from Western universities have expectations and imaginations of a professional career based on the foundation of their degree; Chinese students graduating from Western universities have similar aspirations. Job placement in China often depends on ‘guanxi’ (May 2000, Fligstein and Zhang 2010), and professional placements for returning graduates to China are no longer guaranteed. Graduate employability has become a major concern for all higher education stakeholders including universities, governments, employers and the graduates themselves (Yizhong, et al., 2017, p. 224).

**3.3.3 Connections**

Global forces as described in 3.5.2 are constituted by global connections, that is, “chains, flows, networks” (Burawoy et al., 2000, p. p. 30-31). O’Riain, (cited in Burawoy et al., 2000, p. p. 177-8) describes an emerging type of global workspace by
portraying a conference between a software test group in Ireland, liaising with the parent company in Silicon Valley (USA), and then holding further discussions with the head software developer in St. Louis (USA). This is just one example of a micro global connection, but now a more typical occurrence.

Improved telecommunications and cheaper air travel in the past three decades has changed connections between individuals and countries. Children from China, studying in Australia, can maintain daily verbal communication with their families in China, at no cost using QQ or WeChat. Video contact is also relatively cheap. Visitation is relatively easy and can be accomplished in just two days. Adding to this connectivity, tertiary institutions themselves have formed partnerships and connections in the students’ home country; this is particularly true for Australian universities and China. Western Sydney University’s connection with the Ningbo Education Committee in Zhejiang Province in China is one such example.

Macro connections are arrangements between large organisations, such as governments (through trade treaties and national policies), universities and education departments from one country to another, and large multi-national businesses. Alternatively, micro connections are connections on a much-reduced scale, from person to person or individual to small organisation. Both forms of connections reduce time and space and add to the power of global forces impacting on the local society.

These connections, on a macro and micro level, influence where students from China ultimately elect to study. Chinese students in Australia have instant access to their peers still in China, but who are intending to study abroad. Images uploaded onto Facebook, WeChat and Instagram can excite the imagination in positive and negative ways and have an effect on the study destination choices of students. Most nations that depend on students from China to support their tertiary education systems have included in their foreign student policy documents phrases like “positive student experience” or “warm welcome for international students” to ensure current students will attract future learners.

The policy strategy that, “Australian international education is built on a strong foundation of institutional partnerships, supported by a collaborative network of
officials,” (DNSIE, 2015, p. 7), acknowledges the value of connectedness on a macro level, but ultimately this may be less important than the micro scale through social media.

Local/Global Connections

Singh et al., (2017) illustrates the reality of local to global connections by recording how a number of educators in Australia were able to follow the US Presidential campaign in real time by the tweets accessed on their smart phone. At the same time, these tweets being accessed in the US was having a profound influence on the outcome of the election. Singh acknowledged that:

We were virtually and viscerally connected to the election through millions of tweets/posts (cultural symbols and social ideas virally transmitted across the globe). Some of these tweets/posts morphed into memes, starting out as a #hashtag (accompanying a real-life movement) and then becoming a meme when they spread virally and gained mass recognition (Singh et al., 2017, p. 1).

Social media connections, such as Facebook, WeChat or Tweets have the potential to go viral with the power to change the mood of millions of people, thus allowing local connections to gain global significance. Thus social media plays an increasing critical role in attracting international students.

Making Global Connections

Global connections can exist at many different levels between various attributes. Haines’ (2010, p. 18-20) study shows the benefits attained by connections between field studies and service-learning opportunities; tourists and local communities; land use and water quality; nutrient cycling and composting. Her aim was “to make more connections between our lives in the U.S. and how we affect other areas of the world” (Haines, 2010, p. 23).

The establishment of the EU, a global connection, has kept peace in that part of Europe for the past four decades. Understanding history and past European conflicts underscores the value of this form of globalisation. Wang (2011, p. 3) espouses the
positive side of globalisation with an appreciation that within

“the global settings, different nations have had disputes or even wars during different time periods. To achieve a productive global interdependence, we have to be able to see through conflicts for a bigger picture; otherwise, we will forever be confined by the “win-or-lose” mentality and cannot make meaningful connections” (Wang, 2011, p. 3).

If Wang (2011) is correct, making and maintaining global settings is part of the mechanism leading to world peace. The internationalisation and globalisation of education is part of that fabric. Transcultural citizenship creates and cements more global connections on a micro and macro scale for the betterment of mankind.

People Based Global Connections

Globalisation has developed inexorably since World War 2 with the international flow of capital, natural resources, talent and advanced technologies and in the process “stimulating rapid and constant economic growth” (Peng, 2017, p. 1). The rise of the Internet and people based connections derived through the internet has hastened the process in the past two decades.

International and global education has produced people-based global connections on a micro level between families, and macro levels between educational institutions and even nations. Sun and Lancaster (2013) appreciate the influence of people-based connections on the behaviours of societies as a whole. Although Sun and Lancaster (2013, p. 4) have coined the term “global-I-zation” to represent the power of people-based global connections they have failed in their attempt to show that “global-I-zation” has the influential power of its macro counterpart.

A particular example of a micro connection morphing into a macro global connection is the “bilateral hyperlink connections between countries and the number of telephone minutes (communication variables) are the most important predictors of the flow’s structure,” (Barnett et al., 2016, p. 533), which shows how person to person variables like telephone minutes translate into macro consequences.
China is a leader in macro globalisation, and despite anti-globalisation elements arising in the EU with Brexit, and anti globalisation statements by Trump in the US, “the trend of economic globalisation is irresistible,” (Peng, 2017, p. 1) and fully supported by China. People-based global connections are important in two ways; firstly they encourage globalisation and secondly they enable societies at the individual level to welcome the process.

**Global Connections beyond Aid**

Western organizations should start to question the appropriateness of a *volunteering* language before they decide to use it for youth projects in developing countries (Palacios, 2010, p. 863). In the 1960s, when the boom of international volunteering for young Americans started through the Peace Corps program, it was clear that there were political and colonial-like intentions involved (Palacios, 2010, p. 863). The basic conclusion of many authors that have contributed to this critical theory of development is that the Western intention of helping, underlying the development aid goal, is humanitarian as much as it is colonialist. However, it tends to reproduce the same global patterns of inequality and poverty, leaving intact – if not reinforcing – the dominant position of the North (Palacios, 2010, p. 864).

The US Peace Corp volunteers attract students through unrealistic phrases such as "make a difference", a language of “good intentions” constantly permeated the advertisement, by calling university students to “be the difference” and “contribute” (university flyer). As it has been argued in other contexts of volunteer tourism, “‘a language of ‘making a difference’, ‘doing something worthwhile’ or ‘contributing to the future of others’” might be disguising a development agenda and at the same time reinforcing unreflective volunteer practices (Palacios, 2010, p. 874). Export education portrayed itself with these same mottos in the early stages of development. Notwithstanding the intention to move beyond the aid or trade models, export of education to nations such as China remains a vital structural element of higher education in Australia (Marginson, (cited in Liyanage and Badeng, 2016, p. 3)).
Global Connections via Global Partnerships

Australia is a key provider of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region. The focus of this re-alignment of Australian higher education internationalisation is directed at development of new and existing links with universities in the region. This reflects a globalisation discourse that positions the region as the new centre of global economic power (Ferguson, 2011) in an Asian century (Kohli, Sharma, & Sood, 2011). Australian government policy-makers have embraced this discourse, with calls to stakeholders to develop collaborative research links within the region, (Australian Research Council, 2011); (Liyanage and Badeng, 2016, p. 3).

“Australian universities are now focused on quality, outcomes and meaningful collaboration and this will manifest in an increasing capacity for transnational education and greater emphasis on attracting international PhD students and research collaboration” (Universities Australia (cited in Liyanage and Badeng, 2016, p. 3)).

Global Competence

Quality of education (Gong and Huybers, 2015, p. 1), is a key driver of host nation choice for international university students from China. The global competence of Chinese international students to benefit from their overseas experience has been tested and

“Results from structural equation modeling analysis indicated both English and local language proficiency were significant predictors of global competence, and global competence, in turn, influenced significantly the participants’ social connectedness, social and academic adaptation (Meng, et al., 2017, p. 1).

3.3.4 Local/global Imagination

Global imaginations have an influence on how societies develop and change relative to the rest of the world. Burawoy et al., (2000, p. p. 7-9) illustrate this by referring to letters written by Polish immigrants living in Chicago, to their relatives in Poland. These letters inspired change in Polish society as well as influencing many Poles to
emigrate to the USA. Likewise photos showing students in Australia living and enjoying the advantages of a pristine environment, when posted on social media, have a powerful influence on students in China. These imaginations are often more powerful drivers of influence than the quality of education provided in Australia. An Australian degree is often the first step in a global career. Global career imagination is discussed in the next section.

**Global Imagination**

Kenway (2012, p. 2) criticises neo-liberal universities that practice research imperatives that have "a techno-scientific orientation to knowledge, an emphasis on ‘knowledge networks’ for the explicit purpose of ‘knowledge transfer" (Kenway, 2012, p. 2), and which are persecuted purely in the pursuit of profit. Such researchers she refers to as techno-scientists and the entrepreneurs who market their product are referred to as technopreneurs. Further, Kenway (2012) suspects that the above mentioned collaborators are in the enthrall not only of neo-liberal universities, but also of governments of the same persuasion. Their activities are fiercely competitive and that their research results will be charitable to such universities, the government and other harmonised agencies such as the OECD. Sadly, Kenway (2012) also believes "the field of international education is as subject to these imperatives as other fields and certainly attracts its fair share of technopreneurs."

The alternatives to failings that Kenway has alluded to above are to develop a global research imagination, which includes "seeking and provoking ‘uncomfortable thought’, examining ‘unexamined habits of looking’, trying ‘to see from elsewhere’ and ‘striving for complexity’ Kenway (2012, p.2). This research satisfies her definition of a global research imagination in that it has not endorsed the acceptable findings that "quality of education' is the main reason that an inordinate number of students from China have elected to study at Australian universities. Rather, delving behind the blind statistics, and following the advice of Labaree (2011, p. 623) and Northcote (2012, p. 99) has produced findings that may provoke uncomfortable thought (guanxi and wealth protection) and findings that are complex and unique to this research question.
Kenway (2012, p. 3) challenges us" to ask where does our thinking and theorizing come from?" In this instance I have had at least fifteen years involvement in international education, from a low level base Huija Private School in 1997, to being the Vice General Manager of Beijing International Education Exchange Company (BIEE), personally in charge of producing the 2006 and 2007 BIEE Expos in Beijing, and finally as China Executive for Australian Education Alliance (AEA), from 2011-2013. My interaction with Chinese students and parents, in all of these different roles, belied the findings by other researchers who contended that Chinese students chose to study in Australia, instead of the US, the UK, Japan or Canada, because of quality of education considerations or safety concerns.

The imagination of the original researcher will influence the research process (Kenway, 2012, p. 4) and for this research question there is greater profit scope for the technopreneurs if 'quality of education' is the key driver influencing students to study in Australia. Certainly, I accept that 'quality of education' is part of the answer, and I personally came to Australia hoping to benefit from studying at a prestigious university.

This research satisfies Kenway's (2012, p. 7) definition that "a defiant global research imagination involves probing received notions and developing new ideas"; previously accepted notions are not totally disregarded but placed in a better context, and the concept of transcultural citizenship has been explored and justified in the light of evidence revealed by Olesen, (2016). Olesen's (2016) evidence is fully aligned with the aspirations and the global imagination of the Chinese middle class, as will be developed in the next section.

Global Imagination of the Chinese Middle Class

It is upper middle class families of China, the newly formed HNWI in China, that are sending their, (predominantly), one child to study overseas. Their prime motive is to provide, what they perceive, the best chance for their progeny to have a happy, successful life. They are guided in this endeavour by research, assistance from educational agents, and their imagination and perceptions that have created their wealth. These “Chinese ‘urban professionals’ obsession with middle class lifestyles
precedes the recent rise of the middle class that is expected to constitute the new mainstream of Chinese society", according to Guo (2017, p. 312). Guo (2017) explores the influence of film on the global imagination of the Chinese middle class by examining the works of one of China’s most famous actresses, Xu Jinglei. Although Guo (2017) acknowledges the power that books, TV and the social media have in influencing opinions, perceptions and imaginations, she laments that:

By contrast, there has been a dearth of scholarly attention to the means by which China’s burgeoning film scene partakes in the celebration of the global imaginaries for middle class aspirants, as well as what significant implications this ‘middle-turn’ of Chinese cinema bears on understanding the drastic social transformation in China” (Guo, 2017, p. 312).

Guo (2017, p. 314) recognises the influence on the global imaginations of the Chinese middle class aspirants by the ubiquitous advice books, lifestyle programs and other popular social media outlets such as WeChat. However, a film by actress-turned-director Xu Jinglei, “My Father and I”, adds another perspective to the “emerging middle class seeking to claim its distinctive cultural identity in juxtaposition to the female protagonist’s journey to find an ‘ideal romance’” (Guo, 2017, p. 313).

Xu Jinglei started the first independent film production company in China, and having previously worked under the heavy censorship applied to the media earlier, she is acutely aware of the power of "visual media in China’s new millennium”, says Guo (2017, p. 323).

Guo’s (2017) dissertation emphasises the state of flux surrounding the development of the global imagination of the Chinese middle class. She also notes the pre-eminence of film and social media at the expense of the lessening role played by print.

**Lived Experience of Global Imagination**

Multi-strand global connections through social media and other vehicles have contributed to international shared lived experiences of global imagination. Yoon’s, (2017, p. 1) study illustrates “how transnational fans experience and interpret K-pop as a form of cultural hybridity that facilitates global imagination”and Guo (2017, p.
313) exemplifies how Chinese film is shepherding the Chinese middle-class into a shared global imagination. As global imagininations become more aligned, so too do lived experiences of global imagination converge.

**International Imagination**

International imagination is the created perception that a nation, as a unit, believes about its own identity. Teuton, (2013, p. 33), himself a Cherokee Indian, explains how through the efforts of Cherokee writers and scholars the Cherokee nation was able to rise from the ashes of defeat like the fabled Phoenix. Teuton (2013, pp. 39-40) sees the Cherokee Indians as a separate and foreign nation to the US and his role “as a dual citizen of the Cherokee Nation and the US,” as an opportunity to “experience the vital nature of egalitarian international knowledge exchange.” (Teuton, 2013, p. 51). Teuton’s thoughts and ideas are shared by Plummer (2011), in her dissertation on the international imagination of the African Americans, another nation within the nation of the United States.

Plummer (2011, p. 224) illustrates the influence that Japan had in defining progressive black imagination following Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05. The victory demonstrated that minority races could compete with the West and the international imagination of African Americans evolved from that point.

**Shaping China’s Global Imagination**

Imaginations are global in the same context that aspirations are universal. The aspirations for their progeny by the Chinese parent are very little different from the aspirations of parents anywhere in the world; they all want their offspring to have a happy, productive life. China’s global imagination, especially for the middle class, has changed dramatically in the past three decades. "Specifically, from the mid-1990s onward, public discourses revolving around the middle class in China have been significantly reshaped under the joint force of the state, the market and the media (Guo, 2017, p. 313).

Wang, (2013, p. 3) concludes that a defining moment in shaping China’s global
imagination occurred at the Shanghai Expo 2010, which set a record with 190 countries participating and 73 million visitors attending. China’s hosting of this event so soon after the Beijing Olympics clearly indicated the country’s return to global prominence. Wang (2013, p. 15) defines the use of vehicles such as the Olympics and Expos as examples of ‘soft power’, “which refers to a nation’s ability to get what it wants through appeal and attraction.” Hard power refers to coercion through military strength and economic powers.

The rapid change in China’s global imagination has been unmatched in world history and the process is still ongoing. Education has been a large part of China’s global imagination and international students are part of that ethos.

Global Career Imagination

Graduate employability is a key concern for many observers particularly at a time when education is increasingly available (Yizhong, et al., 2017, p. 223). Yizhong et al., (2017) have raised the spectra of a world over-supplied with graduates and the difficulty of career placement. Previously, others such as Brown, Lauder and Ashton, (2011), had begun to question the employment benefits to graduate students, both foreign and domestic alike, who have been trapped in what they describe as a ‘Global Auction,’ for talent and employment, leading to lower wages and fewer job opportunities in Australia, the UK and the US.

Widegren and Doherty (2010, p. 11) investigated how pre-service teachers from Australia may be motivated by a global imagination, specifically a “global career imagination”. The global career imagination of these pre-service teachers and their subsequent actions match the global career imaginations of those Chinese students who may be contemplating overseas study. Australian teacher educators are already actively involved in delivering “off shore teacher education programmes in Singapore, Malaysia, and Nauru,” (Singh et al., 2017, p. 1), mirroring the high proportion of graduating international students from China who have pursued careers in the West. (Zweig, and Rosen, 2003, Barnett, et. al., 2016). The catalyst for a global career is English language proficiency, a key reason that most Chinese students study in English speaking countries. A paradox exists because Australia is still able to attract more
Chinese university students than the UK, the birthplace of the English language and possessor of many universities more highly ranked than any Australian university. This thesis seeks to solve this enigma by the hypothesis that immigration is a key element of global career imagination of the pre-international student from China.

3.4 USES OF SOCIAL THEORY IN THIS STUDY

This section shows how Social Theory has been used in this research. Social Theory lends an understanding of the complexity of forces, connections and imaginations influencing Chinese society. Overarching all other considerations is entrenched corruption that has enabled many of the HNWIs from China to accumulate the funds required to send their children to study in Australia. The coalescence of theory and data is pivotal to the correct interpretation of the collected data. Just relying on statistical inference to interpret data and generate theory can often lead to erroneous results and false theories (Scott 2014, Northcote 2012, Berliner 2002). This is particularly true when attempting to divine motives (for study-abroad destinations), and there is evidence that the data suppliers (students) could be unaware of the motives of the decision makers (parents). Nevertheless, even data collected under these strictures has value, if correctly interpreted.

Chinese international students belong to HNWI families and 64% of the HNWI cohort in China is seeking to emigrate, (Olesen, 2016, Hurun, 2016). HNWIs in China have a fear of exposure for corruption, which provides a powerful motive for study abroad. The Chinese have a favourable perception of the Australian lifestyle, which could account for the disproportionate number of Chinese university students studying in Australia.

Social Theory is a set of statements, based on data and circumstances created in order to explain some social phenomena, (Bradley et al., p. 27). Data for this research was examined through a new lens, which connected, for the first time, corruption in China and Australia with the flood of Chinese university students studying at Australian universities. The collected data was statistically valid (the response to all questions

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11 Student S5: Australia is the country, which is the closest place to the Heaven, if there is a Heaven.
produced Cronbach’s Alpha scores between 0.6 and 0.7), and most likely reliable, yet it does not guarantee that the data is true, (Berliner 2002, Northcote 2012, Scott 2014).

The theory that corruption was a major driver influencing the decisions by Chinese families to send their child to study in Australia was established by following logical procedures of the Concept Map (figure 3.1) designed for this thesis and Wallace’s theoretical framework (figure 3.2).

Although the Internet questionnaire data in this research yielded Cronbach’s Alpha scores in the range 0.6 - 0.7 for the full set, and also for each individual paired question, there is evidence of acquiescent bias. Without this aberration of acquiescent bias the Cronbach Alpha scores would have been in the range 0.75 – 0.85. The lower scores can be explained by evidence that parents may have made the decisions, and that their progeny in their ignorance have supplied the most acceptable responses. This possible of unanticipated eventualities is a key part of figure 3.1, where the instruction to “compare, question, analyse, evaluate, interpret, & follow Wallace’s (iterative) flow chart”, highlighted anomalies in the data and its interpretation. The first anomaly was the situation whereby students were providing information on factors that had influenced their parents’ decisions, without any real knowledge or understanding of the true import of those influences. Students save FACE by responding with the most acceptable answer, ‘quality of education’. Further revelations that the parents of Chinese students who had purchased residential properties in Australia, and answered the question “Have you purchased any property in Australia?” negatively is an extension of the ‘black heart’ attribute of Chinese culture. Combining these paradigms with the statistical data on HNWIs in China (Hurun, 2016, see Section 2.1) and using the suggestions of Northcote (2012, p. 99), creates a strong case for ‘transcultural citizenship’ being the dominant influence for study abroad. The disproportionate number of Chinese university students choosing to study in Australia can be attributed to this influence because ‘quality of education, safety, cost, environment, lifestyle and employment opportunities’ are at acceptable standards in Australia.

Social Theory is imperative in any epistemological research. Creating a theory about a society involves many steps and iterations that start with observation and finish with a developed theory. The process is difficult and the success rate is small. The
conclusions to this research are based on the interpretation of the data, filtered through evidence that many of the HNWI business leaders in China amassed their wealth by exploiting corrupt practices, practices that the present leadership in China promises to eliminate\(^\text{12}\) (Hurun Report (2016), Chung (2013, 2015, 2017), Cornwall (2014), De Jong (2014), Thornton (2016), Dziedzic (2017), and Kumar (2017).

The next section considers this process of constructing social theory and how it applies to this research.

### 3.5 SOCIAL THEORISING IN THIS STUDY

Castells, (2001, p. 3) opined that to be a good social theorist required “a combination of being attentive to the world and rigorous enough to capture what happens in the world, and then being able to theorize, generalize, and take the broad picture.” Castells (2001) also asserts that there are two distinct categories of theorists; those who approach the problem from an empirical research perspective (such as the American methodology) in contrast to those who develop their theories through observation and philosophical understanding. The latter category expounded by Castells (2001) is most relevant to this research regarding ‘transcultural citizenship’ and the difficulties in proving that theory. Notwithstanding the difficulties, it appears that the first step in developing social theory is observation and searching for an understanding of the society in which we live.

The cultural understanding of FACE contributed to the correct interpretation and the credible theory emanating from this research. The effects of FACE are demonstrated by typical Chinese negotiation procedures where critical issues are approached obliquely rather than in the more direct style of the West. To save the other parties FACE, a negotiator would often use terms like, “you have given us a great proposal, allow me some time to go over all the details and I will get back to you’. The other party then realises that his offer has been rejected, but he can withdraw with FACE,

\(^{12}\)‘China has recently stepped up international efforts to repatriate economic fugitives and corrupt officials who have fled overseas’, (Wen, 2016b, n. p.) in an operation called ‘Fox Hunt’ by the Chinese Government. Australia’s failure to ratify the 2007 extradition treaty with China makes Australia a favoured destination for such fugitives.
perhaps saying, “Thank you, I look forward to our next meeting”.

Following this pattern, the responses of Chinese subjects involved in this research would obliquely allude to the real reasons for “their decision to study abroad” and it was left to the skill of the Chinese inquirer to uncover the essential truth of their response. The relationship between the data suppliers and the decision makers further challenged the authenticity of the data. Accordingly, data interpretation, the very essence of this investigation, was prosecuted with a thorough understanding of Chinese culture. If the raw data had been evaluated “on judgements based on the “holy trinity” of objectivity, reliability and validity” (Spencer, et al., 2003, p. 59, cited in Northcote, 2012, p. 99), then the findings would be in contradiction to other evidence by Hurun (2016), and contradict simple logic given Australian university standings in the world rankings of universities. “Quality of education” does not account for the inordinate number of university students studying in Australia.

Social Theory today is far more than just observing and measuring (Labaree, 2011). Other factors such as “transferability, generalisability, ontological authenticity...” (Northcote, 2012, p. 99) have to be considered during the data interpretation process. Social media is changing the way societies interact, and the rate of social change has accelerated exponentially and many studies completed today may be obsolete before they have been confirmed in hard copy. Understanding the rate of social change and how the differences between societies are converging will certainly be a critical component of applying social theory in the future.

Within any society there are a number of core values or beliefs that influence the ability to apply Social Theory on that society. These include the type of society, whether Capitalist or Communist for instance, and the dominant religions or philosophies generally held by that society. Confucianism is a fundamental component of Chinese society and its influence on the theory developed in this research is detailed in the next section.
3.5.1 Confucianism

This section shows the effects that Confucianism has on Chinese society. Confucianism proclaims that all human relationships involve a set of mutual obligations with defined roles; each participant should understand and conform to his/her proper place in society. “Confucianism empirically advanced civil order” (Schonfeld, 2006, p. 68). While Confucianism includes respect for all others whatever their social status, its emphasis on knowing and remaining fixed in one’s place means respecting the status of a superior. It is said that concerning

“China’s system for training bureaucratic functionaries: If the Confucian tradition managed to impose its literary ideal so completely, it did so because no educational system has ever been more totally identified with its function of selection” (Bourdieu (cited in Singh, 2010, p. 31)).

The Confucian idea is that status and bureaucratic placement are linked to education. These social concepts are still entrenched in Chinese society (Tamaki, 2007; Schonfeld, 2006). While Confucianism is a philosophy and its relevance to this research cannot be undervalued, other modes of Chinese theorising were also considered during the investigation. Modernism and Post modernism both had a brief influence on China’s drive to Chinese Capitalism, and they are the subjects of the next section.

3.5.2 Modernism and Postmodernism

In this section we chart China’s growth to become a world leader and global powerhouse through the intermediary social stages of Modernity and Post modernity. Modernity or Modernism seeks to explain societies in the context of globalisation. Harvey et al., (cited in Featherstone and Lash, 1995, p. 6) see “globalisation as something essentially Postmodern (but) Wallerstein sees it as having its onset with capitalisation and Modernity.” Modernity is the beginning of globalisation and the study of societies in a global setting. Postmodernism is a theory that relates to the present state of globalisation. Moreover, Postmodernism focuses on the relative truths of each person and is sceptical of
explanations that are claimed to be valid for all groups, societies, traditions, or races. In the Postmodern view, reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually. This concept, of reality through interpretation, is a key to the theory developed during this investigation. Postmodernism places emphasis on concrete experience rather than abstract principles, knowing always that each person’s experience is unique and fallible when relative to the universe as a whole. The Postmodernist theory applies to this investigation insofar as the conclusions require statistical inference, but these conclusions do not equally apply to everyone in the sample population.

According to Cosgrove (2004, p. 171), “a Modernist paradigm is characterised by the belief that truths about human behaviour can be found and adherence to the methods of the natural sciences is the best route by which to discover them.” Cosgrove’s (2004) assertion implies that traditional scientific methods of discovery can be used to find the real factors attracting students from China to study in Australia. However, other researchers (Featherstone and Lash 1995; Cosgrove 2004; Skeggs 1991) advocate that the world has moved to a Post-modern era in which “a Postmodern epistemology means taking a critical perspective about knowledge claims”, Cosgrove (2004, p. 174).

China is a fully integrated globalised society (Lu, 2007) with a newly developed wealthy upper class created by the rapid growth of China’s economy. This thesis contends that many students have chosen to study in Australia because of global opportunities including migration. Modernist theory says that the truth of the contention of this thesis can be discovered by the scientific method. Post modernists imply that any results, however found, have to be critiqued carefully. This research has shown that students often chose to give an ‘acceptable’ response rather than disclose their true motives. Parent PP9, who I know personally through her daughter, first denied that they had bought property in Australia, but when presented with evidence of two purchases she changed her answer and also admitted that she had sent her daughter to Australia solely to facilitate immigration to Australia. She also ranked ‘quality of education’ the highest level, 1, as the main reason for study in Australia, but later admitted that ‘quality of education’ was subservient to the main purpose of gaining PR in Australia. This is the “Chinese way” of giving acceptable responses to
unwelcomed inquiries. The next stage in the evolution of the social theory is referred to as Connectionist Theory or its alternative name, the Seventh City. The relevance of Connectionist Theory to this research is discussed in the next section.

3.5.3 Connectionist Theory, the Seventh City

Over the past three decades Chinese society has evolved from Communism to Capitalism, to Modernism and Post modernism and finally to Connectionist Theory, (seventh city). City is used as a metaphor for a type of society; as Parker, (2008, p. 611) clarifies, there are “six ideal type ‘worlds’, ‘cities’ or ‘polities’,’ each co-existing in modern society, but each with different logics of justification.”

The “seventh city”; first proposed by Boltanski and Chiapello (2006) does have a negative side that has produced a widening salary gap between the graduate professional and those executives who occupy the higher managerial levels of corporate structure. Parker, (2008, p. 613) agrees, suggesting, “that the bad side of the Connectionist city means that networked flexibility converts into job insecurity. Trade unions are shrinking, wages are being driven down, and creativity is appropriated and sold.” Thus there are greater profits for “greedy executives” and less reward for those below their level. This “New Spirit of Capitalism” is akin to Chinese Capitalism, where the salary-gap between the graduate and management continues to increase. If the long-term rewards for students returning from study abroad continue to diminish then this will influence the decision of students to seek a foreign education.

Münch, (2014, pp. 1-12), describes how universities have adapted to this new age of entrepreneurial Capitalism by creating a rational targeted management business model known as New Public Management (NPM). Whilst NPM ensured ‘universities stayed viable’, there were drawbacks regarding scientific research and “Entrepreneurial universities are depriving the scientific community of researchers, the academic community of professors, and students” (Münch, 2014, p. 13). As a consequence of NPM the balancing of competing forces has stratified universities in Germany, Münch’s homeland, pushing to create elite universities to the detriment of lesser
institutions. In the UK, the British Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), has recorded the same effect (Münch, 2014, p. 65).

Münch (2014) is one of many researchers highlighting the reduced benefits for all transnational students, and the potential decline in international student numbers to 1970’s levels. In the next section the present state of globalisation and its relevance to export education is explored.

3.6 DISCUSSION

The focus of this chapter was to illuminate the theory underpinning the research into the question; what are the forces, connections and imagination informing Chinese parents and students’ reasons for studying overseas, in particular for choosing Australian universities? Other investigators have probed this question, and with the exception of Bodycott (2009), have all agreed that immigration, (whether motivated by corruption or any other influence), has very little influence on host country destination; “the aspect of immigration sponsorship is the only attribute that is found not to have a significant effect on study destination choice” (Gong and Huybers, 2015, p. 213). “The least important attributes were, ... potential to immigrate” (To et al., 2013, p. 69). The detailed study, in this chapter, of globalisation and its effects on the forces, connections and imaginations that are woven into Chinese society was used to justify the findings of this research. A more accurate interpretation of data that was collected from students was achieved by taking into account the mounting evidence of corruption associated with many aspects of the international education market as it relates to students from China. Interpretation of data sourced from students was complicated by revelation of their possible inability to provide correct responses. The detailed analysis of forces, connections and imaginations interacting with HNWI Chinese, given in this chapter, support the findings of this research. The cultural attribute of FACE and the omnipotent ubiquitousness of guanxi and corruption have been recognised and incorporated into the research. The evidence supports an emerging middle class of China eager to have it all and that includes a better lifestyle in a country that presently promises more than China can offer.
The findings from this research should help Australian universities recruit Chinese students and simultaneously encourage Australian universities to improve their amenity to the Chinese students. It was assumed that a simple answer could be found such as by Gong and Huybers (2015); (quality of education and safety); and on these issues Australian universities could compete with its competitors. In comparison to the UK, Australia lags on quality of education, safety and cost of education, yet is able to attract more Chinese university students than the UK.

Nevertheless, quality of education, safety and cost of education are sufficient inducements as pull factors to attract large numbers of students to the US, the UK, Australia and Canada, but the focus of this research has digressed to investigate, why do Australian universities receive more than their statistical ‘fair share’ of Chinese students? The answer to the conundrum lies behind the corrupt practices of the HNWI parent of the Chinese international student. Immigration inducement involves considering many factors, and it appears that Australia has the right blend to attract more than their fair share of this type of student.

When interviewing parents in China, in my roles at BIEE, CCIEE and AEA, the living conditions in the host country, immigration potential and career prospects on graduation were asked about more frequently than concerns about the university’s reputation. If quality of education is so important then why do the lower ranked universities in Australia attract so many Chinese students? The reason is simple; students want to study in Australia, and the quality of that education is not the main driver of that decision.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The focus of this chapter was to illuminate the theory underpinning the investigation as to why university students from China have chosen to study in Australia. The original data from the focus group and the Internet survey supported the findings of earlier researchers and this data was confirmed by follow-up interviews of parents in both Australia and China. These interviews discovered that the parents were often the decision makers regarding their offspring’s study choices. An additional motive that could influence study destination choice; ‘transcultural citizenship’ as a means of
wealth protection was examined. The disclosures regarding corruption and wealth protection did not detract from the value of the collected data but did influence the interpretation and analysis of the data.

This chapter included a study of globalisation and the influence that globalisation exerts over the forces, connections and imaginations already existing in the Chinese middle class. The evidence of corruption surrounding the HNWIs in China has been factored into the influences affecting choice of study destination. Interpretation of the data, using the paradigm outlined, produced a creditable theory that approximated the findings of the previous researchers, but also filled the gap, which justified Australia receiving more than its statistical fair share of university students from China. Evidence from a number of sources suggests that approximately 64% of the students studying at Australian universities are the children of HNWI families in China seeking to emigrate.

Such families reasoned that immigration was the key to obtaining a sustainable and happy lifestyle for the whole family and their generations to follow. The principal ingredients of a happy lifestyle are safety, environment, stable government, first-world amenities, quality of education and employment opportunities. Whilst Australia may not be the most highly rated in any single one of these categories, Australia would rate favourably when considering the sum of all these features.

Chapter Four outlines the methodologies used to conduct the research, systematically explains the reasons for selecting those methodologies, and demonstrates how the data was collected and successfully interpreted.
CHAPTER FOUR

A CRITIQUE-INTERPRETIVE APPROACH TO EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
4.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose for this research was introduced in Chapter One, which also explained the current situation regarding the disproportionate number of Chinese students studying at Australian universities. Chapter Two gave a comprehensive overview of the current literature pertaining to mobility of international students and placed this research in the context of previous studies. Chapter Three outlined the general theory of epistemological studies and produced a wide-ranging study on globalisation and its effects on the forces, connections and imaginations that are impacting the Chinese middle and upper classes.

Chapter Four considers the various methodologies that could have been used in this research and explains the reasons why an ethnological case study was the best choice. The chapter explains how adherence to Wallace’s Theory Component of the methodological process has been sustained throughout the research and led to the detection, overlooked by other researchers, that in a significant number of cases it was the parents who made the decision regarding study destination for overseas study. This breakthrough, coupled with other evidence discovered by Olesen (2016), and statistics released in the Hurun Report (2016), introduced the powerful motive of transcultural citizenship, fuelled by a fear of reprisals for corruption charges, as a further reason for study abroad.

Chapter Four fully explains the means of data collection and the techniques employed to validate data compiled for this research. The uniqueness of this thesis is its recognising that parents often determine study-abroad destinations, and in linking this research with credible evidence of corruption, which may have influenced the parents’ decisions.

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO METHODOLOGY USED IN THIS INVESTIGATION

This research has fulfilled its aim to “apply rigorous, systematic, and objective
methodology to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to”13 the choices made by students from China who have elected to study in Australia. This research expands the knowledge of Chinese students’ study-abroad patterns of distribution, by truthfully answering the questions proposed in Chapter 1.3. It is difficult to convert raw data into a coherent truth, (Woolgar, 1988; Gutiérrez and Penuel, 2014; Andrews 2005; Kelly et al., 2008), but this research gives evidence that answers the main research question.

The confines of this research follow Woolgar’s (1988) suggestion that the solution to the problem of finding truth can be advanced through the concept of essentialism, and the separation of perception from reality. This research involved the recognition of the forces, connections and imaginations influencing High Net Worth Individuals (HNWI) in China coupled with Chinese cultural effects of Face and guanxi/corruption evident in China.

The difficulty in finding the truth, according to Woolgar, (1988) is the different methods that investigators use to represent the objects of essentialism. Moreover, he contends that the concept of representation is fundamental to science and to all activities involving objective epistemology, which seek to record some feature beyond the activity itself. Woolgar (1988, p. 30) further explains, “Representation is the means by which we generate images (reflections, representations, reports) of the objects ‘out there’”.

The concept for this experiment is factors involving student recruitment by Australian universities; the objects are the students and the evidence that support their choices. The value of this experiment depends on how well the representations being used reflect the true nature of the object under investigation. Table 4.1 shows the representations that will be used to support the evidence of this investigation.

13 USA Education Sciences Reform Act in 2002, cited by Gutiérrez and Penuel, 2014
### Table 4.1 Representations Used to Support Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>oral interview responses</td>
<td>students in Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transcripts and coding</td>
<td>students in Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questionnaire response</td>
<td>students in China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questionnaire response</td>
<td>influencing factors of students from PRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what was said</td>
<td>interviewees in China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what was said</td>
<td>interviewees in Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questionnaire response</td>
<td>intention of students in China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>action or behaviour</td>
<td>intention of students in China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language</td>
<td>meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>documentary evidence</td>
<td>the historical situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>facts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This investigation used a number of methods of data collection; focus group interview, Internet questionnaire and follow-up phone email interviews. For each of these, the ability to accurately match the representation to the object is reflected in the validity of the results.

Data collection is the crux of the thesis, but data without a concluding theory is impotent, (Giddens 1986; Thomas 2003; Mende 2005; Baert and Da Silva 2010; and Ransome 2010). The final part of the analysis followed precedent methods that linked the collected data to the accumulated evidence from reliable media and government sources of corruption in China and Australia, using the methods explained in studies by Andrews, (2005); and Mitchell et al., (2008). The originality of this thesis is the theory that the reason a significant proportion of the students chose to study in Australia was inspired by forces and imaginations linked to corruption. It is noted that:

“The UK’s current strict immigration control policy may have a negative effect on international student inflows, while the UK’s recently increased home student tuition fees policy may have positive spillover effects on the inflows” (Zheng, 2011, p. 141).

This could imply that Australia would attract more tertiary students from PRC than the
UK. In a complete change of policy, the British Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, has affirmed that international students were a "massive benefit" for the UK and that he believed “foreign students should be exempt from migration targets” (Clark, 2016, n. p.). Johnson, who supported Britain’s exit from the EU, understands the value of foreign students to the UK economy, and realises that there are students choosing their host country, for tertiary study, based on immigration potential.

### 4.1.1 Making an Informed Methodological Choice

This study initially focused on students from China who had studied or who were intending to study overseas; it included middle-school students, under-graduates and post-graduates. After the early data was sourced it became evident that it was often the parents, not the students who were the decision makers on study destination choices. This revelation changed the focus of the study as other motives influencing the choice made by parents emerged. Olesen (2016) documented evidence from the Panama Papers, which showed widespread money laundering by HNWIs from China. Money laundering is the by-product of corruption and data sourced through reliable media outlets has uncovered a trail of corruption evident in all aspects of the international student process, both in Australia and China (Chung (2013, 2015, 2017); Cornwall (2014); De Jong (2014); Thornton (2016); Dziedzic (2017); Kumar (2017)). This research is not about investigating racism, and the widespread evidence of corruption does not apply to the bulk of international students, from all countries, who have chosen to study in Australia for purely altruistic reasons. Nevertheless, there are enough cases of corruption to account for the disproportionate number of Chinese students who have chosen to study at Australian universities.

The relationship between the research questions, the required data set, the methods of collection, and how each set of data was analysed is explained in Table 4.2. A feature of this process is an understanding, based on follow up interviews, that for a large proportion of students, the selection of host country was a parental decision. The parents provided their progeny with some justification for their choice but there is no evidence that this justification was the real reason behind their final decision.
### Table 4.2: Contributing Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>China</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Was the quality of education crucial to your decision to study in Australia?</td>
<td>Internet Questionnaire throughout China. Interviews: Beijing (n=5), Shanghai (n=5), Lianyungang (n=5) Organisations (n =2) Parents (n =5) Students (n =10)</td>
<td>Focus groups: (n=21) Interview: Face-to-face: (n=5) Telephone: (n=10) Internet questionnaire (n=365)</td>
<td>Focus Groups: Qualitative analysis Survey: Quantitative data analysis – Interviews: Qualitative analysis &amp; quantitative analysis</td>
<td>NEAF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How much influence did the cost have on your decision to study in Australia?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Was the Australian Lifestyle a factor influencing your decision to study in Australia?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Are environmental issues a factor influencing your decision to study in Australia?</td>
<td>Focus Groups City: Sydney Universities WSS (n=8) USYD (n=10) MU (n=3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NEAF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 How much influence did employment/immigration opportunities assert on the decision making process?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An examination of the different methodologies that could be suitable to this thesis follows.

4.1.2 A Critique Interpretative Approach

I considered whether a positive approach to this study might be appropriate, or at least complement other philosophies of research; or whether different philosophies might not be mutually exclusive and could be used in combination with each other. A positive research philosophy is defined as a

“practice [of] a view of science that has its origins in a school of thought within the philosophy of science known as "logical positivism" or "logical empiricism." A major tenet of logical positivism is its "thesis of the unity of science" which maintains that the methods of natural science constitute the only legitimate methods for use in social science” (Lee, 1991, p. 343).

This study does not rely on treating living individuals as if they were the same as the elements studied in natural science. The data volunteers in this research are social beings who have their own interpretations and the data they provided, in either written or oral form, has been recorded, tabulated, interpreted and analysed. The positivist approach to research is “inadequate to the study of social reality” (Lee, 1991, P. 347). The students and other people included in this research did

create and attach their own meanings to the world around them and to the behaviour that they manifest in that world (Schutz 1973, p. 59). Stated differently, the same physical artefact, the same institution, or the same human action, can have different meanings for different human subjects, as well as for the observing social scientist (Lee, 1991, p. 343).

Perception is not necessarily reality and the volunteers in this investigation answered based on their perception of the truth. The identity of the decision maker further compromised the data. The discovery of evidence that many HNWI Chinese, typically the parents of international students, were involved in large scale corruption and capital flight of funds from China to tax havens in the West was a critical part of data interpretation (Olesen, 2016). Australia is second to the USA as a destination for
Chinese students studying abroad, and it is no coincidence that “The USA was the most popular country for Chinese property investment, (1013-14), followed by Australia” (Zhou & Power, 2016, n. p.). Property investment is the first step along the path to immigration.

The critical interpretative methodology employed in this study produced an iterative process; the critical interpretation and evaluation of the focus group data was used to design the Internet-based questionnaire and final interviews clarified salient points.

4.1.3 Researching and Theorising Interculturally

Intercultural research and theorising requires cultural awareness; misunderstandings of concepts and responses were avoided because the researchers and volunteers in this research were all Chinese.

Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the "meaning" of other people's behaviour (Spencer-Oatey, cited in Dahl 2004, p. 4).

The Chinese culture of Confucianism, mixed with the practices of FACE and guanxi, were an integral part of this investigation as noted throughout the thesis.

4.2 CASE STUDY RESEARCH STRATEGY

Section 4.3.1.1 outlines the reasons for making this exploration a case study. A schematic of the iterative nature of the research process for this enquiry is shown in Figure 4.1 (p. 115).

An important feature of any case study is the inquiry technique of the investigator. It is critical that the questions are clear and unambiguous, eliciting a response from the subject that, they believe, is a true answer to the inquiry. In this research, many of the respondents did not fully know the truth of the information that they supplied.
Yin’s Table 4.3 (1994) shows the relationships between strategies, form of research questions and events being explored. For this case study, the focus must be on current events and the absence of a control group.

**Table 4.3: Relevant Situations for Different Research Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strategy</th>
<th>form of research question</th>
<th>requires control over behavioural events</th>
<th>Focuses on contemporary events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>experiment</td>
<td>how, why</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>survey</td>
<td>who, what, where, how many, how much</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archival analysis</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes/no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>history</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>case study</td>
<td>what, how, why</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Yin, 1994, p 6)

(Yin, (1994, p. 2) advocates case study as a valuable tool in situations involving a research endeavour that “contributes uniquely to our knowledge of individual, organisational, social, and political phenomena.”

**4.2.1 Determining the type of case study**

Case studies are about real people in real situations and provide genuine understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The particular attributes of the case study that make it an applicable methodology in this study were:

1. “It allows you to gather rich, detailed data in an authentic setting.
2. It is holistic and thus supports the idea that much of what we can know about human behaviour is best understood as lived experience in the social context.
3. Unlike experimental research, it can be done without predetermined hypotheses and goals” (Willis cited in White, et al., 2009, p. 21).

There are at least three different types of case study: “the intrinsic, the instrumental and the multiple or collective” Stake (cited in White et al., 2009, p. 20). This particular
inquiry can be termed an instrumental case study because the focus was not on the volunteers who have provided the data, but rather the issue of choice and the implications involved from that choice.

4.2.2 Selection of the case

The ‘case’ for this study was decision-making in relation to overseas study and the influences on their choices by students/parents from China (Zhongguo, 国). This research project focused on the local/global forces, connections and imaginings (Burawoy, 2000) that have influenced the choices made by these students (or their parents), when deciding where to study overseas. It was an instrumental case study that used multiple data sources, including focus groups, interviews and policies and related documents. The study did not entail extended periods of observation by a researcher in situ documenting observations in highly detailed field notes, that are otherwise the epitome of the ethnographer.

4.3 RESEARCH PLAN/DESIGN

4.3.1 Flexible Research Design

This educational research explored two inter-related issues, namely: What occurrences influence students in China to choose to study in Australia and why do students in China choose to study in Australia? The research was designed to move from a descriptive study to an explanatory or theoretical study. The key focus of this research was explanatory and theory generating concerning Chinese students’ international study destinations. Chinese students are attending Australian higher education institutions in record numbers, as they are in the USA, the UK and Canada (Vickers and Bekhradnia, 2007; Luo, 2013; Becker and Kolster, 2011).

The case study method used was divided into three phases as previously recorded, focus group, Internet questionnaire and follow-up interviews. The flexible design allowed for feed-back loops as shown in Figure 4.1. Analysed data collected during
each phase of the project determined the direction of the subsequent investigation. This
procedure revealed evidence that many Chinese students are electing to study in
Australia as a means to initiate transcultural citizenship.

Robson (2006, p. 166) identifies the characteristics of a good flexible research design.
For the purpose of this study these are as follows:

1. Data collection was rigorous. In this investigation data came from multiple
   sources, for example students (n= 21 + 635 + 9), parents (n=10), agents (n=2).
2. This study was framed so its design and implementation evolved depending
   upon opportunities that arose, allowing for the possibility of generating
   unanticipated and unexpected research outcomes during the investigation.
3. This study was based on the tradition of focus groups, Internet questionnaire
   and interview research.
4. This enquiry included data collection and analysis methods that focused on the
   research questions, while also being attentive to new questions that arose
   during the investigative process.
5. The main focus of this research was the recruitment of international students
   from China into Australian universities.
6. Flexible design research demands extra rigour and detailed explanation of the
   procedures employed and the analysis being used.
7. Qualitative and quantitative data were critically analysed and employed for
   further phases of the study as part of a feedback loop.

These techniques support the credibility of the project’s findings and reveal the
complexities involved in the recruitment of Chinese students by Australian
universities.

Robson (2006), asserts that the “terms ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ are avoided by many
proponents of flexible research design. Robson (2006, p. 170) contends that the more
favourable terms used are “credibility, transferability, dependability and
conformability.” These latter terms more accurately describe the orientation of this
project.
Research methodology

The research methodology used in this research was a case study as opposed to an ethnographic study. A case study research focuses on a particular person, group, or situation over a period of time (Jensen and Rogers (2001); Flyvbjerg, (2006); Noy, (2008); Easton, (2010)). “In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed” (Yin, 1994, p. 1). The case study investigation to discover “why Chinese students have chosen to study in Australia?” incorporated a number of research methods, as Jensen and Rogers (2001, p. 237) explain; “By our definition, a case study can take many different forms and use many different methodologies. The particular methodology used in a case study (whether it is qualitative or quantitative) makes no difference to our definition”. The methodologies used in this case study research are focus group, Internet questionnaire and interview.

An ethnographic study was considered but the advantages of a case study (Jensen and
Rogers (2001); McDonnell, Jones and Read, (2000); Flyvbjerg, (2006); Easton, 2010), indicated that a case study would be the better methodology for this investigation because it involves fewer resources, takes less time and will produce a valid result. In addition Jensen and Rogers (2001, p. 244) argue, “that the knowledge-accumulation issue cannot be resolved without case studies”.

4.3.2 Research Design Criteria

Educational researchers tend to explore two types of research questions, namely: What is occurring (Descriptive studies)? And why does it occur (Explanatory or Theoretical studies)? Descriptive research includes government census, or measurement of unemployment levels, information that is of social and/or national importance. Explanatory or theory generating research starts with the knowledge of what is happening and evolves to investigate the reasons behind such occurrences. The purpose of this research was to examine why Chinese students are attending Australian learning institutions in record numbers. Consequently, this study adhered to the following criteria during the process of gathering trustworthy evidence.

The objective of the research was defined as discovering the main reasons why students from PRC have elected to complete their foreign education in Australia. The following six criteria was used to prosecute the research:

1. The purpose of the research was defined.
2. The key concepts used as analytical tools in this study have been detailed in Chapters Two and Three.
3. The design of the research was carefully planned to yield results that were credible.
4. My supervisor, Professor Singh demanded complete frankness and monitored my work closely for flaws in procedures and processes.
5. Construct validity and internal validity were key attainable goals.
6. All findings have been justified by the data produced.
4.3.3 Construct Validity

The intent of this research was to produce findings that are valid. Robson (2006, p. 93) states “Validity is concerned with whether the findings are ‘really’ about what they appear to be about.” Validity in terms of this study concerns whether the findings were ‘really’ about the reasons behind Chinese parents/students’ study choice destinations. Brown (1996, p. 231) claims that the “concept of validity was traditionally defined as ‘the degree to which a test measures what it claims, or purports, to be measuring.’” However, no claim can be made that the validity of this study is absolutely guaranteed.

“We should always use the modifier ‘approximately’ when referring to validity, since one can never know what is true. At best, one can know what has been ruled out as false” (Cook and Campbell, cited in Seale 2004, p. 48).

A construct is

“an attribute, proficiency, ability, or skill that happens in the human brain and is defined by established theories. For example, "overall English language proficiency" is a construct. It exists in theory and has been observed to exist in practice” (Brown 1996, p. 238).

The relevant construct in this study was the suggestion that students from China are influenced by certain factors affecting their decision as to where to study once they have decided to study abroad. Later evidence implicated the parents in that choice and simultaneously exposed the influencing factors deriving from corruption in both China and Australia.

Construct validity is an integral part of this study because the construct of determining the reason “why” attempts to explain approximately the main influencing factors that have persuaded international students from China to choose to study in Australia. The questionnaire was pivotal to the investigation. A 5 point Likert scale was used to prepare questions that were first posed in a positive frame and then presented in a negative format; see Appendix 7. The Likert scale was developed by Rensis Likert in 1932. It requires the individuals to make a decision on their level of agreement, generally on a five-point scale (ie. Strongly Agree, Agree, Mildly Agree/Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) with a statement (Page-Bucci, 2003, p. 1).
Robson (2006, p. 294) has outlined a five-step process for developing a summative rating (Likert) scale. Briefly, the procedure used to ensure validity involved:

1. Decide what information was important for this study.
2. Decide on the most appropriate response categorisation scheme, as previously stated a 1-5 system is preferred to satisfy a Likert Scale.
3. Pre-trial the system before the actual research takes place.
4. Check that the system is giving meaningful results by checking the total score for each recipient.
5. Conduct an item analysis on selected items to ensure validity for each item.

4.3.4 Internal Validity

Cook and Campbell, (cited in Seale, 2004, p. 48) define internal validity as “the approximate validity with which we infer that a relationship between two variables is causal or that the absence of a relationship implies the absence of a cause.” That is, internal validity is an inference, which suggests that if \( A \) comes before \( B \) then it is inferred that \( A \) has caused \( B \) to occur. If this inference is indeed the case then internal validity has been satisfied. However, a possible error may occur; for instance when it is said that \( A \) causes \( C \) and then \( C \) causes \( B \) but it cannot be inferred that \( A \) has a part in causing \( B \).

(Burns, 1997, p. 278) explains that “internal validity is concerned with the question, ‘do the experimental treatments, in fact, make a difference in the different experiments under scrutiny, or can they be ascribed to other factors?’” The main objective of my research was to identify those factors that influence students’ choices of study destination. Furthermore, were the known influences the product of as yet undiscovered effects that determined the students’ choices? There are many features that are a threat to internal validity. Both Robson (2006, pp. 103-4) and Seale (2004,
1. History. Context may have changed during the investigation. Government policies in Australia have changed during the development of this thesis.
2. Maturation. Memory of previous motive may deteriorate over time.
3. Regression. Most of the respondents to the Internet Questionnaire attended the same International school.
4. Testing. Interviewers were careful that their expectation of responses did not affect the data collected.
5. Instrumentation. Refining both the questions and the questioning technique during the investigation was an integral part of the FDR used.
6. Selection. A biased sample was a real threat to internal validity and this was monitored (see 4.5.2).
7. Dropout. Dropout was not a problem in this investigation.

Threats, according to Robson, (2006) can only be ruled out by evidence, not by methods; “methods are only a way of getting the evidence that can help you rule out these threats”, according to Maxwell (1996), (Cited in Robson, 2006, p. 106). The real threat to this inquiry is whether the student volunteers, both in China and Australia, knew or understood why their parents had chosen Australia as their study abroad destination. Notwithstanding this anomaly, the students’ responses most likely reflected the reasons that the parents used to explain to their progeny as to why Australia was the best choice.

4.3.5 External Validity

External validity refers to the degree to which the results of this study can be generalised to all PRC students who study abroad. Research data

"can be said to be internally valid to the extent that within its own confines
its results are credible, but for those results to be (credible), they must be
generalized beyond the confines of the particular (population) i.e. they
must be externally valid also” (Burns 1997, p. 281).

The research applied to the sample population only, and was true at the time of the
study. The large Internet questionnaire sample, \( n = 635 \), should ensure that the results
represent the 130,000\(^{14} \) students from China who are currently studying in Australia.
The volunteers for the focus groups and interviews were selected using the
snowballing technique, which allowed some level of randomness. The Internet-based
questionnaire included far more responses than the 374 that were used; the sample
from the total population of the questionnaire was tested for validity using coupled
questions that were posed in both a positive context and from a negative perspective.
If valid, the Likert scale score sum for the two questions should have been 6.
Volunteers with 75\% of their responses in the range of 5 – 7 were considered to have
provided valid data. Robson (2006, p. 107) identifies four main threats to
generalisability or external validity, namely selection, setting, history and construct
effects. The selection or sampling of volunteers is addressed at 4.5. The other three
threats have been answered previously in this proposal, but will be further explained
in this chapter.

1. **Setting:** *Findings being specific to, or dependent on, the particular
context in which the study took place.* Students in Australia were sourced from
universities in Sydney. In China previous colleagues at CCIEE sourced
students from many different and diverse locations in China and the Internet
questionnaire involved students at an International Middle School in
Lianyungang. These students were from all over China.

2. **History** *Specific and unique historical experiences may determine or
affect the findings.* Australian and Chinese Government policies and their
influence on Chinese international student numbers were monitored
throughout the research.

3. **Construct effects** *The particular construct studied may be specific to the

\[^{14}\text{Figures supplied by Australian Government DET June 2016, Australia January–June 2016, Number of students: 448411, Growth: 11.3\%}\]

https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/DataVisualisations/Pages/Student-number.aspx
Downloaded 12/09/2016
The key to the exploration of this study concerns the choices made by Chinese students. The value of this study was its ability to anticipate trends by comparing responses of students at various stages of their study. Identifying trends will increase the ability of Australian universities to recruit students from the PRC.

4.3.6 Reliability

Robson (2006, p. 102) states that if researchers can eliminate biases and any other factors that may affect the reliability of their research then “you will be making a pretty good job of measuring something”. The population examined in this exploration is an evolving one, subject to both international and national forces that have influences on the questions that were scrutinised. The findings of this research are reliable under the present circumstances; Chinese government initiatives to limit corruption or other unforeseen changes in the future may limit the reliability of the findings.

4.3.7 Triangulation

Triangulation according to Flick (2002, p. 226) is applying a “combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings, and different theoretical perspectives when dealing with a phenomenon.” In this investigation, data was collected from diverse students at three different universities in Sydney, Australia, and from multiple locations in China. I personally conducted all the interviews in both China and Australia.

The different methods of data collection (focus group, questionnaire, interviews) and analysis (quantitative using Likert Scale, and qualitative from focus group) enhanced
the validity of the data. This is a guiding principle for the project. Triangulation is an integral part of flexible design research; although it comes at a cost, to ignore it is a folly.

“One of the primary disadvantages of triangulation is that it can be time-consuming. Collecting more data requires greater planning and organization—resources that are not always available to lead researchers”. (Thurmond, cited in Guin, et. al., 2011, p. 3).

4.4 RESEARCH ETHICS

Contact with possible data respondents commenced after the COC proposal was approved and all the requirements of the WSU Human Research Ethics Committee had been met. Final approval for this investigation was received on 20th April 2015.

I wish to formally advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved your research proposal H10927 “Forces, connections and imagination: factors influencing PRC students decision to study in Australia”, until 31 March 2017 with the provision of a progress report annually if over 12 months and a final report on completion” (Appendix 5).

Time Line

As a guide, an initial time-line for the project was drawn up as shown in the tables below. Although not shown, each of the chapters was revised throughout the investigation until completion of the final version.
Table 4.4: Study Time Line for Thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Jan 2014-Jun 2014</th>
<th>Jul 2014-Dec 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wide reading &amp; Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chpt 1 Research Methods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chpt 2 Literature Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chpt 3 Research Theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chpt 4 A Critique-Interpretive Approach To Educational Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COC &amp; Ethical Application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COC &amp; Ethical Application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot study and Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide reading &amp; Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit China, Organise Internet Survey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Survey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Jan 2016-Jun 2016</th>
<th>Jul 2016-Dec 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wide reading &amp; Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse Results of Internet Survey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modify Internet Survey based on early data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commence Case Studies in Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Case Studies in China</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse Results of Case Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Thesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The wide reading, background research and planning constituted the first six months of the PhD process and this part of the program was pivotal to the success of the entire project. The following six months involved COC preparation, and setting ethical standards procedures in preparation for data collection. COC was confirmed on 22nd October, 2014, with comments such as “Very interesting and strong presentation; well prepared, outcomes interesting, and project of merit. Much substance in the proposal”, with the further suggestion that “project can have better outcomes beyond positivism and empiricism (read Carr and Kemmis, Becoming Critical)”, (COC response from panel, 2014). The focus group sessions started in May 2015, after NEAF approval in April of the same year.

4.5 RESEARCH POPULATION

4.5.1 Selection of Research Participants (Volunteers)

The population for this research project refers to all the students from China who have chosen to study at a university in Australia. “A sample is a selection from the population” (Robson, 2006, p. 260).

The initial collection of data was from the focus group (n = 21) because it was “considered appropriate for qualitative research when the intention is to explore or ‘focus,’ on a specific point.” (Ressel, et al., 2002, p. 52). The focus groups (n = 21) used exceeded the minimum number required to give “data saturation” in terms of the codes produced for this study. The sample was a purposive sample because all the participants had already made the choice to study at university in Australia.

According to Robinson (2014, p. 25), sampling is crucial to any investigation. The ideal method for selecting participants is random sampling. Snowballing, where “the researcher accesses informants through contact information that is provided by other informants” (Noy, 2008, p. 330) was used to enlist the focus group participants. Noy (2008) contends that snowballing is close to a random sample and will have exactly the same properties as the population from which the sample is taken. Further “snowball sampling is arguably the most widely employed method of sampling in qualitative research in various disciplines across the social sciences,” (Noy, 2008, p.
The participants for the online questionnaire included respondents to web-designed questionnaires available on the intranet site of an international school located in Lianyungang, China (n = 635, 598 of these were students aged 18+ at the school who had signaled their intentions to study abroad, a further 37 post GaoKao students were recruited in Beijing by BIEE).

Much of the statistical literature available today advocates a minimum sample size of 30 in order to extrapolate meaningful data from an unbiased, representative sample. In consideration of this statistical belief, and in consideration of the homogeny of the whole population, the initial sample sizes are recorded in Tables 4.5, 4.6, 4.7.

Table 4.5: Student Interviewees in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category – PRC students</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prospective students</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current students</td>
<td>n =21</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed students</td>
<td>n =8</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>n =29</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: Acceptable Student Volunteers\(^{15}\) in China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category – PRC</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prospective</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td>n =374</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current students</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed students</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>n =0</td>
<td>n =374</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7: Parents, agents and university interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category – parent, agents and university</th>
<th>PRC - parent, agents and university</th>
<th>Australia - agents and university</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents of students</td>
<td>n =10</td>
<td>n =10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agents</td>
<td>n =3</td>
<td>n =30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University staff</td>
<td>n =2</td>
<td>n =30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>n =10</td>
<td>n =30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{15}\) 635 students responded to the questionnaire, but 261 of the respondents were rejected because the data was obviously invalid. Many gave the same answer for every question while others failed to produce data that satisfied the Likert Scale test.
4.5.2 Description of Participants’ Involvement

The volunteers for the focus groups were recruited from three different universities in Sydney, The University of Sydney, (USYD), (10), Macquarie University (MU) (3) and WSU (8). No volunteers under the age of 16 were examined.

In any inquiry the sample size is critical. “Individuals designing research … need to know how many interviews they should budget for and write into their protocol, before they enter the field.” (Guest et al., 2005, p. 60). Data saturation is defined as the number of interviews after which “no new information or themes are observed in the data” (Guest et al., 2005, p. 59). Guest, et al. (2005) observed that whilst very few studies had been conducted to find this saturation number, many researchers offered opinions, which varied from 5 to 36. It is considered that

for most research enterprises … in which the aim is to understand common perceptions and experiences among a group of homogeneous individuals, 12 interviews should suffice (Guest, et al. 2005, p. 79).

The participants for the second part of the investigation were the volunteers who answered an online questionnaire. This inquiry was a digital response to factors identified by the focus groups and information was collated using a five point Likert Scale. The online questionnaire attracted more than the 635 responses, of which 238 were rejected when analysis proved that their data was unreliable. The data from the remaining 374 responses was tabulated and analysed. After the questionnaire results were fully analysed, a further 12 parents of students, currently studying in Australia, were interrogated to support the theory that ‘creating a happy lifestyle for their progeny’ was a significant factor that influenced them (the parents) to send their children to study in Australia. These same volunteers also supported the notion that indeed it was their parents (in 8

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16 See Spreadsheet: SS5 Test for Valid Response, Every students’ Likert scores sum for every paired question was examined. For perfect data, all such sums would equal 6; (either (3, 3), (4, 2), (2, 4), (5, 1), or (1, 5)). Allowance for Acquiescent Bias, and question interpretation, any sum score of 5, 6, or 7 was accepted. Every student who produced more than 75% of his responses with paired totals in the range 5 – 7 was accepted as a valid respondent to the questionnaire. Many students failed these criteria, reducing the 635 original respondents to the 374 who satisfied the validity test.
of the 12 cases) who made the decision to study in Australia. Additional confirmation of the above two findings was supplied by China Education International Co,\textsuperscript{17} contacted in China.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

This proposed investigation involved four different methods of data collection; focus group interviews, Internet questionnaire, follow-up interviews of students and parents of students, and researching reliable media sources of evidence of corruption that may be connected with Chinese international students studying in Australia.

4.6.1 Policy Study

The purpose of this section is not to analyse the existing policies of various governments and government agencies, but rather to evaluate whether the current policies in Australia and other countries are likely to attract or discourage students from China to study in their country. MacRea (1979); Yanow (2007); and Owen, (2013) have identified the difficulty of just analysing one policy in one country, and each different country could involve years of investigation. Notwithstanding the difficulties involved, this section attempts to explain the different methods, methodology, theoretical perspective and epistemology that may be used for policy analysis (Owen, 2013).

Policy analysis involves the use of various research methodologies to analyse policy issues and policy-making practices (Yanow, 2007). According to Yanow (2007) there are two major forces that have progressed the social sciences from proposing generalised laws of human behaviour to explicit explanations of human acts. Phenomenology, perhaps the more powerful of the two, is the science of phenomena, which emphasises the detailed description of phenomena in all its various spheres of involvement. In parallel with the development of the scientific method of the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century, social scientists were seeking ways to bring the same rigour to the study of

\textsuperscript{17} Contact: Colin Li, COE of company was previously a colleague at CCIEE working in the Australian section of CCIEE.
the social sciences. The validity and acceptance of epistemology studies could be improved, argues Yanow (2007), by displaying the same dispassionate application of logic, and adherence to methodology, to the social sciences. The practicality of this approach involves separating the researcher from the subject under investigation. In this research it meant that the interview scripts had to be, (and were), identical for all interviews and presented in exactly the same format to all subject volunteers.

The second force is known as hermeneutics, and has been pivotal in developing an interpretative method of policy evaluation.

“In policy analysis, a hermeneutic approach leads to a focus on policy-relevant texts, such as legislative records, agency correspondence, annual reports, minutes from community board meetings, and so on” (Yanow, 2007, p. 114).

Policy documents are open to interpretation, and researchers themselves are also interpreters, yet they are imbued with the task of making true sense of the policy document and all the other speeches, articles and interviews supporting that document, (Yanow, 2007). Moreover, the intended international student also has to interpret the policies that may have influence on his/her choices, giving the researcher the additional task of analysing the interpretative abilities of the international student. Thus the hermeneutics approach is interpretative rather than stepwise and

the researcher-analyst begins with whatever sense making she is capable of at that moment. With further reflection and/or investigation, she develops that interpretation further. And so on, with subsequent thought and inquiry, each time adding another layer of understanding (Yanow, 2007, p. 118).

Fischer, (cited in Ball, 1995) contends that policy analysis consists of a four-step process of justification: verification, validation, vindication and social choice. Fischer tests to see whether;

1. The policy satisfies its own objectives (verification).
2. The policy objectives are suitable to the existing social problem being addressed (validation).
3. The overall policy goals serve an important function for existing social
arrangements (vindication).

4. The polices are aligned to societies’ philosophies and ideologies, and the policies “must be evaluated against each other on their foundational principles” (social choice) (Ball, 1995, p. 713).

These four points noted by Fischer give a concise process for externally evaluating existing policy. This research has no input into the policy development but did involve an analysis of government policies in Australia and China that have influenced students’ choices to choose or not choose Australia as their study destination.

4.6.2 Interviews

Follow-up interviews in both China (n = 4) and Australia (n = 8) were used to validate and qualify the findings from the questionnaire. Guest, Bunce and Johnson’s (2005) research indicates that when seeking factors from a homogeneous group, 12 interviews will give data saturation.

An interview is a method of qualitative research “in which the researcher is interested in collecting “facts”, or gaining insights into or understanding of opinions, attitudes, experiences, processes, behaviours, or predictions” (Rowley, 2012, p. 261). Noy (2008, p. 332) considers interview data is merely information stored in the mind of the informant; it is left to the investigator to extract and transfer the data to the current experiment. The interviews in this research were pivotal in interpreting other responses, even though the interview answers were often deliberately inaccurate. The interview process can be partitioned into a number of discrete steps as follows.

4.6.2.1 Designing and Planning Interviews

The focus group interviews were pre-planned to last one hour; they were conducted in a room at their attending university with a maximum size of six volunteers. Each student was asked the exact same seven questions, (Appendix 1), which were given to the students in written form (Mandarin), and all responses were in Mandarin, the native language of the interrogator and responders. All responses were digitally recorded,
scripted in Mandarin and finally translated into English.

There are two types of research questions, inductive questions that are based on previously developed theory, and deductive questions in which the researcher develops theories from the data being collected. Although this is a grounded study, a number of factors that influence students to study in any country have been examined by other researchers, including Marginson, (2007); The International Student (2013); Mazzarol and Soutar, (2002); Gong and Huybers (2015); and their collective results were tested by this investigation. This research could be construed as inductive/deductive, being informed by both theory and practice, as proposed by Rowley (2012) and Jacob & Furgerson (2012). This agrees with Jacob and Furgerson (2012, p. 2), that “research should guide your questions”.

Other factors that require pre-planning are the length of interviews and the methods used to select and enlist potential interviewees. Lengthy interviews make it difficult to attract volunteers for the experiment and overly short interviews don’t allow the interviewer the time to develop the rapport needed to extract meaningful data. My experience as an educator and having worked in high profile international educational companies in China gave me an advantage when it came to persuading the appropriate volunteers to participate in the investigation.

4.6.2.2 Conducting Interviews

All interviews were conducted in Mandarin, the native language of the interviewer and the volunteers. The results were translated into English before coding; this added another level of possible error.

Starting an interview is often the most difficult part of the process; one method suggested by Rowley (2012) involves writing different influencing factors on separate cards and asking the examinee to arrange them in order. This is in accord with inductive/deductive interviewing because it allows the interviewee to introduce factors

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18 In considering where to study, mobile students’ key choice factors are, in order, country (54%), course (18%), institution (17%), and city (10%)... (OECD, 2004, p. 266)” (Marginson, 2007, p. 12) These, plus other factors such as costs, government policy etc., could all be used as a starting point.
that have not been suggested. Jacob and Furgerson (2012), also emphasise the importance of the initial phases of the interview process, and the need to show genuine care and concern for the interviewee. Achieving a caring persona may require some counselling skills, but the interviewees will not fully ‘open up’ unless they feel valued and that his/her opinion really matters. The most important asset of the interviewer is the ability to listen and to refrain from allowing their experiences to influence the interview process (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

The focus group interviews followed the procedures suggested by Rowley (2012); Jacob and Furgerson (2012); thus the interview was designed, planned and practiced with friends before the first real interview was attempted. Finally, they started and ended with a script.

4.6.3 Online Questionnaire

The second phase of the research was an internet-based questionnaire. Volunteers were asked to respond to 24-paired questions, which tested the five main themes emanating from the focus group interviews. A full list of these 48 questions is in Appendix 7.

An advantage of an internet-based questionnaire is that data can be collected objectively in the form of numerical scores to predetermined questions. A key problem with numerically based Internet questionnaires is that the respondents’ attitudes and meanings, (the object of the research), are represented by their responses. Validity of these questionnaires relies on the truth of these responses (Woolgar, 1988). Another disadvantage of the method is that Internet questionnaires do not allow for unforeseen data. The full inquiry is a subjective inquiry and conclusions and patterns emerging from the questionnaire were tested and validated by follow-up interviews in China and Australia. This is the kernel of the research program, and as Walliman points out “if you want to draw conclusions about all the cases, you will need to select a few typical ones for detailed study called ‘case studies’ using a sampling method” (Walliman, 2011, p. 93). Yin advocates case study as a valuable tool in situations involving psychology and sociology, such as in this examination. He further observes “as a
research endeavour, the case study contributes uniquely to our knowledge of individual, organizational, social, and political phenomena” (Yin, 1994, p. 2).

Large questionnaires are expensive, and a cost benefit analysis influenced the size of the population sampled. Prior to the Internet, such questionnaires were conducted either by face to face, telephone, facsimile or by mail. All had their problems, mainly in the areas of convenience, time and cost. Internet-based questionnaires are superior to alternative methods because

“Internet-based questionnaire distribution involves lower cost as well as higher transmission and response …… and reduces the risk of data entry errors as respondent data can be automatically transformed into a format ready for analysis.” (Hewson, et al., Cited in Harzing, et al., 2012, n. p.)

The website design and administration of the Internet questionnaire conducted in China was completed with the help of the IT department of the International School and BIEE in China. In combination with the focus groups in Australia, the investigation could be considered a cross culture research, because some of the respondents had studied in Australia for many years at the time of their interrogation. Cross culture research introduces several challenges that will require special techniques and research practices to confront these challenges.

“Compared with domestic research, international cross-cultural research faces additional methodological challenges that, if not properly addressed, may considerably increase the risk of inferential errors” (Singh, cited in Harzing et al., 2013, p. 1).

This problem was minimised because both the interrogator and the respondents were native Chinese with shared international education experiences.

4.6.4 Focus Group Research Strategy

The focus groups (n=21) convened in Sydney had knowledge of the forces that influenced their decision to study in Australia (e.g. S10: My parents told me if I study preschool education, then I should stay and live in Australia); the connections (e.g. S11: my teacher had been to Australia); and the imaginations (e.g. S8: my father
thought that I should experience more in life; S11: I felt from the photos that it (Australia) has pristine nature). The final analysis of the data yielded five dominant themes that influenced this choice. This list was analysed for completeness by comparing it to other studies and literature about Chinese students who study abroad.

A focus group investigation is

a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative, sampling of a specific population, this group being ‘focused’ on a given topic. (MacMillan et al., cited in Wilson et al., 2013, p. 281)

An important feature of all three strategies, (focus group interview, Internet questionnaire and case study interview) used in this investigation, is the inquiry technique of the investigator. It was critical that the questions, written or oral, were clear and unambiguous, but equally as imperative that the questions produced a response from the volunteer participants, which contributed to the final conclusion of this inquiry. Yin (1994) explains the importance of understanding the relationships between strategy, form of research questions and events being explored. (See Table 4.8). The table shows that for a case study, the focus must be on current events and the absence of a control group.

Table 4.8: Relevant Situations for Different Research Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Form of my research question</th>
<th>Requires control over behavioural events</th>
<th>Focuses on contemporary events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>experiment</td>
<td>Not used in this study</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>survey</td>
<td>What factors, why, how much. Likert scale</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archival analysis</td>
<td>Not used</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes/no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>history</td>
<td>What factors, why, how much. Likert scale</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>case study</td>
<td>Not used</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Yin, 1994, p 6)
4.6.5 Data Sources for Corruption Issues

It was impossible to source data on corruption issues from students who were unaware of the issues involved, and parents are unlikely to divulge information about wrong doings leading to criminal charges. However, creditable data for corruption has been sourced from Government documents and published articles by investigative journalists in reputable media. These sources are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Data Sources of Corruption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence Chapters</th>
<th>Corruption in Australia</th>
<th>Corruption Evidence in China</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost Chapter Nine</td>
<td>The average cost per year for living and university fees for an international student is $60,000</td>
<td>Corruption is thought to cost China US$86 billion each year. Widespread corruption at all levels of Chinese society (Wang 2017)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Chapter Ten</td>
<td>Traffic Pollution, Air pollution, over population (Liao, May 9th, 2017) The Conversation</td>
<td>Tracking down these corrupt officials (Cornwell 2014) (Wang 2017)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The value of data depends on its correct interpretation (analysis), and its potential uses (Mende, 2005); (Zundel, & Kokkalis, 2010). Robson (2006, p. 387) recognises that “data in their raw form do not speak for themselves” but require detailed and scientific analysis for interpretation. The value of this research depended on the accuracy of the theory suggested by the data (Mende, 2005); (Zundel & Kokkalis, 2010). This research process had four stages; observation, data collection, data analysis and conclusion. The raw data provided by the focus group was managed, stored and analysed. Converting focus group discussions into manageable and usable format required theme coding. The coding was straightforward because the sample of volunteers was a homogeneous purposive group of students who had already chosen to study in Australia.

4.7.1 Determining the Units of Analysis

The unit of analysis in any study is the major entity that is being analysed. In this examination the unit is the body of students from the PRC who have elected to study overseas, or who will in the future study overseas. The unit is not the individual student because this study is not interested in individuals per se, but rather the investigation concerns the major factors that have had an influence on the students as a group.

Units of analysis could be any of:

1. individuals
2. groups
3. artefacts (books, photos newspapers)
4. geographical units (town, census tract, state)
5. social interactions (didatic relations, divorce, arrests).19

The groups are slightly different. All the students in the focus group in Sydney have already decided to study in Australia, whilst the respondents to the questionnaire in China have some involvement in the decision making process of deciding where to study.

19 list copied from website “Research Methods, Knowledge Base” see: http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/unitanal.php
4.7.2 Data Coding

The original data was provided in the form of transcripts from the audio records of the four convened focus groups. This data was analysed using a process known as open coding whereby different “parts of the data are marked with appropriate labels or ‘codes’ to identify them for further analysis” (Khandkar, 2009, n. p.). Open coding is a line-by-line examination of the data, which identifies words using codes, which are relevant to this investigation. In summation,

“each code definition has five parts: (1) a “brief definition” to jog the analyst’s memory; (2) a “full definition” that more fully explains the code; (3) a “when to use” section that gives specific instances, usually based on the data, in which the code should be applied; (4) a “when not to use” section that gives instances in which the code might be considered but should not be applied (often because another code would be more appropriate); and (5) an “example” section of quotes pulled from the data that are good examples of the code” (Guest et al. 2005, p. 64).

The open coding workflow used with this inductive/deductive research is shown in figure 4.1. The coding process is cyclic; in the first cycle any factor influencing the students’ choice is given a code. The first cycle generates too many codes and the distilling process involves a second cycle called clustering. Clustering collates the information concerning a phenomenon into groups that have similar patterns or characteristics. Part of the clustering technique involves “making contrasts and comparisons. Miles and Huberman, (cited in Robson 2006, p. 480) and Robson (2006, p. 480) elaborate; the process involves “establishing similarities and differences between and within data sets”, which is an important stage of transforming raw data into meaningful information. This was time consuming and entailed constant referral to the original data to ensure the accuracy of the coding process. Prior to this stage it was not feasible to make theories concerning the possible outcomes of this investigation, but some patterns did start to emerge early in the coding process.

These patterns represent the third cycle of data analysis, and this became the completion of the analysis of the focus group. The online questionnaire and the follow
up interviews were used to refine the initial patterns into a reliable theory.

**Figure 4.2: Open Coding Techniques**

![Diagram showing the process of open coding, with codes leading to categories and then patterns, ultimately leading to grounded theory.]

The initial data included words (or groups of words) such as *safety, fear, law, and security*, which can be given separate code names. After the initial open coding process had been completed for the focus group analysis, the grouping of labels, termed axial coding, began. All of the labels in the above example could be classified in the category *safety*.

### 4.7.3 Data Driven Cycle

The grouping of labels into categories is the first stage of thematic analysis and Khnadkar, (2009) suggests that these classifications can be further grouped into patterns. The final five patterns that did emerge from the focus group interviews; quality of education, lifestyle, cost, environment and immigration/employment opportunities, were then tested by the Internet questionnaire. Albeit, at this stage of the
research, implications relating to corruption and real ownership of the decision making process were not included in the research or the theory being generated.

4.7.4 Theory-informed Cycle

Miles and Huberman, (cited in Robson, 2006, p. 480-1) identified thirteen different stages of transforming raw data into meaningful information. The relevant stages of this investigation have been addressed in this chapter. Of the last two items on the list; 12 refers to “Building a logical train of evidence”, and 13 refers to “Making a conceptual/theoretical coherence. Moving from data to constructs to theories through analysis and categorisation.” This is the theory-informed cycle for the experiment.

Every step in the collection, managing, coding, evaluation and conceptualising of data, is vital to the integrity of the research. However, unless the conceptualising and theorising are accurate, irrespective of the perfection of the prior stages, the net value of the research is worthless. The value of this research could be critical to the future success of WSU and other Australian universities in attracting Chinese students to study in Australia. It is important that the conceptual theories developed match the data collected and that constructs and theories generated from the data are genuine logical outcomes.

4.7.5 Selection of Conceptual Analytical Tools

Conceptualisation of data is the key product of any research, so the importance of the verification process used to arrive at conceptualisation and theorising was paramount. The tools for conceptual analysis are visual representations that interrogate the data in such a way that linkages, patterns and connections become evident. “Grounded theorists believe that creating visual representations of the emerging theories is an intrinsic and essential step in theory building” (Verdinelli and Scagnoli 2013, p. 360). These visual tools could be boxed diagrams, decision tree modeling, flow chart, ladder, matrix, metaphorical visual display, modified Venn diagram, network or taxonomy
Method of calculating $\alpha$ using Likert’s Scale

A properly designed Likert scale tests each inquiry by asking the same question in the reverse order, creating a questionnaire based on paired questions. Thus, if question #1 was “I chose to study in Australia because I considered Australia the safest country in which to live and study” and paired question #30 was “Safety consideration had no influence on my decision to study in Australia”, then these two questions are testing the same factor, safety; firstly in a positive sense and secondly in a negative sense. If the questions are answered truthfully then the summed Likert scores from the paired questions should be 6. The first analysis of the Internet data deleted responses from any student who had less than 75% of their summed scores for paired questions within the range 5-7.

Cronbach’s alpha is applied using the summed scores ($x$) of the paired questions. In the following formulae; $x_j$ is any score and $x_0 = \sum_{j=1}^{k} x_j$ where $k$ is the total number of scores. The Cronbach’s Alpha is given by the formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{k}{k-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{k} \text{var}(j)}{\text{var}(x_0)}\right)$$

This value can be calculated using Excel spreadsheets or by using a scientific calculator. Cronbach’s Alpha was calculated for each individual respondent, for the total of all respondents, and for each individual set of paired questions. In every case Cronbach’s Alpha confirmed the validity of the data.

Every score $x$ can be partitioned into its true value ($t$) and its error ($e$), (ie $x = t + e$). The reliability of $x$ is defined as the correlation coefficient of $t$ and $x$ given by the formula $r_{xt} = \frac{\sigma(t)}{\sigma(x)}$; where $\sigma(t)$ is the standard deviation of $t$ and $\sigma(x)$ is the standard deviation of $x$. For example, if $x = 3$ and $\alpha = 0.9$ then $t = (1 - 0.9^2) \times 3 = 2.43$ and $e = 0.57$. 
Supporting statistics do not guarantee reliability; the integrity involves many factors, any one of which can undermine validity. If these statistics are cross-matched and still bring the same results, then reliability is more assured and the degree of certainty with the hypothesis being tested increases, but it is never 100%.

4.7.6 Data Display

Burns (1997, p. 397) claims that the main “purpose of research is not only to increase your own understanding, but also to share that knowledge with others”. The many different ways of doing this, including charts and Figures, figures, tables and matrices, enable quick transfer of information from author to reader and can be used to emphasise similarities and comparisons (see Section 4.5.7.2).

4.7.7 Checking for Researcher Effects

Checking for bias and unreliable data was done with support of the statistics staff at WSU. I personally conducted the Australian interviews. Other methods, such as triangulation, which were used to uncover bias, have already been discussed in this document. Other adverse researcher effects were also addressed. Whilst collecting evidence I was diligent in my memo reporting, and with the help of my supervisor, I researched design protocols for interviewing to minimize researcher effect.

4.7.8 Drawing Conclusions and Verification

This thesis is based on a flexibly designed research methodology (see Figure 4.1), and the data collected was interrogated according to Wallace’s schematic, (Figure 3.1). Mende (2005, p. 192), argues that the real value of research is the theory that it produces. “Empirical methods merely enabled Galileo to discover the law of falling, whereas theoretical methods enabled Newton to discover the theory of Mechanics.”
According to Fjelland (1991, p. 269), “a scientific hypothesis is never tested in isolation, but in conjunction with other theories, which are simply taken for granted.” A grounded study such as this assumes the absence of prior theories; such a situation, contends Fjelland (1991), cannot exist. As patterns became apparent they were tested in feedback loops to ensure that the emerging pattern fitted all the data. The same methods, described previously in this chapter, used to validate and scrutinize data, were employed to test theories arising from this research.

4.7.9 Research Writing

The purpose of writing any thesis is to present the findings of the author in such a manner that the conclusions may be of benefit to other academics, researchers and persons with an interest in the subject under investigation. Giddens (1986, p. 44), illustrates the challenges faced by research writers when attempting to communicate with readers: “One of the main tasks of the study of the text … must be precisely to examine the divergence which can become instituted between the circumstances of their production” and the meaning sustained by their author at the time of writing. Kitching (2008, p. 63) contends that “the very multiplicity, complexity and variety of ways in which people use language itself makes it very difficult for them to have a ‘clear view’ or understanding of how they are using it.” Academics resort to the use of jargon, because terms used have been uniquely defined and convey fully and faithfully the meanings that the author wishes to communicate.

Jargon is the language of the specialist speaking to equals, but jargon also has its detractors. According to Pinker et al., (2014), “academic writing stinks”, and jargon is a large part of the reason for the “stink”. Sword, (cited in Pinker et al., 2014); has reflected on the merits and disadvantages of Jargon, something that this thesis has used sparingly. A survey of 100 writing guides “found that 21 recommend against disciplinary jargon of any kind; 46 caution that technical language should be used carefully, accurately, and sparingly; and 33 make no comment on the subject. I have yet to discover a single academic-style guide that advocates a freewheeling embrace of jargon” (Pinker, et al., 2014, p. 14).
However, despite the fact that no guide recommends a freewheeling use of jargon, “academic journals are awash in the stuff” (Pinker, et al., 2014, p. 14).

Readers of this thesis could include sociological scholars, administrative staff within universities and students from China who potentially will come to Australia to study at university. For sociological scholars it is important to use the terminology (jargon) that has been developed and widely used in this field. To assist others, who may also read this thesis, I have adopted Professor Singh’s suggestion and defined the key terms and definitions used. Pinker et al., (2014), explain, “Writers do not deny the utility of jargon, nor do they eschew its intellectual and aesthetic pleasures. Instead they deploy specialised language gracefully, cautiously, and meticulously, taking care to keep their readers on board”. (Pinker, et al., 2014, p. 14). That is the aim for this thesis.

4.8 DISCUSSION

The genesis of this research followed traditional lines of focus group interviews to refine the scope of research, large-scale questionnaires to produce statistical inferential data, and follow up interviews to refine certain aspects of the data. These traditional methods seemed to produce findings that agreed with others who have conducted similar research. The first breakthrough in the research came when interviewing parents as a follow-up to the Internet Questionnaire; it is often the parents and not the children who are the decision makers. This discovery mandated that the forces; (fear of corruption allegations, need for wealth protection), connections; (international business partners and government officials in China), and the imaginations; (the benefits of the Western middle class lifestyle in a free society), of the parents were germane to the research conclusions. I had prior evidence of this situation when interviewing parents and students in China for overseas study. It was generally the parents setting the tone of the interview, and the questions were often about the lifestyle features of the possible host nation rather than the qualities of the university.

In the latter stages of this research it became evident that:

1. New data, concerning the aspirations of the parents was needed to incorporate the evidence of the parental involvement in the choice process.
2. There was already in existence an abundance of evidence from reports in reputable media sources and government publications regarding corruption issues (Chung (2013, 2015, 2017), Cornwall 2014, De Jong 2014, Thornton 2016, Dziedzic 2017, and Kumar 2017) in China and Australia that made Australia a safe haven for capital flight from China (Olesen 2016).

3. The original research question: “What forces, connections or imaginations influenced students from China to complete their tertiary education in Australia?” seemed redundant in the light of this new evidence and it was changed to: ‘What are the forces, connections and imaginations informing Chinese parents and students’ reasons for studying overseas, in particular for choosing Australian universities?’

4. Although Chapter Two lists multiple creditable sources documenting corruption in China and Australia (see Table 2.2) it should be noted that this research is not a racist attack on the Chinese.

5. It is quite possible that the corrupt practices that exist in China are prevalent in many other countries, and this issue could also account for a significant proportion of students from those countries studying in Australia.

This research was unable to attribute a statistic to the actual proportion of students studying at Australian universities because of corruption issues, nor would this researcher have the tools and investigative skills to carry out such a research. Corruption has also seeped into Australian universities keen to balance their budgets through the funds provided by international students. Irregularities in recruitment by agents, plagiarisms and ghost-writers ensure that students graduate and the income stream from international students continues, according to Bretag (2016), Bochenski (2015), Besser et al., (2015), and ICAC (2015). Such practices come with their own risk.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter explains the methodologies used to interrogate the main question of the research and the contributing questions. The full gamut of the methodologies includes research method, data sources, data validation and data interpretation, all of which have been justified in this chapter.
The value of any research is its relevance, reliability and credibility. The reputation of Professor Singh, and his assistant Dr. Han, provide integrity to the research. Relevance is provided by unique linking of corruption issues in China and Australia as a further motive for parents and students from China to choose Australia as a study destination. Chapter Five defines Australia’s reliance on international students and how government policy has been designed to maximise that benefit. Similar scenarios exist in Australia’s main competitors with the US, the UK, Canada, Japan and New Zealand framing policies to attract international students to their learning institutions. There is ample evidence (Olesen, 2016), that Chinese capital flight has benefited all these nations; most likely the accompanying corruption issues involved with university education in Australia also exist in the same countries.

The next chapter examines the government policies of the five countries mentioned above, and Australia, and analyses how these policies have moderated the international student market.
CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION POLICIES
5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the degree of influence that educational policies and practices, in different countries, exert on the choice of host country for international students. The examination will include the most recent policies but will also assess the impact of past policies and practices. The assessment incorporates a policy analysis.

There are many reasons other than educational policies for compelling large numbers of Chinese students to choose a foreign education. Corruption concerns and wealth protection offer strong reasons for transcultural citizenship through students’ visas. Most of the international students from China are now self-funded and 80% of Chinese millionaires want their children to study overseas (Cai, 2014; Hurun, 2014). ‘The Chinese Ministry of Education reports that 523,000 Chinese students went abroad to study in 2015’ (Colson, 2016, n. p.). By far the most popular destination for students from China is the USA (see Table 5.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>260,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>90,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>89,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>86,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>42,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>38,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>25,801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Colson, 2016, n. p.)

Australia was the second preferred destination in 2015, especially for undergraduates, being more popular than the UK. However, as Cai explains, for “Chinese millionaires, the UK is the favourite destination for high school education and the US is the preferred place for higher education” (Cai, 2014, n. p.).

5.1 METHOD OF POLICY ANALYSIS (LITERATURE REVIEW ABOUT THE METHOD OF DOING POLICY ANALYSIS)
The purpose of this chapter is to consider the possible impact that government policies have on international student flow. Methods of government policy analysis were covered in the previous chapter (see section 4.6.1).

An integral component of the research was the online questionnaire, which attempted to draw conclusions about the effects of government policies in Australia and China that have influenced students to choose or not choose Australia as their study destination.

Two stages of this research were by interviews, which presented opportunities for discussion on government policy, but this did not eventuate. The confirmation of parental involvement in study destination choice, joined with evidence of corruption issues in China, (Cornwall, 2014; Chung 2017), and property ownership opportunities in Australia, (Dziedzic, 2017; Thornton 2016), have all increased the likelihood that the government policies of those two countries attract students from China to Australia.

The possibility that the parents may have hidden their real motive for the choice of Australia increases if corruption issues are applicable. Parental involvement in the decision process and corruption issues may have contributed to the statistically weak data derived from the focus groups and the Internet questionnaire.

5.2 POST–GRADUATE AND STEM STUDENTS

Even before the proposed Federal Government changes, as outlined in Section 5.4, Australia’s reputation as a credible international education provider was falling because of its inability to attract post-graduate students:

“A remarkable 30 per cent of all foreign students entering American doctoral universities are PhD students. But only about 1 in 60 international students studying in Australian higher education are on scholarship (DEST, 2007)” (Marginson, 2007, p. 4).

The current situation is that “Australia has a declining rate of STEM-related (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) course completions, which have decreased over the past 10 years from 22% to 16%” (PWC, 2014, n. p.). This compares
unfavourably with the UK, where, during 2013-2014 “98,000 students were accepted on to STEM undergraduate courses, the highest level ever recorded” (Thomas, 2014, n. p.). The Office of the Chief Scientist (2013) noted that the USA has further plans to increase the number of STEM graduates in one decade, plans which “are deceptively challenging and will require overcoming steep obstacles at the thousands of US colleges and universities that educate the next generation of workers” (Mervis, 2012, n. p.).

STEM courses in Australia attracted students with an average annual recruitment rate increasing by 12.5% between the years 2002 and 2013. Presently, more than half of the postgraduate international students studying in Australia are STEM students, and “students from China were the largest cohort (25.4%) for postgraduate research enrolments in STEM courses in 2013” (Australian Government Department of Education, 2014, n. p.).

Table 5.2: International student enrolments in HE STEM fields by level of study, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad Field of Education</th>
<th>Level of Study</th>
<th>International students as proportion of total students in postgraduate research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Postgraduate (Research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Related Technologies</td>
<td>14,256</td>
<td>3,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>8,339</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Environmental &amp; Related Studies</td>
<td>1,347</td>
<td>597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural &amp; Physical Sciences</td>
<td>6,971</td>
<td>3,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics related</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other broad field of Education</td>
<td>107,493</td>
<td>8,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Higher Education)</td>
<td>138,630</td>
<td>17,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, 2014

Most nations who rely on international students from China recognise the value of STEM students and have adjusted their policies to reflect their importance as seen in Table 5.3.
Table 5.3: International policies on STEM fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICIES</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>UK/Britain</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Japan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post–graduate and STEM Students</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Net Worth Individuals</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The STEM situation in Australia is an incentive for students from China to seek skilled migration to Australia through studying such courses in Australia. A limiting factor to this action is the high cost of some STEM courses, particularly engineering and science. Furthermore, any reduction in Federal funding to universities could place the cost of study in STEM courses beyond the reach of many foreign and domestic students.

Marginson (2007, p. 4) also highlighted Australia’s leanings towards North America and Europe in research engagements and a tendency to treat “Asia largely as a recruiting ground.” In addition, Marginson (2007) is supported by Singh & Harreveld (2014) in recognising that the teaching and learning of Asian languages in Australia has gone backwards, and this applies particularly to Mandarin. A poor reputation in STEM education, a poor record in post-graduate foreign students and lack of engagement with China (Asia) will have some influence on the number of foreign students from Asia who decide to study in Australia. This is the present situation, however, the DNSIE (2015, p. 13), reveals a Vision Statement from the Minister of Education, which recognises that “Australian international education is a core element of Australia’s economic prosperity, social advancement and international standing.”

The vision of Minister Pyne was confirmed in 2016 when the Australian Trade and Investment Commission released *Australian International Education 2025* (AIE 2025), which confirmed that “Australia’s onshore international education sector is the strongest it has ever been and its borderless offerings continue to grow” (AIE 2025, p. 6). The flows of international students from “China and India alone are expected to grow at rates of 6% and 7% respectively in the next ten years” (AIE 2025, p. 6). The Australian share of these increased numbers will depend on Australia’s ability to deliver courses that are shorter, more flexible and more cost effective to both students and to providers.
5.3 HIGH NET WORTH INDIVIDUALS (HNWI)

Hurun (2014, n. p.) defines a High Net Worth Individual (HNWI) as someone with a “family wealth of no less than 6 million CNY (US$1 million), with an average wealth of 42 million CNY (US$7 million)." “China currently has 1,340,000 high net worth individuals, defined as individuals with US$1.5 m, so that means we are looking at a massive 800,000 individuals who want to buy property overseas over the next three years” (Hurun News, 2016, n. p.).

Emigration of Chinese HNWI is also at record levels.

“The proportion of HNWIs who have emigrated, or are planning to do so, rose to 64%, up from 60%, driven mainly by the number of super-rich who have already emigrated, according to the Hurun Chinese Luxury Consumer Survey released in January 2014” (Hurun Report 2, 2014, n. p.).

The above statistics suggest that the long-term sustainability of students from China is assured, a good outcome for Australian universities even though Australia is not a preferred destination for immigration, as shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: HNWI's from China preferred emigration destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emigration destination preferences</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 US</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Canada</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Australia</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Europe</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 New Zealand</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Singapore</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Hong Kong</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Japan</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The key findings of the Hurun survey showed that

Education concerns, pollution and food safety are the main reasons driving China’s HNWIs to consider emigrating abroad, accounting for 21%, 20% and 19% respectively. … (The) US and Canada are preferred countries for investment immigration (Hurun Report 2, 2014, n. p.).

The Hurun Report concluded that HNWIs from China are keen to emigrate because of
concerns over education (21%), pollution (20%) and food safety, (19%). It does not mention corruption leading to capital flight as exposed by Olesen (2016) after this report was written. Australia has a well-deserved reputation in providing quality education, but more importantly it offers an attractive lifestyle in a country that offers a safe haven, courtesy of its refusal to ratify the 2007 extradition treaty between Australia and China.

5.4 AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH

Marginson (2007, p. 7) reported, when analysing Australia’s global position, that

… despite our engagement in Asia and the extraordinary recent growth of research in Singapore, China, Taiwan and especially Korea, nearly all our research collaborations are in North America, the UK and Europe. We are treating Asia largely as a recruiting ground.

Another anomaly of Australian research is that currently 60 per cent of all researchers are employed in higher education with a further 10 per cent employed in research agencies (OECD, (2012); Chubb, (2014)). “The sector dominates: only 30 per cent of Australian researchers are in the business sector by contrast with 80 per cent in the US, 64 per cent in Switzerland and 70 per cent in Japan” (Office of the Chief Scientist 2013, p. 8). This may explain why “Australia has one of the worst rates of collaboration between business and researchers in the developed world” (Phillips and Walters, 2014, n. p.).

Marginson (2007) recognised Australia’s dearth of research as a problem, and suggested that it was desirable to simultaneously increase both private and public investment in research to compete with trends in other OECD countries. Recent developments show that rather than following Marginson’s suggestion, the situation regarding research has deteriorated. During 2014, “the top innovative OECD countries have three times more R&D personnel in industry than Australia” (Price Waterhouse Cooper, 2014, n. p.). The USA has addressed the problem of linking universities, research and business through agencies known as Technology Parks. In the USA there are 72 universities (including MIT) that have Techno Parks very similar to the Werrington Park Corporate Centre being constructed at WSU. Techno Parks in the USA assist business start-up and provide opportunities for graduates and
undergraduates to find relevant employment on the university campus. These Parks attract students from China, who, despite their wealth in China, often have difficulty funding their foreign degrees. Techno Parks could be part of the reason why nearly three times as many students from China chose the USA for study in preference to Australia.

Presently, Australia has nine Science Parks; Adelaide University Research Park, Australian Technology Park (Eveleigh NSW), Canberra Technology Park, Docklands Science Park (Melbourne), Macquarie University Research Park (Sydney), Tasmanian Techno-park, Technology Park Adelaide, Technology Park Bentley (Western Australia) and University of Ballarat Technology Park (UNESCO, 2014, n. p.). Also, according to UNESCO,

“… there are over 400 science parks worldwide and their number is still growing. At the top of the list comes the USA, which is reported to have more than 150 science parks. Japan comes next with 111 science parks. China began developing science parks in the mid-1980s and now has around 100, 52 of which were approved by the national government and the remainder by local governments” (UNESCO, 2014, n. p.).

This raises two critical points. Firstly, the two countries, which have the most science parks (the USA and Japan), also attract the most students from China. In addition, students from China are familiar with the concept of science parks since China itself is rapidly developing such centres. Australia and Canada, with their English language, very little pollution and food safety satisfy many of the now accepted reasons why students from China study abroad, yet Japan is still able to attract more students from China than either country. If the existence of science parks is an attraction for some students, then developing the Werrington Park Corporate Centre with its Chinese Research Centre may be the key to attract far greater numbers of students from China to WSU. If this is successful, other universities in Australia may follow suit.

5.5 WHAT CONSTITUTES INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION POLICIES

International education is now a major export earner for a number of first world
Western countries. HM’s British Government (2013, p. 3) acknowledges in the foreword to its policy document that “There are few sectors of the UK economy with the capacity to grow and generate export earnings as impressive as education.” The USA, the UK, Australia, Canada, France, and the Netherlands have released similar government policy documents, which include laws, procedures and practices that are designed to attract international students.

Whilst it is sufficient to look at current policies from other countries, a more historical view was taken when analysing Australia’s International Educational Policy. The method of policy analysis used in this research was a brief summary of export educational policy documents from Australia, China, the USA, the UK, Canada and Japan. The reasons for this approach were fully explained in Chapter Four (4.6.1). A document summary was used for all countries except the USA; instead, the USA policy has been open coded and the source codes themed for better understanding of trends.

5.6 AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION POLICIES

Australian Universities are now dependent on foreign students to balance their budgets but they face fierce competition from other countries wishing to attract international students. To satisfy this dependence on foreign students, Australia must overcome increased competition from the USA and the UK, which is a direct consequence of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) (Zheng, 2011).

The Australian Government’s recognition of the economic value of international education is well documented; (Chaney 2013; AUSTRADE, 2014); Abbott, 2014; AIE 2015). In 2012 Chaney was appointed by the Australian Government to investigate procedures for protecting and growing export education in Australia. The presented report “sets out 35 recommendations to address seven key issues identified as crucial to a sustainable future for international education” (Chaney, 2013, p. 5).

---
20 The UK Government’s policy release concerning export education.
21 International education is currently one of Australia’s top service exports, valued at $19.65 billion in 2015 (including fees and associated expenditure) and supports over 130,000 jobs in cities and regions throughout Australia. (AIE 2025, p. 4).
These key issues are coordination; quality; a positive student experience; partnerships; ensuring integrity – Australia’s student visa program; data analysis and research in international education; and competition, marketing and promotion (Chaney, 2013, p. 5).

The key issues above are matters that the Australian Government and University sector can address, but Chaney (2013) also indicated that there were other drivers of students’ choices which include work opportunities, costs, career options and other opportunities presented by increased global mobility. Chaney (2013, p. 26) acknowledged that other countries used immigration inducements to attract international students but did not identify immigration potential as an influencing factor attracting students to study in Australia.

In response to the Chaney Report (2013), the Australian Government issued a Draft National Strategy for International Education (DNSIE) for consultation, inviting all stakeholders to “submit your feedback on the draft strategy online at: www.internationaleducation.gov.au by close of business 29 May 2015” (DNSIE, 2015, p. 3). In the Minister’s Forward of the same document, The Hon. Pyne, refers to the statistics in Table 5.5 (below), when he acknowledges that “The number of international students studying in Australia has begun to climb and the value of international education has grown by over a billion dollars in just one year” (DNSIE, 2015, p. 1).

Undeniably, cost was and is, an important issue, as has been shown by the sharp decline of international students into Australia in 2010, when on a global scale the number of international students increased. In that period Australia had “topped the USA and Britain as the most expensive country in the world for foreign students, an international report has found” (Kwek and Preisis, 2013, n. p.).

The cost of export education in Australia had risen dramatically because of the high AUD for a brief period for reasons unrelated to Australian government policy (see Section 2.5.3). The AUD remained above 1 USD until the fourth quarter of 2013 and it has been in steady decline ever since and now, at the time of writing, 1 AUD is worth less than 0.74 USD. Chaney (2013), predicted three scenarios for increased international student intake, based on 2%, 5% and 7% annual increases in the number
of international student enrolments. Figures published by AUSTRADE (2015, n. p.), and presented in Table 5.5 below show substantial increases, beyond Chaney’s most optimistic expectation. This increase coincides with a fall in excess of 30% of the value of the Australian dollar in comparison to the US dollar and the Yuan.

Table 5.5: Enrolment of international students in Australia 2013 and 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Enrolment of full fee paying international students</th>
<th>Change from previous year</th>
<th>Commencement of full fee paying international students</th>
<th>Change from previous year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year to Date November, 2014</td>
<td>583,714</td>
<td>12.3% increase</td>
<td>347,591</td>
<td>17.4% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Year 2013</td>
<td>526,932</td>
<td>2.6% increase</td>
<td>302,976</td>
<td>5.9% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average change previous 10 years</td>
<td>5.4% increase</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.1% increase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two major contributors to enrolments in higher education were China and India who accounted for 36.3% and 10.5% respectively. There are other factors that have changed during this period as well.

In response to the Chaney report, McKenzie, (2014, p. 2) praised the quality of the Australian education system “as a world leader in education” and re-affirmed Australia’s commitment to international education. Key issues such as coordination, cooperation, consultation and a positive student experience were mentioned as being contentious issues. There was no indication of how the Australian Government would address these matters, nor was any suggestion made on how improvements could be introduced. The problems continually faced by students from China concerning visa applications were addressed in simple terms by “Minister (of Education) Pyne arguing for visa settings that were competitive and attractive in all education sectors” (McKenzie, 2014, p. 10). Pyne did not offer any assurance that the current student visa problems would be remedied. In total, McKenzie’s reply is high on aspiration but lacking in content.

In November, 2014, the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Abbott, announced the “China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA) (which) will unlock substantial new benefits for Australians for years to come” (Abbott, 2014, n. p.). This Free Trade
Agreement (ChAFTA) between Australia and China signifies that the Australian

“Services sector is poised to reap significant gains from the China-
Australia free trade deal. Preferential access will be granted across key
areas such as education …” (Pearcey, 2014, n. p.).

He continues:

“As the student market becomes increasingly competitive with aggressive
marketing from North America and Europe, Australia will be the only
country in the world to enjoy this special access.”

According to the Australian Prime Minister (Abbott, 2014, n. p.), “The Australian
Government has secured the best ever market access provided to a foreign country by
China on services, with enormous scope to build on an export market already worth
$7 billion.” There is also a better chance that the HNWIs from China will consider
Australia, because

“ChAFTA contains investment provisions, which will boost and diversify
our bilateral investment relationship with China. The Chinese
Government estimates total outbound investment of US$1.25 trillion
(AU$1.44 trillion) over the next 10 years” (Abbott, 2014, n. p., italics
added).

Specifically, according to the DFAT website, the ChAFTA suggests that

“Australian higher education providers will benefit from improved
recognition by prospective Chinese students and employers, enabling them
greater access to China’s higher education market” (DFAT, 2015, n.p.).

The Australian Government stated as an objective:

“China will list on a Ministry of Education website 77 Australian private
higher education institutions registered on the Commonwealth Register of
Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)” (DFAT, 2015,
n. p.).

However it is unclear how such a listing will influence more students from China to
study in Australia.
Different world university ranking lists compiled independently by Shanghai University and The Times Publishing Group, rank Australian universities overall behind its main competitors; the USA, the UK, Canada, Japan and France. It is doubtful that giving students from China more Australian options, presumably of a lesser quality, will entice more students to come to Australia. Supporting the ChAFTA (DFAT, 2015, n. p.), Education Ministers in China and Australia have signed MOUs to ensure bilateral recognition of higher education qualifications from either country. These MOU’s may attract more students.

Allowing recognition of awards from educational providers with lower educational standards may attract the less able students from China who still want an overseas education. Such an occurrence would affect Australia’s reputation of providing high quality education.

The Australian Government still retains policies and practices, which make the process of attracting overseas students more difficult. Currently Australia has a longer waiting time for visas (three months nominally since July 2016) than its main competitors. Visa application time is crucial because a “long waiting time is the biggest obstacle in applying for immigration” (Hurun Report 2, 2014, n. p.). On 24th March 2012, the Australian Government introduced Streamlined Visa Processing (Australian Immigration, 2014, n. p.), which allowed certain educational providers in Australia to issue their own eCOE (Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment). The eCOE reduced visa-processing time to about three weeks. The Immigration Department website gives the list of educational providers, with their CRICOS numbers, who are allowed to issue eCOEs. This list includes all the universities and their educational partners, and many HE colleges. The only secondary schools on the list are part of the Study Group and Taylor’s College. Just recently, I assisted my niece (connection) in acquiring her study visa application to attend Stella Maris College in Manly. The visa process took more than three months, causing my niece to regret not choosing to study in the USA. Time wasted from November 2014 to April 2015 increased her secondary education program by 12 months.

The USA Consular website states that it takes up to 4 days to get an interview at a USA Embassy and the processing time for a student visa is just one day. Conversely, student
visa processing time for Canada is 7 weeks, and this may account for the relatively fewer number of students from China and other countries electing to study in Canada (See Table 5.6). According to the official UK Government website Gov.UK (2014) the processing time for student visas to the UK is two days and the cost of the visa is 855CNY (about $160AUD).

Table 5.6: Comparative trends in international undergraduate enrolments, 2004 vs 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of foreign students 2004</th>
<th>Foreign students % of total students</th>
<th>A % of foreign students who are undergraduates</th>
<th>Number of foreign students 2012</th>
<th>B % of foreign students who are undergraduates</th>
<th>Foreign students % total students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>178,700</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>244,800</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>114,800</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>198,700</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>120,500</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>192,600</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>40,500</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>61,100</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: World Education Services, 2011, p. 7)

The same report states the “main reason to emigrate to US and Canada is the ease of obtaining a green card,” (working visa), whereas similar visas are much more difficult to obtain in Australia. Column B, highlighted, emphasises the high percentage of international students who are undergraduates.

Another disincentive to study in Australia is the high, non-refundable student visa cost, presently $550 AUD. In terms of AUD the approximate student visa costs for Canada is $217; New Zealand $256; and the US $414 (Honeywood, 2014, n. p.). Follow up visa costs in Australia are even more expensive than Australia’s competitors’ fees. Although small in terms of the overall cost of the students’ education, these charges damage Australia’s image as a desirable study destination. Further increases in fees are anticipated because the 2014-15 Australian Federal Budget introduced a number of new tax measures for funding HEI’s. Key among these is “expansion of the demand driven system” whereby:

“Current caps on the student contributions that higher education providers are able to charge will be removed from 1 January 2016 for students who accept an offer to commence a course from 14 May 2014. Higher
education providers will be responsible for setting their own course fees” (Federal Treasury Department Budget Paper 2, n. p.).

The legislation, not yet passed in parliament, would ‘save’ the Australian Government $1.1 billion, which universities could recoup by charging higher student fees. Reducing university funding is not new to Australian governments. In April, 2013, the Prime Minister of Australia, announced

“Government plans to slash $2.3 billion from its spending on higher education in order to fund Labour's Gonski school reforms, the biggest cut to the sector since John Howard's 1996 budget. … Australia currently sits at 25th out of 29 advanced economies ranked on public investment in universities as a percentage of gross domestic product” (Matchett, 2013, n. p.).

Australia has a poor record in funding universities.

“Between 1995 and 2003 public funding per (university) student fell by 30 per cent, much the largest such fall in the OECD (OECD, 2006). The federal government now supplies only 41 per cent of the total income of the funded higher education institutions” (Marginson 2007, p. 5).

The small decline in student numbers during the brief period of the high AUD, 2012-2013, suggests that cost is a minor consideration when choosing study abroad options.

Marginson, (2007, p. 12), cited OECD figures which showed that the main elements influencing students study choices were in order “country (54%), course (18%), institution (17%), and city (10%).” Students from China who elect to study in the West are predominately from HNWI families because of the huge cost for this education. The high cost of university fees would be a deterrent for lower middle-class Chinese families wishing to immigrate to Australia.

The proposed university funding cuts by the Australian Government could undo the advantages given to Australian learning institutions by ChAFTA. Universities in Australia also have difficulty recruiting STEM students and post-graduate students. If fees do increase, then international student numbers will lessen a marginal amount, but a significant proportion of HNWIs from China will still send their heirs to Australia for study; mainly for Australia’s lifestyle and immigration opportunities.

Appendix 21 analyses Australian international education policies, using Taylor’s

DNSIE (2015) is the Australian Government’s response to previous reports by Chaney (2012) and the Knight Report (2011). Some of the recommendations from Knight (2010), and Chaney (2012) have already been introduced, most notably the introduction of the eCOE to streamline the student visa process. The ChAFTA treaty (2014) supports the desire to “enter into partnership arrangements with other governments” (DNSIE, 2015, p. 25), to improve the higher education arrangements between Australia and China.

Australian policies on international education have much in common with similar policy documents from the USA, the UK, Canada, and Japan. The common intention is to attract more international students and reap the rewards that follow. The shared inducement factors are world-class education, a positive and enjoyable living/study experience and the possibility of employment/immigration opportunities (Japan excepted) in the host country. The Australian DNSIE is very clear on these aspirations, but less clear on how to achieve a “world class education” with tertiary institutions that are poorly funded in comparison to other OECD countries (Chubb, 2014). Another problem not addressed is the student visa process for secondary students, given that now 22% of Chinese students studying abroad are secondary school students and these students will most likely continue their university study in the same country as their secondary schooling.

5.7 USA POLICY INITIATIVES

In 2014 the number of international students in the USA grew by 7% (cf. a 12.3% growth in Australia), and the number of new enrolments grew by 5% (cf. a 17.4% growth in Australia). The main perceived reasons for the increases included recruitment efforts (78% of respondents), and the growing reputation of the institution (71% of respondents), according to the IIE Centre for Academic Mobility Research and Impact (2014, p. 1). The other perceived factors driving international student
enrolment in the USA are given in the following Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: Factors driving increases in international enrolments 2014-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional changes</th>
<th>Per cent reporting (N= 186)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased number of linkages with international universities</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased institutional support staff and/or resources for recruitment and admission of international students</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth of institutional scholarship opportunities for international students</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New academic programming targeted at international students such as ESL programs</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased number of joint/dual degree programs</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased participation by international high school students in pre-college summer programs</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowered tuition fees and costs to the students</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased efforts as a result of the ‘100K Strong in the Americas’ initiative</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economic and other factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth of foreign government-sponsored scholarship programs (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Brazil, etc.)</th>
<th>51.1%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growth of the middle class in other countries</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less concern by international students about visa availability</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in getting into top schools in home country</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak dollar made U.S. tuition costs more attractive</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer available jobs make graduate school a more attractive option</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth of scholarship opportunities from private sources</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More restrictive student visa policies in other countries make the U.S. more appealing</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IIE Centre for Academic Mobility Research and Impact, 2014, p. 2.

The weak USD (or cost of education), a perception held by 10.8% of respondents,
might have greater significance than respondents realised. Australia’s situation has improved significantly in line with a weakening AUD and thus a reduction in costs. Whilst there was an overall growth in foreign students across the USA, at least 60 institutions had a decline in foreign students during the 2014-15 academic year. Major reasons for the decline include cost of tuition (50%), application processes and concerns over delays/denials (35%). Again these are problems that have been identified by Australian universities as contributing to declining student numbers. Similar to Australia, the main focus (41.5%) of the USA’s recruitment efforts is directed towards China (IIE Centre for Academic Mobility Research and Impact, 2014, p. 4).

The U.S. Department of Education established its first-ever, fully articulated international strategy in 2012. The strategy was designed to simultaneously advance two strategic goals: “Strengthening U.S. Education and advancing our nation’s international priorities” (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 1). The focus of the report is to retain the U.S.’s placement as the world leader in export education.

I have open coded The U.S. Department of Education International Strategy 2012-2016 document and grouped the codes into five themes influencing international student enrolment to the USA, (see Appendix for full coding):

Theme 1 Cooperation and Partnerships, (partnerships, engagement, knowledge sharing, mutual interest....),
Theme 2: Quality of Education (world class education, global benchmarking, benchmarking, think critically, ....)
Theme 3: Cultural Experience (language skills, cultural experience, ...)
Theme 4: National Security (international focus, military, defense, strong diplomacy, ....)
Theme 5: Career Preparation (competing for jobs, transglobal communication, commerce, small business, ....)

The document itself is lacking in substance, being more a list of desirable outcomes, without the procedures required to produce those results. There are a number of notable omissions. Firstly, the cost of education in the USA as a driver for choosing the USA
for education, is not considered, nor does the policy document indicate the economic benefits of export education. More interestingly, there is no mention of advertising, marketing or the use of education agents to recruit students. The US now uses education agents because

“the National Association for College Admission Counselling (in the USA) lifted its ban on the use of education agents, an expected increase in the use of agents by United States institutions is also likely to result in more aggressive student recruitment” (DNSIE, 2015, p. 3).

The analysis of US international education policies using Taylor’s methodology (cited in Ball, 1995, p. 712) shows that the policy fails on verification, (a world class education for all students), and validation, (addresses existing social issues). The document does meet the requirements of vindication and social choice (see Appendix 22).

In comparison, the UK and Canadian policy documents outline in detail the expected monetary rewards that flow from hosting international students and both countries use education agents to recruit students. Australia’s policy documents allude to “an export market already worth $7 billion” (Abbott, 2014, n. p.), but the subsequent Australian DNSIE (2015, p. 5) alludes to statistics that show that “International education is vital for the Australian economy. It is our largest services export, contributing $16.3 billion to the Australian economy in 2013–14”.

US policy, (see Appendix 22) is designed to strengthen the US’s place as the world’s major supplier of export education and at the same time enhance international diplomacy. The policy does not mention profit motive, which is a clear driver of educational providers seeking foreign students. Creating a policy that takes no concern of the consideration of profit suggests that the policy document is not a complete reflection of the goals of the US Department of Education regarding international

students.

In November 2016, Trump was declared US President Elect for the next four-year term. Trump’s xenophobic rhetoric prior to the election could reduce the number of international students seeking to study in the USA (Douglas-Gabriel, 2016, n. p.). Shortly after his election Trump declared; “I want the next generation of production and innovation to happen right here, in our great homeland: America – creating wealth and jobs for American workers” (Kaufman, 2017, n. p.). These and other utterances by the new President have raised concerns, by international students currently studying in the US, and the educational providers actively seeking to recruit international students. Still, despite Trump’s rhetoric, Allen, the Co-Founder of Passport Scholars has cautioned that “Donald Trump’s presidency will most likely have no negative impact on international students” and further he believes “the United States will continue to welcome international students, now and in the foreseeable future” (Allen, 2016, n. p.). The initial fear was that President Trump would curb the issuing of student visas to foreign students so that he can ‘protect US jobs.’ Such action would deny a valuable resource (international students) to American universities and US businesses. Irrespective of Trump’s intention the reality is that “for the first time in more than a decade, most graduate business schools (in the US) are reporting a decline in applications from international students” (Gee, 2017, p. 1). Other universities are experiencing the same problems. (Gee 2017). It seems that Allen’s assurances regarding Trumps policies on international student numbers were optimistic; the US experience is replicated in the UK as is discussed in the next section. The changed situation in the UK and the US will benefit

“Australia's fast-growing $21 billion-a-year education export industry (which), is poised for a boost from students who are shying away from studying in the United States and Britain following the election of Donald Trump and the vote for Brexit” (AUSTRADE, cited in Dodd. 2017, n. p.).

It is too early to judge the full impact of Trump’s policies but there are signs that Australia will benefit at the expense of the US.

5.8 THE UK POLICY
The UK ranks second as a destination for international students from all countries, although at the moment they attract slightly fewer university students from China than Australia does.

The UK was the most popular destination for students studying English outside of their home country. In 2011, we attracted nearly 50% of students globally worth £2.5 billion including both tuition and living costs (H.M. Gov UK, 2013, p. 15).

Whilst David Cameron was Prime Minister, the policy of “HM Government, (2013)” recognised the benefits that foreign students brought to the UK, quoting figures that showed international university students in the UK paid £3.9 billion ($7.7 billion AUD) tuition fees alone in 2011/12 and a further £6.3 billion ($12.5 billion AUD) in living costs. To protect and grow this market the UK government had identified impediments preventing student access and made the following recommendations:

1. Student visas were difficult to obtain and in 2011 the UK Government developed a “robust visa regime that welcomes all genuine students to the UK” (H.M. Gov. UK, 2013, p. 28).

2. Socialising. The Government has made efforts to recognise and acknowledge the economic, cultural and social benefits that international students bring to their educational providers and to the UK as a whole.

3. Employment opportunities, both during study time and after graduation. The Government has made it easier (and possible) for international students “to transfer to a skilled worker visa after graduation.” (H.M. Gov. UK, 2013, p. 29). All PhD students have the right to remain in the UK for up to one year after graduation.

The analysis of the UK’s international education policies, using Taylor’s methodology (cited in Ball, 1995, p. 712), shows that the policy satisfies all four criteria (see Appendix 23).

The UK’s goal of hosting 520,000 students per year by 2020 and thus boosting their local economy by GBP £13.1 billion is threatened by rivalry from the USA, Australia and Canada. According to (H.M. Gov. UK, 2013) Canada has a goal to more than
double the number of international students by 2022, (to 478,000) and US initiatives, such as the Immigration Reform Bill, expect international student contributions to reduce the budget deficit by $US200 billion within 10 years. (H.M. Gov. UK, 2013, p. 32).

Yet export education in the UK has been controversial and the “new Prime Minister Theresa May was notoriously hostile to international students in her previous role as Home Secretary” (Pitman, 2016, n. p.). The previous UK government and its learning institutions welcomed the benefits that international students brought to the UK, but some parts of society resented foreign students who were taking university placements that could be filled by local students. This perception also exists in Australia. It is still too early for the new UK Government to implement policy changes and already there is resistance to May’s tough stance. An all-party group, co-chaired by MP Bloomfield and Lord Bilimoria, has formed from both houses of parliament “to emphasise the contribution of international education to the UK” (Pitman, 2016, n. p.).

5.9 CANADIAN POLICY

Figures quoted by Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada (HMQRC, 2014, p. 21) show that there were 80,638 students from China studying in Canada in 2012 although only 26,238 were undergraduates (see Table 5.1). In 2011 the Canadian Government released a paper known as the Economic Action Plan 2011, designed to develop a comprehensive International Education Strategy and to constitute an advisory panel to enhance Canada’s profile in the international student market. As a follow up to the 2011 Action Plan, the Canadian Government produced the Global Markets Action Plan, released in November 2013 (HMQRC, 2014, p. 4).

The major policy initiatives to increase international student recruitment are “Focusing on Priority Education Markets” (HMQRC, 2014, p. 9); “Branding Canada to Maximize Success” (HMQRC, 2014, p. 10); “Strengthening Institutional Research Partnerships and Educational Exchanges, and Leveraging People-to-people Ties” (HMQRC, 2014, p. 11). The perceived competitive advantages that Canada can offer to international students are:
- A welcoming, safe and multicultural country offering high-quality education at an attractive price.
- A global centre of innovation, research and development.
- A research partner of choice.
- State-of-the-art research facilities.
- A world leader in skills development and other advanced skills for employment (HMQRC, 2014, p. 6).

There is a high emphasis on research and development, an area in which Australia acknowledges certain deficiencies. “Australia is now the only country in the OECD not to have a national strategy that bears on science and/or technology and/or innovation” (Chubb, 2014, p. 10). And “amongst 33 OECD countries Australia ranks 32\textsuperscript{nd} on business to research collaboration for small and medium enterprises, (SME’s), and 33\textsuperscript{nd} for large firms” (Chubb, 2014, p. 10).

Canada is a significantly preferred destination by HNWI Chinese for emigration (see Table 5.4). An initiative known as Canadian Express Class (CEC), introduced in 2008, affords greater opportunity for foreign student graduates to gain Canadian citizenship. Previously, the 8,000 possible citizenship applicants for the period May 2014 to December 2014 were oversubscribed (Government of Canada, 2015, n. p.). This supports the theory of cultural migration through study visas. Canada has three universities ranked in the top 50 in the world, (University of Toronto, 20th, McGill University 21st, and University of British Columbia 43rd); thus Canada can attract students through ‘quality of education’ (QS Top Universities, 2016, n. p.).

HMQRC (2014, p. 4) states that, “International education is at the very heart of our current and future prosperity.” Canada’s 2014 International Education Policy document acknowledges that Canada falls below the USA, the UK, Australia, Germany and France in attracting international students (based on 2012 figures). Nonetheless, the percentage increase in Canada’s international student intake has been higher in the past seven years, than the five previously mentioned countries that host more international students than Canada. Canada’s 2014 International Education Policy document “Overview”, attributes this success to the 2011 Economic Action Plan and the Global Market Action Plan released by the Canadian Minister of
Education in November 2013.

In contrast with the U.S. Department of Education International Strategy 2012-2016 document, the 2014 Canadian policy document (HMQRC, 2014), identifies and highlights the significant economic benefits that international students produce for Canada. “Data for 2012 show that 265,400 international students spent a total of some $8.4 billion in communities across Canada, helping sustain 86,570 Canadian jobs” (HMQRC, 2014, p. 7). Canada recognises that the main contributors to its international student population will be the following seven countries/regions; Brazil, China, India, Mexico, North Africa/Middle East, and Vietnam. The Canadian policy on the intake of international students is perhaps the most effective policy discussed in this chapter, certainly when measured by % increases. The Canadian document’s merit is that it clearly outlines the full economic and other benefits that international students bring to Canada. HMQRC (2014) is very similar to H.M. Gov. UK (2013) in regard to identifying economic benefits.

The analysis of Canada’s international education policies, using Taylor’s methodology (cited in Ball, 1995, p. 712), shows that the policy satisfies all four criteria (see Appendix 24).

Canada has many similarities with Australia and would appear to have some edge over Australia in attracting foreign students, especially students from China. This is not currently the case, but the situation could change rapidly. In 2012, there were 80,638 students from China studying in Canada, which was 30.4% of Canada’s total foreign student population (HMQRC, 2014, p. 21). Of these 26,238 were new enrolments, (see Table 5.1). The new enrolments from China represented 38% of the total new enrolments of 61,100 foreign students enrolled in 2012 (see Table 5.6). Canada’s international student policy is designed to attract new students and like the UK, the USA, Japan and Australia, the main focus is recruiting students from China.

5.10 THE JAPANESE POLICY

Japan released two educational policies on international education over a thirty-year period, in 1983 and 2008. The 1983 document was essentially not a policy on how to
attract international students, but rather a plan on how to deal with the 100,000 international students that they expected to accommodate by the year 2000. In reality their forecast was inaccurate, not surprising given the difficulties an international student faced if he/she wished to study in Japan. Japan, boasting the second largest economy in the world and the only Asian first world country other than Singapore, still held great attraction for Asian international students who made up over 90% of all international students in Japan (Shao, 2008). Japan remained the leader in the intake of Asian international students “until 2005, in which year China excelled” (Shao, 2008, p. 4). Japan realised that there are many advantages from hosting international students besides the obvious economic returns. These compensations include forming network connections, promoting R&D in Japan and recruiting skilled labour, amongst others (Shao^23, 2008, p. 4).

The falling in international student numbers below expectation prompted the Japanese Government to institute a study to address the situation. Many of the problems identified were peculiar to Japan, including the need for a student to have a Japanese “Guarantor”, and the difficulties foreign students face in finding suitable accommodation. Indeed “most international students from China in the late 20th Century lived in rundown flats without a built in bathroom” (Shao, 2008, p.p. 6-7). Restrictive rental conditions made it more difficult for foreign students in Japan. There were other issues with education quality and one of the aims of the 1983 policy, to entice PhD students, was lagging because of the structure of the PhD program at Japanese universities. “In 1992, the rate of awarded PhD degrees was as low as 1.2%” (Shao, 2008, p. 5). Working conditions for students on visas, and students resorting to illegal activities in order to survive, were investigated by the study^24 that formed the basis of the 2008 policy on international students.

The main feature of the 2008 policy is the plan to accept 300,000 international students

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23 All Shao references are from a “paper was presented to the 17th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia in Melbourne 1-3 July 2008. It has been peer reviewed via a double blind referee process and appears on the Conference Proceedings Website by the permission of the author who retains copyright. This paper may be downloaded for fair use under the Copyright Act (1954), its later amendments and other relevant legislation.” (Shao, 2008, p. 1.)

24 Study proposed by the Fukuda Government in July, 2008, analyses 1983 plan to accept 100,000 international students into Japan and the 2008 plan to accept 300,000 international students to study in Japan.
by 2020, preserving the status quo for Japan over the 12-year period from 2008 to 2020. In 2008 Japan hosted about 5% of all international students in the world, and on predicated figures, the 300,000 international students to be hosted in 2020 will be 5% of all the international students in the world. In pursuit of this plan, the new 2008 Japanese Policy for international education had five key points.

“An invitation to international students to study in Japan:

1. The improvement of an entrance examination, an enrollment and an immigration process.
2. The promotion of the globalisation of universities/colleges.
3. An arrangement for an appropriate environment to accept international students.
4. The promotion of accepting international students after graduation in Japan” (Shao, 2008, p. 8-9).

Japan’s 2008 plan did not succeed; actual foreign student enrolments peaked at about 141,700 in 2010, after which a number of natural and man-made disasters saw foreign student numbers decline. Figures released by the Japanese Government in 2013 show that the number of foreign students in Japan in 2012 was roughly 137,750, of which 96,592 were from China (see Table 5.1) and the next largest number were from Korea (Kahuchi, 2014, n. p.).

Japan now needs foreign students to make its domestic university system sustainable. In 1992, 2.05 million Japanese high school students qualified to enter university, but in 2007 that number had dropped to 1.3 million (Shao, 2008, p. 12). At the same time greater numbers of Japanese students, both at the undergraduate level and the postgraduate level, are electing to study abroad. It is noted that many of these students have chosen to study in Canada because language students do not need a visa (Kahuchi, 2014, n. p.).

The analysis of Japan’s international education policies using Taylor’s methodology (cited in Ball, 1995, p. 712) shows that the policy fails on verification (to host 300,000 international students by 2020), and vindication (the 2008 plan failed), which shows that the overall policy does not serve a function to help solve the problem of falling student enrolments. However, the document does meet the requirements of validation and social choice (see Appendix 25).
Japan attracts more Chinese students than Australia, and understanding the reason for this will help answer the question of “why Chinese students choose not to study in Australia”.

Japan, in its 1982 educational policy document, considered international students as a problem to be solved. It neither welcomed them nor rejected them, it simply accommodated them. The second policy released in 2008 supported this stance, but (at the time) recognised that foreign students were a benefit and that Japanese universities were experiencing difficulties filling enrolment quotas created by the decreasing number of domestic students continuing to tertiary education. Japan is yet to match the aggression of its competitors who are seeking international students, and its weak approach to the task has seen its position as a supplier of export education decline.

The anomaly to Japan’s present position on export education is the number of students from China. Although this is by far the most targeted market in the world, coveted by powerful suppliers such as the USA and the UK, Japan is still the second preferred destination for these students.
5.11 Comparative Analysis (discussion) Section

5.11.1 Policy Analysis

Table 5.8 gives a comparison of the student visa requirements and the overall educational costs that international students face when considering study abroad.

Table 5.8: Student visa comparisons by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Visa Processing time</th>
<th>Visa Cost</th>
<th>Cost of Education &amp; Living Cost</th>
<th>Employment opportunities</th>
<th>Migration Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>$553 AUD</td>
<td>$4-7,000/mth</td>
<td>20 hours/wk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>$414 AUD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>$160 AUD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>$14000USD/mth</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>$217 AUD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>2 Months</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$24000 AUD/yr</td>
<td>Up to 16 hr/wk</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>$1000/mth</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Information found on Immigration Department websites for the mentioned countries. See also footnotes

The International Education Policy documents of the seven countries studied and listed above have similar themes. The prime concern of each country is to provide the best quality education available and thus strengthen its reputation as an educational provider. The major suppliers of educational services recognise the value of partnerships, in particular with China and India, who supply the most international students. The USA has special interests in the two American continents with favoured agreements with Spain and Mexico. The UK is a favoured destination for students from the former British Commonwealth, and is also the most popular choice for learning English and for international students of school age.

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25 Approximate values after currency conversion
27 Study in Japan, (2015), living cost (includes academic fees) much more expensive than Australia. Cost quoted is the average cost per student throughout Japan. Tokyo is far more expensive at $16,500 USD/month.
28 Approximate values after currency conversion
Many countries recruit international students to bolster their own domestic higher education system. China is at present the largest supplier of international students, although other countries, such as India and Brazil, are sending increasing numbers abroad. Educational policies in various countries do affect their ability to attract international students. Australia has commissioned reviews on export education by Knight (2009), Baird (2010) and Chaney (2012), but despite their recommendations there have been no real policy changes to address the critical issues of quality of education and visa processing time. In April 2015, the DNSIE was issued to allow stakeholders in the international education industry to comment and make submissions to the Australian Government. This could yet prove decisive, but other Australian Government initiatives, such as reducing funding to universities, run counter to DNSIE’s stated aims. In particular, whilst the UK and the USA have been able to deliver students visas in less than a week, Australia still takes up to 3 months (for Chinese students), and the number of Australian universities ranked in the top 100 on the two major ranking sites, fell from six in 2013 to five in 2014.

Currently Australia’s position with regards to the intake of foreign students is improving, with international student enrolments rising by 17.4% in 2014 over 2013 admissions. This compares favourably with an average yearly increase of 6.1% over the past ten years (see Table 5.5). However, the flow of international students is volatile. In 2010, foreign student numbers studying in Australia fell considerably, although the number of foreign students in our major competing countries rose at the same time. Difficulties in visa processing applications along with costs associated with Australia’s high currency rate were recognised as contributing factors. In the same period, 2010, perceived racism towards Indian students studying in Melbourne decimated the Indian students market (see Chapter Two). The number of Indian students has not yet returned to the levels experienced prior to this incident.

To avoid incidents such as the Indian racism episode, the Australian HEI needs to be
proactive and have systems in place that can deal with these situations before they escalate. One of the recommendations of the Chaney Report was a

“critical need to establish a new high level Ministerial Coordinating Council on International Education (MCCIE) to be in place for the next five years. ... with expertise in matters relating to international education, science and research from across the sector, business and industry” (Chaney, 2013, p. 39).

Chaney’s (2013) proposal has not yet occurred, nor have many of the recommendations of the Knight Report (2011) and the Baird Report (2011). Whilst the Australian Government values the international student trade and is investigating ways to enhance and increase international students’ education, it remains reluctant to follow up on recommendations of reports that it has commissioned. One area of concern is the cost of student fees, which is a significant driver of students’ choice when considering a study abroad destination (Chaney, 2013, p. 26). Australia’s share of international students fell when prices were high, but increased markedly as the value of the AUD fell. Notwithstanding cost recommendations, Australia’s Federal Budget proposal (Abbott, 2014), if ratified, will significantly increase the fees for international students and jeopardise the ability of the Australian HEI’s to recruit these students.

Visa processing is another unresolved problem identified by Knight (2011), Baird (2011), & Chaney (2013). In Asian culture, ‘the buyer is king’, and the major buyer is the ‘emperor’. Australia has ignored this concept by treating Chinese secondary students as second-class citizens, designating them a category 3, (the lowest grading and status), when determining their visas status. Treating Chinese secondary students as category 3 is unreasonable because Chinese students have been the most prolific international students in Australia for many years, with little evidence of visa breaches. Compounding this discrimination is the fact that other Asian countries, like Japan and Singapore, who send very few students to Australia in comparison, are given favoured category 1 classification when it comes to visa processing. Competitor countries, notably the UK and the USA, are able to grant student visas to Chinese students in less than one week.
5.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that educational and visa policies do influence the rate of international student flow to a country. This is particularly true for Japan where unfriendly policies and practices have led to a steady reduction in international student numbers. Contrastingly, concerted efforts recently by Canada to create policies designed to attract international students are having effect, with increasing numbers of international students.

Australia has recognised the benefit from creating policies that will entice international students and has already commenced implementing some of them. Other policies relating to student visas and work restrictions for students are damaging Australia’s ability to attract students.

A different set of policies relating to immigration, capital investment and wealth protection were also investigated in the chapter. The findings in this chapter show that Australia is an ideal destination for corrupt HNWIs from China seeking to immigrate to Australia. Immigration, through the channel of students’ study visas, could explain why Australia hosts a disproportionate number of Chinese international students. None of the other themes, which constitute the contributory questions, gives Australia a significant advantage over any of its competitors. The next chapter explains the processes and findings of the focus group interviews. These findings created the original directions of this research project.

The situation in Australia is very similar to that in the USA where Ortiz, et al., (2015), contend that “for every seven international students enrolled, three US jobs are created or supported”. Ortiz’s research shows that the number of student enrolments has been declining in the UK since 2012, because of visa problems. Meanwhile Australia has rebounded in international student enrolments after a significant decline starting in 2010. In the same period both the USA and UK have shown a steady growth.
CHAPTER SIX

FOCUS GROUP
6.0 INTRODUCTION

A focus group is “a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative, sampling of a specific population, this group being ‘focused’ on a given topic” (MacMillan et al., cited in Wilson et al., 2013, p. 281).

Focus group data for this research was collected from four focus group sessions involving Chinese students at three different universities in Sydney; University of Sydney, (USYD) (n = 10), Western Sydney University (WSU) (n = 8) and Macquarie University (MU) (n = 3). The focus group sessions were conducted in the students’ first language, Mandarin, translated, and line-by-line coded, displaying a range of influencing opinions to the five focus group questions (see Appendix 5). The gamut of responses was themed to produce five main influences previously identified in section 1.3 Research Questions.

The inquiry technique of the investigator is a critical element of all three data collection strategies used in this investigation; focus group, Internet questionnaire, and interview. It is crucial that the questions, written or oral, are clear and unambiguous. Essentially the questions must produce a response from the volunteer participants, which contributes meaningful data to the focus of the inquiry. Yin (1994) explains the importance of understanding the relationships between strategy, form of research questions and events being explored (see Table 6.1). The Table shows that for a case study, the focus must be on current events and the absence of a control group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Form of my research</th>
<th>Requires control</th>
<th>Focuses on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Relevant situations for different research strategies
6.1 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis process used for focus group data has been explained in section 4.7 of Chapter Four.

6.1.1 Coding

Coding theory and the methodology used to code the focus group data has been explained in section 4.7.2 of Chapter Four.

6.1.2 Thematic Analysis

The grouping of labels into categories is known as the first stage of thematic analysis and Khnadkar (2009) suggests that these categories can be further grouped into patterns. For example, safety and security could have been grouped with other categories such as climate and standards of living and lifestyle into a single theme, migration possibilities, which would have accorded with the developed theory of this thesis.

6.1.3 Conceptual Analysis

The value of this research is the accuracy of the theory it has produced. Utilising this theory could be critical to the future success of Australian universities in their bid to recruit Chinese students. The data driven theory should explain why such a
disproportionate number of students from China elect to study in Australia. This research differs from the findings of other researchers because it recognises that study destination is often a parental choice made independent of the students’ preferences. Further, the final choice is generally influenced by a range of forces, connections and imaginations embedded in Chinese culture and swayed by *guanxi*, corruption, and wealth protection issues related to high net worth individuals (HNWI) in China.

### 6.1.4 Data Display

Burns (1997, p. 397) claims that the main “purpose of research is not only to increase your own understanding, but also to share that knowledge with others”. This thesis report includes all the original data, including audio scripts from the focus groups, the Internet questionnaire responses, and the charts and statistical tables derived from the raw data. Where necessary, charts, tables and Figures have been produced to assist the reader’s interpretation and understanding of the data.

### 6.1.5 Verification Strategies

Conceptualisation of data is the key product of any research, so the importance of the verification process used to arrive at conceptualisation/theorising was paramount. The following tactics were employed to ensure the integrity of the derived conclusions.

**Clustering and Theming**

A clustering technique was used to collate the information concerning a phenomenon into groups that had similar patterns or characteristics. The clustering of data facilitates the process of conceptualising from which the final theory of the proposed project will be drawn. It was important that even before data collection began that there was some notion as to what grouping and clusters would be used in the investigation. The initial data generated twenty-four different clusters of answers, such as Environment (number four in FGQ1) in the table below. Word clusters that suggest environment include:

- “Thirdly, we have more freedom here in Australia” S12; or
- “Additionally, the environment and climate here (in Australia) is better”, S13.
A full analysis of the clustering emanating from the open coding is shown in Table 6.2 on the following page.
Table 6.2: Summary of Focus Group Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motives for Study in Australia</th>
<th>FGQ1</th>
<th>FGQ2</th>
<th>FGQ3</th>
<th>FGQ4</th>
<th>FGQ5</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Immigration</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Climate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Safety and Security</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Environment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Recommendation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Relative/friend in Australia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Quality of Education</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Cost</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Visa conditions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Employment opportunities post graduation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Lifestyle</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Independence from family</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. New social experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Learn English</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Learn Time management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Improved study techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Work opportunities in Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Will recommend Australia to others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10/21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Diversified population</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Scholarship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Australian Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Opportunity Factors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Discrimination</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Social alienation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Australian Government Educational Policies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Item 8 (Quality of Education), was the most frequent single response (frequency = 76) but it was more often referred to as a negative or a disincentive reason for study in Australia.

Lifestyle (item 12), frequency 23, can also encompass such items as Australian culture, (item 22, frequency 37), discrimination (item 24, frequency 19) and social alienation (item 25, frequency 10), making lifestyle issues the dominant concern of the students. Lifestyle considerations would be the foremost influence if transcultural citizenship was the hidden motive for study in Australia.

The other group themes to emerge were cost, (item 9, frequency 27), environment,
(item 4, frequency 27) and employment/immigration opportunities (items 1, 18, frequencies 14, 13). A Graphical representation of Table 6.1 is shown in Figure 6.1.

**Figure 6.1: Summary of number of focus group responses for each theme.**

There are two main features of figure 6.1. Quality of education is by far the most popular response and this was expected. If a student has travelled overseas to gain an education, purely for the sake of education, then the quality of education is the most important influence in his/her study choices. If there are other reasons, other than the educational aspect, for studying abroad, and it was desirable to keep those reasons secret, citing the ‘quality of education’ is a safe subterfuge.

The second most common responses are the two equal influences, ‘immigration’ and ‘environment’. These influences are very desirable characteristics for anyone seeking transcultural citizenship. The next two equal influences, ‘climate’ and ‘safety and
security’ are also desirable characteristics for anyone seeking transcultural citizenship. This suite of the four most desirable situations, combined with the fact that Australia does not have an extradition treaty\(^{31}\) with China, make Australia an ideal destination for HNWIs from China seeking to emigrate.

### 6.1.6 Making Contrasts and Comparisons

Miles and Huberman, 1994 (cited Robson (2006, p. 480-1) claim that “making contrasts and comparisons, establishing similarities and differences between and within data sets” is an important stage of transforming raw data into meaningful information. The above Table 6.1 was themed into five categories; quality of education, lifestyle, cost, environment and work/immigration opportunities. These themes were interrogated, using an Internet questionnaire to ascertain the relevant potency of each influence. In accordance with the Critique Interpretative Approach, recurrent feedback in the investigation facilitated continual refinement to the developing theory and the direction of further inquiry. The researcher, prior to issuing the Internet questionnaire, was unaware of the extent of parents’ involvement in destination choice for overseas study.

### 6.1.7 Checking for Researcher Effects

Although this was a grounded study I was aware of many influences affecting students’ study-abroad options through my experiences during professional employment at CCIEE and BIEE. Nevertheless, an absence of pre-conceived bias can be found in the many discussions and emails between professor Singh and myself, which show a changing and evolving understanding of the importance of each of the factors being measured. The two key findings of this research, parental involvement in the decision-making process, and corruption and resulting immigration issues, emerged after the

---

\(^{31}\) An extradition treaty was signed with China in 2007, but it still awaits ratification. The Australian Government has doubts about this treaty because it “contains weaker human rights protections than is the case in other extradition treaties to which Australia is a party” (Patterson, 2017, n. p.).
Internet questionnaire had been completed. These latter findings were confirmed by reports published in credible media sources and the follow-up interviews, in China and Australia. Previous researchers in this field were unaware of Olesen’s (2016) revelations in the Panama Papers and failed to make the connection between other evidence of corruption in China and Australia (Chung 2013; Cornwall 2014; De Jong 2014). This link provides a powerful motive for HNWIs in China to emigrate.

Although the proportion of students involved in this scheme could not be measured, Olesen (2016) estimates that 40% of HNWIs are involved in capital flight, and HNWIs are the parents of the majority of students who study in Australia.

### 6.2 DISCUSSION

Follow up interviews, in Australia and China, prosecuted after the Internet questionnaire, confirmed the reservations as to the validity of the collected data. Twelve parents of Chinese students who had completed tertiary education in Australia were emailed in China to give written response to the following questions:

1. Was the choice to study overseas made by the parent or the students?
2. Who had the most influence in selecting Australia as host country?
3. What was the main reason for choosing Australia?
4. Do the parents intend to migrate to Australia in the short or long term?
5. Have the parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?
### Table 6.3: Summary of parents' responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Question 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PP1</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP2</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>School in China</td>
<td>USYD</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP3</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP4</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Education/environment</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP5</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Child’s uncle &amp; brother</td>
<td>Relative in Australia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP6</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Intended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP7</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Lifestyle &amp; safety</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP8</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Lifestyle, safety &amp; environment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP9</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Quality of Education &amp; environment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP10</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Agents</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Intended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP11</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP12</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five out of twelve respondents have definitely stated that it was the parent who made the decision of where to study. Yet another three stated that it was ‘family’, perhaps a euphemism for parents.

Acquiescent bias and dissemination is evidenced in these responses. One respondent initially denied owning property and having immigration intentions, but further investigation showed that she owned two properties in Sydney and that she had applied for a business sponsored immigration visa. Parents perceive that quality of education and safety are the most ‘acceptable’ reasons for choosing Australia and hence rate these highly, even if they have not influenced their decision to choose Australia as a host nation.

The parents were asked two further questions with options offered and tested by a Likert Scale:

6. What was the main purpose for study overseas? 1 Strongly Agree... 5 Strongly Disagree
7. What factors influenced your choice of host country? 1 Strongly Agree... 5 Strongly Disagree
The results are shown in Figures 6.2 and 6.3

**Figure 6.2: Comparison of factors contributing to the decision in favour of overseas study?**

The first column represents a Likert score 1 (strongly agree). Quality of Education rates very highly. This an example of acquiescent bias coupled with the need to provide an acceptable reason. In that context it could also be an honest reason in every case. No person strongly disagreed with any influence.
Figure 6.3: Comparison of factors influencing parents’ choice of host country?

Series 1 represents Likert score 1 etc. No parent gave a score 5 in either figure, and no parent gave a score of 4 or 5 in figure 6.3. There is consistency between the two tables. Although this data was collected after the Internet questionnaire, it is shown before analysis of that latter data because of its relevance to the answers provided by the students in the questionnaire.
6.3 CONCLUSION

The Focus Group responses set the direction for further investigation in this thesis, although the apparent flaws in the validity of the responses have been identified in this chapter and previous chapters. Any ethnological study relies heavily on the truthfulness of the volunteers and the researcher’s ability to analyse the responses to produce a valid theory. When the Focus Group replies were analysed, this researcher wrongly assumed that all the respondents were truthful and knew the correct information to the questions being interrogated. This erroneous notion persisted until the completion of the Internet questionnaire, when the evidence of many invalid responses, acquiescent bias, and other factors challenged the validity of the collected data. Coincidentally, the release of the Panama papers, (Olesen, 2016), alerted this researcher to other influences affecting students’ (that is, parents’) choices of host country for study abroad options. Even with this latter knowledge, it would not have been possible to elicit more valid replies from either group of respondents, given the dictates of ‘thick face, black heart’.
CHAPTER SEVEN

EVIDENCE FOR QUALITY OF EDUCATION
7.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter examined the evidence from the original focus group interviews with twenty-one university students currently studying in Sydney, Australia. The focus group findings set the tone and direction for further research.

Missing from the focus group interviews was any discussion of corruption involving the accumulation of money required to fund their study in Australia. Another omission was any mention of possible corruption by international students in Australia gaining qualifications by plagiarism or the employment of ghost-writers. This chapter examines the evidence suggested by the focus group and supported by Gong and Huybers (2015) that “quality of education is a ‘key driver’ of international students’ choice of study destination”. The procedures and methodology used in Chapter Seven will be replicated in the remaining evidence chapters. The limitations of the investigation are the forces, imaginations and connections that have influenced students to study in Australia. Push dynamics are only relevant to the inquiry if they have an influence on the study destination. This research followed standard investigative procedures as follows:

1. Data Sources. A critical interpretative methodology was used in this study; with data originally sourced through focus groups (n = 21) in Sydney, Internet questionnaire (n = 635) in China, and subsequent follow up interviews in China and Australia.

2. Previous research in this field by Mazzarol & Soutar (2002); Marginson (2004, 2007); Li and Bray (2007); Yang (2010) and Gong and Huybers (2015) offered insights into the exploration questions used in the focus group interviews. These questions are listed in Chapter 1, FGQ1 – FGQ7.

4. Analysis of the focus groups data produced five main themes, introduced as contributory questions in Chapter One.

5. The Internet questionnaire tested the validity of the findings of the focus group interviews.

6. The methodology used for the focus group interviews is explained in
Chapter 6. The findings emanating from the focus group were pivotal to designing the 48 questions tested by the Internet questionnaire (see Appendix 7).

7.1 CULTURAL EFFECTS

A complete comprehension of the evidence requires a basic understanding of the unique aspects of Chinese culture. China is one of the world’s oldest societies, imbued with cultures and mores that have existed for centuries. The rate of the changes that have taken place in China in the past four years greatly exceeds anything that any other country has experienced; yet these mores still exist. Currently, Western business pragmatisms in China cohabit with traditional customs such as FACE (面子：mianzi) and guanxi. The data for this thesis must be viewed through the prism of Chinese eyes and the evidence weighed using this guideline.

7.2 DATA SOURCES

7.2.1 Focus Groups

The original data for this thesis was supplied as a focus group case study. The volunteers for this experiment are shown in table 7.1.
Table 7.1: Details on focus groups volunteers

7.2.2 Internet Questionnaire

The purpose of the online questionnaire was to probe the reasons behind the findings of the focus groups. The methodology used to design the Internet questionnaire is explained in Chapter Four. Other factors not discovered in the focus group interviews but revealed in the Panama Papers, concerning German bank Mossack Fonseca (Olesen, 2016), alerted this researcher to another powerful motive for choosing Australia as a host country; immigration. Immigration through student visas has been termed transcultural citizenship. Follow up interviews, planned originally to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire analysis results, confirmed that transcultural citizenship was a strong influence by the parents’ choice of Australia as a host nation. A full list of the 48 Internet questions is included as Appendix 7.

The questionnaire invoked a 5 point Likert Scale with Strongly Agree (of the Likert Scale), has the lowest score of one, and Strongly Disagree the highest score of five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group from Macquarie University</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>Jiangsu</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Masters Degree, Accounting</th>
<th>24</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Guangdong</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters Degree, Accounting</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Heilongjiang</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters Degree, Accounting</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group from Western Sydney University</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>Shandong</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Masters Degree, Education</th>
<th>23</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>Hebei</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters Degree, Education</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S6</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Masters Degree, Education</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S7</td>
<td>Heilongjiang</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>PhD Education</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>Henan</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>PhD Education</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S9</td>
<td>Hebei,</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>PhD Education</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S10</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>PhD Education</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>Jiangxi</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>PhD Education</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group from the University of Sydney</th>
<th>S12</th>
<th>Beijing</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Finance and Accounting</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S13</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Finance and Econometrics</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S14</td>
<td>Fujian</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Finance and Econometrics</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S15</td>
<td>Guangdong</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Finance and Accounting</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S16</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S17</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S18</td>
<td>Hubei</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Finance and Accounting</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S19</td>
<td>Shanxi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Finance and Data Analysis</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S20</td>
<td>Fujian</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Finance &amp; Business Analysis</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S21</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each question in the main body of the questionnaire was posed in an affirmative and negative manner; the data is reliable if the sum of the two responses is six (6). A cursory analysis of the spreadsheet of all data showed that some respondents had presented unreliable data, which was culled from the sample. The process was started, in a spreadsheet, by placing the positively devised question and the negatively expressed question in adjacent columns. Thus Q1 is adjacent to Q25, Q2 to Q26; thus pairing the full 48 questions. A third column was generated which shows the sum of the scores of the two-paired columns. This data was highlighted. If the total score is 6 then reliability is certain, but scores of 5 or 7 would also show strong reliability. It is not unusual for someone to actively agree with a positively expressed question and then passively disagree with the negatively framed question.

The data in the online questionnaire has been separated into two different collections. In one group are 37 students who are post-GaoKao school leavers who already have intention to study overseas. Some of the data from the other larger group, students at an international school, does not satisfy the validity test as explained previously, even allowing for a skewing effect caused by acquiescence bias. The first group is valid after the acquiescence bias factor has been considered. The 37 post GaoKao students were recruited through the website of an affiliate company of CCIEE. An inducement of a ‘red pocket’ (small sum of money) was offered to all respondents. The NEAF letter to volunteers was displayed on the website in both Mandarin and English. The respondents were from all over China and the data collected included contact information from the volunteers.

The larger group of 598 middle school students were all recruited from a Foreign Language school in Lianyungang, a middle-size city in Jiangsu Province. The school has a population of about 5000 students who come from all over China, but mostly from Jiangsu province. The questionnaire was posted on the school intranet system and emails, containing the relevant NEAF requirements, were sent to all eligible students, (i.e. students over 16 years of age), offering them the opportunity to complete.

Respondents were eliminated using an index called LongString Index “computed as the maximum number of consecutive items with the same response option chosen.” (Mead & Craig, 2011, p. 3). Respondents were eliminated from the survey if their LongString index > 7. According to Mead & Craig, (2011, p. 3-4) such responses are careless and the respondents are invalid.
the questionnaire during a free period on offer. About 30% of the eligible students accepted the invitation. The identity of the respondents was anonymous, but each student supplied their date of birth, sex, their course of study and the likely time that they will commence study overseas. For identification purposes, each student supplied their intranet IP address, so if interviews were required a request could be made through the school that would then contact the students and his/her parents for permission.

7.2.2.1 The validity and reliability of the Internet Questionnaire

The data from the 635 respondents is recorded in Appendix 14 and the reliable data from the 374, after eliminating the 261 students deemed unreliable, is recorded in Appendix 16.

The results generated by the twenty-four original questions, positively formulated, and then matched with the responses to the same question asked in a negatively formulated enquiry, have been included in the appropriate evidence chapters. Perfect validity would result in the two symmetrical Figures as shown below in 7.1.

**Figure 7.1: Bar Graph Theoretical Example of Valid Data**

![Bar Graph Theoretical Example of Valid Data](attachment:fig7_1.png)

This is an ideal Graphical representation of 100% valid data. It is a sample of how data from the 635 respondents would look if the data were perfectly valid. Note the symmetry of the figures relating to the two different questions.
The strongly agree score for question $x$ (50 students), matches the strongly disagree score for question $24+x$. A quick check of the degree of validity in all future charts of this type is the relative symmetry about the neither score. The data displayed in the 24 paired questions does not exhibit this degree of perfection, but despite the lack of perfection the data still has relevance to the investigation.

Previously, Marginson (2007, p. 12) quoted OECD figures when he concluded: “In considering where to study, mobile students’ key choice factors are, in order, country (54%)”. Maybe that percentage is higher than the OECD imagined, but more importantly, the reason for choosing country is a further essential statistic.

Following the dictates of the custom of FACE, volunteers answering the questionnaire or in the focus group interrogations will respond with the answer most palatable to the inquirer. Such occurrences are referred to as acquiescence bias. If the informants (students) did not fully understand the real reason that their parents wanted them to study overseas, they would reply with the most palatable option. ‘Quality of education’ is such an option.

Schriesheim and Hill (1991) contended that there was no evidence to support the view that a mixture of positively and negatively posed questions could be used to counteract acquiescence response bias. Hinz (et al., 2007) conducted experiments on 2037 volunteers that support Schriesheim and Hill (1991). The volunteers were tested using 5 subscales. “For each subject and for each subscale an acquiescence score was calculated based on the simple sum of the answers to the items of both orientations” (Hinz et al., 2007, p. 1).

A simple synopsis of their investigation follows:
A test was conducted on 2037 volunteers. Each Volunteer answered 4 questions under five subheadings as per Table 7.2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.2: Possible Causes of Acquiescent Bias</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Fatigue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each set of answers (like 1,1,3,5) were set into a large table and statistically measured for acquiescence bias. i.e. 5 x 2037 = 10,185 sets were recorded

Table 7.2 is a Sample Table of data collected from the 2037 volunteers by Hinz (et al., 2007) and used to show that using a mixture of positively and negatively posed questions does not necessarily counteract acquiescence response bias.

“Conclusion: The acquiescence scores derived by simple addition of item values proved to be well suited to clarify amount and conditions of the acquiescence effect” (Hinz, et al., 2007, p. 1). Examining the data for the full 635 volunteers showed that there were 793 and 9609 in categories 1 and 2 respectively, (strongly agree and agree), in stark comparison to 5262 and 2194 in classifications 4 and 5 (strongly disagree and disagree). Real validity requires that the value in the group 1 set should be approximately equal to the value in set 5, the same applying for groups 2 and 4. This did not happen with the Internet questionnaire.

Hinz (et al., 2007) sought responses to four questions, two asked in a positive format and two in a negative format. The coded replies are two positive, two negative and one neutral. The interrogation of the Chinese students was very similar, except that forty-eight questions were asked in the investigation.

The original online questionnaire can be partitioned into two collections. The larger group of 598 respondents were students in the age range of 17-18 years. The smaller group (37) were GaoKao graduates and much older. A summation of the data from the former set revealed 26.1% scored in category 1 (strongly agree), 31.5% category 2 (agree), 18.0% (neutral), 17.3% (disagree) and 7.7% (strongly disagree). All items were both positively and negatively formulated and, if valid, would have produced a palindromic result whereby the percentage response to category 1 equalled the response to category 5 and so on. These results do not conform to the pattern necessary for validity; instead, they show marked acquiescence bias.
The results from the 37 more mature-aged students were significant, with mean scores 0.148, (14.8%), 0.332, 0.194, 0.248 and 0.079. These scores are within a 10% margin of error, which conforms to normal acquiescence bias. Although the GaoKao graduates are much fewer in number, their data is more valid and relevant to the findings of this research. The quality of education has featured in all sets of data and cannot be ignored. Country is paramount if wealth protection and transcultural citizenship are the superior forces driving the study abroad decision.

7.3 FINDINGS FROM INITIAL DATA ANALYSIS

Focus Groups: Main Themes

The main themes to emerge from the analysis of the data were: Education, Lifestyle, Cost, Environment and Work/immigration opportunities (as listed in Section 7.1, item 3 above).

Education refers to the quality of education and the reputation of the educational provider. The ability to parlay the provided education into a career path is important.

Lifestyle is synonymous with the phrase ‘happy life’, the most fervent wish of the Chinese parent for their child. Table 7.3 shows that this was the most frequently commented factor by the focus groups.

Table 7.3: Frequency of each Theme in Pre-Coded Data from the Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Question 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/Immigration opportunity</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3 can be visually represented in figure 7.2. The original coded data is displayed in Appendix 13: Summary of Total Focus Group Responses.
Figure 7.2: Frequency of each Theme in Pre-Coded Data from the Focus Groups

The plotted graph of this data shows that education and life-style are/were the dominant forces that influenced their decision. Quality of education was more frequently cited when responding to Question 2, than Question 1. This shows that the negative aspects outweighed the positive features of the quality of education in Australia; disputing Gong and Huybers’ view (2015) “that ‘quality of education and safety’ are the main drivers in country selection for overseas study by students from China”. See a full analysis in Appendices.

7.4 INITIAL FINDINGS AND ASSUMPTIONS FROM FOCUS GROUP

The perceptions surrounding the ‘quality of education’ in Australia that Chinese students held prior to commencing study here are captured in answers to FGQ1, “What are the five most important positive factors, concerning study in Australia that you considered, prior to making your decision to study in Australia?” Typical answers were:

S12 (Student 12): “Firstly, the threshold of applying for Australian schools is not high.”

S15: “Thirdly, before coming here, I heard that University X ? was a great school.”

S19: “Firstly, the studying period of Australian universities is three years
and relative shorter.”

Contrast the above answers with replies to FGQ2, “What are the five most important negative factors, concerning study in Australia that you considered, prior to making your decision to study in Australia?” Typical answers were:

S5: “Most Australian universities are not that highly ranked globally except for the eight most famous universities. So these two were the main factors that discouraged me to choose Australia as the destiny of overseas study.”

or

S12: “Firstly, the overall quality of Australian education system is inferior to those of America and Britain.”

Yet there are more Chinese university undergraduates in Australia than the UK, and relative to population size, there are far more students from China in Australia than in the USA. The assessments by S5 and S12 are perceptions that many students from China may have held prior to their decision to study in Australia. At least, in the case of S12, comments for FGQ1 and FGQ2 are consistent.

Initial Findings and Assumptions from Internet Questionnaire

In contrast, the Internet questionnaire was conducted in China, questioned students yet to travel abroad, and was designed to examine the reasons why the ‘quality of education’ was such an influencing factor for study destination. Although interpreting and validating the generated data was challenging and vital to the experiment, (see 7.2.2. above), an analysis of the results all point to the same conclusion for a large proportion of the students. The inescapable conclusion is that ‘quality of education’ was not a key driver directing PRC students to Australian universities, although it could be a key driver guiding students to elite universities in other countries.

7.5 DETAILED THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUP AND QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

7.5.1 Detailed Thematic Analysis Of Focus Group Data
A detailed thematic analysis of the focus group data is described in section 4.7.2 of Chapter Four.

7.5.2 Detailed Thematic Analysis Of Internet Questionnaire Data

The analysed focus group data produced five themes, which were tested by the Internet questionnaire.

- The five themes, in conjunction with the five main focus group questions were used as a guide to creating 24 positively framed questions (questions 1 to 24) to be tested by an Internet questionnaire. For further reference, the positively formulated questions have been designated as set A.
- Starting with question 25, 24 negatively formatted questions (questions 25 to 48) were developed to reveal the same information as the first 24 questions. The latter 24 questions will be referred to as set B. Care was taken to construct set B in such a manner so that it was not obvious that the same question had been repeated.
- The Internet data was collected through two different websites as described in 7.2.2.
- The information from both sources remained live on website (http://www.sojump.com/), but was also transcribed into a word document (Appendix 19) and spreadsheet (Appendix 14).
- The information from Appendix 14 was transcribed to a new spreadsheet, in English, with the information recorded alongside the question (Appendix 15).
- The validity and reliability of the statistics was questioned in section 7.2.2.1.
- To test for acquiescence bias, and/or reliability, the totals of each type of response were calculated. Ideally, considering all 48 questions, the sum of #1 responses should equal the sum of #5 responses. Similarly, the sum of all #2 responses should approximately equal the sum of #4 responses. The figures showed otherwise with totals of 7943 (#1), 9609 (#2), 5472 (#3), 5672 (#4) and 2194 (#5).
- Since 7943 ≠ 2194 and 9609 ≠ 5672 there is an error in the data.
- Factors that caused these discrepancies include acquiescent bias, question construction and invalid data. Poorly designed pairings of questions is exemplified by questions 1 and 25. Inquiry 1 of the questionnaire asked if the quality of the university was the ‘main’ consideration. viz:

1. **The main consideration** when choosing study abroad options is the reputation of the university.

25. *The reputation of the university of my choice is (was) not a factor for consideration when investigating study abroad options.*

An analysis of the responses to these two questions is shown in Table 7.4.
Table 7.4: Statistics on Responses to Questions 1 and 25 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of response</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of students who agreed that the reputation of the university was an important issue = 319 (85.3%) for Q 1; and = 186 (49.7%) in response to the negatively posed question. Statistically this is not a well-behaved Table, even allowing for acquiescence bias. The mean of the two questions shows that 67.5% of students agree that the reputation of the university was an important driver in the choice of host country.

The lack of consistency between the positively formatted question and its negatively posed construction shows that the respondents lacked commitment to their replies. The value of the thesis depended on having reliable data.

A simple reliability test of data was completed using columns J-N inclusive of spreadsheet. The data from Question 25 was merged with the data from Question 1. Thus Strongly Agree = 1 score (Q1) + 5 score (Q25) and so forth. The final results for Question 1 revealed the following:
Validity Check

The questionnaire invoked a 5 point Likert Scale as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>319</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The displayed numbers above are the combined results for Question 1 and Question 25, with Strongly Agree being the total score of the Strongly Agree responses for Question 1 plus the Strongly Disagree responses of Question 25.

The individual numbers for question 1 are

261 294 44 24 12.

For ‘data validity’ the scores for question 25 should have been

12 24 44 294 261.

Instead the responses were recorded as

142 158 106 171 58

giving the figures as recorded immediately above. A full analysis in this fashion was calculated for all paired questions and recorded.

Schriesheim & Hill (1991) have identified the tendency to respond with acquiescence when completing questionnaires. This knowledge has created a need

“for greater attention to questionnaire development in epidemiology, there has been less focus on the wide range of different biases, at different levels, stemming from the various modes of administering questionnaires” (Bowling 2005, p. 289).

Bowling (2005, p. 287) further asserts, “Research has indicated that when questions are presented visually (as in self-administered questionnaires) respondents are likely to begin with the first response option presented (primacy effects).”

Allowing for these discrepancies, it would seem that the number of students (from 635 questioned) who truly believed that ‘The main consideration when choosing study abroad options is the reputation of the university,’ lies within the range 229 – 555. The
mean of these two statistics is 392, significantly more than 50%.

- A similar spreadsheet was developed for the 37 post GaoKao informants. The GaoKao responders provided more reliable data than the 635 students as a whole.
- Some data was irrelevant based on reliability requirements. The data was further scrutinized in spreadsheet (Appendix 15). The process employed was to place the two-paired questions in adjacent columns and compare the sum of the scores. Ideal validity and reliability would deliver a score of 6 for all paired totals for each question. Appendix 16 shows varied results on the score of reliability.
- A decision was made to accept sums of 5, 6 or 7, for paired questions, as being reliable data. Sums of 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, or 10 were considered unreliable.
- Any respondent with at least 18 of his/her 24 sum scores, (75%) having a total of 5, 6 or 7 was retained and all other data was deleted. The process of culling the unwanted data was effected on a spreadsheet (Appendix 15) with the rows highlighted in blue being the deleted data. 374 students remained after the cull.
- The data was then updated on the website, which was still live, and the International school produced from the website an analysed MS Word document summary (Appendix 19).
- The analysed summary was individually transferred to a spreadsheet and paired questions were analysed and Figureed to re-test for validity and reliability.
- A new spreadsheet, (Appendix 15), was created and the validity of the data in each question pairing was tested for validity. This was accomplished by sorting the totals of the scores from the paired questions, and the results were recorded in the Validity Table (Appendix 17). Any score within the three middle shaded columns reflects a valid response. The results of a question pairing were accepted as valid if 70% of scores were within this range. Evidence of acquiescence bias can be seen in a quick perusal of totals 4 and 8. These should be equal, but in most cases the positive response is more frequent than its negative counter-part.
The evidence confirms the variety of reasons parents have for selection of host countries for their children’s study-abroad program.

Student S2 confirmed this assertion when responding to FGQ2:
“When I first had the idea of studying abroad I was very young. So I did not have many of my own opinions. Instead, my parents made decisions for me and took a lot of things into consideration including the positive factors”.

As a native of China, I know that such determinations are of paramount significance, to the family, and the final decision is only made after much deliberation. The motivators influencing the choices faced are many, but the over-arching motivator is “What is best for my child?” For many parents, the resulting conclusion includes the possibility of immigration to the country of choice. The purpose of this investigation is to determine why so many students continue to choose Australia. The defining reason why students choose Australia may not be any single consideration but, as FG Student S7 explained:

“the first reason I chose Australia is that it is an English speaking country. Secondly, Australian universities provided scholarship with higher monetary amount. Besides, the climate here is very comfortable. It is really important to feel comfortable when studying abroad.”

When comparing Australia to the UK, S7 added: “Britain is also an option, but we all know that Britain is a traditional capitalist country and its degree of cultural tolerance is not as high as Australia. Compared to Britain, Australia is a much younger and dynamic immigrant country. The macro-environment here is better than Britain.”

7.6 THEME 1: QUALITY OF EDUCATION

7.6.1 Theme 1: Quality of Education, Focus Group

The focus group volunteers mentioned ‘quality of education’ 118 times in discussing
the five main questions, 38 responses of which were in replies to FGQ2. (What are the five most important negative factors, concerning study in Australia that you considered, prior to making your decision to study in Australia?). However, only 22 mentions were expressed when deliberating on FGQ1. (What are the five most important positive factors, concerning study in Australia that you considered, prior to making your decision to study in Australia?) (see Table 7.2 above). S1’s comment is a typical response to FGQ1.

S1: ‘I think the educational system of Australia is better than that of Britain.’

S3’s response reflects the thinking of most of the FG volunteers.

S3: ‘Australia is not the best nor the worst. In fact, it is a compromising choice.’

Other comments, which contradict S1 above and generally support S3 include the response by S18.

S18: ‘Firstly, the ranking and quality of Australian education are still inferior to those of Britain and America.’

S16 gave a more thoughtful response.

S16: ‘Firstly, the quality of education here is not guaranteed. I come from the north of Jiangsu Province in China. There is a saying in my hometown that if children study in Australia, people will regard them as spoiled sons from rich families.’

S3, when answering FGQ1, suggests that quality of education is not the most compelling reason for students to choose Australia as a study destination.

S3: “As you cannot receive excellent education within only one year, I think going to Britain is not a good choice. In terms of America, the academic threshold is too high for me. It is very difficult to get the offer from the top 100 universities in the USA. Australia is not the best nor the worst. In fact, it is a compromising choice. Of course, immigration is also an important factor.” (Italics added by researcher).
Student S9 also chose to study in Australia, even though when deliberating on FGQ2 he/she admitted:

“Most Australian universities are not that highly ranked globally except for the eight most famous universities. So these two were the main factors that discouraged me to choose Australia as the destiny of overseas study.”

Student S4, also accepted that:

“Besides, although I said that rankings of universities are very important, it is not the most important factor.”

Student S4’s comment argues that the quality of education in Australia was of a sufficient standard to make education in Australia worthwhile.

Student S5 responded when asked: “What factors have influenced your decision on choosing Australia as your destiny of overseas study?”

“I think the lack of publicity constitutes a negative factor. Because compared to Britain and the US, Australia seems not very famous in education. And I know little about this country before coming here, .... so going to America is the most popular option to Chinese students.”

Anecdotal evidence supports S5’s observation because more PRC students do study in the USA than in any other country. S12’s comment supports S5’s response.

S12: “Firstly, the overall quality of Australian education system is inferior to those of America and Britain. My academic performance in China is excellent enough to let me enter into highly ranked American universities.”

S12 still elected to study in Australia, despite his/her excellent academic performance in China being sufficient to have gained him/her admission to the highest ranked universities in the USA. This pattern of responses is repeated throughout the focus group interviews. Students acknowledged many positive aspects of tertiary study in Australia but admitted there were better alternatives in the USA and the UK.

For example:

S14: “First of all, Britain and America are countries with very outstanding education system. Many of my friends choose to further their study in
these two countries.”

S15: “A degree from an Australian university is not very highly valued in China.”

S20: “The quality of education here is not as high as in America and Britain.”

These comments demonstrate that the ‘quality of education’ was not the pull factor that brought these students to Australia, but as S14 (above) alludes, it may have been an influence for students choosing other countries than Australia. The comments also show that while quality of education alone did not influence students to study in Australia, it did not deter them, and when considered with other motivators, which made immigration appealing, the quality of education was sufficient.

S14, in response to FGQ3, showed his/her disappointment with the quality of education provided when he/she opined that

“the quality of education in Australia is questionable.”

S21, when asked if he/she would recommend Australia by FGQ7, proposed that

“If you plan to immigrate to a foreign country, then I would recommend Australia. But if you want to further your study and find a job in China after graduate, then I will recommend the US.”

The quality of education is certainly a requirement and a major concern for students from the PRC who study abroad, but its significance is subservient, for some students, to other forces. Referring to S21’s intentions above, emigration to Australia is highly desirable. Macquarie University’s website seeks to attract international students with the enticement “Live in one of the world's most beautiful and exciting cities” (Macquarie University, 2016, n. p.). The same website justifies its claim with information about, The Climate, Things to Do, and Safety. Under its banner question of “Why Study Here?” it offers the following:

“Imagine studying in one of the world's greatest cities. A beautiful green campus bringing together perspectives from around the world, all on a path to a more exciting future. Welcome to Macquarie University.
With our 5-star QS rating and global reputation for expertise in areas like business and health and medical sciences, we produce graduates who are among the most sought-after professionals in the world” (Macquarie University, 2016, n. p.).

Macquarie University rates itself as a “Five Star University” where

“From our beginnings, we've nurtured the brightest minds to reach their full potential. Supported by world-leading academics and practical experiences, you'll graduate from Macquarie ready to lead and make a difference in your world” (Macquarie University, 2016, n. p.).

Macquarie University is not considered as one of the G8 top universities in Australia, nor has either the Times Ranking or the Shanghai Ranking ever ranked it in the top 100 universities. Despite this Macquarie University has 10,026 international students (AEN, 2016, n. p.), or 26% of its student population, many of whom are Chinese.

Gong and Huybers’ (2015) findings concluded:

“The findings suggest that university ranking and destination safety are key decision drivers for Chinese students. The results have policy implications for Australia, as one of the key higher education destination countries” (Gong and Huybers, 2015, p. 196).

Gong and Huybers’ (2015) evidence was made prior to the revelations of the Panama Papers, (Olesen, 2016), nor did they refer to corruption, wealth protection and desire by HNWIs in China to emigrate.

7.6.2 Theme 1: Quality of Education, Internet Questionnaire

The Quality of Education was examined by the Internet Questionnaire using paired questions (2, 26), (3, 27) and (9, 33). Presently Australia has five universities ranked in the top 100 universities in the World, according to The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2015-2016 list. In order they are ANU 52, USYD 55, The University of Queensland 60, Monash 73 and UNSW 82. This is impressive for a country with Australia’s population, but China has two universities in the top 50,
Peking University 42 and Hong Kong University 44. The University of Tokyo is ranked at 43. The elite universities such as CalTec, Oxford, Cambridge and Stanford are mostly in the USA and the UK. Canada, which attracts far fewer Chinese students than Australia, has the University of Toronto, ranked at 19. Australia’s advantage is that the Federal Government controls nearly all the Australian universities, and most are ranked in the top 500 universities in the world. A degree from any Australian university is universally accepted. This is not the case for all degrees from the USA.

Based on the rankings of universities, Australia has no academic reputation advantage to Chinese students over its main competitors; the USA, Japan, the UK, and Canada. Nonetheless, students know that any degree from an Australian University has universal value. The responses to the Internet questionnaire supports this, that quality of education is definitely a motivator, but is unlikely to be the dominant consideration by families when choosing the host country where their one child will study abroad.

**Questions 2 and 26**

“2. I am prepared to attend any reputable foreign university that accepts me as a student.”

“26. University selection is based on the quality of education.”

The frequencies of totalled scores from 2 to 10 are shown in Table 7.5 whilst the individual statistics are given in Table 7.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three shaded cells, representing valid data, total just 130 or 35% of the scores. These cells are the only valid responses, whereas the total Agree responses, for both questions, equals 241 or 64% of the scores. This is shown in figures 7.3 and 7.4; thus the data is not valid. Students admit that they will attend any reputable Western university that accepts them, while responding that the selection of the university is
based on quality of education delivered by the university.

Table 7.6 Statistics on Responses to Questions 2 and 26 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1 %</th>
<th>2 %</th>
<th>3 %</th>
<th>4 %</th>
<th>5 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 2</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 26</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first of the two-paired questions is in this case negatively formatted.

The total number of students who agreed that reputation of the university was an important issue: Q 26 = 312 (83.4%) & for Q 2 = 66 (17.6%) in response to the positively posed question. The mean number of students who answered that the reputation of the university would influence their decision is 50%; the contrast in the results between the two questions can be accounted for by the construct of Q2, which includes the word ‘reputable’. The full statistics for Questions 2 and 26 are given in Table 7.7.

Table 7.7: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 2 and 26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quest Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s (\alpha)</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.292</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>0.653</td>
<td>-0.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.850</td>
<td>0.815</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statistics confirm the confusion of the students answering this pair of coupled questions. A small negative correlation coefficient shows that the positive/negative formats of the paired questions were ineffective. The statistics for questions 2 and 26 given in table 7.6.2.2 include the Cronbach’s \(\alpha\) for all scores, which designate acceptance of the validity of all the data as well as the validity of each individual question.

The first Figure is data from 37 respondents who are post-GaoKao school leavers.

\(^{33}\) A Cronbach \(\alpha\) score between 0.7 and higher represents valid data, 0.8 and higher very valid data, but scores between 0.6 and .7 indicate acceptable valid data. All the Cronbach \(\alpha\) scores for the full set of data falls in the latter range.
This chart shows no consistency between the responses to the same question, once posed as a positively formulated question and the other version presented in a negative manner. The lack of validity supports the supposition that Quality of Education was not an overarching influence when the decision of where to study was determined. The strong acquiescence bias suggests that the questions were unimportant to the students.

The same data from the 374 remaining students has no validity as shown below, but this chart shows clearer evidence of acquiescence bias than was shown by the GaoKao students.

Figure 7.4: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 2
This data is consistent with the data from the post-GaoKao students. It is strongly acquiescent biased and invalid.

Mead & Craig (2011, p. 3.) found that “around 3-5% of respondents engage in rampant inattentive responding and around 15% of respondents engage in sporadic careless responding” and further, approximately 52% of volunteers answer inattentively to at least one item. Inattention or careless replies are symptomatic of disinterest in the subject under interrogation. While this does not discount the students’ strong desire for a quality education, it does show that the quality of education would not be a defining reason for choosing to study in Australia.

Questions 3 and 27

“3. My choice of university is based on my course choice.”

“27. I want a degree from a foreign university, the course and degree is of minor importance.”

The frequency of totalled scores from 2 to 10 are shown in Table 7.8 and the individual statistics for Q 3 and Q 27 are given in Table 7.9
Table 7.8: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 3 and 27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data is far more valid than the data for the previous two questions with 287 scores (77%) in the shaded validity section. The frequency of the sum 4, 46 could be accounted for by acquiescence bias, which is confirmed by a review of the original data which shows that the majority of 4 scores are derived from ‘1+3=4’.

Table 7.9: Statistics on Responses to Questions 3 and 27 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 3</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Q 3, 332 students (88.8%) agreed that university choice is linked to course selection, whereas in Q 27 only 235 students (62.8%) agreed when the same question was negatively posed. Allowing 10% acquiescence bias gives percentages of 78% and 73%. The mean of the original data is 75.8%, which shows, as far as the students are concerned, the quality of education is a key driver as discovered by Gong and Huybers (2015). A critical disclaimer to their assertion is the question of who really decides where the child studies. The full statistics for Questions 3 and 27 are given in Table 7.10.

Table 7.10: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 3 and 27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quest Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sum of the means is 5.40; a perfect 6 if a 10% allowance is made for acquiescence bias, which is always present. All the data for these two questions have high validity.

In this instance there is good correlation of the evidence from the two different sources as shown by Figures 7.5 and 7.6. The evidence from the post-GaoKao students is valid, but the 374 results of the answers of valid students from the International school are
remarkably valid. There are some reasons for the degree of validity from the two different sources. The first group is still at school, preparing for GaoKao, and for them the quality of education is imperative. Moreover, the students know that their responses are live on their school intranet. The latter group are school leavers, and are probably better informed as to their options for study abroad.

**Figure 7.5: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 3 and 27**

![Figure 7.5](image)

The lack of perfect symmetry could perhaps be attributed to 3-4 students who may have had little interest in this question, or who may have succumbed to acquiescence bias.

**Figure 7.6: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 3**

![Figure 7.6](image)
Again, after acquiescence bias has been considered, the results show remarkable validity. These two questions show that the quality of education was not a careless response as defined by Mead & Craig (2011), and quality of education is an important part of the host educational provider selection process.

The data from both sources above show that course consideration is superior to university selection and tacitly implies that ‘quality education’ is important.

**Questions 9 and 33**

“9. The university must be in Australia.”

“33. I will not choose an Australian university.”

The frequencies of totalled scores from 2 to 10 are shown in Table 7.11 and the statistics for the individual questions are shown in Table 7.12.

**Table 7.11: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 9 and 33.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is valid data with 77% of the scores within the validity range.
Table 7.12: Statistics on Responses to Questions 9 and 33 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 51 students agreed that their choice of university must be in Australia, and on the reverse question 51 students, (the same number) stated that they would not study in Australia. The high ‘Neither’ scores in both cases emphasised the general indifference to Australian universities. These findings, derived from students in China, are very much in accord with S3’s comments above: “Australia is not the best nor the worst. In fact, it is a compromising choice. Of course, immigration is also an important factor.”

The full statistics for questions 9 and 33 are given in table 7.13.

Table 7.13: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 9 and 33

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 33 is not question 9 negatively posed. The responses have high validity and show that the respondents have not made a decision as to whether they will study in Australia, or not.

Question 9 has directly asked the respondent if coming to Australia was the main factor for choosing to study abroad. The validity of the answers cannot be determined from figures 7.8 and 7.9 because the two questions do not test the same information. This was an unfortunate oversight in the design of the questionnaire. The post GaoKao students may have already chosen their study abroad destination in an alternative country to Australia. However, even if this is the case, they have not eliminated the possibility of ever studying at an Australian university. Under these circumstances question 33 is poorly posed in that it is not question 9 fully negatively formulated. This argument similarly applies to the 374 school students in the International school. This school has partnerships with a number of universities and many of the students would have already made their study destination. Both charts reflect the reality that less than
25% of students from the PRC chose to study in Australia.

**Figure 7.7: Data from GaoKao students for questions 9 and 33**

There is no symmetry about “neither” in this chart, thus suggesting that the data contained is invalid. However, the lack of symmetry could be the result of decisions already confirmed. The invalidity may be due to careless responses as defined by Mead & Craig, (2011), but equally it may arise because most of the post GaoKao students have already chosen their host educational provider, and it may not be in Australia.
The response for “Disagree” for question 33 does not equal the “Agree” for question 9, albeit the poorly designed question allows the possibility that the students answered the questions honestly under the scenarios offered above.

The quality of education is a significant influence on students’ study choices, but in this case, rather than being a reason why students elect to study in Australia, it may have more influence on why the other 75% of Chinese international students decide not to study in Australia. Many of the 25% who have nominated to study in Australia did so because of satisfaction with the perceived quality of education offered by an Australian Institution.

Gong and Huybers’ (2015) study identified ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’ as the key drivers when choosing study-abroad options. Certainly, Australia is not first in either of these categories. Japan, according to NationMaster (2016), has a far safer society than Australia where violent crimes occur at 25 times the rate of such crimes in Japan. This may account for the fact that slightly more Chinese students study in Japan (Gong and Huybers 2015, p. 198) than Australia. Accessibility and ‘quality of education’ also favour Japan. In addition, according to NationMaster (2016), fear of crime in Australia is slightly higher than expressed in the UK, and murders with
firearms per million is 3 in Australia, while in the UK the statistic is 0.236. Although perception may defeat statistics, The UK is a safer place for students from China in which to study and has a superior ‘quality of education’ offering. Yet more students elect to complete tertiary study in Australia than the UK, thus confounding the findings of Gong and Huybers, (2015). However, immigration to Australia is easier than immigration to the UK.

There is strong evidence to show that wealth protection and capital flight, as identified by Olesen (2016) but not scrutinised by Gong and Huybers (2015), is a powerful motivator for HNWI Chinese to emigrate. Wealth is linked to the currency exchange rate between countries and the number of international students coming to Australia in 2014 rose by 17%, by far the highest rate increase of any country, between 2013 and 2014. Australia seems to be a favourable country for such a purpose. The lower Australian dollar now means that HNWIs from China immigrating to Australia are able to convert the Yuan to greater wealth in Australia. Table 5.4, a 2014 report showing HNWI’s preferred emigration destination, shows that 9% preferred Australia, placing it 3rd behind Canada with 21%, and the USA with a 52% preference. The data was collected in 2013 at a time when the buying power of the Yuan in Australia was far lower than the buying power of the Yuan in the two other mentioned countries. The US dollar was at a record low with 1AUD =1.10USD. The situation now is 1AUD=0.73USD and the number of new enrolments of international students coming to Australia has increased by 17.4%, compared to a 5% increase for new enrolments of international students in the USA.

7.7 CORRUPTION AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION

A quick synopsis of FACE (面子：mianzi), Chinese corruption and guanxi is appropriate. Previously, in business negotiation, it was considered etiquette to allow the loser in a negotiation to withdraw with FACE (or grace) (see Section 3.6).

Every country is contaminated by corruption. China’s President Xi Jinping has committed the Chinese Government to eliminating corrupt practices. Corruption issues exist because successful businesses in China would have resorted to a form of
corruption just to survive against competitors using similar tactics. Whilst overt corruption and nepotism are well-entrenched Western problems, China has a third layer of corruption known as *guanxi*. *Guanxi*, according to Li (2010), exists at all levels, but is most endemic at the micro level where she describes it as corruption with a human face. Moreover, she has found during her research that “the micro-level operation of corruption in China is not due to some haphazard aggregation of sporadic acts but follows certain rules and codes of conduct,” (Li, 2011, p. 2). A simpler name for *guanxi* is relationship building, a process that is carried out covertly and with such refinement that, even if exposed, it would be very difficult to prove that any wrongdoing had occurred. In its earlier forms it consisted of ‘business meetings’ in expensive restaurants, and more recently the giving of expensive luxury items as gifts has become the norm (Li, 2011).

Although China has an international reputation for bribery and corruption, Transparency International (TI), a globally independent body who compiles an annually based Corruption Perception Index around the world, ranks China 78 out of 178 nations (Gao, 2011, p. 2).

Paradoxically, according to Gao, (2011), whilst the Chinese Government, under Xi Jinping 34, is attacking corruption, the relationships between the Government, bureaucracy and private enterprise have created a situation whereby business can only exist and flourish with some form of bribery (and/or *guanxi*). Successful businesses, built on some form of corruption, have precipitated the situation of capital flight by HNWIs who are seeking to protect their wealth and avoid corruption charges.

Unfortunately, it is outside the scope of this thesis to investigate the illegal practice of transferring funds and assets out of China. Capital flight, however, is often accomplished through foreign property purchases, which could include “million-dollar trophy homes to more modest condominiums, Chinese

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34 It has been alleged that Deng Jiagui, brother-in-law of China’s paramount leader Xi Jinping, has acquired one offshore firm via Mossack Fonseca in 2004 and two more in 2009. The main purpose for acquiring such companies is money laundering or wealth protection. Xi Jinping has made anti-corruption a hallmark of his rule, but this example illustrates the difficulty of his task (Olsen, 2016, n. p.).
buyers are the fastest-growing segment of global property buyers in the USA with over US$7.2 billion in sales in 2009 and US$37 billion in 2013” (Juawai, 2016, n. p.).

“According to the Foreign Investment Review Board China has overtaken the US to become the biggest source of approved foreign investment in Australian real estate after Chinese investors more than doubled their spending last financial year” (news.com.au, 2015, n. p.). In addition to the real estate investments in Australia, enormous sums of illegal money have been sent overseas by wealthy Chinese of all persuasions; politicians, business people, and others such as actor, Jacki Chan. Much of this money could eventually be linked to wealthy Chinese who have immigrated to Australia. Further evidence of corruption is contained in

“An analysis of the leaked records by ICIJ (International Consortium of Investigative Journalists) [which] shows that by the end of 2015 Mossack Fonseca was collecting fees for more than 16,300 offshore companies incorporated through offices in Hong Kong and China. Those companies represented 29 percent of Mossack Fonseca’s active companies worldwide and made greater China the law firm’s single leading market. Its busiest office in Asia — and globally — is Hong Kong” (Olesen 2016, n. p.).

Most of the students who elect to study in Australia, the USA, the UK, Canada or New Zealand, are from one-child families who have made their wealth in the new China. To create that wealth, it is almost certain that the main person in those families has employed some form of corruption or quanxi. Presently China is examining about 40,000 companies and individuals per year. Not a high percentage will be caught but the threat of exposure is real.

There have been many examples of companies and individuals who have been caught trying to smuggle their wealth out of China. One simple method is for the child to study overseas and buy a property, and later, after the student has PR his/her family will immigrate to that country. The term used for this procedure is ‘transcultural citizenship’. All the data points to the proposition that anything to do with a host country for study is significant, but the driving force is to identify a country that is a suitable immigration destination and an opportunity for wealth protection. All of these reasons are imbedded in the data from both the focus groups and the Internet questionnaire. If the parents’ intention or belief is that their child will have a
better life in a particular OECD country, then the choice of that country is supreme. If the intention is for their child to return, work and live in China, then the quality of education will be the dominant issue. These two themes have been the overriding influences, both overtly and tacitly, when talking to students, parents and other Chinese. “Other Motivators” such as lifestyle, quality of education, safety, environment, cost, employment opportunities and wealth protection also assist in choosing the country. This thesis seeks to distinguish which of these ‘other factors’ have or will influence students from China to choose Australia. This chapter shows that the real prominence of the ‘quality of education’ is less than the significance given to it by other researchers. Education is a significant element in a set of influences considered as a whole, and it is the best-constructed suite of elements that ultimately determines the choice of host country. The remainder of this chapter analyses some of the corruption issues.

Corruption occurs in both China, where GaoKao scores and qualifications are for sale, (Chung 2015; Yang 2016), and Australia where plagiarism and academic cheating is more prevalent than universities care to admit (Betag 2016; Chung 2015; Dean 2014; Marsden 2008). According to Yang (2016, n. p.) cheating in the GauKao has got so out of control that the Chinese government has made such cheating a criminal offence with a penalty of up to seven years in prison. Further,

> “An estimated 90 per cent of all recommendation letters for Chinese applicants to United States universities are fake. Some 70 per cent of application essays are not written by students, and 50 per cent of grades transcripts are falsified” (Yang, 2016, n. p.).

The reasons that so many Chinese students cheat are simply because they can, and because the rewards for cheating, such as high educational qualifications and the opportunities those qualifications offer, are desired by most families (Yang, 2016, n. p.). The high incidence of these practices detracts from the efforts of the thousands of genuine Chinese international students whose qualifications fall under the pall of doubt created by cheating.

### 7.8 DISCUSSION

Quality of education is the most logical response for students justifying their choice of
learning institution. The original data collected for this research did corroborate the findings of previous research conducted by (Mazzarol & Soutar 2002; Marginson 2004, 2007; Li and Bray 2007; Yang 2010; Gong and Huybers 2015) and there is ample evidence to conclude that quality of education is a significantly influencing element in choice of study destination. The point of difference in this research is the level of significance, because many of the students who indicated that quality of education was a substantial motive were unaware of the true intention of their parents, the real decision makers. This research has discovered that immigration is perhaps the most powerful drive influencing study destination choice and often immigration is seen as a means by HNWI Chinese to avoid corruption charges.

The level of corruption revealed in Section 7.8 provides a powerful and sinister reason for choosing Australia as a study destination; it is a safe haven for money laundering, wealth protection and finally immigration. This situation should not surprise the Australian Government, with Chung (2013, n. p.) reporting that ‘Australia’s money laundering watchdog investigated more than $3AUD billion in suspicious transfers by Chinese investors last year, including $1AUD billion in property transactions.’ Chung (2013), also refers to HNWIs in China who gained their wealth ‘very quickly’ and were now fearful of corrupt government officials in an environment which was ‘a little bit like the Wild West’ (Chung, 2013, n. p.) It should be noted that China is not alone in this malaise, with India, Korea, Vietnam and other smaller South East Asian nations that have experienced exceptional growth rates over the past two decades, and in doing so have created a new wealthy middle class.

Australia has reaped the benefits from this situation and it is not blameless in the process. Educational institutions in Australia, particularly universities, have become reliant on the income derived from the export education market. The international student market is worth in excess of $AUD17 billion annually to the Australian economy (DNSIE, 2015) and universities are loath to implement integrity changes that may jeopardise their share of that income. The current situation where some ‘Foreign students are cheating and getting special treatment to ensure they get their degrees,’ claims Moor (2010, n. p.) tarnishes the reputation of the university, and unfairly diminishes the value of the qualifications obtained by the genuine international students. The circumstance is that cheating at all levels of study at university is on
the rise, with recent research showing that six per cent of university students cheat on their studies and ‘international students (are) the most likely offenders’ (News.com.au, 2017. n. p.).

Marsden (2008, p. iii), argues that the quality of education provided by Australian universities is crucial in attracting international students and therefore vital to the Australian economy. Corrupt practices by some international students are damaging that reputation. “When reputations are called into question, the sustainability of institutions becomes uncertain” (Marsden, 2008, p. iii).

Marsden’s (2008, p. iii) words are a timely reminder that Australian universities have to become accountable for the integrity of their degrees or else risk the demise of their lucrative export market. There are a number of options of risk management available that could be explored and instituted, at very little cost, that will enhance the reputation of the universities and which will enhance, and restore if needed, the reputations of all universities.

These measures could include:

1. Making education agents more accountable. “Australian universities are paying more than an estimated $250 million each year to unregulated middlemen for the recruitment of international students,” (Besser, Cronau & Cohen, 2015, n. p.) and many of these students are using fraudulent documents to gain university entry. WSU terminated the services of at least four education agents in 2015 in an effort to make their university more accountable (Besser et al., 2015).

2. MoUs creating partnerships between Australian VET institutes and their Chinese counterparts are under threat because of the “endemic corruption in the Chinese education system” (Bochenski, 2015, n. p.). Identifying ways to eliminate these anomalies should be a priority.

3. For almost thirty years universities “have experienced problems such as fake qualifications, questionable agent behaviour, visa-driven enrolments, nepotism in offshore campuses” (Besser, et al., 2015, n. p.). Instituting photo ID’s for lectures and exams and creating a small integrity department to independently investigate university fraud and cheating will help to allay Marsden’s (2008)
fears that Australian universities share of the international education market may become unsustainable.
7.9 CONCLUSION

‘Quality of Education’ is a friendly answer as to why students have elected to study in Australia. It is a logical and a pleasing response for the host country. Nevertheless, the developing theory from the data analysis above is that Australia was chosen as a study destination because it offered the family, parents and student, the best opportunity for immigration. Quality of education was one contributing element to that grand design.

The responses to the focus group inquiries mainly hinted at immigration, but always the Chinese custom of hiding true meaning made evaluating a literal meaning from the data difficult and possibly flawed. Other evidence introduced in this chapter strongly supports immigration as the key driver influencing some Chinese families to send their children to study in Australia.

The Internet questionnaire exposed acquiescence bias in many of the accepted responses, whilst some questions produced careless replies. These careless responses, from reliable volunteers, showed that the question under scrutiny had insignificant consequence to the interviewee. Understanding the importance of careless responses and acquiescence bias was pivotal to interpreting data that was already camouflaged by cultural dictates and a genuine desire to protect oneself from criminal prosecution. This research shows that ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’ are two of a number of motives considered when selecting the most suitable country for immigration purposes. The critical evidence supporting the finding is that the UK offers a higher standard of education than Australia and is statistically safer than Australia, yet attracts less Chinese undergraduate students than Australia.

Missing from the collected data is genuine evidence of corrupt practices, by the families of some Chinese students that provided the funds for education in Australia. Nevertheless, data mined from reliable media sources does identify the corrupt practices of plagiarism and ghost-writing used by some international students to gain degrees. This secondary evidence does not show any correlation between corrupt practices in China and different corrupt practices in Australia although there is corruption in both countries. The extent of corruption is not confined to just educational issues and the next chapter reveals how excess wealth can pervert the
lifestyle of affluent Chinese university students.

Australia’s friendly lifestyle attracts students from all countries irrespective of their wealth. Lifestyle was the most mentioned motive by the focus group interviewees, and the gamut of those issues raised is fully examined in Chapter Eight.
CHAPTER EIGHT

EVIDENCE FOR LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle reasons for studying in Australia
8.0 INTRODUCTION

The evidence presented in Chapter Seven supports the hypothesis that ‘quality of education’ was a significant influence behind the decision by Chinese students to study at Australian universities. The previous chapter also explored the ramifications associated with corruption by some Chinese HNWI families in China who have sent their children to study overseas. Previous researchers into this topic have not made the connection between corruption in China by HNWIs, and the desire for emigration. The Australian lifestyle satisfies the imaginations and forces generated by the corruption and emigration desires. The focus groups mentioned lifestyle 27 times, most frequently (9) in response to FGQ3. This chapter explains how the Australian lifestyle impacts on the decision by students from China to study in Australia.

A brief synopsis of this chapter is as follows:-

1. An analysis of Chinese students’ perceptions of ‘lifestyle’ in Australia before and after starting their education in Australia.
2. The chapter shows how the evidence is scrutinised and interpreted through the cultured eyes of a Han Chinese scholar who understands guanxi and has experienced study in Australia at two different universities.
3. The data collected during the focus groups interviews is examined under the strictures offered in point 2 above. Verbatim quotes strengthen the theory being developed.
4. The Internet questionnaire results are tested for validity and interpreted, again using the constraints in point 2 above.
5. Finally, other research papers are critiqued and evaluated against the developed theory.

8.1 LIFESTYLE: FOCUS GROUP

Referring to FGQ4 (most rewarding), and FGQ5 (most disappointing), numbers of responses of 12 and 43 respectively would appear to suggest that lifestyle was not a
guiding factor in the students’ choice of country. Paradoxically the opposite is true. Disappointment in Australia’s lifestyle offering reflects high expectations unfulfilled. This implies that lifestyle did influence their choice of study destination. FGQ3 confirms this assertion, a score of 29 responses showing that their perception of Australia has changed since coming to Australia.

Although lifestyle is a contributing factor to choice, the perception did not match the experiences of many of the focus group members. S9 agrees:

“Before I came here I heard that Sydney was an open and inclusive international metropolis. But I can’t feel the so-called open and inclusive here.”

Feelings of loneliness and ‘not belonging’ were overtly stated or tacitly implied by many of the focus groups. Lifestyle includes elements, which could be social, cultural and environmental, all contributing to the happy life of the Chinese student. In response to FGQ2 student S10, was prepared to acknowledge:

“I am pleased with the environment (in Australia)”, and “My parents told me if I study preschool education, then I should stay and live in Australia”.

S10 then expressed disappointment at encountering mild discrimination and social alienation when answering FGQ5.

S10: “I agree with him. (S8). Once I worked in a center and the colleagues there did not respect me at all. As a minor I always do my work alone. They won’t even want to have lunch with me.”

Student S8 had already recounted his own experiences in the workplace:

“Once I was in an internship in a centre. Only four people there were undergraduates or with higher level. Most of the employees there were so unfriendly to us. Maybe their thought in mind was: ‘you guys are even not Australian resident.’”

However, the negative aspects of living in a foreign country were not the dominant forces, connections or imaginations that in reality convinced the student to study in Australia. S11 was able to enumerate a number of reasons for studying in Australia.

S11: “it (Australia) has pristine nature. Second, Australia is an advanced
country; I want to know multicultural Western country, ... Fourth, English is the official language while I want to improve my English; others, it’s said there is no discrimination in Australia. The gourmet, from all over the world, is also another factor,” and finally “my aunt lives in Australia”.

The parent’s rationale when combining these factors would suggest that their child would enjoy a better lifestyle in this environment than the one they faced in China. Student S7 considered many factors before eventually choosing to study in Australia, comparing the appeal of this country with the UK and Canada in particular.

S7: “Britain is also an option, but we all know that Britain is a traditional capitalist country and its degree of cultural tolerance is not as high as Australia. Compared to Britain, Australia is a much younger and dynamic immigrant country.”

Cultural tolerance and the ability to immigrate are S7’s key words. Immigration may have inspired S7’s parents to choose Australia, but the reasons for immigration could include corruption issues.

S1 was definite in his response to FGQ1:

“Firstly, immigration issue is definitely the most important consideration. Personally, I want to immigrate to a foreign country. Compared to the USA, the immigrating policies of Australia and Canada are much more flexible.”

The parents of S1 have already invested in a property in Sydney in preparation to immigrate.

S2, in the same focus group and contemplating the same question, concurs:

“The first reason why I choose Australia is also about immigration.” Further “I could have more options if I came to Australia,” but “If I chose to go to Britain, I must go back to China upon graduation.”

These statements are in accord with pull factors such as ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’ but only in the sense that they are qualifiers for the more desirable immigration options.

Not everyone agrees, and any of the five themes investigated could have been the main, if not the sole, reason why some students elected to study in Australia. As student S3
explains in response to statements by S1 and S2:

S3: “My considerations are different from theirs. First of all, I don’t have an immigration plan. It seems that many people regard immigration as the most important issue. But I just want to travel abroad and expand my outlook.”

S3, however, in an attempt to nominate the five foremost motives for choosing to study in Australia, offers the following:

“I think going to Britain is not a good choice. In terms of America, the academic threshold is too high for me. It is very difficult to get the offer from the top 100 universities in the USA. Australia is not the best nor the worst. In fact, it is a compromising choice. Of course, immigration is also an important factor. (Italics added) After all, I can decide whether to stay in this country or not.”

The Chinese way of ‘Thick Face,’ is to keep your true motives hidden, but sometimes, genuine intentions are revealed as an after-thought. A desirable lifestyle would be an essential pre-condition before immigration possibilities were explored, but the paramount objective remains immigration.

Student S12 refers obliquely to lifestyle issues in Australia, when discussing FGQ1, with the comment,

“we have more freedom here in Australia.”

S13 considers a few advantages for choosing Australia as a host nation.

S13: “It is convenient to fly to Australia. Australia seems much safer compared to America ... the environment and climate here is better.”

Immigration is not stated as S13’s key motivation for choosing Australia. Suggesting that it is easier to fly to Australia seems a weak reason, given that Japan is closer and the USA and Canada are almost similar distances. All the offerings from S13 in total reveal mixed messages concerning cost and quality of education. S13’s opinion on social environment; “there are too many Chinese people here,” is interesting. These confused answers show that S13 may not really know the reasons behind his/her
parents’ choice of Australia as a study destination.

In answering (FGQ1), S19 is more definitive, offering a number of good explanations for choosing Australia, such as

“Some Australian universities ranked highly worldwide. Secondly, the procedure of getting a visa from Australia is the simplest. ... I tended to go to Australia because of the good environment and comfort climate. Lastly, Australia is a multicultural nation and I can approach different cultures.”

The last part of the quote defines an acceptable lifestyle, ‘environment, climate, culture’, while acknowledging the need for an acceptable ‘quality of education’ and visa procedures. Immigration involves visa consideration. When considering FGQ4, S19 commented that “if you work hard, your hard work will pay off here,” raising the possibility of staying in Australia.

S16 identified some of the principal features of lifestyle as contributory explanations for choosing Australia as a host nation for study:

“I want to add that safety, climate and comfortable weather and temperature here also constitute positive factors. Besides, winters here are not very cold. I can also enjoy beautiful views and beaches in Australia.”

S16, when evaluating expectations, (FGS6), opined that the realisation of his/her satisfaction “reaches the lowest boundary of my expectation. But my experience of studying in Australia is not as good as I thought.” However, S16 freely admitted, when replying to FGQ7 “I think I will recommend Australia”. Again, this contradictory response underlines the confusion concerning the reasons for choosing to study in Australia.

S17 linked immigration potential to lifestyle in response to FGQ1:

“Firstly, it is easy to immigrate to Australia. Canada is too cold for me. I have to consider my parents. I think my parents would enjoy a comfortable life here when they get old in the future.”
S17’s response shows confusion over his/her parents’ true intentions for choosing Australia.

S18’s reasons for choosing to study in Australia includes some elements of lifestyle such as:

“Secondly, guns are banned here so Australia seems much safer. Thirdly, there are a lot of Chinese people here and I thought I would not be discriminated in Australia. Lastly, the climate in Australia is much better compared to the US and Canada, which both have very cold winters.”

S6 enumerates some of the positive aspects of lifestyle that are perceived to be part of the advantages of living in Australia.

S6: “Australia has very beautiful environment, which is helpful to your health. The people here like sports, resulting in healthy body.”

Unfortunately, these perceived advantages did not become reality for S6 who, in answer to FGQ3, acknowledged that

“At first I had thought it’s very easy to live here and immigrate here. Later on, I found not only it’s very difficult to immigrate here—because my major is not in the Skilled List—but also it’s hard/arduous to live here, it is very lonely.”

S6 confirms that Australia benefits from the perception of lifestyle, which for many Chinese students is illusory.

S14, responding to FGQ1, had been accepted into universities in both Canada and Australia,

“But the Australian school sent me the offer first. Secondly, it is relative easier to migrate to Australia. Thirdly, before coming here, I heard that University xxx was a great school.”

S14 cites convenience, immigration and ‘quality of education’ as the reasons behind his/her choice, but later responded to FGQ2 with:
“First of all, Britain and America are countries with very outstanding education system. ... (and the) Australian education is too industrialized and commercialized at cost of its quality.”

Initially S14 supports Gong and Huybers’ (2015) assertion that ‘quality of education’ is a key driver for host country selection, but S14 chose to study in Australia well aware that there were better ‘quality of education’ options available in the UK or the USA.

S4 supports the theory that transcultural immigration is the main driver of study destination.

S4: “I chose Australia. After all, Australia is an English country, whose English environment is very good. Besides, it’s also an immigration country. And I can experience multicultural here. Those 3 points are important to me. It’s said the natural environment is very good also. Anyway, there are many positive points.”

S4 perhaps comes closest to voicing the ‘happy life” expectation when he/she contributed:

“I have been expecting to come to Australia before, due to an old saying: Australia is the country, which is the closest place to the Heaven, if there is a Heaven.”

Heaven could have a dual meaning for the wealthy Chinese. First, as Hatton, (2016), reported on examination of the ‘Panama Papers’ that:

“Mossack Fonseca's booming China business is evidence of an even bigger trend: the reliance of China's wealthiest people on offshore investments. Around $1tn (£700bn) left China last year, draining the country's foreign reserves. It is a shift that could destabilise the entire Chinese economy. And the relatives of China's leaders are among those who have stashed their wealth abroad” (Hatton, 2016, n. p.).

Australia offers a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle for wealthy people. An extra bonus is that Australia does not have an extradition treaty with China, although, as Wen, (2016) reports; “The Turnbull government is moving to ratify an extradition treaty with China as Beijing steps up efforts to repatriate corrupt officials who have fled overseas.” Further, Chinese Government officials routinely cite Australia as one of the most
popular havens for its fugitives. (Wen, (2016a); Chung (2017); Cornwall (2014)).

Wen’s (2016a) allegations infer that many wealthy Chinese families have already purchased property in Australia in the name of their children. Anecdotally, many of the students I have assisted through my role in AEA, purchased property in Australia, with money provided by their parents.

None of the focus groups mentioned property investment or asset protection. Even if they knew of these activities they were reluctant to admit them for fear of exposing their parents’ corruption. This is the case for many of the students.

8.2 LIFESTYLE: INTERNET QUESTIONNAIRE

The Internet questionnaire queries students who have already decided to study overseas, but have not yet left China. Given the assertions above, it is difficult to obtain supporting evidence for the theory that their study-abroad program is designed to protect wealth through immigration. The issue is clouded because many of the parents would have given ‘reasons’ behind the advantages of overseas study and the choices from the options available. Illogical or conflicting data, within the responses to the Internet questionnaire, are the main clues to hidden motives.

As noted with the focus group answers, lifestyle is an all-embracing topic, which includes work opportunities, safety, cost, environment and many other elements, which have been considered separately. Given that these have been examined separately, they have been excluded from this part of the analysis. Only questions (19, 43) and (20, 44) refer directly to lifestyle. Nevertheless, I have also included the pair (23, 47), as part of this analysis, even though (23, 47) will also be included under the theme, Environment. All these reasons are in accord with the parents’ wishes to create a better ‘lifestyle’ and happiness for their child.

Questions 19 and 43

“19. When choosing where to study I only consider first world countries that have a high safety rating for their population.”
“43. Personal safety is not a factor influencing my choice of study destination.”

The key words of Q19 are ‘first world’ and ‘safety’. Both of these contribute to lifestyle without being totally definitive of that theme.

The frequency of totalled scores from 2 to 10, for Q 19 and Q 43, are shown in Tables 8.1 & 8.2

Table 8.1: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 19 and 43

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75% of the scores fall within validity acceptance, i.e. a total of 5, 6 or 7. There is only very slight evidence of acquiescence bias in these scores.

Table 8.2: Statistics on Responses to Questions 19 and 43 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 19</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 43</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of students who agreed that safety was an important issue = 233 (62.3%) for Q 19; and = 220 (58.8%) in response to the negatively posed Q 43. Statistically 60% of the respondents considered ‘safety,’ a lifestyle issue, as a critical influence in their decision making process.

The full statistics for questions 19 and 43 are given in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 19 and 43

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quest Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s â</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statistics show that safety is definitely an issue for students, and this is also in
accord with transcultural citizenship.

The data from the post GaoKao students shows very good validity as shown in Figure 8.1.

**Figure 8.1: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 19 and 43**

![Safety as a factor in choice of host country](image)

This graph illustrates the importance of ‘first world’ and ‘safety’ to respondents, two key elements for an enjoyable lifestyle.

The data for the post GaoKao students is also valid, with just a smaller degree of acquiescence bias than the following data of the 374 students. This is shown in Figure 8.2.

**Figure 8.2: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 19 and 43**
This graph confirms the data given by the Post-GaoKao students in China. The slight lack of perfect symmetry, the test for validity, can be attributed to acquiescence bias.

Both of these graphs would suggest that Gong and Huybers (2015) were correct in their assertion that ‘safety’ was a key driver when choosing study-abroad options. However, safety and lifestyle could be used as powerful persuaders to convince the student to agree with this option. Not many one child progenies, often referred to as ‘little emperors’, would be keen to lose all the luxuries and conveniences they enjoyed in the family home, just to study in a foreign land.

Questions 20 and 44

“20. I will not study in any country that has a reputation of racial discrimination.”

“44. Racial discrimination (of Chinese) did (will) not influence my choice of host country.”

Previously there was official racial discrimination in Australia, particularly under the “White Australia” policy. Today racial discrimination in Australia is illegal, and in many practical respects is less than that which exists in most countries. Recently, Australia has streamlined its Student Visa process with eCOE. Previously students
from China were considered as Category 5 for visa applications, (the lowest priority of 5 categories), and this discrimination did deter, or prevent, many Chinese students from studying in Australia.

The frequencies of totalled scores from 2 to 10, for Q 20 and Q 44, are shown in Table 8.4 and the statistics for each individual question are recorded in Table 8.5.

Table 8.4: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 20 and 44

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

77% of the scores are in the valid data sector with slight acquiescence bias shown by the number of scores totalling 2, 3 and 4.

Table 8.5: Statistics on Responses to Questions 20 and 44 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 20</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 44</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 262 (70.1%) of respondents agreed with Q 20 and would not study in a country that had a reputation of racial discrimination, but when responding to Q 44, only 220 (58.8%) agreed that racism would influence their decision concerning where to study. These numbers may have been much higher if the same questions had been given to their parents. Racism will affect lifestyle during study time, but more so if immigration is contemplated.

A statistical analysis for questions 20 and 44 are given in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 20 and 44

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quest Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s â</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Page 239
The evidence shows that racial discrimination will deter students from studying in a particular country. This will discourage families from seeking immigration to that country. These figures in Table 8.6 confirm the importance of lifestyle as a motivating force when choosing host country.

The results from the two different groups, the post GaoKao students Figure 8.3 and the 374 students from the International School, Figure 8.4, are remarkably consistent.

**Figure 8.3: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 20 and 44**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of responses</th>
<th>Question 20</th>
<th>Question 44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst 22 of the 37 students confirmed that they would not study in any country that has a reputation for racial discrimination, 24 of them admitted that the idea of racial discrimination did influence their choice.

**Figure 8.4: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 20 and 44**
A total of 262 (or 70%) of the students did agree with Q20 and only 222 (60%) disagreed with Q44. Some of this discrepancy can be attributed to acquiescence bias. When considering the future of their off spring, it appears that the parent will consider Australia’s multi-cultural society as a plus.

These results neither confirm nor deny the theory developed in this thesis, but are expected results if the theory is correct.

**Questions 23 and 47**

“23. My choice of host city is based on a pleasant environment, good air quality, and ease of travel.”

“47. I did not want to study in an overcrowded city such as Shanghai.”

Table 8.7 below shows again valid results for these two questions while Table 8.8 gives the individual statistics for each question.

**Table 8.7: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 23 and 47**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 20</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 44</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
273 of the scores (73%) are within the valid range.

**Table 8.8: Statistics on Responses to Questions 23 and 47 of Internet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 23</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 47</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Q 23, 241 (64.5%) of respondents agreed that a pleasant environment and air quality were key influences when selecting study destination, but only 184 students (49.2%) rejected the possibility of studying in a polluted environment such as Shanghai. Perhaps many of the students had Shanghai citizenship.

**Table 8.9: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 23 and 47**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quest Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These two questions do not represent the same question, one posed positively and the other negatively formatted, in fact they are both asking the student, in a positive way “Do you want to study in a city with a good clean environment?” The correlation coefficient supports the validity of each set of responses.

The significant elements in these questions are ‘pleasant environment’, ‘air quality’, ‘ease of travel’, and ‘overcrowded city’. While these features are present in Australia, many of them can be found in different parts of Australia’s main competitors, including the USA and the UK. Many of the post GaoKao students have not travelled overseas, and their perceptions of Australia are based on their imagination and investigative skills.

The results from the two different groups, the post GaoKao students in Figure 8.5, and the 374 students from the International School in Figure 8.6, are remarkably consistent as shown in the next two Figures.
Figure 8.5: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 23 and 47

The Figure for Q 47 is almost symmetrical in its own right as the Figure for Q 23 is less symmetrical. The inference would be that the question did not arouse strong convictions with the respondents who mostly answered within the range 2-4.

Figure 8.6: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 23 and 47

The graph of Q23 is reasonably symmetrical to the graph of Q47, with 241 school students agreeing with Q23 and 184 disagreeing with Q47. An inordinately large number of respondents answered ‘Neither’ to both questions.
The Chinese parents would be able to link the ‘lifestyle’ of a country to the future happiness of their children. Students, answering questionnaires concerning decisions made by their parents, would be unable to discern the motives influencing their parents. Nearly all the respondents had indicated that they would study abroad and were keen to better understand their future options. The students were rewarded for participation in the Internet questionnaire. Those students who have taken the time to provide valid data might have done so in a quest to divine their parents’ true motives for sending them abroad. I am sure that there are many who do fully understand the purpose behind their parents’ decisions, and I am equally sure that there are many who cannot comprehend their parents’ true reasons for their decision. Even parental interviews would not unmask those who have used this method to provide a happy life for the family and to protect the family’s wealth.

However, at the time of writing, more evidence is being revealed in the Panama Papers, (cited in Olesen, 2016), that wealthy Chinese are seeking safe havens for themselves and their fortunes. Australia is considered a safe haven. In conjunction with the environment and healthy lifestyle, Australia is the ideal solution, as evidenced by the increasing number of Chinese students seeking to study at Australian tertiary institutions.

The above assertions do not negate that there are a large number of students who have other motives for study in Australia, which are not linked to immigration. Nor does it discount the other pull factors such as quality of education, safety, lifestyle, cost, et al., which are all necessary pre-conditions for those families who do fit the theory.

**Critical Discussion**

The inability of this researcher, and that of other academic investigators, to test the theory developed within this and the preceding chapter, has allowed the advancement of other theories. Original research into corruption and money laundering requires forensic investigative skills beyond the scope of this researcher, but researching evidence discovered by others supports the theories of this research.
An interesting study, by Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013), identified a selection of factors impacting on the intention of Han female students from Henan province (China) when deciding whether to study overseas. Although their research did not indicate lifestyle as being an issue for students wanting to study overseas, this omission is explained in the context of their study and the sample under investigation. Zhang et al.’s (2013) study found eight key factors impacting on students’ decisions to study overseas: namely they wanted to “continue their current study; to pursue a more advanced degree; they were the only child of their families”; they were ranked “medium high or high in their classes; their parents themselves had more education; satisfied with the university”; and keen to improve their “English proficiency” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, 2013, p. 151). These conclusions, which can be loosely grouped under the banner of ‘quality of education’ accord with Gong and Huybers’ (2015) supposition that ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’ are the key drivers for study destination. Albeit, Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, (2013, p. 141) did refer to an earlier study by Bodycot (2009) which found that the “three most important factors motivating students to study abroad are: 1) immigration to the hosting country after graduation,...” and the main purpose of immigration is to create a better life(style) for the immigrant. 40, out of the 96 sampled, had indicated that they planned to study overseas, although the actual number would be far lower than this statistic, again taking into account the Chinese culture of FACE. The potential of overseas study offers more FACE to the respondent. Interestingly, 11 of the students indicated a desire to obtain a Masters degree overseas and the remaining 29 proffered a wish to obtain a doctorate from a foreign university.

Students who preferred not to study abroad had parents who, having “received less education may not be aware of the possibility of studying outside of China” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, 2013, p. 151). Likewise, “students who expressed a higher level of satisfaction with the current Chinese university were less likely to pursue education overseas” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, 2013, p. 151).

A previous study has found that “almost half of the participants were considering study abroad to “continue their current study or to pursue a more advanced degree” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, 2013, p. 151). Further, it was found that a “higher proportion of students who planned to study overseas were the “only child of their families,” ranked
“medium high or high in their classes”, were willing to “pursue an advanced degree” in the future, and had “parents with more education” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, 2013, p. 151). In addition, “students who were less satisfied with the university tend to search for other options and more likely to consider studying in a different country” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, 2013, p. 151). Students who “reported a lower English proficiency level were more likely to choose to study abroad” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedorn, 2013, p. 151). Zhang et al. advance a number of reasons as to why female students from China seek to study abroad. Potential immigration is not mentioned, possibly because the researchers are not collecting data from the parents of the students in the survey. Zhang et al.’s (2013) “data were collected from 96 female undergraduates who enrolled in a 4-year public university in North Central China [in the] fall [of] 2010” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedon, 2013, p. 140). Another researcher, Menjie (2016) had similar explanations for these study-abroad choices.

“The conclusions of Zhang, Sun & Hagedon, (2013), are applicable to their sample population, but their relevance to this investigation needs to be qualified. Approximately 450,000 (4.74%) from the sample of 9.5 million GaoKao students, elected to study overseas in 2014 (Du & Zhang, 2013, n. p.). In total, over 99% of the students who completed the GaoKao in 2013 chose not to study in Australia. The females examined had chosen initially, instead, to continue study in China. Obviously these findings give valid reasons as to why Chinese students elect not to study in Australia and are in a small way germane to our findings.

8.3 CORRUPTION AND LIFESTYLE

The evidence indicates that many students (or their parents) chose Australia because of the lifestyle on offer and the chance to share that lifestyle through immigration.
Many Chinese international students agreed in principle with S4’s comment that ‘Australia is the country, which is the closest place to the Heaven, if there is a Heaven’. However, possessing this opinion does not restrict the likelihood that corruption featured in the visa study process, either in China or Australia or both.

There is mounting evidence of money laundering in Australia with “more than $3 billion in suspicious transfers by Chinese investors last year, including $1 billion in property transactions” (Chung, 2013, n. p.). “Australia had(s) become a favourite bolthole for corrupt Chinese officials and businessmen and many corrupt Chinese officials have fled to Australia with embezzled funds exceeding $1 billion” (Cornwall, 2014, n. p.). Australia is a favoured destination for corrupt officials because it refused to ratify a 2007 extradition treaty signed by the two governments (Dziedzic, 2017) and lax tax laws have simplified the process of money laundering. Money laundering, or wealth protection is often achieved through property acquisition. The scale of money laundering by corrupt Chinese officials is staggering; “it has been estimated that $1.7 trillion of corrupt and criminal proceeds were spent by Chinese investors around the world between 1992 and 2012,” (Thornton, 2016, n. p.). An estimated $12 billion was invested in Australian property by Chinese investors during the 2015 financial year (Thornton, 2016). This evidence only became apparent towards the concluding parts of this research during follow up interviews with parents. In those interviews many parents admitted that they owned property in Australia, sometimes more than one, and one of the interviewees tried to conceal the fact of property ownership even though that person had sought my help in obtaining their property.

Chapter Seven exposed evidence of corruption by Chinese students in Australia to dishonestly gain educational qualifications (Bretag, 2016; Chung, 2015; Dean, 2014). This situation allowed wealthy Chinese students with free time to pursue an indolent lifestyle, which often involved gambling and possibly the use of recreational drugs. (Pung, 2017; Acharya, 2016; Chung, 2015; Cervini, 2013). The level of corruption does not entirely reside with the students; universities are tacitly complicit in the manner by which students are recruited. The integrity of educational agents has been suspect over many years (Knight, 2011), and with regards to the use of such agents ‘the universities have long-known they are dealing in murky waters’. (Besser, Cronau & Cohen, 2015, n. p.). Corruption has allowed some wealthy students to gain
fraudulent entry into Australian universities to study courses they cannot pass. Such occurrence opens the door to corruption of the educational system in Australia, whilst the student pursues an indulgent lifestyle funded by corrupt payments from China. Such incidents are small in comparison but there is a significant number of students involved, and the Chinese are not the only nationality participating in this practice.

8.4 DISCUSSION

Australia offers a pleasant lifestyle, its per capita GDP is one of the highest in the world, it has a world-renowned health system, and it appeals as a tourist destination because of a pristine environment and the uniqueness of its flora and fauna. Lifestyle was also the most mentioned attribute in the focus group interviews. About 65% of the volunteers to the Internet questionnaire agreed that pleasant environment and air quality were key influences when selecting a study destination. Safety is an important component of lifestyle and 62% agreed with Gong and Huybers (2015), that safety factors are key drivers in study destination decisions. The evidence also showed that 70% of Chinese students, (see Tables 8.3 & 8.4), would not study in a country where overt racial discrimination is on display; racial tolerance is linked to immigration aspirations. Australia’s lifestyle makes it an ideal choice for immigration (Chung, 2017; Kumar, 2017; Thronton, 2016; Dziedzic, 2017; De Jong, 2014; Cornwall, 2014).

This research has substantiated the findings of Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013); Marginson (2007); Yang (2010); Bodycott (2009); Oleksiyenko et al., (2013) and Guo et al., (2013), all of which can account for large numbers of Chinese students studying in Australia. However, their findings do not account for the disproportionate numbers of Chinese students studying in Australian universities. No other research into the motives for study in Australia has canvassed the opinions of parents, nor have other researchers linked corruption issues in both China (Kumar, 2017, Thornton 2016, Cornwall 2014, Chung 2013, 2015, 2017, Dean 2014, De Jong

35 The Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDP/Capita) in Australia was last recorded at 54688.45 US dollars in 2015 (Trading Economics, 2017, n. p.). In fact Trading Economics (2017) ranks Australia’s GDP/Capita at $US54688.45, second to Switzerland with $US75582.00 and above third placed USA.
2014) and Australia (Clark & Oakes 2017, Besser, Cronau & Cohen 2015) as factors influencing choice motive. This researcher, initially alerted by Olesen’s (2016) findings, discovered an abundance of reputable media reports detailing the scale and scope of Chinese corruption and its influence in Australia. Australia has also been under scrutiny regarding corruption issues. This research contends that a significant number of Chinese students are choosing to study in Australia because of the desire for immigration, motivated by corruption issues.

The evidence in this chapter has been successfully decoded within the parameters of an understanding of the unique facets of Chinese culture and set against the revelations of Olesen (2016) and Wen (2016). Finally, Zhang, Sun & Hagedon, (2013, p. 141), quote a number of diverse sources, which confirm the findings of this chapter. Although at first glance they seem to be conflicting points, they are in accord with the theory that immigration as a means of avoiding corruption charges in China is a powerful motive for study in Australia. Zhang et al., (2013) made these three particular points:

1. “(Bodycott, 2009) specifically focused on students from mainland China, indicating the three most important factors motivating students to study abroad: 1) immigration to the hosting country after graduation, 2) a perceived better quality of education, and 3) a competitive tuition” (Zhang, Sun & Hagedon 2013, p. 141).

2. “Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) indicated that the college choice decision process for international students consists of at least three steps: 1) to study internationally; 2) decide upon a host country; and 3) decide upon a specific institution” (Zhang et al., 2013, p. 142).

3. More importantly, Zhang et al., (2013, p. 141) emphasised that “Chinese parents have a strong influence on their children's decision making process regarding study overseas”.

Despite the accumulated evidence of corruption in both Australia and China, further study is required to ascertain the long term effects of this corruption on Australia’s
export education market.

8.5 CONCLUSION

Lifestyle is a multi-faceted concept; it encompasses such issues as financial health and career, and embraces other diverse matters such as the environment, cultural considerations, health and safety, climate and many more of this genre. This chapter has investigated the various lifestyle issues that have convinced the focus groups of students to study in Australia, and may convince others in China to follow them.

The findings in this chapter reveal a strong interest in most aspects of lifestyle. The focus group data is more instructive than the Internet Questionnaire, because these students did choose Australia. There is no indication of the number involved in the Internet Questionnaire who will follow their example.

Imagination is a key word for both groups, because for most the reality of the hoped for Australian lifestyle did not eventuate. Nevertheless, most of the students wanted to emigrate and work in Australia after graduation.

The phenomena of students from the PRC studying abroad, has attracted study by many scholars and the attention of the media in a number of countries who rely on export education to China. Analysis of the data in this chapter supports the theory that studying abroad is one option that some Chinese parents have used to provide a safe and happy life for their children. Other evidence has uncovered the substantial amounts of Chinese money being diverted to safe tax havens and confirms that Australia is a real estate target for Chinese investors.

The evidence in this chapter has been successfully decoded within the parameters of an understanding of the unique facets of Chinese culture. Connecting the findings of this chapter with the revelations of a number of diverse sources confirms that lifestyle is a strong driver of study choice destination.

A desirable lifestyle is synonymous with a ‘happy life’. HNWIs from China are seeking to emigrate to a country offering a better lifestyle coupled with wealth
protection. This is one imaginative force that pulls students to study in Australia. The ripostes from some of the focus group suggest that some experience disappointment in the difference between pre-conceived lifestyle imaginations and the reality of living in Australia. But even those voicing dissatisfaction still express the wish to emigrate permanently to Australia. For those who have chosen this path to a happy life in Australia, wealth is important, and the cost of making the change could be a defining factor. Previously the huge fluctuations in the value of the AUD against the Yuan did have an impact on the rate of flow of students from China coming to Australia. The full impact of cost in all of its related areas is examined in the next chapter.
CHAPTER NINE

EVIDENCE FOR COST
9.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters produced evidence that showed that quality of education and lifestyle are drivers of choice of destination country for international study. This evidence from this research confirmed the findings of Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013); Marginson (2007); Yang (2010); Bodycott (2009); Oleksiyenko et al. (2013) and Guo et al. (2013). However, the previous two chapters indicate that there are other attributes that contribute to the complex mixture of forces, imaginations and connections influencing this choice. This chapter investigates the influence that cost has on determining whether students from China will or will not choose Australia as their host country for that study. Cost is defined as ‘the expected annual expenditure’ (Gong and Huybers, 2015, p. 214). Cost is an easy statistic to measure; universities publish their fees, Governments release cost of living statistics and currency exchange rates are readily available. Not every student in the focus groups cited cost in answer to the focus group questions. Those that did include ‘cost’ in their responses generally considered the cost of studying and living in Australia is at the highest levels and is a really negative factor for international students in general. However, the negativity related to cost did not discourage any of the focus groups from coming to Australia.

Reference was made in earlier chapters concerning the period of time when the cost of study in Australia was quite high because of the high AUD. The cost/benefit ratio for international study in general was also explored in previous chapters.

Cost certainly is a factor influencing choice, but rather in the form of affordability. It was not mentioned in the free response options. The work of Brown et al., (2011) suggested that a degree was no longer a pathway to a secure, rewarding career and the financial benefits to the Chinese student that accrue from foreign education are less than the cost of that education. The realisation that the value of the degree is less than the cost suggests that there has to be another motive, other than obtaining a degree, for study in Australia. The previous two chapters also examined corruption associated with HNWIs from China, (Olesen (2016), Chung (2013, 2015, 2017)), and for the
student progeny of corrupt individuals, cost is not the defining factor, but rather the prospect of immigration to a country that offers a better life and wealth protection becomes paramount. Although there is mounting evidence in credible media sources to support this theory, it should be emphasised that corruption only refers to a small proportion of students from China.

International students are affected by globalisation, a surplus of graduates and greedy management practices, which has placed all graduates, domestic or local, in a global auction for jobs and salary (Brown et al., 2011). A number of students in the focus groups expressed their concern that the value of a Western degree was lower than their initial expectations. Brown et al., (2011) present a strong case emphasising the point that the high expectations that graduates enjoyed in the past have been eroded by a global auction on jobs and salaries. Cantwell and Kauppinen (2014, p. 3), expanded this theme to include the concept of Academic Capitalism. Brown et al., (2011) have identified the benefits of ‘Academic Capitalism’ to large businesses (multi-nationals) who now have a sizeable supply of a vital resource at lower than previous cost. It is not yet clear how the changing cost/benefit ratio of a Western degree will impact on the flow of international students in the future.

9.1 COST: FOCUS GROUP

The affordability factor is probably the reason why the number of students from China studying in Australia fell in 2013 when “Australia has topped the US and Britain as the most expensive country in the world for foreign students, an international report has found” (Kwek and Preisis, 2013, n. p.). Nevertheless, Australia was still able to attract large numbers of students from China at a time when a cheaper and better education could be gained elsewhere, indicating that cost was not a significant deterrent factor in choosing Australia. Many of the focus groups also elected to study in Australia during an interval when it was the most expensive country in the world as a study destination for Chinese students. Eliminating cost and quality of education as pivotal elements leaves environment and lifestyle influences and corruption issues as critical components of deliberation when choosing a country for study abroad. In 2014 the number of international students enrolling in Australian universities rose by 17.45% to 347,591, the largest increase being the number of Chinese students who in 2014...
comprised 36.3% of all the international students in Australia (See Table 5.5). Chapter Five reveals that the reason behind the increase was the sharp drop in the Australian dollar, which reduced the cost of education in Australia by 35%, although there were many students coming when education was at its most expensive phase. It appears that cost only affected a small percentage of the new students from China.

Student S12, in answering FGQ1 mounted a counter argument in favour of high cost:

S12: “The price level in Australia is high and I regard it as a positive factor. Because most of the international students I meet are from decent families and the entirety of their character are relatively high.”

Only two other FG attendees mentioned cost in response to FGQ1;

S1: “Besides, compared to America, the tuition fee in Australia is relatively inexpensive” ..... “Thirdly, the exchange rate at that time was at a very high level. It felt that I received an inferior education at the same cost of studying in America or other countries.”

S10 also saw cost as a positive factor when he/she said in contemplating FG1,

“Because of money, of course!”

At the same time 16 others cited cost when discussing FGQ2;

S13: “The first issue is about the tuition fee. The Australian dollar’s exchange rate against Yuan, (is high) compared to Canadian dollar’s exchange rate against Yuan at that time.”

S13 still came to Australia even though he/she had cheaper options in Canada and the USA.

S1 echoed the same sentiments.

S1: “Another issue is price level. Many people told me that the price level in Australia is crazy, especially the rent. I have an American friend who lives in California and once travelled and worked in Australia for one year, she told me the price level of merchandise and accommodation is much higher than that in the US.”
S15 concurred, in response to FGQ2,

“Firstly, the tuition fee is very expensive.”

This was considered before coming to Australia, but S15 still came, agreeing with S13’s comment above when answering the same question.

S17 was as equally succinct as S13 and S15 in response to FGQ2:

S17: “Firstly, the tuition fee is too expensive... Secondly, the transportation cost is so high.”

In response to FG3, S17 noted:

“But the price level in Australia is very high, even higher than those of North American countries.”

Similar remarks followed from S18 and S2 when responding to FGQ2:

S18: “Secondly, the price level is relative high and tuition fee is expensive.”

S2: “So we don’t have enough income to cover our cost of life..... This is really a heavy financial burden for my family.”

S19: “It took me a long time to make my decision because the tuition fee of studying in Australia is very expensive.”

Yet S19 did choose to study in Australia. Was that the child’s decision, or did the one who pays make the decision, and why did they choose the most expensive education when cheaper and better options were available in the UK and the USA?

S20 also elected to study in Australia even though he/she noted:

“The first factor is that when I first came to Australia, the exchange rate of Australian dollar against Yuan was 6.6. So the financial cost is really high.”

A number of students have admitted that the high cost was the first negative factor to have an influence on their decision, but in each case other forces, imaginations or
connections supplanted this obstacle in choosing Australia as their study destination.

S14 supported the theory of transcultural immigration.

   S14: “At first, many of us did not consider to stay here. But after a while, we changed our minds.”

It is possible that the parents had divined this outcome at the time of the decision.

S16, when discussing the most rewarding aspects of study in Australia, in FGQ3, proposed that

   “The things that satisfied me most include the freedoms of studying and time arrangement. In addition, it is easy to travel with companions with similar interests.”

Most parents would know that Australian society is much freer than its Chinese counter-part, something that would appeal to the younger person. If given the opportunity it may seem that the child is trying to engineer the parents’ migration to Australia, even though the reverse could be true.

S21 offered another rewarding aspect when comparing life in China with the situation in Australia.

   S21: “The competition here is relatively fair compared with domestic situation (in China).”

Since this was their thinking before coming to Australia it did not deter them from doing so. Obviously, the focus groups could not identify students, who had been deterred from coming to Australia by cost, nor could the Internet questionnaire.

9.2 COST: INTERNET QUESTIONNAIRE

Cost was investigated by the paired questions (4, 28), (17, 41), and (18, 42). The Figures of the paired data are shown on the following pages.

Questions 4 and 28
“4. My choice of university is (will be) based on cost of course fees.”

“28. Course cost is not a factor that has (or will) influence my choice of university.”

The total score validity test shows strong validity, with 279 scores (75%) within the validity acceptance range of 5-7 as shown in Table 9.1 while the individual statistics are shown in Table 9.2.

Table 9.1: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 4 and 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows small acquiescence bias with positive scores for 2, 3 & 4 (= 62) greater than the total scores for 8, 9, and 10 (=33).

Table 9.2: Statistics on Responses to Questions 4 and 28 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 179 students (47.9%) in Q 4 considered cost as part of their decision procedure and the response in Q 28 was 133 (35.7%), which was even lower. The high ‘Neither’ score indicates that cost for many students is irrelevant.

Table 9.3: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 4 and 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s å</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With both means very close to 3, the ‘Neither’ score shows that cost is a relatively unimportant issue.

Figure 9.1 is data from 37 respondents who were post-GaoKao school leavers.
Figure 9.1: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 4 and 28

This graph has a fair degree of validity according to the symmetrical principle explained previously in this chapter. 24/37 students agree that the choice of university will be based on cost of course fees, but that could, under the wording of the question, be a decision made after the country of choice has been made.

The same data from the 374 remaining students has no such validity, as shown below in Figure 9.2.
The graph is not symmetrical and the low scores, in both graphs for option 1 and 5, demonstrate that cost was not a significant contributor to the ultimate choice of country.

**Questions 17 and 41**

“17. I only considered prestigious universities that charged high fees.”

“41. I did not consider any cost as a factor when choosing my overseas study destination.”

This produced the most unusual validity test results as shown in Table 9.4 below.

**Table 9.4: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 17 and 41**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 192 scores (51%) fall within the validity acceptance range of 5-7, with 166 scores with totals of 8, 9, or 10. This may have been because ‘high fees’ was linked to ‘prestigious university’ making the question confusing.
The individual statistics for each question are shown in Table 9.5.

Table 9.5: Statistics on Responses to Questions 17 and 41 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 41</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar to the results for the paired questions 4 & 28, the high ‘Neither’ score implies that cost is not a relevant issue for most students.

The data from these two questions does not satisfy the symmetrical criteria for the data to be valid. Since most of the data from the two sources used here is valid over the full questionnaire, the invalidity of these two questions tended to show that costs involved were not considered relevant to their ultimate choice.

Table 9.6: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 17 and 41

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s å Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high score for both questions shows that cost does influence choice of host country and university. The positive correlation coefficient is evident that students did not perceived these as the same question asked in different formats.

Figure, 9.3 shows data from 37 respondents who are post-GaoKao school leavers.
Figure 9.3: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 17 and 41

The graphs are almost identical and show no symmetry; therefore the data is not valid. It would appear that the respondents answered these two questions without a great deal of thought.

The same data, Figure 9.4, for the 374 remaining students has no validity as shown below.

Questions 18 and 42
“18. The cost of living was an important factor that will (did) influence my decision.”

“42. The cost of living in my host country did (will) not influence my decision of host country.”

The validity test for these two questions is quite good as shown by Table 9.7 and the individual statistics for Q 18 and Q 42 as shown in Table 9.8.

### Table 9.7: Statistics on Responses to Questions 18 and 42 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

272 (73%) of the scores fall within the range 5-7 (valid) with little evidence of acquiescence bias.

### Table 9.8: Individual statistics for questions 18 and 42

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 18</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 42</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Q 18, 195 respondents (52.2%) answered that cost of living in the host country influenced their decision, whilst in the negatively formatted Q 42, 119 students (31.9%) were influenced by the cost of living.

### Table 9.9: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 18 and 42

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s ñ</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This pair of questions is well constructed, with means very close to 3, suggesting that cost is not a significant issue for the majority of students, but it was a critical factor that accounted for the 8-10% decrease in numbers during times of high cost of study living in Australia because the high AUD..
The first Figure, Figure 9.5, is data from 37 respondents who are post-GaoKao school leavers.

**Figure 9.5: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 18 and 42**

![Bar chart showing cost of living as a factor influencing choice of host country](chart.jpg)

There is some correlation between the Strongly Agree of Q18 when compared with the Strongly Disagree of Q42, the negatively formulated question. Other than these two scores there is not validity. Once more this infers that maybe cost was an issue for a small number, but for most students it was not given any consideration.

Figure 9.6, is for the remaining 374 students, which also supports the inference gained from the post-GaoKao students, and is shown below.

**Figure 9.6: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 18 and 42**

![Bar chart showing cost of living as a factor influencing choice of host country](chart.jpg)
Previous investigations by Marginson (2007) and Yang (2010) did not see cost as a significant factor. This data confirms their assessment, except for a small number of students, which was verified by the decline in student numbers during the period when Australia was the most expensive country in the world for international students (Kwek, 2013).

9.3 DISCUSSION

The cost for international students to study in Australia is generally at the high end of the scale, and is similar to that of Australia’s main competitors, the US, the UK, Japan and Canada. Cost variations occur with fluctuations in monetary exchange rates. The flood of international students from China continues to increase despite mounting evidence that this flood is fuelled by corruption in China; (Chung 2017, Bochenski 2015, De Jong 2014, Cornwall 2014); and is serviced by an Australian education sector also plagued with corrupt practices (Dean 2014, Bretag 2016, Besser et al., 2015, ICAC 2015, Marsden 2008). Australia, as a country, has tarnished its reputation in recent years, ‘ending a four-year slide down Transparency International's global corruption ladder,’ (Clark & Oakes, 2017, n. p.), to 13th position. Corruption involves money and ultimately this is factored into cost.

The focus group’s responses on cost were mainly negative, most agreeing that Australia was expensive when compared with its main competitors. Nevertheless these same students had chosen to study in Australia. The Internet responses showed very
little validity between the paired questions as demonstrated by the lack of reflective symmetry in the Figures 9.1 – 9.6. Wealthy Chinese parents, the ones who can afford to send their children to study in Australia, would not base their study destination on cost alone.

Further, if the parents had been the decision makers it would have been unlikely in Chinese custom to make a decision, concerning the future of their children, simply on a matter of cost. From the students’ perspectives, parents would not have included a cost barrier if indeed it were the student that made the decision. Yang (2010) also believes that ‘Chinese would perceive spending on education as an investment rather than as a cost’ (Yang, 2010, p. 30). Gong and Huybers (2015, p. 213) disagree and quote a number of researches, all pre-dating 2013, which contend ‘that charging a lower cost ... made universities more attractive to international students.’ Notwithstanding Gong and Huybers (2015, p. 213) assertion, my own observations suggest that where cost is an issue, it does not affect the country of choice, but is more likely to influence the choice of educational institution in the chosen host nation.

This final point raises another cost that has not been tested, and that is the additional cost of corruption required to ensure that the student acquires their desired qualifications. Australian universities are fiercely competing with universities around the world with “17% of university operating revenues (in NSW) coming from international student fees” (ICAC, 2015, p. 4.). These same universities would find it difficult to survive without this extra revenue source (Bretag 2016, ICAC 2015, Bochenski 2015, Besser et al., 2015). The efforts of the universities in NSW (and also other Australian states), to defray cost have created a situation which is ‘conducive to corruption, and can lead to cheating, inducements to academics, academic exploitation of struggling students’ (ICAC, 2015, p. 6). This situation cannot continue without cost damages to both the Australian universities and the international students who use their services.

9.4 CONCLUSION
Cost is not a subtle issue, neither is it multi-faceted. Notwithstanding, it can be compartmentalised into three principal areas; cost of tuition, and daily cost of living are obvious, but Australia’s high rental costs is a further impost on international
students. A fourth hidden cost is the fluctuating exchange rate between China and Australia.

The evidence from this chapter has shown that while some HNWIs in China have recognised that Australia is an expensive study destination it has not deterred their choice of that option for their children. The evidence also reveals that some of the same families have purchased properties in Australia. These two circumstances support the theory of transcultural citizenship via students’ study visas. In comparison there is evidence in previous chapters that excessive high cost did reduce the number of international students choosing to study in Australia. Thus cost is a reason for choosing not to study in Australia, but of its own it has no influence in persuading students to study in Australia.

Presently the cost of education in Australia is comparative to Australia’s main competitors, and as such can be discounted as a significant pull factor attracting students to Australia universities. Therefore cost has at most a small influence on Chinese families when making a choice of country for study-abroad options.

International students make their choices under the influences of many forces, connections and imaginations, and it is the latter of this trio that is investigated in the next chapter, environmental factors. During my time with CCIEE, BIEE and more lately, AEA, I had the opportunity to attend seminars given by many Australian Universities and AUSTRADE, all seeking to attract Chinese students to study in Australia. Visual high-lights of all such presentations included the unique flora and fauna of Australia, its pristine beaches, its clean environment, all presented to attract a student living in some of the more crowded and polluted areas of China. This promised ‘imaginary pristine environment’ is not found in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane where the great majority of Chinese students elect to study, however, as the next chapter reveals, environment is still a pulling force for overseas students.

CHAPTER TEN
10.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous evidence chapters have focused on single issues that may have been a sole or contributory influencing choice. Environment alone is the one classification that places Australia at the forefront of all other popular host nations. This chapter examines the possibility that Australia’s environment is a sufficiently compelling reason for Chinese students to study in Australia. Chapter Ten also links Australia’s environment to other motives such as corruption and wealth protection, which together indicate that immigration is a key driver for study in Australia.

Chapter Ten will show that the influencing power of the Australian environment is its linkage with Australian lifestyle and the high net worth individuals (HNWI) from China seeking to emigrate. Other evidence will show that Australia recognises this influence in the way Australian universities market themselves overseas.

10.1 CORRUPTION ISSUES

The data collected in this research has been supplemented by evidence from a wide-range of media investigations and Government reports that revealed large-scale corruption issues in China. Investigations have shown evidence of corruption in Chinese educational institutions matched by corruption concerns involving Australia’s international education industry (Dean 2014, Bretag 2016, Besser et al., 2015, ICAC 2015). Other corrupt activities in Australia can be linked to international students from China who are currently studying at Australian universities and colleges (Clark & Oakes 2017, Kumar, 2017, Thornton 2016, Bramble 2016, Chung 2013). Corruption is unlikely to have affected the motive for the environment as being an influencing factor when the decision for study-abroad destinations was under consideration. Nevertheless, the appeal of studying in a relatively pristine environment, and the chance to emigrate, does appeal to the average Chinese family.

AUSTRADE highlights Australia’s environmental advantages whenever they assist in marketing Australia’s international education credentials overseas. The continued use of this tactic attests to the pulling power that Australia’s environment exerts on
students from China. This pulling power is far more potent when combined with the corruption issues that are influencing HNWIs from China to immigrate to a safe haven. Not one of the students in the focus groups nominated Australia’s environment as their single reason for study in Australia. However, student S25, when asked, “What was the main reason for choosing Australia?” responded with one reason, “Immigrant policy.”

10.2 SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Environment also includes the social environment encompassing such characteristics as social alienation, discrimination and loneliness. Many of the focus groups raised these social problems after living in Australia, and these experiences may reduce Chinese student inflow to Australian universities. Evidence of social dissatisfaction is shown by the following responses of S10, S8, and S6.

S10, FGQ2: “So my room and the school are the two places where I stay most often. I feel lonely and make few friends.”

S8, FGQ5): “Once I was in an internship in a center. Only four people there were undergraduates or with higher level. Most of the employees there were so unfriendly to us. Maybe their thought in mind was: ‘you guys are even not Australian resident. Why are you so well-educated and get higher payments than us?’ Some of my classmates told me that the staff in the workplace often bullied them. Compared to theirs, my experience seems not that terrible.”

S6, FGQ3: “At first I had thought it’s very easy to live here and immigrate here. Later on, I found not only it’s very difficult to immigrate here—because my major is not in the Skilled List- but also it’s hard/arduous to live here, it is very lonely.”

The identity of the decision maker is another mitigating factor that discounts environment as being an inducement for the student. Three of the interviewed students (S24, S28, and S29) confessed that their mother was the decision maker; S27 admitted that the choice was a collaboration between him/her and his/her parents; S22 and S26 identified their parents as the sole contributors to the choice; S25 followed the advice of his/her aunt. S23 was the only interviewed student who claimed that it was his/her decision alone to choose to study in Australia. Further admissions from S25 include
the desire to gain PR (for him/herself and his/her parents), but he/she did not divulge the purchase of any property.

Australia’s environment as a single force is not a sufficiently compelling reason for Chinese students to study in Australia, but its environment does support other motives for immigration to Australia.

10.3 ENVIRONMENT: FOCUS GROUP

Environmental issues are raised 26 times by the initial 21 focus group students, eight times in a positive context when answering FGQ1 but fourteen times when responding to FGQ2. The second group of eight interviewed students did cite environment as part of the reason for choosing to study in Australia, as enunciated by Student S27 in responding to Q3 “What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?”

S27: “Good environment, multiple cultures and excellent universities.”

When S27 was asked, “Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia,” the response was “Not until they both retire in China.”

Further questioning on property ownership in Australia revealed, “Yes, my husband and I have purchased an apartment” (S27) (This student already has PR in Australia, DQ. (this researcher)).

When asked the question, what was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia? S28 responded in an almost identical manner.

“There are four main reasons for choosing Australia:

- Australia is one of the most livable countries in the world.
- The climate in major cities of Australia is warm and comfortable.
- I have an opportunity to migrate to Australia after finishing my study.
- One of my mother’s friends lived in Australia. My parents expected that she could more or less take care of me” (S28).
When asked “Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?” S28 replied, “Yes, they have intention to migrate to Australia.”

When asked “Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?” S28 replied, “Yes, they have purchased property in Australia in my name.”

A few volunteers in their responses to FG1 and other FG questions highlight the dissimilarity between their expectation and an unacceptable reality.

S1, FG1: “there are a lot of tourist attractions in this country, including Blue Mountain, Opera House, amazing farms in Adelaide and the Great Barrier Reef in Queensland.”
S1, FG3: “Besides, I think the weather here is too hot, especially the summer.”

S4, FG3: “It’s said the natural environment is very good also.”
S4, FG2: “After I arrived and I considered that only CBD is prosperous. Others areas are not so wealthy.”

S4, FG1: “climate and comfortable weather and temperature here also constitute positive factors. Besides, winters here are not very cold. I can also enjoy beautiful views and beaches in Australia.”
S16, FG6: “But my experience of studying in Australia is not as good as I thought.”

These conflicting answers made it difficult to ascertain which forces, connections and imaginations were the main influencing factors enticing students from China to study in Australia. Environmental considerations are some of those factors, and certainly a contributor to the happy lifestyle that the Chinese parents seek for their progeny. Other positive comments concerning Australia’s environment include

S20, FGQ1: “The main reason I chose Australia was the climate.”

S19, FGQ1: “Fourthly, I tended to go to Australia because of the good environment and comfort climate.”

S5, FGQ1: “Australia is the country, which is the closest place to the
Heaven, if there is a Heaven.”

S5, FGQ3: “The only special merit here is the fresh air, wonderful environment. ... Australians don’t mix (as a group), with other cultures.” (Natural environment magnificent, social environment poor; this theme was repeated throughout the focus group responses. DQ).

S1, FGQ1: “I felt from the photos that it has pristine nature.”

S13, FGQ1: “Additionally, the environment and climate here is better.”

In comparison, a number of volunteers did not admit to any environmental factors that influenced their choice prior to coming to Australia, but did find unpalatable aspects after living in Australia. Typical comments include:-

S2, FGQ2: “The first consideration is about culture. There are many differences and even conflicts between Australian culture and Chinese culture. I was afraid that I could not integrate into Australian culture and institutions.”

S15, FGQ2: “Secondly, I made my choice without doing adequate research and I did not have any friend when I first came here.”

S15, FG3: “Before coming here, I thought Australia was a highly developed commercialized country. But in reality it is not.”

S21, FGQ3: “In respect of the macro-environment, I think the pace of life here is too slow and not good for young people.”

Students pursuing PR, however, would be better able to create a positive outcome irrespective of whether their expectation matched with actual experience. A number of student volunteers demonstrated this trait when considering the sum total of their responses. Such adaption points towards a pre-conceived desire for immigration prior to study in Australia and that the student had been exhorted by his/her parents to find a happy lifestyle in the host country. This allegation is confirmed by the following:

S3, FGQ2: “Before I came here, I really don’t know whether I can integrate into Australian culture. (Suggests long term plans to stay. DQ). It turns out that I can’t and the distinction between the two cultures seems increasingly obvious to me.”

S3, FGQ6: “Living environment is of great importance. Only after getting to a foreign country can you know that how essential it is to have a strong mind. ... This is so important that I have the ability to face various obstacles
in my life. Thanks to that dispirited experience in Australia, I become mentally stronger and more confident.”

S3, FGQ7: “I recommend my students and relatives to study in Australia. Besides, the food safety and healthy eco-system are also good reason for studying here.”

S17, FGQ2: “Thirdly, there are too many Chinese people here and your opportunity of communicate with local people is very limited.”

S17, FG2: “Fourthly, if you can’t get your PR, it is very hard to find a job; if you have no working experience, you can hardly get your PR, which presents a paradox. Although many people say Australia is a big immigrant country, but sometimes it is really difficult to operate.”

S17, FGQ3: “It is often sunny days, which is very nice.”

S18, FG1: “Lastly, the climate in Australia is much better compared to the US and Canada, which both have very cold winters.” (‘lastly,’ weak recommendation, DQ).

S18, FG2: “Thirdly, there are too many students studying business here and we don’t have adequate employment opportunities.”

S18, FG6: My overall experience here has exceeded my expectation. But my family’s expectation turns into a driving force to me. Besides, the environment here changed me a lot.”

Responses by all the volunteers are tainted because of possible parental involvement when choosing the host country. Complicating the issue is Chinese parents’ culture which hides behind a “Thick Face and Black Heart” to protect their children from unwanted consequences. An understanding of Chinese culture makes data interpretation difficult, but not impossible. Most of the data, relating to the environment, has not been presented by any of the students in such a manner that identifies this factor as being the most important influence when choosing to study in Australia. Environmental issues contribute to lifestyle and potential immigration to Australia. Without the advantages of Australia’s unique pristine natural environment and free culture, far fewer Chinese students would have studied in Australia. This is well known by AUSTRADE.

The power of the imagination that encouraged many students from China to study in Australia, and the disappointment of the reality is captured in the words of S16:
S16, FGQ1: “climate and comfortable weather and temperature here also constitute positive factors. Besides, winters here are not very cold. I can also enjoy beautiful views and beaches in Australia” (prior to study in Australia).

S16, FG6: “But my experience of studying in Australia is not as good as I thought” (after living and studying in Australia).

Australia is a compromise. There are opportunities and challenges but the sum total of these, based on the true wants of the Chinese family, still brings Chinese students to Australia in record and increasing numbers. Unfortunately, irrespective of the validity tests, measuring the true influence of environment using the Internet Questionnaire will produce data that requires special interpretation.

10.4 ENVIRONMENT: INTERNET QUESTIONNAIRE

Environment was investigated by the paired questions (20, 44); (21, 45); (22, 46); and (23, 47). The Figures of the paired data are shown below:

Questions 20, 44

“20. I will not study in any country that has a reputation of racial discrimination.”

“44. Racial discrimination (of Chinese) did (will) not influence my choice of host country.”

These two questions were examined in Chapter 8, Lifestyle Analysis, but the responses also reflect concern about the social environment. 77% agreed in Q 20 that they would not study in a country, which had discrimination issues. The social environment in Australia, whilst not perfect for the foreign student, is far better than most countries. As S28 opined above ‘Australia is one of the most livable countries in the world.’

Questions 21, 45

“21. I will only study in a country that has a mild, temperate climate.”
“45. Climate conditions were not (or will not) be considered when choosing where to study.”

The total score validity test shows strong validity with 273 scores (73%) within the validity range of 5-7 as shown in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 21 and 45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the validity test for the positively formulated question shows strong agreement, in fact looking at the two differing Figures, one indicates reasonable validity and the other shows that the data has low validity. Both the GaoKao volunteers and the total group confirm the low validity assertion. The reason behind the differences is attributed to the lack of consultation between the students in the International School and their parents.

Table 10.2: Statistics on Responses to Questions 21 and 45 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 101 (27%) of students agreed with Q 21, and this matched the 137 (36.7%) students who disagreed with Q 45. The large ‘Neither’ score for both questions shows that temperate climate, is not a key issue.

Table 10.3: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 21 and 45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sum of the two means is very close to 6, which indicates a high level of validity; however, Cronbach’s alpha is still in the low acceptable range. These statistics show that natural environment is an important factor but not the chief influence.
There is sufficient validity to show that climate did exert some influence on students’ choices, but only at the agree/disagree level, and ‘strongly’ was largely ignored in the responses. Again, this shows that climate may have been a factor, but not the overriding factor.
The response from the 374 students shows no validity, except to note the evidence of acquiescence bias. Most of these students are still at school and their parents probably have not consulted with them as to which country will host their study abroad program.

**Questions 22, 46**

“22. Air quality was important to where I study.”

“46. Air quality, in the host country/city, will not influence my study destination decision.”

The total score validity test shows strong validity with 278 scores (75%) within the validity range of 5-7. Again there is strong acquiescence bias, 80 scores to 16 as shown in Table 10.4.

**Table 10.4: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 22 and 46**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are valid statistics after allowing for acquiescence bias.

**Table 10.5: Statistics on Responses to Questions 22 and 46 of Internet Questionnaire**
Nearly 70% agreed that air quality was important but less than 45% indicated that air quality would deter them from studying in a particular country.

**Table 10.6: Statistical Analysis for Internet Questions 22 and 46**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>-0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10.3 below confirms that GaoKao students were more concerned about air quality in the host nation than the other 374 students.

**Figure 10.3: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 22 and 46**

24 of the 37 GaoKao students considered air quality important when quizzed by a positively formulated question and 16 responded in like manner to the negatively formatted inquiry. This shows a resonance for acceptable air quality.

**Figure 10.4: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 22 and 46**
This Figure shows strong validity, indicating that air quality is a consideration that the students feel should be accounted for when study-abroad decisions are being made.

**Questions 23 and 47**

“23. My choice of host city is based on a pleasant environment, good air quality, and ease of travel.”

“47. I did not want to study in an overcrowded city such as Shanghai.”

The analysis of these paired questions is recorded in Chapter Eight with the conclusion that a pleasant environment and clean air contribute to the decision making process.

### 10.5 DISCUSSION

Environmental elements, including social concerns are just part of the sum of components that make Australia a desirable choice for study, and for some, possible cultural immigration. AUSTRADE believes that Australia’s unique and pristine environment has a powerful influence on attracting students from China to study in Australia, and the natural environment aspects are a large part of its advertising material. Most Australian universities are aligned with this technique, such as the University of Wollongong, which seeks to attract international students with promises that
“the Illawarra region has some of the most pristine beaches in Australia and a great network of mountain walking trails with dazzling views of the coastline. Keeping healthy has rarely looked so good—with running tracks by the sea, bike trails through the mountains and clean Pacific waters to swim in” (UOW, 2016, n. p.).

There are a number of attributes about the Australian environment that appeal to Chinese families:

1. Air quality. The Chinese are now aware of the disastrous air quality in Beijing and, to a lesser or greater extent, in every large Chinese city. Chinese parents are genuinely concerned about the long-term health risks that this imposes on their children.

2. Social environmental issues such as relative safety and a freer more relaxed lifestyle than the one enjoyed in China.

3. Natural beauty, beaches, National Parks, the flora and fauna unique to Australia.

All of the above attributes recommend Australia as an immigration destination. However, migration requires wealth and there is ample evidence of corrupt practices in Australia concerning property acquisition by wealthy Chinese investors, (Thornton 2016, Chung 2013, Cornwall 2014), that will provide that protection (Kumar 2017, Dziedzic 2017).

The political environment in Australia is stable and the chance of extradition to China to face corruption charges is remote (Dziedzic 2017, Collins 2017). Chapter Three examined the global imagination of the Chinese middle class and their obsession with middle class lifestyles catered to by the ubiquitous advice books, lifestyle programs and other popular social media outlets in China. However, the idyllic lifestyle that they sought may not be present in Australia if the words of S3 are true; ‘before I came here, I really don’t know whether I can integrate into Australian culture. (Suggests long term plans to stay, DQ). “It turns out that I can’t and the distinction between the two cultures seems increasingly obvious to me” (S3).
In terms of imagination and connections Australia does have a strong ‘pull’ attracting students from China to study at its universities. Corruption in both countries has made that appeal stronger for a significant few Chinese students. Albeit, environmental issues alone is not a key driver of choice, but rather an element of the suite of influences that combine to bring students from China to study in Australia.

10.6 CONCLUSION

The findings from the evidence shown in this chapter are that environment is a strong influence in attracting Chinese students to study at Australian universities. The evidence presented in the chapter has been interpreted under the paradigm of Chinese culture and parental involvement in the decision making process. Environmental issues are intertwined with lifestyle. The previous three chapters concluded that quality of education, cost, and lifestyle when considered together present Australia as an ideal destination for immigration. Environment adds to that appeal. Thus environment, like the three previously mentioned influences; is not only a standalone influence for most students, but rather one of many factors considered when deciding on host country for study abroad.

Chapter Eleven investigates the pulling power of employment/immigration opportunities and how the students relate to those motives. Similar to previous chapters the data has to be viewed within the paradigm of Chinese culture, including corruption issues identified in both China and Australia. Similarly to previous explanations, the results are interpreted knowing that the respondents to the questionnaire were not necessarily the decision makers nor were they, possibly in many cases, aware of the reasons behind the decisions.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

EVIDENCE FOR EMPLOYMENT/IMMIGRATION OPPORTUNITIES
11.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the pulling power of immigration, driven by fear of exposure for corrupt activities in China, and enticed by an attractive lifestyle in Australia as the key motives influencing Chinese students to study in Australia. The scrutiny of the data is performed with due reference to the unique aspects of Chinese culture. The data, supplied by Chinese students was compromised because of parental involvement in the decision making process. Evidence revealed in Chapter Seven showed that 60% of the high net worth individuals (HNWI) in China were seeking to emigrate. The parents of Chinese international students are HNWI who may have obtained their wealth through some form of corruption. Olesen’s (2016) revelation that the wealthy of China were prominent in using offshore bank accounts to hide their wealth from Government scrutiny shows that HNWIs could be using foreign education of their children as a means to immigrate.

11.1 THEME 5: EMPLOYMENT/IMMIGRATION OPPORTUNITIES, FOCUS GROUP

Relatively high scores on FGQ1 for environment and work/immigration opportunities all suggest that the majority of students wanted to continue their life in Australia. Common responses include “Secondly, it is relative easier to migrate to Australia (S14).” In comparison, S2, considering the implications of FGQ2, re-joined with,

“The first consideration is about culture. There are many differences and even conflicts between Australian culture and Chinese culture. I was afraid that I could not integrate into Australian culture and institutions.”

S1, in response to FGQ3 also supports this contention:

“Before I came here, I thought that studying in Australia would be a very enjoyable experience and I could study and live a colourful life simultaneously.”

It is quite possible that S1 was lured by the prospect of immigration.
S16, answering FGQ1, enumerates lifestyle reasons for choosing Australia; the same reasons are powerful influences for immigration.

“I want to add that safety, climate and comfortable weather and temperature here also constitute positive factors. Besides, winters here are not very cold. I can also enjoy beautiful views and beaches in Australia.”

S4, answering FGQ1 concurs,

“After all, Australia is an English country, whose English environment is very good. Besides, it’s also an immigration country. And I can experience multicultural here. Those 3 points are important to me. It’s said the natural environment is very good also. Anyway, there are many positive points.”

S1, in responses to FGQ1 is adamant that

“Firstly, immigration issue is definitely the most important consideration. Personally, I want to immigrate to a foreign country.”

S1 has enunciated his/her objective prior to coming to Australia. Chinese parents consider their children as their greatest asset, and providing for their future is paramount. Wealth protection is a part of that future. Australia provides a safe, clean environment and an enjoyable lifestyle compatible to their aspirations. In addition, Australia grants the opportunity for citizenship, and if problems are discovered in China, there is no extradition treaty between Australia and China that will return the family to face Chinese justice.

The other aspects of a happy lifestyle include a career and the ability to integrate into the Australian way of life. The enclaves of Chinese citizens who have made this transition attest to the ease of this task. S2, summarises this point perfectly.

S2, FG1: “The first reason why I choose Australia is also about immigration. Secondly, I have a cousin living in Australia.”

The following students supported future immigration as a motive for study in Australia. All replies are in response to focus group question 1.

S5: “Australia is the country, which is the closest place to the Heaven, if there is a Heaven”.
S6: “There are many Chinese immigrants here also, which will benefit myself living here later on”.

S7: “Compared to Britain, Australia is a much younger and dynamic immigrant country”.

S8: “Originally I thought I just came here and study for a while. But after staying so long, I don’t want to leave Australia”.

S9: “If you want to immigrant to a foreign country, then Australia is a good choice”.

S17: “Firstly, it is easy to immigrate to Australia”.

S21: “If you plan to immigrate to a foreign country, then I would recommend Australia”.

11.2 EMPLOYMENT/IMMIGRATION OPPORTUNITIES, INTERVIEWS

In June 2016, eight students, from six different universities, who have studied in Australia, gave volunteered responses to the following five questions:

1. Who made the choice to study overseas, you or your parent(s)?
2. Who made the choice to choose Australia, you or your parent(s)?
3. What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?
4. Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?
5. Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?

S24, who has lived in Australia for the past eight years, provided answers consistent with a family whose parents had decided to immigrate (to Australia) but who have not fully divulged that intent to their sole progeny. S24’s replies, in the same order were:

1. “The idea was proposed by my parents. We have discussed together and made the choice together.”
2. “My parents suggest to study in Australia for several reasons. By hearing the suggestion, I also asked my friends who already studied in Australia, about their conditions. Then I agree with my parents.”
3. “The good security environment and high-quality educational institutions are two main reasons.”
4. “My parents do not have any intention to migrate to Australia now” (Italics added).
5. “Yes, my parents have purchased two properties in Australia.”
There may have been some discussion regarding host country choice, but in almost every Chinese family the parent’s wishes (Confucius) triumph. The unconcealed reasons for choice are consistent with the findings of Gong and Huybers (2015), but the true motives for the selection can be discerned from interpreting the answers to questions 4 and 5. S22’s parents do not have intention to “immigrate... now” according to his/her understanding, but that acceptance is dependent on the level of information that the parent wishes to divulge. If the parents were seeking wealth protection, along with immigration, it would be unwise for others to know. Revealing this information to a child is a risk that any Chinese parent would avoid. Finally, the purchase of two properties in Australia is a safe investment that allows money to be transferred from China. Five of the eight interviewed students agreed that they, or their parents, had purchased property in Australia, while six of the eight had immigration plans for their family. A summary of responses to the interviews is in Table 11.1 below.

### Table 11.1: Responses from Students in Follow-Up Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewed Students</th>
<th>Who made the decision to study overseas?</th>
<th>Who Chose Australia?</th>
<th>Reasons for choosing Australia</th>
<th>Plan to immigrate to Australia</th>
<th>Purchase property in Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S22</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Safety &amp; Education</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S23</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S24</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S25</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Aunt</td>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S26</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Environment, culture, education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S27</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Student, discussed with parent</td>
<td>Lifestyle, education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S28</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Good environment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S29</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>No reason</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A key to the table is the reasons given for choosing Australia. Whereas just two respondents gave immigration as the motive, five of the remaining six gave intentions, which identify Australia as a good immigration choice.

11.3 EMPLOYMENT/IMMIGRATION OPPORTUNITIES, INTERNET
QUESTIONNAIRE

Employment/Immigration Opportunities were investigated by the paired questions, (12, 36); (13, 37); (14, 38); (15, 39); (16, 40). The Figures of the paired data are shown below:

Questions 12 & 36

“12. My main influence of where to study was to consider the immigration possibilities of the host country.”

“36. I have no immigration plans for my host country.”

The validity of the two questions is shown in Table 11.2 and the separate questions are analysed in Table 11.3.

Table 11.2: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 12 and 36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 277 scores (74%) fall within the validity range 5-7.

Table 11.3: Statistics on Responses to Questions 12 and 36 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1 %</th>
<th>2 %</th>
<th>3 %</th>
<th>4 %</th>
<th>5 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 157 students, or 42%, admitted that they (or their parents) had immigration intentions when considering their host country in responding to Q 12, while 92 students (24.6%) agreed that they did have immigration plans when responding to Q 36. The high validity of the scores shows that the students did not consider immigration potential as part of their study abroad program.

Figure 11.1: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 12 and 36
Figure 11.2: Figure of data from International school for questions 12 and 36

Questions 13 & 37

“13. The main purpose of study abroad was to secure employment in the host country.”

“37. It was always my intention to return and live and work in China after study abroad.”

The total score validity test shows strong validity with 277 scores (74%) within the validity range of 5-7 as shown in Table 11.4, with the individual questions analysed in
Table 11.4: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 13 and 37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is some evidence of acquiescence bias in these figures, which is emphasised in the Figures below. The evidence clearly shows that employment opportunities in the host country, for about 50% of the students, are a key driver in their desire to study overseas, as shown in the Figures 11.3 and 11.4 below.

Table 11.5: Individual Statistics for Questions 13 and 37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 37</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

129 students (34.7%) conceded that they would seek employment in their host country. This figure is well below the proportion of students in the focus groups. A simple explanation for the low percentage is the age of the students and that many of them have never previously travelled overseas. The response is similar for Q 37 for the same reason.
Figure 11.3: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 13 and 37

![Employment opportunities as a factor influencing choice of host country](chart1)

This graph implies that approximately 50% agree that the main purpose for study overseas was to find employment in the host country.

Figure 11.4: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 13 and 37

![Employment opportunities as a factor influencing choice of host country](chart2)

Questions 14 & 38

“14. I believe that my best employment opportunities are in China and I will seek employment in China after graduation.”
“38. Although immigration opportunities are not an influencing factor I will certainly look at all possibilities before returning to China.”

This data is invalid as shown in Table 11.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data is not valid. It is very highly skewed with acquiescence bias, with a ratio of 139:8, and the problem is that the two questions are not correctly posed as opposites. The raw data indicates that 19 of the GaoKao students will seek employment in China as a first option but 24 of the same cohort of 37 will explore opportunities in their host country first.

**Figure 11.5: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 14 and 38**

![Employment opportunities as a factor influencing choice of host country](chart)

There is no symmetry in this data therefore the data is not valid enough to make a firm conclusion. The problem may reside in the interrogation, asking the student to predict a course of action that he/she may follow at some future date.

The International school students could not answer these questions with any degree of certainty, even if they conscientiously wished to do so. The data is invalid of because the questions ask students to predict their intentions after graduating in a foreign
country of unknown destination.

**Questions 15 & 39**

“15. If I am unable to find suitable employment in China I will seek employment in my host country.”

“39. I will not seek to be employed in my host country even if unable to find employment in China.”

The validity table for this data is quite convincing with 300, (80%), in the strongly valid range of 5-7 as shown in Table 11.7 and Table 11.8.

**Table 11.7: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 15 and 39**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graphs of this data below reflect the desire of the potential study-abroad students to seek future employment in their host country. This is not enough evidence to imply that the parents were already planning to immigrate to the students’ host country, but few parents want to be separated from their family indefinitely.

**Table 11.8: Statistics on Responses to Questions 15 and 39 of Internet Questionnaire**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 39</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

232 students (62%) acknowledged that they might seek employment in their host country when responding to Q 15 while 165 (44.2%) accepted the same proposition when replying to Q 39. These answers are based on possible future actions and are suspect because of that reason.
Figure 11.7: Data from GaoKao Students in Response to Questions 15 and 39

The two graphs are very symmetrical, showing that the students would seek employment opportunities in the host country if such opportunities were not available in China.

Figure 11.8: Data from International School Students in Response to Questions 15 and 39

Figure 11.8 is valid with an error attributed to slight acquiescence bias. It reflects the GaoKao data.
Questions 16 & 40

“16. After graduation in host country I will seek immigration and employment opportunities in many Western countries.”

“40. After graduation I will return to China to live and pursue my career.”

The validity table for this data places 264/374 responses (71%) in the valid 5-7 ranges. The validity Table 11.9 shows this clearly whilst the individual statistics, Table 11.10, indicate that students generally did not favour employment/immigration opportunities in Western countries.

Table 11.9: Frequency Table for the Sum of the Scores for Questions 16 and 40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of scores</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acquiescence bias is evident and the graphs clearly show that there is no validity. For the GaoKao respondents, 22/37 students agreed that they would “seek immigration and employment opportunities in many Western countries.” but from the same cohort, 19/37 decided; “After graduation I will return to China to live and pursue my career”. The undecided figures in both cases were 7 and 10. The total in both cases is 29, the same, whereas the total should be $x$ and in the first case and $37-x$ in the second case. For perfect validity $x$ would represent the sum of scores 1+2+3 for question 16. The two following Figures, 11.9 and 11.10, show no symmetry, hence no validity.

Table 11.10: Statistics on Responses to Questions 16 and 40 of Internet Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 16</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 40</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

180 students (48.1%) accepted the proposition of Q 16 but only 59 students (15.8%) rejected the idea that they would return to China after graduation. Again, these are hypothetical questions and rely on the student to predict future actions. Also, there is no certainty as to who made the decision to study overseas, student or parent(s); or whether the student would prefer overseas study to study in China.
The data from question 16 contradicts the data from its paired question 40. The data is invalid because of acquiescence bias and the students’ lack of commitment to future actions after graduation.
11.4 DISCUSSION

This research has presented a strong case to show that ‘corruption, in China and Australia, does account for the disproportionate number of Chinese students choosing to study at Australian universities’

China has strict policies regarding money transfer overseas whereby individuals in China ‘are restricted to exchanging the equivalent of US$50,000 in foreign currency each year.’ (Grigg & Murray, 2016, n. p.). The extent of the problem and the desire of HNWIs to transfer their money from China were revealed in the Panama Papers (Olesen, 2016), but education does offer a safer alternative method. According to The Urban Developer (2017, n. p.), the rules for Chinese wanting to transfer money overseas are:

- Use for overseas property, securities, life insurance or other investment-style insurance products is DISALLOWED.
- Use for tourism, schooling, business travel, medical care, trade in goods, non-investment insurance and consulting service purchase are ALLOWED.

The extent of capital flight from China is huge. The USB group estimated that Chinese HNWIs illegally transferred $US324 billion in 2014 and Goldman Sachs calculated that a further $US200 billion illegally left China in the first half of 2015 (Bloomberg, 2015, n. p.).

The HNWIs from China soon realised that having a child studying overseas created opportunities for visitation to Australia and the ability to smuggle money from China to Australia.

Although capital flight from China takes many different paths, including Hong Kong money changes, underground banks and fake business transactions (Bloomberg, 2015, n. p.), having a child studying at an overseas university does provide an uncomplicated method that only involves family. The method is simple. The three family members pool their $US50,000 quota, extra funds are transferred to cover the students ‘educational costs’, and frequent visitations allow the possibility to personally smuggle a few thousand dollars each visit. This amount is converted into the deposit
for a house, which is rented to pay the mortgage. Whilst the influx of capital generally benefits a country, it can have some undesirable side effects. ‘This flood of cash is being felt around the world, driving up real estate prices in Sydney, New York, Hong Kong and Vancouver’ (Bloomberg, 2015, n. p.).

Gong and Huybers’ (2015) research concluded that ‘Quality of Education’ and ‘Safety’ were the key drivers in Chinese students’ choice of host country for study abroad programs. Over 300,000 Chinese students choose to study in the USA each year, over half the number of students from China who elect to study abroad. The USA has by far the most universities listed in the top 100 universities in the Times World Ranking of Universities lists. This would accord with the findings that the Chinese students choose the USA because of ‘Quality of Education’. Table 11.10 shows that the students are not necessarily choosing the top universities. Many of the universities with the greater number of international students are not the higher ranked universities.
Table 11.11

Universities in USA with the Most International Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Times Ranking</th>
<th>Number of International Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>New York University</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>University of Southern California</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>12,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Columbia University</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Arizona State University</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>11,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>University of Illinois, Champaign</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Northeastern University</td>
<td>201-250</td>
<td>10,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Purdue University</td>
<td>=113</td>
<td>10,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>University of California, Los Angeles</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>=99</td>
<td>8,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>University of Washington Seattle</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Boston University</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pennsylvania State University</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>7,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>University of Michigan Ann Arbor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ohio State University</td>
<td>=90</td>
<td>7,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>University of Texas Dallas</td>
<td>201-250</td>
<td>7,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Indiana University</td>
<td>201-250</td>
<td>7,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>=65</td>
<td>6,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>University of California at Berkeley</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>University of Buffalo</td>
<td>201-250</td>
<td>6,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Texas A &amp; M University</td>
<td>=193</td>
<td>6,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Carnegie Mellon University</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>University of Florida</td>
<td>=120</td>
<td>6,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>University of Texas at Austin</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5,947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


All five major themes that originated from the initial focus groups, (Quality of Education, Lifestyle, Cost, Environment and Employment/Immigration Opportunities), have influenced the decision, of students from China, in selection of host country for study. In some cases it may be that just one of the five themes, such as cost, has been all-powerful. There are a large number of Chinese students presently studying in Malaysia where tuition fees are comparable to those in China. It could be
that two themes, such as Quality of Education and Safety (Environment) are the key drivers as Gong and Huybers, (2015), suggest. Nonetheless, the Chinese philosophy of Confucius, as discussed in Chapter 3, places the future well-being of the Chinese progeny as being of supreme value, and therefore all ramifications of any decision relating to their one-child would be considered. Certainly safety is a pre-requisite, but Chapter 8 demonstrates that Australia is not the only country offering ‘safety’. The UK, Japan, New Zealand, and Canada offer equal or better safety than Australia, but recruit fewer students than Australia. The same applies to ‘Quality of Education’, with the exception of New Zealand. ‘Lifestyle’ is more difficult to measure and is subjective, but Australia does boast of having an enjoyable lifestyle.

The second interviews, of the eight students who have elected to stay in Australia after graduation, are significant (see Table 11.1 above). They demonstrate that immigration potential was a dominant influence for the parents before making their choice of host country. Thus to encapsulate the full influencing dynamics one has to look at what elements constitute a desirable country for immigration. Australia seems to satisfy all considerations and the five themes are all part of the immigration criteria required by the Chinese parents, the decision makers.

11.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the push power of emigration, driven by fear of exposure for corrupt activities in China. The pulling power of Australia’s attractive lifestyle and absence of an extradition treaty with China were key motives enticing some Chinese parents to choose Australia as a study destination for their children. The evidence examined in this chapter showed conflicting responses to similar questions, which were positively and negatively posed. This inconsistency was interpreted under the paradigm of Chinese culture, particularly the Chinese custom to provide acceptable answers. The data was further tarnished also by the revelation that the data suppliers (students) may not have known the real motives influencing the decision makers (parents).

The original focus group interviews referred to aspects of Australia’s lifestyle more frequently than any other reason for study in Australia. This indicates a high interest
in immigration. The student volunteers in China were perhaps unaware of their parents’ real motives for sending them to study overseas, and perhaps the students themselves did not welcome the event. Deciphering truth from conflicting data was aided by a surfeit of corroborative evidence from other sources that revealed a strong desire from HNWIs in China to emigrate. The theory of transcultural citizenship satisfies all the elements of the forces, connections and imaginations driving some HNWIs to seek immigration in Australia through their children’s study visas. The high proportion of HNWIs from China seeking to emigrate does not account for every Chinese student studying at an Australian university, but it is a valid explanation for the situation whereby a disproportionate number of Chinese university students have chosen to study in Australia.

The next chapter analyses all the findings. Particular references are made to the initial five themes identified from the focus group interviews. Corruption issues inspiring HNWIs from China to emigrate, and other findings relating to wealth protection, are also analysed in the final chapter. The interconnection of these two groups of findings is the real value of this thesis and the final conclusions from that analysis are covered in the next and final chapter.
CHAPTER 12

PARENTS’ DECIDE STUDENTS’ OVERSEAS STUDIES:

THE REVELATION OF THE CHINESE NESTING BOXES\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{36} Chinese boxes were made in China in the Song dynasty as early as 1000AD.
12.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous five chapters of this thesis have critically analysed and evaluated the data to the five supplementary questions raised by the initial focus group interviews. A brief summary of the findings from these five chapters is shown in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1: Analysis of the findings chapters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Analysis and Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Quality of Education</td>
<td>A necessary but very seldom a sufficient influence on choice of host nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>Essential for transcultural citizenship, not so important otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Not insignificant (except to the extremely wealthy) as shown by decline in international enrolments when Australia is the most expensive destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Similar to Lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>Employment/Immigration Opportunities</td>
<td>Essential for transcultural citizenship but also important otherwise as graduates need employment opportunities in a global market of declining opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results were interpreted under the paradigm that the data providers, students, were not necessarily the decision makers and that the decision makers had legitimate reasons for keeping their true motives hidden. Interpretation of the results follows Northcote’s (2012, p. 99) and Labaree’s, (2011, p. 623) recommendations that validation and reliability are often an impediment in the search for truth and meaning from derived data, (see Sections 2.1 & 3.4.4).

The main purpose of this research was to discover the prime forces, connections and imaginations that influenced students from China to complete tertiary degrees in Australia. Part of the purpose involved in this research was to ascertain the reasons why students from China chose to study in Australia in preference to other countries, in particular the USA, the UK, Japan and Canada. An unexpected revelation of this research shows that parents have a major influence on the final decisions concerning their offspring’s study-abroad options (See Table 6.3 and sections 8.1, 9.2, 10.0, 10.1, 11.1.).
The theory used to launch the project focused on findings of previous researchers in this field such as Marginson (2005 and 2007), Bodycott (2009), Yang (2010), Zhang et al., (2013), Wong & Wen (2013) and Gong and Huybers (2015). This research differs from many others because of its single purpose of divining the reason for choosing Australia, whereas most other researchers have a broader scope of trying to ascertain what the main influences are for choosing any country. However, a greater distinction for this thesis is it has identified the real decision makers, and it has incorporated the findings of Olesen (2016) and the Hurun Report (2015). The evidence shown in Table 6.3, and the inference from that evidence, combined with detailed analysis of the answers to the Internet questionnaire, have revealed wealth protection by transcultural citizenship as a potent influence in the decision making process.

The key research question is: Why choose Australia for overseas study? The key research question was expanded to five supplementary questions that were designed to comprehensively answer the key research question and these five questions, along with two other supplementary questions, were presented to the focus groups (see Appendix 1).

The most important part of the research was to create a research framework (Figure 3.1), that included Wallace’s Methodological Implementation of Scientific Process, (see Section 3.2) and this allowed our epistemological case study to refocus and adapt to the evolving data. The initial data confirmed previous research concerning choice of host nation. Evidence concerning the identity of the decision makers, combined with the findings of Olesen (2016), was crucial in re-evaluating the findings of other researchers. Olesen (2016) (See sections 1.4, and 3.2.2) uncovered the speculative practices of HNWIs from China, attempting to provide wealth protection through German bank Mossack Fonsecea. Following Olesen’s disclosures, Wen (2016) confirmed that Australia is a real estate target for Chinese investors (see Section 8.1). These two discoveries support a new theory, transcultural citizenship, as a compelling reason why many Chinese parents are electing to send their children to study in Australia. These findings explain why an inordinate number of undergraduates have chosen to study in Australia, with the smallest population of all of its main competitors, (the US, the UK, Japan and Canada), who all offer better ‘quality of education’ options.
Originally the thesis has focused on five main drivers identified by the initial focus group interviews (see Table 12.1) and has sought to gauge the relative merits of each of these motivators. ‘Transcultural citizenship,’ a sixth influence, has surfaced as a consequence of revelations by Olesen (2016) and subsequent re-interpretation of the data in accordance with Wallace’s Methodological Implementation of Scientific Process. Correct interpretation of data produced in an epistemological study is problematical, even though in this case it was Chinese interrogating Chinese and all parties understood the Chinese cultural effects such as ‘thick face black heart’ and Confucianism. Woolgar, (1988) investigated the difficulty of divining truth from data, and the findings and derived theory presented in this chapter are based on convincing data evidence linked with a strong understanding of Chinese culture. The collected data, and the interpretations of that evidence, have produced findings that run counter to the conclusions of other researchers who have developed theories derived from data collected exclusively from Chinese students.

12.1 Limitations of this Research

This research did not canvass the reasons that students from the PRC chose to study overseas, but rather, once such a decision has been made, why they chose to complete tertiary study in Australia. The research does not include:

1. Students who are attending schools in Australia, nor does it include volunteers under the age of 18 years.
2. Students attending TAFE and other college course of study in Australia.
3. An analysis of all the push influences that have compelled students from China to seek study abroad other than those push/pull considerations that have contributed to the desire to seek to further their international study in Australia.
4. Attributing different motives to gender although it acknowledges that the work of Yi, et al., (2013, p. 141) which investigated “the factors that impact Chinese female students’ choice to study overseas and how these factors impact their decision making process.”
5. Course selection or the value of the education gained in Australia after graduation.
6. The importance of learning English has not been investigated in this thesis because all of Australia’s main competitors for the Chinese university student are English speaking nations and Australia does not have a competitive advantage or disadvantage based on the learning of English.

Instead, this investigation is based solely on the factors that have influenced Chinese students to complete tertiary study in Australia.

12.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

12.2.1 Research Finding 1: Quality of Education

A key finding of this study is that the ‘quality of education’ is a prime motivator influencing the choice of study destination of students from China. In response to the main research question, students in focus group discussions, (See Table 6.2) respondents to the Internet questionnaire, (See section 7.2) and interviewed parents, (See Table 6.3) all agreed with Gong and Huybers, (2015), that quality of education was pivotal in their choice of host nation for overseas study.

However, in response to the first supplementary question, a greater number of respondents in the focus group listed ‘quality of education’ as a reason not to choose Australia, although these students were at that time studying in Sydney, Australia (See Appendix 13). A quick perusal of the two main world universities ranking tables shows that our main competitors, the USA, the UK, Japan and Canada all have universities more highly ranked than the top Australian university. This does not diminish the ‘quality of education’ as being an important reason, but limits it to the role of a contributing element of the decision making process (see Section 7.6.2).

Since only 21 volunteers were involved in the focus group discussions, some students were able to identify both positive and negative aspects about the quality of education in Australia. The analysis of the evidence in Chapter Six also indicates that ‘quality of education’ was clearly the favoured response by parents of Chinese students who had already completed tertiary education in Australia (see figure 6.2).

Evidence analysed in Chapter Seven revealed that the respondents to the Internet
questionnaire indicated that ‘quality of education’ did influence their choice of study destination. This finding is fully in accord with the recent discrete choice experiment (DCE) study by Gong and Huybers (2015), which indicated that ‘quality of education’ and ‘safety’ were the key drivers when choosing study destination.

This research shows that, while ‘quality of education’ is a necessary part of the reason that students from China study in Australia, it is not a sufficient influence. The findings of this study are at odds with those of Gong and Huybers, (2015), and other researchers who have presented ‘quality of education’ as the key motivation for choosing a study destination. Australian education, whilst slightly inferior to its main competitors, (see Section 7.6.2), is reliable, and a necessary component of a suite of attributes that together make a powerful influencing force motivating students from China to study in Australia.
12.2.2 Research Finding 2: Cost

A crucial finding of this research is that ‘cost’, including tuition fees and living expenses, will have an impact on the decision made to study or not study in Australia. Similar to the arguments presented in 12.1.1 cost on its own cannot be counted as being a powerful pull factor attracting students to study in Australia.

When Australia became the most expensive country in the world for international students, the enrolments from China decreased in real terms, but more importantly in relative terms to Australia’s main competitors, the US and the UK (See section 5.6). However, even though the relative numbers did drop, the drop was not significant and rapidly corrected when the value of the Australian dollar fell and Australia was no longer the most expensive place in the world in which to study. Table 5.5 clearly shows that in November 2014 the commencement of full fee paying international students had increased by 17.4% with the major contributors to the increase being China and India.

An analysis of the evidence in Chapter Nine revealed that no one in the focus group was either attracted to, or deterred from study in Australia because of cost. Nevertheless, 45.42% of the students participating in the Internet questionnaire agreed that ‘cost’ was an influencing force in their choice of country for study abroad (See Table 12.1). The overriding conclusion of the evidence from Chapter Nine is that ‘cost’ is not a factor influencing students to study in Australia, but may be a mitigating factor preventing some students from China choosing Australia as a study destination.

Nevertheless, cost affects the ability to support a lifestyle, (the next theme), and the power of the following theme is governed by the ability to meet the cost of the desired lifestyle.
12.2.3 Research Finding 3: Lifestyle

A key finding of this research is that ‘lifestyle’, i.e. the perceived quality of life enjoyed by the citizens of the host nation, was a strong motivator that influenced the choice of study destination for students. The power of lifestyle may be stronger than the collected data indicates, if it is accepted that in a majority of cases it was the parents who made the decision of study destination, and in many cases the parents were seeking transcultural citizenship (See Table 6.3).

The analysis of evidence in Chapter Six revealed that seven of the twelve parents interviewed indicated that aspects favourable to transcultural citizenship were the main reasons for choosing Australia as a study destination (see Table 6.3). Moreover 18 of the 23 (70%) mentions of ‘lifestyle’ by the focus group volunteers portrayed ‘lifestyle’ in Australia as a positive attribute; which means the endorsement for ‘lifestyle’ is greater than the support given to the other four findings. In addition, 58.95% of the students participating in the Internet questionnaire agreed that ‘lifestyle’ was a powerful force influencing choice of country for study abroad (see Table 12.1). Analysis of evidence, uncovered by Olesen (2016), and revealed in Chapter Eight indicates that a high proportion of HNWI’s from China are participating in illegal capital flight from China and are seeking to emigrate to a country which will provide a pleasant lifestyle and a safe haven for wealth protection.

The importance of lifestyle, to parents seeking transcultural citizenship for the long term happiness of the whole family, is far greater than the short term benefit of the ‘quality of education’ which, according to Gong and Huybers (2015); Zhang, Sun and Hagedorn (2013); Marginson (2007); Yang (2010); Bodycott (2009); Oleksiyenko et al., (2013) and Guo et al., (2013) offered as the key driver influencing the choice of study destination. Lifestyle should be investigated from two different perspectives; the first where the students intend to study in Australia and then return to China. The alternate scenario concerns the intention of migration to Australia. The latter case and similar logic applies to the next finding, environment, which is a main contributor to many aspects of lifestyle.
12.2.4 Research Finding 4: Environment

This research shows that environment, including physical and social, is a key finding from this study. Environmental aspects include such factors as air quality, safety, overcrowding in cities and public transport, social issues such as discrimination, and the general liveability of the host nation. The environmental contrast between some of the more polluted cities in China and the capital cities of Australia is well known in China, and is a strong pulling power attracting students to Australia. Overall 48.73% of the students involved in the Internet questionnaire thought that environmental issues were an important part of the decision making process (see Table 12.1). Since most of those students had probably not travelled outside China they could not compare the physical environment of China with another country.

The analysis of evidence in Chapter 11 shows that 70% of the Internet questionnaire respondents agreed that air quality was important, while 45% indicated that poor air quality would deter them from studying in a particular country (See Table 10.5). Further, analysis in Chapter Eight revealed that 241 or 64.5% of the Internet questionnaire students decided, “My choice of host city is based on a pleasant environment, good air quality, and ease of travel”. (See Table 10.8). However, in response to “I did not want to study in an overcrowded city such as Shanghai” only 184 students (49.2%) rejected the possibility of studying in a polluted environment such as exists in many large cities in China.

Nonetheless, it is unlikely that environment by itself would attract students to study in Australia. The UK, US and Canada offer opportunities to study in a safe, non-polluted environment. However, combining environment with the next theme, employment/immigration opportunities, does significantly increase its influence.
### 12.2.5 Research Finding 5: Employment/Immigration Opportunities

The final key finding revealed in the data produced by this investigation is Employment/Immigration, which is far more relevant than the Internet questionnaire indicates. The reason that only 34.26% of students rated Employment/Immigration as a critical influence in the decision of choosing a host country for study abroad options is simple; they are students and such options are far in the future.

Students in China, yet to leave school and many years before completing their degrees, did not rate Employment/Immigration Opportunities as a key finding, but its importance would have been considerably greater for the parents. Transcultural citizenship would be included in the long-term plans of many parents without their children being aware of their strategy. Evidence discovered by other researchers such as Bodycott (2009) and Zhang et al., (2013) and revealed in Chapter Eight as supporting transcultural citizenship, includes listing immigration to the hosting country after graduation as the prime motive influencing country selection for study. Bodycott, (2009) and Zhang et al., (2013) emphasised the strong influence that parents have on their children’s decision-making processes, again diluting the arguments of previous researchers who have listed ‘quality of education’ as the prime driver of choice.

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1. “Research (Bodycott, 2009) specifically focused on students from mainland China indicated the three most important factors motivating students to study abroad: 1) immigration to the hosting country after graduation, 2) a perceived better quality of education, and 3) a competitive tuition.”

2. “Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) indicated that the college choice decision process for international students consists of at least three steps: 1) to study internationally; 2) decide upon a host country; and 3) decide upon a specific institution” (Zhang et al., 2013, p. 142).

3. More importantly, ibid p. 141 emphasised that “Chinese parents have a strong influence on their children's decision making process regarding study overseas” (See section 8.3 this thesis).
12.3 EXPLANATIONS AND SPECULATIONS ABOUT KEY FINDING

The sixth theme, transcultural citizenship, emerged in the latter stages of this research. Although many researchers such as Yang (2010) and Bodycott (2009), show qualified agreement with these findings, they contradict the conclusions from Gong and Huybers (2015) DCE, which found that immigration played very little role in attracting Chinese students to Australia. This theme was initially hidden, like the final box in a set of Chinese nesting boxes. Chapter Three identified Chinese cultural customs that played a significant part in camouflaging ‘transcultural citizenship’ as a dominant theme for students electing to study in Australia. Further, Chapter Six revealed that in many cases it was the parents, and not the students, who made the decision of host nation for overseas study. This circumstance has created a situation whereby the ignorance of the students who may have provided valid data for this thesis has led to the possibility of unwittingly producing invalid data. However, valid data has emerged from analysis and interpretation of the collected data and the compelling evidence uncovered by Olesen (op. cit.). Previous researchers were not aware of the circumstances and implications of the evidence revealed in the Panama Papers, (Olesen op. cit.), first mentioned in Chapter One and featured in most chapters of this thesis. The revelation of Chinese Capital flight through German Bank Mossack Fonseca is detailed in Chapter Seven. Further statistics, disclosing that 64% of wealthy Chinese have emigrated or are seriously considering emigrating overseas, support the theory that transcultural citizenship is a powerful motivating factor for study in Australia, more so than most other nations. The former of these findings wasn’t available when this study commenced in 2014 and therefore it was not tested by the collected data.

All previous evidence uncovered by other researchers can be interpreted as supporting the theory that transcultural citizenship is influencing Chinese students to study in Australia. Indeed, the findings conclusions, that “university ranking and destination safety are key decision drivers for Chinese students” (Gong and Huybers,

2015 p. 196) are totally aligned with a student seeking transcultural citizenship, which includes a degree, career, and a country that can provide the opportunity for a happy life. Education and safety are fundamental to the concept of a happy lifestyle that could be achieved through transcultural citizenship.

### 12.4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A complete summary of the data collected by the Internet Questionnaire in response to the five key questions stated above is shown in Table 12.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Theme 1: %</th>
<th>Quest No</th>
<th>Theme 2: %</th>
<th>Quest No</th>
<th>Theme 3: %</th>
<th>Quest No</th>
<th>Theme 4: %</th>
<th>Quest No</th>
<th>Theme 5: %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Column 1 identifies the questions relating to theme 1 (quality of education), column 2 shows the % of students who agreed with the question and so on.

The table shows that the five themes originally identified by the initial Focus Group investigation are all strong drivers influencing the choice of study destinations by students from China seeking an overseas education. Note, the mean for theme 1 increases to 74% if question 2 is ignored, and question 2 was poorly constructed and should not be included in this data.

The above table shows support for all of the five main themes investigated with ‘quality of education’ and ‘lifestyle’ being predominant. These two themes themselves support the theory that ‘transcultural citizenship’ was a key driver for choosing Australia. Chapter 3 quoted a number of social scientists who agreed that deriving a cogent theory and data from a society is difficult and in most cases erroneous.
Nonetheless, there is enough evidence presented in chapters 7-11 to show that the five themes acknowledged all have some influence on the choice of host country for study. Unfortunately, it would be a mistake to use clever statistical methodology to attribute relative merits to each of the themes given the problems and interpretations discussed within those five chapters.

Despite the fact that Australia does not match the US and the UK in ‘quality of education’, the number of Chinese students entering Australia continues to rise at a faster rate than anywhere else in the world. This rise in Chinese student numbers is matched by a similar increase in investment in Australian property by Chinese HNWIs. This scenario is fully in accord with HNWI Chinese seeking to immigrate to Australia and join their one child graduate from an Australian university. The plan includes an Australian degree, which can lead to a professional career and ultimately PR for the student and his family. This course of action should, according to those who chose it, create a happy lifestyle for the student, his parents and for the generations to follow. The evidence for this suggestion is circumstantial, but many of the statistics support the proposed theory.

Initially Gong and Huyber’s (2015) DCE identified ten different attributes applicable to their study, where each attribute consisted of three different levels, plus another attribute, ‘immigration sponsorship requirement’, at two levels. In order to design scenarios that would rank each attribute against all others would require $3^{10} \times 2 = 118089$ permutations, an impossible task to consider. This situation is the main flaw with DCE, and to simplify their problem,

The 36 comparison sets in the OMEP were blocked into four survey versions which generated nine choice sets for each survey respondent. An example of a choice set is in Appendix 1. To explain the choice attributes and their associated levels to study participants, an information sheet was created (Gong & Huybers, 2015, p. 206).

The justification for this drastic reduction of sample testing was fifteen days of interviews conducted in China prior to designing the final scenarios. DCE are often the basis for market testing by commercial companies, which is a testament to the validity of their findings. Nonetheless, unforeseen attributes or levels of attribution
could render the results of such surveys as meaningless. Wealth protection is one such attribute not tested by Gong & Huybers (2015).

Considering the total cohort of all international students “currently 49.5% of students choose the US as their preferred destination country, followed by the UK (13.6%)41, Australia (9.2%), Canada (8%), Germany (3.6%), France (3.4%) and Singapore (2.8%).” (Chu, 2016, n. p.). The contradiction hidden by these statistics is the comparison between the US and Australia of numbers of international v. Chinese students in each country. Currently 32800042 students from China are studying in the US while 172,000 43 Chinese students are studying in Australia. The obvious contradiction is that with five times as many international students studying in the US in comparison to Australia, less than two times as many Chinese students have elected to study in the US. Quality of education cannot account for this contradiction since the US offers the highest levels of education available. Discounting the education factor as the driver influencing the extra proportion of Chinese electing to study in Australia raises the influence of the other four themes tested and the theorised sixth theme. Australia fares favourably compared to the USA when the five listed influences are compared, except ‘quality of education’. The four remaining attributes are key elements for a desirable immigration destination and Australia fares better than any other country in the sum total of these four influences. An important component of preparing for emigration to a foreign country is to establish a home and Chinese investors had invested $24.3 billion in Australian residential property in 2014-2015 (Zhou & Power, 2016, n. p.). In terms of residential purchases by Chinese investors, Australia ranks closely with the USA where “Chinese purchasers continued to outpace all others” (Olick, 2016, n. p.).

Students from China who are studying at universities in Australia are predominately the children of HNWIs, and of that cohort:

41 This figure includes school students and the UK is the preferred destination for school students from China. The UK is a far safer country than USA, Australia and Canada, which could be the reason for attracting the most school students from PRC China. Australia attracts more tertiary students than the UK. (see Chapter One).
42 See: http://www.iie.org/Services/Project-Atlas/United-States/International-Students-In-US/#WK4tHBJ96Rs
43 See: https://www.studiesinaustralia.com/why-study-in-australia/international-students-in-australia#1
- 64% of wealthy Chinese have emigrated or are seriously considering emigrating overseas.
- 42% of China’s HNWIs intend to invest abroad in next 3 years - 66% of whom plan to buy residential properties.
- 83% of wealthy Chinese intend to educate their children overseas (Hurun News, 2016, n. p.).

Australia lags the USA by just a small amount in terms of residential investment by HNWIs from China; suggesting that Australia attracts similar numbers of this group contemplating emigration. The kernel of this thesis was discerning the motives of many of the HNWIs who have concealed their motive for decisions behind a ‘thick face and a black heart.’ Transcultural citizenship is a concealed motive of many students from China who have elected to complete their tertiary education in Australia. Equally, this influence may also be a reason for study in the US, the UK or Canada. This assumption, based on the circumstantial evidence outlined above, is contrary to the findings of Gong and Huyber (2015, p. 213); who found that immigration sponsorship had very little effect on study destination choice.

Transcultural citizenship aside, Australia is comparable to its main competitors in most of the other forces, connections and imaginations influencing students from China when choosing study-abroad destination. Since immigration is the main difference, this factor may account for the comparative difference in numbers of students choosing to study in Australia in preference to other destinations.

12.5 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THIS STUDY

There are a number of delimitations to this thesis, the most important being that very few parents were included in the cohort of volunteers who provided data. In addition the collected data referred to Chinese students seeking undergraduate study in Australia or overseas. It did not include students studying in TAFE or other VET courses in Australia. Evidence revealed in the investigation showed that very few doctorate students from China studied in Australia, and this was not explored, nor was the fact that a relatively low proportion (in comparison to the USA, the UK and Japan), of Chinese STEM students are studying in Australia.
The delimitations outlined above, and the emerging data supporting the theory of ‘transcultural citizenship’ to Australia has placed a number of limitations on the findings. The findings do not imply that ‘transcultural citizenship’ is the chief motivator influencing parents to send their children to study in Australia, nor does the power of the influence of ‘transcultural citizenship’ diminish the importance of the five themes mentioned above that were originally identified by the focus group interviews. In contrast, the concept of ‘transcultural citizenship’ increases the significance of each theme independently, and as a collective set, because all are pivotal to the reasons for ‘transcultural citizenship’.

12.5.1 Problems Encountered During Research

Several problems arose during data collection, mainly concerning the Internet questionnaire. Firstly 261 students submitted obvious invalid data and this reduced the data set from 635 contributors to 374 students. Validating the Internet questionnaire involved testing by Cronbach’s Alpha for the whole data set and for each question individually. (See Appendix 18). All tests produced Cronbach Alpha scores in the range of 0.6 - 0.7 which is within the range of acceptability for valid data. Another difficulty was interviewing parents who were reluctant to take part in the study, and those that did were often less than candid.

A shortcoming of the research design was choosing students as volunteers for data collection rather than seeking data from those who made the decision on study choices. This failing was partially rectified by the twelve parent interviews conducted after the Internet questionnaire had been recorded and analysed. However, the most obvious inadequacy was the inability to ascertain how many students, who may elect to study in Australia, will do so because of the pull of ‘transcultural citizenship’.

There were three features of the research design, which may have affected the quality of the findings. Firstly, it was very difficult to craft the paired inquiries so that the positive and negative formatted interrogations actually mined the exact same data. In
addition, the research should have focused on volunteers who had made the decision for choosing the host nation for study abroad, the evidence from this thesis is that the parents should have been the main contributors of data, not their offspring. Finally, it was not anticipated at the start of the thesis that ‘transcultural citizenship’ would be a central motivating influence and that this motive was not independent of many of the other contributing influences.

12.5.2 Implications and Practical Applications of Research Findings

Pathway to Immigration

The implication that wealthy Chinese families are seeking to immigrate to Australia using their children’s study visa offers many opportunities to Australia. The advantage of the inflow of financial capital is obvious; and equally important is the human capital inherent in the expertise of successful business people seeking to relocate to Australia. Currently opportunities exist in Australia because “Australia’s buoyant economy, growing population and increased trade footprint are driving an unprecedented need for investment in, and better use of, infrastructure.”

The US attracts more Chinese students than any other country and the top four universities in terms of international students enrolments are University of Illinois, (9636 students), University of Southern California, Purdue University and Northeastern University; (See Table 11.2). Only the first two mentioned universities are ranked by Times in the top 100 universities in the world. However, these four universities have a strong focus on research with attached research facilities such as University of Illinois’ facility, CHAMPAIGN, which is a Techno Park. More than 75 universities in the US have attached Techno-Parks as research facilities, which offer graduates and post graduates research/employment opportunities. WSU has recently opened Werrington Park Corporate Centre (WPCC), which could be used as an incentive to attract students to WSU by showing WSU has a pathway for international

44 AUSTRADE, 2016, INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN AUSTRALIAN INFRASTRUCTURE, p. 3 Hurun Report, 2016
students to find employment and obtain PR.

12.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Policy documents such as DSNIE et al., discussed in Chapter Five have all emphasised the value of export education to the host nation. Australia, more than any other nation, relies on the funds derived from international students to fund their tertiary institutions. Other countries also welcome and benefit from the flow of international students. However, the newly elected leader of the UK, Prime Minister May, “was notoriously hostile to international students in her previous role as Home Secretary” (Pitman, 2016, n. p.) and this attitude, if reflected in policy, will impact on the flow of international students to the UK. Similarly, President Trump has expressed dissatisfaction with the high number of international students in US universities. While no policy changes have been announced by either nation, the continued pattern of the flow of international students to those two nations is uncertain. Australia has a policy of following the US lead in world events.

The US situation is the most volatile, with a recent US government report to the White House warning that “ties between the two nuclear-armed countries (China & USA) could rapidly deteriorate into an economic or even military confrontation” (Phillips, 2017, n. p.). Australia has strong ties with both countries and at this stage it is unclear how much Australian policy will reflect any changes in either the UK or the US’s attitude towards attracting international students.

Gong and Huybers’ (2015) other driver of influence motivating choice was ‘safety’, but safety received only one mention in the focus group discussions and was not further tested. However, the concept of ‘safety’ is embedded in terms such as discrimination and social alienation, and safety is crucial to being able to create a happy lifestyle. Australia has most of the desirable attributes to attract students to study there, and educational policies should reflect the support and continuation of those attributes. Opportunities for post-graduation employment and the possibility to obtain transcultural citizenship through those opportunities will certainly attract many students from China. More government funded Techno Parks at Universities, similar to WPCC, would attract more STEM students and encourage more international
students to complete research PhD’s in Australia.

12.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is important / relevant to investigate whether the volunteers providing the motives for study in Australia were the ones responsible for making that decision. This research predominately, along with most other investigations into the topic, has relied on data provided by students. The failings of that data were revealed in Chapter Seven and confirmed by a number of students. It follows that it is difficult for the students to supply the reasons as to why Australia was chosen as a host nation for further study after their parents have made that decision. At the same time it is equally obvious that some students did select their host nation and institution for continued study.

Once this has been established one avenue for further study would be research into the specifics of wealth protection using ‘transcultural citizenship’. Such research would require forensic capabilities and investigative powers usually reserved for Government agencies. Without further research into transcultural citizenship it will not be possible to fully ascertain the real key drivers influencing students from China to study in Australia.

Follow-up investigation could be in the form of “customer satisfaction.” This could cover a number of scenarios, ranging from students who had every intention of returning to China after completion of their studies, and actual did so, to students whose intention was immigration but were unsuccessful in their attempt, and finally to include those students and their families who were able to settle in Australia through their student visa. Such a study would by necessity be a longitudinal study, which investigated and compared long-term satisfaction ratings with the changes in emotions and fortunes that emerge over time.

The inquiry should recognise that the trade in export education is not a stable business model. It fails to deliver on its promises. Instead it is a compromise that is beset with paradoxes. One reason for Chinese students to study abroad is that they already have some English language proficiency, yet there is evidence, in Australia, that universities are lowering English language requirements in order to attract more students.
Corruption is another real problem and encompasses such issues as:

“falsification of entry documents, cheating in English language proficiency tests, online contract cheat sites selling assignments or providing the means for so-called ‘file sharing’, widespread plagiarism, and cheating and fraud in examinations” (Bretag, 2016, n. p.).

Confronting these problems head-on will lead to lost revenue and give an advantage to those countries where these problems continue to flourish. The corruption concerning the source of the students’ incomes (of university students from China) is widespread and insurmountable from the universities’ perspectives. Albeit, the universities are not powerless to improve the situation; and they should be more proactive in their fight against corrupt practices.

Most universities in Australia already have a number of measures in place to combat academic dishonesty, which includes plagiarism and exam cheating. However, despite the development of sophisticated software and other innovative methods there is no indication that the number of such instances has reduced. The other form of academic dishonesty emanates from the university staffs, who, because of funding cuts to universities, think of students as customers (Gillings and Williamson, 2015, n. p.; Dawson, 2015).

Further research designed to collect more defined data will be difficult as has been outlined in previous chapters. It involves parents disclosing information that may be sensitive to them. However, if parents are not part of the investigation then the value of the data is tainted. Also implied in this recommendation is the ability to source data from volunteers who may be reluctant to make their true intentions known.

The premises of most theses concerning international student flow is the concept that certain attributes contribute to identifying the forces, connections and imaginations influencing choice of host nation. The evidence from this investigation shows that rather it is a weighted mean of a large number of attributes that have the most influence on the final decision. More importantly, the Indian experience (see 5.11.2) shows that a lacking in one single attribute can deter many students from choosing to study in a particular country; but the reverse is not necessarily true.
The evidence supporting the findings and theories of this thesis is compelling and should be confirmed by further research, which takes into consideration the offered recommendations. The beneficiaries of this and further research are Australian universities and the Australian government in particular, but other nations can apply the findings to their own unique circumstances.

**Recommendations**

Universities value and guard their reputations; world university rankings can enhance or detract from reputations. The complexity of export education and aspirations of international students compared to their academic potential has created a potent mix of forces that has seen the fortunes of the universities and the international students intertwined. Creating a best solution from the mixture of competing desires will require courage and wisdom.

This thesis has identified a few areas where the increasing rate of academic dishonesty can be reversed. Firstly, English language proficiency standards should be commensurate with the level required to complete the course of intended study. The university could have mechanisms in place to rectify shortfalls in this area. Plagiarism and ghost-writing can be reduced by a more accurate assessment of the students’ potential abilities and aspirations to study the intended course at the level required. The person supervising the assessment process for Chinese students should be an academic who has tertiary and high school teaching experience in China, and post-graduate qualifications from both China and Australia. Finally more support should be given to international students to socialise and enjoy their study time. The university could help students immerse themselves into the Australian culture by encouraging them to do volunteer work or join social clubs such as Activate Clubs\(^\text{45}\), Toastmasters, or many of the other social clubs available in most capital cities in Australia.

The findings from this research revealed four insights unrecognised by previous research into the main research question:

\(^{45}\) An initiative of University of Technology Sydney.
1. It is the parents who in many cases decide the host country destination and choice of university.

2. Interviewing students may not uncover the motives that influenced the parents’ decisions.

3. Overseas education per se is a prime driver of choice, rather than quality of education.

4. Corruption, especially money laundering, and transcultural immigration are the main motives driving many families’ choices of university in Australia.

This thesis has changed directions many times throughout the investigation. It brings a fresh perspective on the forces, connections and imaginations influencing students to study in Australia, but at the same time it has raised questions that it was not able to completely answer.

12.8 AUOTBIOFIGUREICAL REFLECTIONS

I have been employed in the international education industry since 1997 at which time I organised and conducted the first student exchange program between Beijing Huijia Private School and schools in Canada and the USA. This experience highlighted to me the lifestyle difference between being a school student in Beijing from being a school student in Vancouver. The Chinese students clearly envied the opportunities enjoyed by their Canadian hosts.

Subsequently I spent three years as Chief Director of the Joint Program Department at China Centre for International Educational Exchange (CCIEE) and a further three years with the Beijing International Educational Exchange (BIEE). During my time at BIEE I was in charge of organising the 2006 & 2007 BIEE Expos, and instituted a number of research surveys to enhance the quality of the delivery of that event. During an eight-year period I liaised with many parents seeking study-abroad options for their children. This connection revealed many reasons why studying abroad was considered, and possible post-graduate employment and immigration was often a point of inquiry.
After a Master of Education degree at The University of Sydney I was offered the position of Director of China for Australian Educational Alliance, (AEA), an agency company recruiting students from China to study in Australia. This position allowed me many opportunities to speak with students in China who were interested in international study. This research has allowed me to satisfy a personal interest to discover the prime motivating factors that have induced other Chinese students to follow my example to study in Australia.
References


the first year experience, 13 (2), 75-93.


http://www.austrade.gov.au/Education/Student-Data/2013#.Ux99nv2gEy4


# APPENDICES

List of Appendices

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<td>Reliability Test of Original Data from Internet Questionnaire*</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Valid Data for Internet Questionnaire*</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Validity Table for Internet Questionnaire</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Spreadsheet Showing Calculations for Statistical Analysis of Internet Questionnaire Data*</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Statistical Data for Each Individual Question of the Internet Questionnaire*</td>
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<td>Open Coded Themes from the US Department of Education</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Analysis of Australian International Education Policies</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Analysis of US International Educational Policies</td>
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<td>Analysis of UK International Education Policies</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Analysis of Canadian International Education Policies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Analysis Of Japanese International Education Policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Post Internet Questionnaire Interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Complete document stored as original data at Western Sydney University
Appendix 1: Focus Group Questions.

FGQ1. What are the five most important positive factors, concerning study in Australia that you considered, prior to making your decision to study in Australia?

FGQ2. What are the five most important negative factors, concerning study in Australia that you considered, prior to making your decision to study in Australia?

FGQ3. What perceptions or opinions have you changed since you have arrived in Australia?

FGQ4. What are the most rewarding aspects of your study in your Australian experience?

FGQ5. What are the most disappointing aspects of your study in your Australian experience?

FGQ6. Has your study experience in Australia (a) exceeded expectations, (b) met expectations or (c) been less than your expectations. Explain why?

FGQ7. Would you recommend to your friends or relatives to study at an Australian university? Why?
Appendix 2 Participant Information Sheet Focus Group

School of Education
University of Western Sydney
Locked Bag 1797
Penrith NSW 2751
Australia
Telephone: +61 2 4736 0448
E-mail: 17954974@student.uws.edu.au

Participant Information Sheet (Focus Group)

Project Title: Forces, Connections and Imagination: Factors Influencing PRC Students’ Decision to Study in Australia

Project Summary: (PRC) Chinese students are attending Australian universities in record numbers (AEN, 2014, n. p.). Competition for Chinese students has increased from traditional rivals such as the USA, the UK and Canada (de Wit, Ferencz & Rumbley, 2013). At the same time new competition has arisen from other Asian countries, including Malaysia, Singapore, Korea and Japan (Wong & Wen, 2013).

The aim of this project is to investigate and explain the main factors among the many that influence the choices of universities and countries by Chinese students electing to study abroad. Evidence will be collected by questionnaires and focus groups from students from China who have decided to study at a foreign university. The main focus will be on students from China who have decided to study in Australia.

This study should assist Australian universities’ ability to recruit students from China by assisting them to better cater to the expectations of the Chinese student.

How is this study being paid for?
The study is not sponsored.

What will I be asked to do?
You will be asked to attend a focus group at which you will be asked a number of open-ended questions concerning the factors that influenced your decision to study in Australia. The main research question for this project is: What are the factors influencing Chinese students’ choice of where to study overseas? Focus groups will be held at UWS, USYD and UTS.

Your responses in general terms will be the factors that influenced you to choose Australia as a host country for your university study. You will also be asked if you could give a weighing to the factors that influenced your choice, but this will be an option that you can either accept or reject. The focus group will be conducted within a study room at your university at a time suitable to you. If at any time you feel uncomfortable in the focus group the meeting will stop and you will be given the opportunity to contact the UWS Counseling Services:
Ph: 02 9852 5199
or email: counselling@uws.edu.au.

Office hours are 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday.

Your responses at the focus group will be shared by the other participants in that group. These other participants will be students from the same university as you and may be known by you.

**How much of my time will I need to give?**
45-60 minutes

**What specific benefits will I receive for participating?**

The expected benefits of this research for the participants include providing more options for further study and a better understanding of the reasons behind their original choice. For participants in China it will help them better comprehend the various study options available and help them to make a selection that best suits their needs. For the universities in Australia it will point to possible trends in factors influencing students’ choices and thus enable them to cater to the students’ perceived needs and to advertise their services accordingly.
Will the study involve any discomfort for me? If so, what will you do to rectify it.
There is no risk of harm or discomfort to you.
The researcher can assure you that all the information collected for this research will be kept anonymous. The raw data will only be viewed by the researchers. Your interview transcript will be returned to you to check before it is used in research.
If you feel any discomfort you may withdraw from the study at any time without giving any reason and all your data will be deleted from the study.

How do you intend on publishing the results?
The findings of the research will be published in conferences.

How do you intend on publishing the results?
The findings of the research will be published in conferences or other professional journals.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Yes, you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason. If you agree to participate in the study you will be identified by a code known only by the researcher and her supervisors. If you do choose to withdraw, any information that you will have supplied under your coded identity will be deleted from the survey data.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator's contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?
Please contact Ms Demei Qi should you wish to discuss the research further before deciding whether or not to participate.
Demei Qi
PhD Candidate
School of Education
University of Western Sydney
Telephone: +61 2 4736 0448
Email: 17954974@student.uws.edu.au

**What if I have a complaint?**

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is H10927.

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
Appendix 3 Participant Information Sheet (General)

School of Education
University of Western Sydney
Locked Bag 1797
Penrith NSW 2751
Australia
Telephone: +61 2 4736 0448
E-mail: 17954974@student.uws.edu.au

Participant Information Sheet Internet Questionnaire

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to respond to an online questionnaire concerning the factors that influenced your decision to study in Australia. The main research question for this project is: What are the factors influencing Chinese students’ choice of where to study overseas?

How much of my time will I need to give?

45-60 minutes

Note: Remainder of this appendix is identical to Appendix 2.
Appendix 4 Participant Consent Form

This is a project specific consent form. It restricts the use of the data collected to the named project by the named investigators.

Project Title: Forces, Connections and Imagination: Factors Influencing PRC Students’ Decision to Study in Australia

I,………………………….….., consent to participate in the research project titled: Forces, Connections and Imagination: Factors Influencing PRC Students’ Decision to Study in Australia.

I acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to the interviews through audio tape recording.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

Signed: ______________________

Name: ________________________ Date: _________________________

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is: H10927
If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix 5 Ethics Approval

Locked Bag 1797
Penrith NSW 2751 Australia
Office of Research Services

ORS Reference: H10927

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

20 April 2015

Professor Michael Singh
Centre for Educational Research

Dear Michael,

I wish to formally advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved your research proposal H10927 “Forces, connections and imagination: factors influencing PRC students decision to study in Australia”, until 31 March 2017 with the provision of a progress report annually if over 12 months and a final report on completion.

**Conditions of Approval**

1. A progress report will be due annually on the anniversary of the approval date.
2. A final report will be due at the expiration of the approval period.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee prior to being implemented. Amendments must be requested using the HREC Amendment Request Form:
   http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/491130/HREC_Amendment_Request_Form.pdf
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events on participants must be reported to the Human Ethics Committee via the Human Ethics Officer as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the Committee as a matter of priority.
6. Consent forms are to be retained within the archives of the School or Research Institute and made available to the Committee upon request.

Please quote the registration number and title as indicated above in the subject line on all future correspondence related to this project. All correspondence should be sent to the email address humanethics@uws.edu.au.

This protocol covers the following researchers:

Michael Singh, Jinghe Han, Demei Qi

Yours sincerely

Professor Elizabeth Deane
Presiding Member,
Human Researcher Ethics Committee
# Appendix 6

## Focus Group Details of Volunteers

### Focus Group from Macquarie University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student (S)</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>M/F</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Arrived</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters Degree, Accounting</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Guangdong</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Masters Degree, Accounting</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Masters Degree, Accounting</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2012</td>
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</table>

### Focus Group from Western Sydney University

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<tr>
<th>Student (S)</th>
<th>Province</th>
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<th>Course</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Arrived</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Masters Degree, Education</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>S8</td>
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<td>2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>S9</td>
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### Focus Group from the University of Sydney

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Province</th>
<th>M/F</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Arrived</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S12</td>
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<td>Finance and Accounting</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Finance</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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### Interviewed Graduates who remained in Australia

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<th>Province</th>
<th>M/F</th>
<th>Degree 1</th>
<th>Degree 2</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Arrived</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>BA (Acc) MU (F)</td>
<td>MA USYD</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS2</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
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<td>MA (IT) UTS</td>
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<td>Henan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>BA (Acc) (MU)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>28</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS4</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
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<td>BA (Acc) (UoW)</td>
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<tr>
<td>AS5</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
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<td>BA (Acc) (Curt)</td>
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<td>AS8</td>
<td>North E Ch</td>
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<td>BA UNSW</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- MU: Macquarie University (Sydney)
- USYD: University of Sydney (Sydney)
- UTS: University of Technology (Sydney)
- UoW: University of Wollongong (Wollongong)
- Curt: Curtin University (Sydney Campus)
- UNSW: University of New South Wales (Sydney)
Appendix 7: Questionnaire for Internet

The questionnaire for the internet was designed to interrogate data derived by focus groups of Chinese students already studying in Australia. The sample of 21 students was small, but enough to satisfy data saturation (Guest et al., 2006).

The focus group data was line-by-line coded and these codes grouped into the following themes. The purpose of the internet questionnaire is to rank these themes and to seek to discover other influences that may have been omitted from the focus group investigation. Mining for other data will be accomplished by free response questions presented at the conclusion of the focus group theme questions. Follow up interviews are planned and should improve the reliability and validity of the questionnaire analysis results.

The questionnaire will invoke a 5 point Likert Scale as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strongly agree has the lowest score, one, and strongly disagree the highest score, five. Each question of the main body of the questionnaire will be posed in an affirmative and negative sense. The data will be valid if the sum of the two responses is six (6).

1. **Education.**

2. **Life-style.**

3. **Work/Immigration opportunity.**

4. **Cost.**

5. **Environment.**

6. **Use of Educational Agents.**
When responding to the following statements, Tick the box that best reflects your level of agreement with the assertion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement for consideration:</th>
<th>Response Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider the statement carefully and try to measure your response accurately</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The main consideration when choosing study abroad options is the reputation of the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am prepared to attend any reputable foreign university that accepts me as a student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My choice of university is based on my course choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My choice of university is (will be) based on cost of course fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I will only choose a university located in a country whose first langauge is English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When selecting a university, I will first choose a host country with immigration potential, and then select a university in that country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The choice of host city is more important than the choice of university.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I will choose a country first then choose the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The university must be in Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Recommendations by others will influence my choice of study destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. My parents will not influence my choice of foreign educational provider</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. My main influence of where to study was to consider the immigration possibilities of the host country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>The main purpose of study abroad was to secure employment in the host country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I believe that my best employment opportunities are in China and I will seek employment in China after graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>If I am unable to find suitable employment in China I will seek employment in my host country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>After graduation in host country I will seek immigration and employment opportunities in many Western countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I only considered prestigious universities that charged high fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>The cost of living was an important factor that will (did) influence my decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>When choosing where to study I only consider first world countries that have a high safety rating for their population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I will not study in any country that has a reputation of racial discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I will only study in a country that has a mild temperate climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Air quality was important to where I study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>My choice of host city is based on a pleasant environment, good air quality, and ease of travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>My final study choice was (will be) greatly influenced by educational agents or information gained at educational fairs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When responding to the following statements, tick the box that best reflects your level of agreement with the assertion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement for consideration:</th>
<th>Response Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider the statement carefully and try to measure your response accurately</td>
<td>Strongly Agree  Agree  Neither  Disagree  Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. The reputation of the university of my choice is (was) not a factor for consideration when investigating study abroad options</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. University selection is based on the quality of education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I want a degree from a foreign university, the course and degree is of minor importance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Course cost is not a factor that has (or will) influence my choice of university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I am happy to study at any foreign university, irrespective of the language of the host country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. My opportunity to immigrate to the host country will not influence my choice of university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. My choice of university will not be dependent upon the living standards of the host city of the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. My first preference is to choose the most suitable university, irrespective of its location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I will not choose an Australian university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I will do my own research of universities and not rely on the recommendation of others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. My parents will choose my foreign educational provider</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. I have no immigration plans for my host country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. It was always my intention to return and live and work in China after study abroad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Although immigration opportunities are not an influencing factor I will certainly look at all possibilities before returning to China</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. I will not seek to be employed in my host country even if unable to find employment in China</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. After graduation I will return to China to live and pursue my career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. I did not consider any cost as a factor when choosing my overseas study destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. The cost of living in my host country did (will) not influence my decision of host country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Personal safety is not a factor influencing my choice of study destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Racial discrimination (of Chinese) did (will) not influence my choice of host country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Climate conditions were (or will) not be considered when choosing where to study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Air quality, in the host country/city, will not influence my study destination decision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. I did not want to study in an overcrowded city such as Shanghai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. I did not seek or rely on information from educational agents nor did I attend educational fairs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8
The Likert Scale

The questionnaire invoked a 5 point Likert Scale as follows:-

Consider question 4:
My choice of university is (will be) based on cost of course fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reverse of question 4 is question 28:
Course cost is not a factor that has (or will) influence my choice of university

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If, question 28 is a true negative of question 4, then the data would be consistent if and only if the answers to question 28 was the reverse order to the answers of question 4.

Thus, if we assumed that question 4 was accurate, then the numbers for question 28 should be: 34 122 94 209 176
the actual numbers: 137 195 117 123 63

How do I apply this data?

Consider 5/29

Question 5: 144 165 105 166 55
Question 29: 152 191 102 143 47

Acquiescence Bias occurs where the data volunteers submit ‘agreeable’ results, often the first choice.
### Appendix 9
The Coding of Responses: Macquarie University Focus Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student &amp; Responses</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student S1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Firstly, **immigration**   issue is definitely the most important consideration. Personally, I want to immigrate to a foreign country. Compared to the USA, the immigrating policies of Australia and Canada are much more flexible. However, my physical condition is a little bit different-----I am a disabled. **So the cold and snowy weather in Canada may cause much inconvenience, while the weather in Australia is far better.** Thus, the pleasant climate of Australia is the second reason. The public security situation is the third reason. As we all know, **Australia is a gun-free nation.** Last but not least, I think there are a lot of tourist attractions in this country, including Blue Mountain, Opera House, amazing farms in Adelaide and the Great Barrier Reef in Queensland. Oh, I want to plus one reason, a friend of mine recommended me to go to Australia-----that friend is you. | 1. Immigration  
2. **Climate**  
3. **Safety and security**  
4. **Environment**  
5. **Recommendation**  |
| **Student S2**             |                            |
| The **first reason why I choose Australia is also about immigration.** Secondly, I have a cousin living in Australia, and he recommended me to come and further my study here. I just thought I could have **more options** if I came to Australia. After completing my study, I can have more choices: going back to China or staying here for further career development. If I chose to go to Britain, I must go back to China upon graduation. I can’t find more reasons. | 1. Immigration  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5. **Recommendation**  
6. **Relative in Australia**  
7. **Choices**  |
| **Student S1**             |                            |
| I think the **educational system of Australia is better than that of Britain.** The length of schooling here is about 2 to 2.5 years (Postgraduate), which enables the international students get a student visa and stay here for a longer period of time. Besides, compared to America, the tuition fee in Australia is relatively inexpensive. | 1. Immigration  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  
6.  
7.  
8. **Quality of Education**  
9. **Cost**  
10. **Visa conditions**  |
Appendix 10
The Coding of Responses: Western Sydney University Focus Group

FGQ1.
Student S4
Definitely because of this program, Nimbo, (8) I chose Australia. After all, Australia is an English country, whose English environment is very good. (15) Besides, it’s also an immigration country. (1) And I can experience multicultural here. (20) Those 3 points are important to me. It’s said the natural environment is very good also. (4) Anyway, there are many positive points.

Student S5
The first reason for me is also this program. (8) We can be a Mandarin teacher at the local schools through this program, which is valuable experience. (18) At the same time, we can do our Masters degree. (23) Actually I have been expecting to come to Australia before, due to an old saying: Australia is the country, which is the closest place to the Heaven, if there is a Heaven. (4) Although I ever applied for any other countries, at last I chose this country, because of the benefit of this program: (8) we will pay fewer expenses. (9)

Student S6
I have been focus on Australia Multicultural Environment and want to have a look here. (20) There are many Chinese immigrants here also, which will benefit myself living here later on. (1) Australia has very beautiful environment, which is helpful to your health. (4) The people here like sports, resulting in healthy body. (12) The English environment also helps you to improve your English. (15)

FGQ2.
Student S4
There is no any negative aspect. Never thought of it. The only issue I am worrying about is my future career after I go back to China. (11)

Student S5
There is no disadvantage. Otherwise, I will not come here.

Student S6
The disadvantage is that the commodity price here is very high, which leads to heavy burden on my family. Besides, there is discrimination, to the Asia.
## Appendix 11
### The Coding of Responses: Sydney University Focus Group

| FGQ1. USYD #1 S12 |  |
|--------------------| 8. Quality of Education |
| Firstly, the threshold of applying for Australian schools is not high. The amount of time and money that is needed to spend in Australia is relatively less than those in the US and Britain. Secondly, I did not get a very good result in the College Entrance Examination in China. The academic requirements of British and American universities are relatively higher so I cannot apply for those very well-known universities in those two countries. On contrary, I can apply for any Australian universities I like. As I did not need to take up preparatory course, I chose to study in University of Sydney. The price level in Australia is high and I regard it as a positive factor. Because most of the international students I meet are from decent families and the entirety of their character is relatively high. Thirdly, we have more freedom here in Australia. My parents are anti-homosexuality protestors and they did not allow me to go to Britain. Then, Australia is developing rapidly and is one of the most important trading partners of China. It is relatively easy for my parents to come over and see me here. Last but not least, in the long run, I might engage some business projects related to international trade. |
| 9. Cost |
| 4. Environment |
| 22 Australian Culture |
| 18 Career opportunities |
| 3 Safety and Security |
| 4. Environment |
| 2. Climate |
| 23 Opportunity Factors |
| 1. Immigration |
| 8. Quality of Education |

| USYD #2 S13 |  |
| It is convenient to fly to Australia. Besides, Australia seems much safer compared to America. When we were considering which country to go, a campus shooting occurred in the US at that time. Thus my parents did not rest assured that I went to America alone. Additionally, the environment and climate here is better. |
|  |
| 2. Climate |
| 1. Immigration |
| 23 Opportunity Factors |
| 1. Immigration |

| USYD #3 S14 |  |
| My consideration is about the timing of enrolment. I was planning to go to Canada. But I applied for a school in Canada and another one in Australia. But the Australian school sent me the offer first. Secondly, it is relative easier to migrate to Australia. Thirdly, before coming here, I heard that University of Sydney was a great school. Although I did not have any other counterparts to compare to, I just got the feeling that this university was reliable one. |
| 8. Quality of Education |
| 1. Immigration |

| USYD #4 S1 |  |
| 1. Immigration |

### Appendix 12 Transcripts of Focus Groups Sessions
Audio Tapes have been transcribed in Mandarin and translated into English.

Focus Group Macquarie University  30/06/2015
Student 1
SBJ, 24, Male, Jiangsu, Accounting, 05/07/2014, Master, International Student
Student 2
WJL, 26, Male, Guangdong, Accounting, 12/07/2013, Master, International Student
Student 3
HYL, 25, Male, Heilongjiang, Accounting, 10/06/2012, Master, International Student

Video 1 0:24:38

首先欢迎大家过来座谈，谢谢大家的宝贵时间。今天主要问的问题是关于出国留学的。主要是有这么几个问题:

(Rose Demei Qi) I: First of all, welcome all of you to come over and participate in this discussion. Thank you for your precious time. Today’s topic is mainly about studying abroad. Here are the questions:

第一个问题: 也就是说: 我说明 1-7 个问题并解释

Student 1: 需要每个人都发言还是我们三人综合起来就行?

Student 1: Need each of us answer the questions? Or we sent a representative to answer your questions?

I: 每个人都发言。

I: I would like to know opinions from all of you

Question 1 第一个问题

S 金: 第一个问题就是移民拉。移民政策比美国松一些。我希望移民，我当时选的一个是澳大利亚，一个是加拿大。但是加拿大比较冷，我是特殊情况，我是残疾人，所以另外的一个因素是加拿大天气比较好。第三个就是社会治安相对好一点，他禁枪。然后是感觉澳大利亚好玩的东西挺多的。景点比较多，蓝山拉，悉尼歌剧院拉，阿德莱德、大堡礁之类的。然后就是亲友推荐，你推荐我的。

Student 1 (A) S1 Q1 Firstly, immigration issue is definitely the most important consideration. Personally, I want to immigrate to a foreign country. Compared to the USA, the immigrating policies of Australia and Canada are much more flexible. However, my physical condition is a little bit different-----I am a disabled. So the cold and snowy weather in Canada may cause much inconvenience, while the weather in Australia is far better. Thus, the pleasant climate of Australia is the second reason. The public security situation is the third reason. As we all know, Australia is a gun-free nation. Last but not least, I think there are a lot of tourist attractions in this country, including Blue Mountain, Opera House, amazing farms in Adelaide and the Great Barrier Reef in Queensland. Oh, I want to plus one reason, a friend of mine recommended me to go to Australia-------that friend is you.

S 文俊: 我第一个也是移民吧。第二 我有个堂哥在这边，他推荐我来这儿。
### Appendix 13

**Summary of Total Focus Group Responses**

**Coding:**
- 11 USYD
- 11 Macquarie University
- 11 Western Sydney University

**FGQ1. What are the five most important positive factors, concerning study in Australia that you considered prior to making your decision to study in Australia?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Immigration</td>
<td>1111/111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Climate</td>
<td>1111/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Safety and Security</td>
<td>1111/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Environment</td>
<td>1111/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Recommendation</td>
<td>1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Relative/friend in Australia</td>
<td>1111/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choices</td>
<td>1111/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Quality of Education</td>
<td>1111/111/111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Cost</td>
<td>1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Visa conditions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Employment opportunities post grad</td>
<td>1111/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Lifestyle</td>
<td>1111/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Independence from family</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. New social experience</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Learn English</td>
<td>1111/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Learn Time management</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Improved study techniques</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Work opportunities in Australia</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Will recommend others</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Diversified population</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Scholarship</td>
<td>1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Australian Culture</td>
<td>1111/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Opportunity Factors</td>
<td>1111/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Discrimination</td>
<td>1111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 14
Original Data from Internet Questionnaire

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<th>序号</th>
<th>提交答卷时间</th>
<th>所用时间</th>
<th>来自IP</th>
<th>来源</th>
<th>来源详情</th>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
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Original Document 365 pages (Excel), 385 pages (pdf): Both stored with original data at Western Sydney University data storage unit. Stored in soft and hard copy. Original
audio tapes also stored on USB.
**APPENDIX 15**

**Validity Test of Original Data from Internet Questionnaire**

Paired questions (such as 1, 24; 2, 25; etc.) were placed side by side in the spreadsheet and the sum of the scores for the two questions is shown in the shaded column. A student’s data was accepted as valid if 75% of the sums in the shaded column were in the range 5-7. Note: the first and last two students in this small sample from the data were eliminated because they gave the same response to every question.

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Original Document 180 pages (Excel) stored with original data at Western Sydney University data storage unit. Stored in soft and hard copy.
APPENDIX 16
Valid Data from Internet Questionnaire

This spreadsheet is a refined copy of appendix 15 after the invalid data has been removed.

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Original Document 108 pages (Excel) stored with original data at Western Sydney University data storage unit. Stored in soft and hard copy.
Appendix 17

This validity table sums the scores for the positively formulated question and its negatively posed partner.

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**APPENDIX 18**

Spreadsheet Showing Calculations for Statistical Analysis of Internet Questionnaire Data

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Original Document 91 pages (Excel) stored with original data at Western Sydney University data storage unit. Stored in soft and hard copy.
数据与分析：
第 1 题  在选择出国留学时主要考虑选择学校的声誉。 [单选题]

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</tr>
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<td>都不是</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>1.34%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

本题有效填写人次 374
Appendix 20
Open Coded Themes from the US Department of Education International Strategy 2012

Theme: **Cooperation and Partnerships**
partnerships, engagement, knowledge sharing, mutual interest, bilateral, joint research, shared policies, agreements, collaborating, relationships, diplomacy, global stability, participating in multilateral organisations, prioritising countries, mutually beneficial, reciprocal relationships, key countries, strategic partnerships, international exchange, long lasting connections, interactions, learning from others, engaging internationally

Theme: **Quality of Education**
world class education, global benchmarking, benchmarking, think critically, competencies, academic levels, language skills, technological expertise, innovation, communication skills, think critically, think creatively, solve complex problems, strengthen US education, global competencies, benchmarked colleges, academically rigorous expectations, standards, knowledge, understanding, essential skills, inter-related skills, curricula, assessment, Common Core Standards, Race to the Top, cognitive development, performance, research, teacher effectiveness, best practice, teacher quality, preparation of teachers

Theme: **Cultural Experience**
language skills, cultural experience, cultural awareness, multicultural society, integrating international perspectives, cultural traditions, religions, prioritising countries, immigration patterns, social and cultural life

Theme: **National Security**
international focus, military, defense, strong diplomacy, engagement, strength of our nation, national security, strategic relationships

Theme: **Career Preparation**
competing for jobs, transglobal communication, commerce, small business, large business, non-routine skills, hiring, requisite global skills, interact with the world, career ready standards, global economy, trade relationships,

Appendix 21
## Analysis of Australian international education policies

| 1. the policy satisfies its own objectives (verification) | The Education Minister’s (Pyne) forward to the draft policy document suggests the desirable objectives for the final policy:  
- “International education is a vital part of our national prosperity and critical to the Australian Government’s plan to build a more diverse, world-class economy” (DNSIE, 2015, p. 1).  
- “Australia’s engagement in international education benefits us well beyond being a mainstay of our economy. It generates important people-to-people links that underpin Australia’s research, trade, investment and social engagement with the world”. (DNSIE, 2015, p. 1). |
| 2. the policy objectives are suitable to the existing social problem being addressed (validation) | The policy objectives reflect the situation facing Australian education with reduced funding and the need to provide a suitable education to domestic students. Further, the policy addresses the present and continuing shortage of STEM graduates. |
| 3. the overall policy goals serve an important function for existing social arrangements (vindication) | Australia has a “skills shortage” (Chubb, 2014) and supports an immigration policy that welcomes immigrants. International students, especially those with post graduate degrees and STEM qualifications, satisfy the social need for population growth as well as the economic benefits that flow from their immigration. |
| 4. the policy is aligned to society’s philosophies and ideologies, and the policy “must be evaluated against each other on their foundational principles” (social choice). | Australia is an isolated island, founded on European traditions, but situated in the Southern Pacific where its nearest neighbours (excluding New Zealand) are Asian. The remoteness of Australia makes it difficult to attract international talent and to create strong international business partnerships. International students provide talent and foster the creation of international business partnerships. The DNSIE document addresses both these issues in its section “Reaching Out to the World” (DNSIE, 2015, p. 21). |
### Appendix 22

Analysis of US International Educational Policies

| 1. | policy satisfies its own objectives (verification) | The objectives of the educational policy document “Succeeding Globally Through International Education” are “the value and necessity of:
- a world class education for all students
- global competency for all students
- international benchmarking and applying lessons learnt from other countries; and
- education diplomacy and engagement with other countries” (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 1). The policy document refers to bilateral education agreements with Australia and Singapore (p. 11) and performance assessment by PISA (p. 11). At the moment the USA is ranked by PISA; 27th in mathematics, 20th in Science and 17th in reading from the 34 OECD countries involved. Although the USA has the best and most numerous of the top universities, anecdotal evidence suggests that not all students in the USA receive a world class education or gain global recognition. |
| 2. | the policy objectives are suitable to the existing social problem being addressed (validation) | The policy objectives seem to address the inequities of opportunity in education that exist in the USA. College education is expensive and out of the reach of many US citizens and this policy does not directly attack that problem. Thus when this policy refers to a world-class education, it is education for those who can afford it, and foreign students fall into this category. |
| 3. | the overall policy goals serve an important function for existing social arrangements (vindication) | The policy goals of diplomacy, global competency and engagement do serve an important function for existing social arrangements because the USA functions as a world leader and mediator of international foreign policy. |
| 4. | the policy is aligned to society’s philosophies and ideologies, and the policy “must be evaluated against each other on their foundational principles” (social choice). | The US society’s philosophies and ideologies are aligned with being a world leader and these policies reflect that. The strategy which will allow the US Department of Education to “Understand the World through disciplinary and interdisciplinary study” (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 6) supports excellence and re-enforces the desire to build “education diplomacy and engagement with other countries”. |
## Appendix 23

**Analysis of UK international education policies:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. policy satisfies its own objectives (verification)</th>
<th>The HM Government paper on “International Education: Global Growth and Prosperity” (UK, 2013, p. 1) begins with the assertion that “There are few sectors of the UK economy with the capacity to grow and generate export earnings as impressive as education”. Given this influencing driver, the objective of the UK policy on international students is to increase numbers, by providing a warm welcome to these students, supporting transnational education and leading the world in educational technology. The UK government had, previous to this document, instituted a number of policies in line with these objectives, most notably streamlined visa processing and re-enforcing protection for overseas students in the UK (HM, 2013, p. 37).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. the policy objectives are suitable to the existing social problem being addressed (validation)</td>
<td>The UK is a multi-cultural society similar to Australia. This policy document addresses the existing social problems and the challenges facing international students in a strange country in the Executive Summary (p. 6-7) and in the Policy Section (p. 35-42).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. the overall policy goals serve an important function for existing social arrangements (vindication)</td>
<td>The overall policy goal to grow the UK economy through export education emphasises the value of migrants to all sections of the UK. Increasing export education also supports tertiary institutions and this allows domestic access to less expensive tertiary education. In addition, funding from export education can be used in research, which has multiplying benefits to the institution doing the research and to the country in general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the policy is aligned to societies philosophies and ideologies, and the policy “must be evaluated against each other on their foundational principles” (social choice).</td>
<td>The UK is a capitalist country and it has a world-renowned education system (Oxford and Cambridge Universities). It is logical that it would seek to make capital from these assets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 24

Analysis of Canadian international education policies

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. the policy satisfies its own objectives (verification)</td>
<td>In the forward to Canada’s International Education Strategy the Minister of International Trade asserts that “International education is critical to Canada’s success” (HMQRC, 2014, p. 4). The Canadian policy focuses on economic advantage and identifies various ways to gain this improvement through export education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. the policy objectives are suitable to the existing social problem being addressed (validation)</td>
<td>Canada is a sparse country with a small population, similar to Australia. It welcomes immigrants and sees great benefit from being able to attract skilled migrants, especially students with post-graduate qualifications. Export education addresses the immigration problem by accepting these highly skilled students as immigrants.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. the overall policy goals serve an important function for existing social arrangements (vindication)</td>
<td>Canada and Australia were both developed through immigration. This process is ongoing and the policy document HMQRC continues that social arrangement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the policy is aligned to societies philosophies and ideologies, and the policy “must be evaluated against each other on their foundational principles” (social choice).</td>
<td>“International education has a vital role to play in creating jobs, economic growth and long-term prosperity in Canada” (HMQRC, 2014, p. 6). Canada is a capitalist society and this policy is aligned to the philosophies and ideologies of that society.</td>
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### Appendix 25

**Analysis of Japanese international education policies**

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<tr>
<th>1. the policy satisfies its own objectives (verification)</th>
<th>The policy does not satisfy its main objective, which was to have 300,000 foreign students by 2020. International student numbers are currently in decline at about 130,000 students.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. the policy objectives are suitable to the existing social problem being addressed (validation)</td>
<td>The social problem that can be solved by international student enrolments is the sustainability of the Japanese tertiary education sector. Domestic student enrolments have fallen by 700,000 between 1992 and 2008. The policy objectives are suitable to address this problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. the overall policy goals serve an important function for existing social arrangements (vindication)</td>
<td>Given that the 2008 plan failed, it shows that the overall policy does not serve a function for the problem of falling student enrolments because it does not adequately define how to resolve the situation. The policy does recognize opportunities in international education and problems within their tertiary sector with regards to falling domestic student numbers, but it does not offer ways to take advantage of the opportunities nor does it offer solutions to their problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the policy is aligned to societies philosophies and ideologies, and the policy “must be evaluated against each other on their foundational principles” (social choice).</td>
<td>Japan has a very homogeneous population and culture. It is difficult for foreigners living in Japan to rent accommodation and even more difficult for them to buy property. The Japanese are outwardly polite, but inwardly believe in the superiority of the Japanese race. 92% of international students in Japan are from Asian countries, but the Japanese hold biased opinions on “those poor international students from Asian countries” (Shao, 2008, p. 7).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 26
Follow Up Data from Post Internet Interviews

Student 1 (22)
Name: 
University: Bachelor Degree: Macquarie University
Master Degree: The University of Sydney
Gender: Female
Age: 24
Place of Birth: Taizhou City Jiangsu Province China
Course: Accounting
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2008
Degree: Master

1. Who made the choice to study overseas, you or your parent(s)?
   The idea was proposed by my parents. We have discussed together and made the choice together.

2. Who made the choice to choose Australia, you or your parent(s)?
   My parents suggest to study in Australia for several reasons. By hearing the suggestion, I also asked my friends who already studied in Australia, about their conditions. Then I agree with my parents.

3. What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?
   The good security environment and high-quality educational institutions are two main reasons.

4. Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?
   My parents do not have any intention to migrate to Australia now.

5. Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?
   Yes, my parents have purchased two properties in Australia.

Student 2
University: UTS
Gender: Female
Age: 24
Place of Birth: Beijing China
Course: IT
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2014
Degree: Masters

1. Was the choice to study overseas made by the parent or the students?
   By student
2. Who had the most influence in selecting Australia as host country?
   Myself
3. What was the main reason for choosing Australia?
Easier to choose my major.
4. Do the parents intend to migrate to Australia in the short or long term?
Yes, I plan to apply PR for my parents.
5. Have the parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?
No, we haven't.

Student 3
University: MU
Gender: Male
Age: 28
Place of Birth: Luoyang, Henan, China
Course: Accounting
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2008
Degree: Bachelor

1. Who made the choice to study overseas, you or your parent(s)?
   My mother.
2. Who made the choice to choose Australia, you or your parent(s)?
   My mother.
3. What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?
   Easy to apply visa and have the chance to immigrate.
4. Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?
   Yes, my mother and sister will migrate to Australia at end of this year.
5. Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?
   Yes, my wife and I have purchased an apartment.

Student 4
University: UOW
Gender: Male
Age: 32
Place of Birth: Jiangsu, China
Course: Accounting
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2007
Degree: Bachelor

1. Was the choice to study overseas made by the parent or the students?
   By parents
2. Who had the most influence in selecting Australia as host country?
   My aunt
3. What was the main reason for choosing Australia?
   Immigrant policy
4. Do the parents intend to migrate to Australia in the short or long term?
   Yes, I plan to apply PR for my parents.
5. Have the parents, either in their own name or the name of the student,
Student 5
University: CU (Curtin University)
Gender: Female
Age: 27
Place of Birth: Lianyungang, Jiangsu, China
Course: Accounting
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2008
Degree: Bachelor

1. Who made the choice to study overseas, you or your parent(s)?
   My parents.
2. Who made the choice to choose Australia, you or your parent(s)?
   My parents.
3. What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?
   Good environment, multiple cultures and excellent universities.
4. Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?
   Not until they both retire in China.
5. Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia?
   Yes, my husband and I have purchased an apartment.

Student 6
University: MU
Gender: Male
Age: 24
Place of Birth: Jiangsu, China
Course: Accounting
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2014
Degree: Master
Contact:

1. Who made the choice to study overseas, you or your parent(s)?
   I made the choice to study overseas because I thought the employment environment in China is not friendly to disabled people and I wanted to go to other countries to learn new things and experience a different life.

2. Who made the choice to choose Australia, you or your parent(s)?
   I made the choice to choose Australia. But when making the decision, I also discussed with my parents and ask for their advice. Because I needed to take the monetary cost of studying abroad into consideration and I was fully financial supported by my parents.
3. What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?
There are four main reasons for choosing Australia:
◆ Australia is one of the most livable countries in the world.
◆ The climate in major cities of Australia is warm and comfortable.
◆ I have an opportunity to migrate to Australia after finishing my study.
◆ One of my mother’s friends lived in Australia. My parents expected that she could more or less take care of me.

4. Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?
   Yes, they have intention to migrate to Australia.

5. Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia.
   Yes, they have purchased property in Australia in my name.

Student 7
University: USYD
Gender: Female
Age: 19
Place of Birth: Shanxi, China
Course: Architecture
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2014
Degree: Bachelor

1. Who made the choice to study overseas, you or your parent(s)?
   Parents.
2. Who made the choice to choose Australia, you or your parent(s)?
   Mother.
3. What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?
   Australia have good environment.
4. Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?
   Yes.
5. Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia.
   Yes, in their own name, purchased 3 properties in Australia.

Student 8
Name:
University: UNSW
Gender: Female
Age: 19
Place of Birth: North East, China
Course: Mass Media
First Time arriving & studying in Australia: 2013
Degree: Bachelor
Who made the choice to study overseas, you or your parent(s)?
  Parents.
6. Who made the choice to choose Australia, you or your parent(s)?
  Mother.
7. What was the main reason(s) for choosing Australia?
  No reason.
8. Do your parents have any intention to migrate to Australia?
  No
9. Have your parents, either in their own name or the name of the student, purchased any property in Australia.
  No.