



Re-imagining the Collegiate Ideal: An Exploration of the Higher Education Motivations and Self-Formation of Students from International Schools

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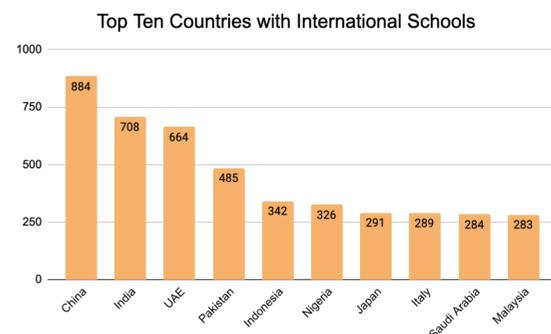


Abstract

Students from international schools often find themselves at a crossroads when choosing a university. To unpack the college choice process, we interviewed 19 graduating students from international schools and countries across the world. We explored the key people and experiences that shaped students' college choice process and their expectations for the future. Our conversations highlight four main elements that shaped their views of the ideal university experience. Growing numbers of internationally mobile students from international schools make this an important population to understand.

International Growth and Mobility

- International student mobility has increased in the last three decades from 1.3 million in 1990 to almost 5 million in 2017.
- There were 5.6 million students at international schools in 2018 and 80% were local.



Research Questions

1. What motivations and factors drive the higher education institution choice of students from P12 international schools?
2. How do students view their transnational identities and cosmopolitanism as factors affecting their self-formation in university and beyond?

Framework and Methodology

- Longitudinal Qualitative Study
- Relativist Phenomenological Approach
- Theoretical Framework
 - Self Formation (Marginson, 2018)
 - Push-Pull Theory (Altbach, 1998)
- Semi-structured interview questions with six focus areas
- Second interviews will occur in Spring 2020

Participant Information

- 19 Student Participants
- 10 different international schools in either China, India, or the UAE
- 11 Females, 8 Males

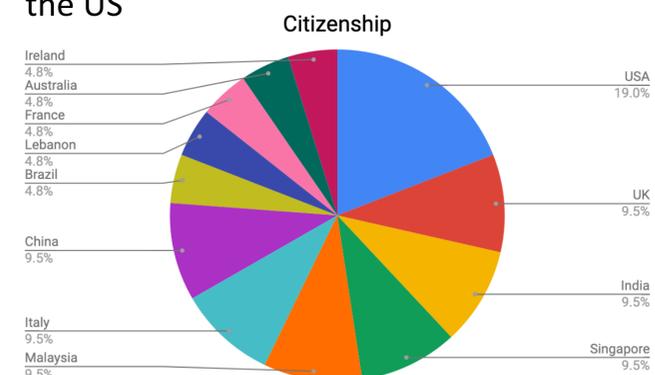
"All the problems we think about here are international problems. We don't just think about, you know, problems in our hometown or home country... people like to think about solutions that would be applicable on a global scale. I hope to continue that at my university."

Key Findings

- **Pre-College Experiences:** Experiential learning that builds a sense of purpose
- **College Explorations:** Universities as hubs of global activity
- **College Choice:** Personal connections and sense of community
- **Post-College Aspirations:** Careers and causes that impact on a global scale

"The idea of being able to look into different courses, because the one reason that kind of drove me towards the US rather than in the UK because I was...I did apply to the UK and I did get accepted...What drove me to the US was the idea of flexibility."

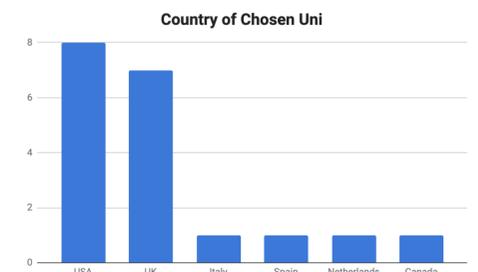
- Students were drawn to the US for the variety of experiences offered, name recognition, and ease to explore careers and majors.
- Finances are an important concern, and push many students away from tertiary education in the US



Discussion and Implications

- Traditional destinations still dominate, but students seek comparable regional options.
- These students are impacted by experiential education and want a similar college experience
- Rankings and prestige are not as important as career opportunities and exploration, global-mindedness, and personal connections.

"I think that one thing that I learned from being in an international school is that no matter where you go, wherever you've been to, it's shaped you as a person."



References

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Other Information

This study is a partnership with ISC Research