

Understanding the Evolving Roles of Outbound Education Tourism in China: Past, Present, and Future

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This paper discusses the evolving roles of outbound education tourism in China. To provide a thorough understanding, it first surveyed the origins and philosophy of travel as an educational device as well as education travelers' motivations in Chinese history from the first pioneers in the Confucian era to the late 20th century. Then, it described key events and factors that have stimulated the development of the outbound education tourism in modern China and its explosive growth in the 21st century. Through in-depth personal interviews, the study developed a set of measures that reflected present Chinese students' expectations of traveling abroad to study. A follow-up large-scale survey among Chinese students studying in the United States revealed two dimensions underlining these expectations: Intellectual Growth and Lifestyle. The findings of the study have significant implications for key stakeholders of higher education such as administrators, marketers, faculty, staff, and governmental policy-making agencies.

Keywords: *Education tourism, Outbound tourism, Chinese students, Travel motivation, Expectations.*

Introduction

Traveling abroad to study, which falls under the definition of *education tourism* by Ritchie et al. (2003), has become a new sensation in China's outbound tourism market. Indeed, since the start of the 21st century, top colleges and universities around the world have found themselves welcoming more and more Chinese students, who are quickly becoming the largest group of international students across campuses. Most of these students are self-financing and pay full tuition and fees, thus every year contributing billions of dollars to destination countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Germany, France, and Singapore. This single fact, the tremendous financial value, is sufficient in highlighting the importance of this outbound tourism market, which has indeed provoked many destination countries' governments and universities to make favorable policies to attract and admit more Chinese students.

Nevertheless, this market has not received much attention from the perspective of tourism. Although there is growing interest in education tourism in general, much of the existing work discusses such tourism as it pertains to Europe and America. For instance, Brodsky-Porges (1981) traced the roots of Europe's Grand Tour of the 17th and 18th centuries and its impact on society, while Falk et al. (2012) examined Aristotle's three approaches to knowledge, i.e., *phronesis* (theoretical knowledge), *techne* (skills and crafts), and *episteme* (practical wisdom),

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as a framework for understanding how tourism contributes to learning. These Western concepts, however, do not fully explain the Chinese market, which has its own roles reflected in its origins, philosophies, motives, and expectations. This study was thus designed to fill this void. Specifically, the study strived to answer this research question: what roles did education tourism play in different periods in the long history of China?

To achieve this, this study first conducted a background review through describing the origins and philosophy of travel in China as an educational device and evaluated the evolving roles of education tourism from the Confucian era to the late 20th century. Then it summarized key events and factors that had stimulated the development of outbound education tourism in modern China and resulted in its explosive growth in the 21st century. To gain in-depth understanding of the current role of outbound education tourism in China, this study, through empirical data collection, examined the expectations of modern Chinese students who had strong interests in obtaining higher education in a foreign country.

Literature Review

China has a history of more than five thousand years, in which education tourism has evolved and played different roles in different eras. To understand present day education tourism in China, it is imperative to gain a historical view of this tourism segment to see how culture and historical events in a society have gradually shaped one's beliefs and values. The following text first scans the roles of education tourism in these eras: ancient and imperial times, contemporary era, and modern China. Then it moves to literature review on studies addressing students' expectations.

Ancient and Imperial Times

The impetus for educational tourism in China in ancient and imperial times was to improve individual knowledge and cultivate personal character. The elites of society, those with education, wealth, or power, traveled within the country to experience different customs and view diverse natural attractions in order to broaden their minds or integrate their own ideas and concepts with literature and reality.

Enrichment of Knowledge and Cultivation of Personal Character

Tourism in China dates to ancient times, in which travel was considered an integral part of education. Recorded documents show that Kongzi or Master Kong (551-479 BC), who is known as Confucius in the West, and his students were some of China's earliest educational tourists. As described in the ancient texts, in 497 BC, Confucius, followed by his students, left his own country to start a 14-year tour covering multiple lands in central Asia. His original motive for this endeavor was to share with various rulers his thoughts for managing people

through moral values instead of violence. After experiencing great hardships, Confucius was finally welcomed back to his own land. Although few rulers adopted Confucius' views, it was during this long journey that Confucius synthesized his reflections and personal experiences and finally formed his own theories. Many of the scenarios and conversations Confucius had with his students during this journey were later recorded in the *Analects*, the content of which formed the essence of Chinese culture, while Confucius became the greatest philosopher and educator in Chinese society.

The Master's saying, "Isn't it a pleasure after all to experience frequently what one has learned?" is regarded as the earliest endorsement of the relationship between travel and education. A scan of China's long history shows that this philosophy was practiced widely and repeatedly throughout the generations, including by many highly regarded historical figures whose work and words have been influential in Chinese history.

Creation of Outstanding Poems and Essays

As Mengzi (372–289 BC), known as Mencius in English, said, "To see once is better than to read a hundred times." A principal interpreter of Confucianism, Mencius spent 40 years traveling China to offer advice to rulers about reform. During his travels, he developed his own theories and became another great philosopher in Chinese history. It was during the most prosperous era in Chinese history, the Tang Dynasty (618-907), considered China's Golden Age when the nation was rich, strong, and peaceful, that China produced many highly regarded poets, among them Li Bai (701-762) and Du Fu (712-770), both of whom traveled extensively and wove their travel experiences into their poems. Some of these have been greatly esteemed from their lifetime to the present in the Chinese cultural area and other parts of the world and were included in the canonical 18th-century anthology *Three Hundred Tang Poems*. The popular saying, "To attain wisdom, one must read thousands of books as well as travel thousands of miles," created by a group of elites in this dynasty continues to be included in Chinese textbooks for elementary schools and is one of the most inspirational quotations that encourage people to pursue learning and experience through extensive travel in modern China.

Another influential figure who endorsed the relationship between learning and travel was Su Shi, also known as Dong Po (1037-1101). A Chinese writer, poet, painter, calligrapher, pharmacologist, gastronome, and statesman of the Song Dynasty (960-1279), Su was a major personality of this era and an important figure in Song politics. He was also famed as an essayist, and his prose writings have lucidly contributed to our understanding of 11th century Chinese travel literature on topics such as the contemporaneous Chinese iron industry. His poetry has long been popular and influential in China, Japan, and other nearby areas, and is well known in the English-speaking world through translations by Arthur Waley and others. In talking about the importance of personal experience in learning, Su asked, "If a person has not experienced a situation but jumps to agree with it, is that all right?" Su traveled extensively and wrote of his travel experiences in so-

called daytrip essays, which belong to the popular Song literary category of travel literature, the main purpose of which was to use a setting and event to convey a philosophical or moral argument. This writing style was extended and pushed to its peak by Xu Xiake (1587-1641), a Chinese travel writer and geographer of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Xu traveled throughout China for more than 30 years, documenting his travel experiences extensively in his work *Xu Xiake's Travel Diaries*. These diaries have remained inspirational reading for numerous Chinese. The period from the early 1600s to the mid-1800s, when the Grand Tour was taking place in Europe, coincided with the first half of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) in Chinese history, when China again experienced a period of relative peace and prosperity and elites of the society were free to travel throughout the country for learning and writing purposes.

Contemporary Era

The education tourism in the contemporary era of China has played different roles, which could be observed in several distinct characteristics. First, it has expanded “outbound.” That is, Chinese young people traveled to more advanced countries, especially those countries that were stronger than China. Secondly, the educational travelers were focused on learning about subjects, such as economy, military, science, and politics, that might strengthen China as an independent country. Thirdly, outbound educational tourism activities were limited to a minority of people who were considered the elites of the society and who were either selected and supported by the government or could afford to volunteer with their own resources. And finally, these educational travelers were all motivated by the same goal, “to seek the right path to advance China” in turbulent times.

Path to Peace

As shown in contemporary history texts, it was during the Qing Dynasty that China began experiencing more contact with the rest of the world, Europeans in particular, beginning with the Portuguese in the mid-16th century. But unhappy with the restrictions imposed by China on trade with foreigners, Europeans pressed for more access, and by the 18th century the key they were using to open Chinese doors was opium. Despite Chinese government prohibitions, Britain continued to increase imports of this commodity into China throughout the 18th and into the 19th centuries, leading to addiction by millions of people and the draining of silver from the Chinese economy. Finally, in response, the Chinese government ordered the confiscation of all opium and a halt to further imports; this in turn set off the Opium Wars (1839-1842, 1856-1860) with Britain and later France. China's eventual defeat and humiliation in these wars at the hands of European powers marked the start of a massive invasion of Western products and ideas into the Chinese market.

In response to its losses, the Chinese government undertook a series of reforms amounting to a Western-style industrialization movement, also known as the Self-Strengthening Movement, which among other reforms initiated outbound

educational tourism. As Zhang and Liu (2005) have described, this era was marked by five waves of studying abroad, each of which reflected the unique characteristics of the corresponding period. The first wave occurred between 1872 and 1896, during which the Chinese government sent more than 200 bright adolescents to France, Germany, Britain, and other European countries to study advanced natural science, military technology, and other subjects. The slogan for this wave was that “to be strong, Chinese must learn advanced knowledge and technology” (Zhang and Liu 2005).

The second wave began in 1901 after China’s defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), followed by a violent reaction against foreign influence known as the Boxer Rebellion (1897-1901) and military intervention by the West to put it down. As China came to realize, its neighbor Japan was far ahead in acquiring new knowledge and technology, and was a much more convenient and inexpensive destination for Chinese young people to extend their learning rather than traveling far away to Europe. As a result, over the next several years, thousands of Chinese traveled to Japan to study many subjects, military technology in particular (Zhang and Liu 2005). This educational wave, however, made the Americans uneasy. In their eyes, Japan’s influence on Chinese students put the US in a less favorable position as becoming a world leader. Therefore, in 1908 the U.S. Congress passed a bill returning half of China’s compensation to the US for the Boxer Rebellion to help pay expenses for Chinese students to study in America. This ultimately led to the third wave of educational tourism beginning in 1911, as Chinese students traveled to the US to study such subjects as engineering, agriculture, medicine, physics, chemistry, and business management, which were considered important for advancing China’s economy and society (Zhang and Liu 2005).

The fourth wave of educational tourism was greatly influenced by several major events, including the Chinese Revolution of 1911 that overthrew the last emperor and ushered in modern China, the start of World War I in 1914, the New Culture Movement that began in China in 1915, and the Russian Revolution in 1917 (Zhang and Liu 2005). In this wave, working and studying in France became a trend in the early 1910s among young people who were greatly influenced by the works of Karl Marx and who aggressively sought the best future for China. For the same reason, the 1920s were marked by the fifth wave of educational tourism, as patriotic Chinese were sent to Russia to study the Russian model of establishing a strong nation based on the working class. This wave, however, was soon interrupted by the Chinese Civil War (1927-1950) and World War II (Zhang and Liu 2005).

New China

Outbound educational tourism development in the People’s Republic of China (also called “New China”), which was formed in 1949 by the victorious Communist Party after the Civil War, can be divided into two distinct periods. The first period, from 1949 to 1999, showed that outbound educational travel primarily served politics. The second period, starting at the turn of the new millennium, showed that outbound educational tourism was a by-product of leisure tourism.

Transitioning from Political Means to Leisure

After the Chinese Communist Party assumed leadership of the country in 1949, some limited educational tourism occurred for a short period during which the new Chinese government sent a number of compatriots to the Soviet Union to study both technology and theories of communism. But this ceased in the late 1950s when the relationship between the two countries grew strained. Indeed, from that time tourism itself completely disappeared in China until the late 1970s, when the government decided to shift its focus from politics to economic reform. At that time some people were sent abroad to acquire advanced knowledge in various fields. Eventually in the early 1990s, studying overseas to achieve a better life became something of a fad among the country's young people, but the high obstacles of obtaining a private passport, visa, and financial support gave opportunities only to those who were considered outstanding and who scored high enough on all kinds of exams. This would enable them to secure scholarships from graduate schools in other countries. A majority of these students finished their undergraduate studies in China and continued on to a foreign country for a master's or doctoral degree. Most of the students who were not sent by the government chose to remain permanently abroad after finishing their studies, mainly for the greater opportunities for a better life. As the new millennium approached, however, this picture had undergone a complete change.

Explosion of Outbound Educational Tourism

Entering the 21st century, the outbound educational tourism market in China was starting to reveal a very different landscape; indeed, the changes indicated not simply a revitalization but a revolution in the market. As Education Online (Eol.cn 2012) reported, the number of students traveling abroad to study suddenly rose in 2000 and has since continued growing at an average rate of about 20% a year. In 2012, more than 400,000 students obtained visas and traveled to a foreign country to study, while the cumulative number of Chinese students studying overseas between 1978 and 2012 approached 2 million (Eol.cn 2012). As the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* (2008) and the Australian newspaper *the Daily Telegraph* (2013) have reported, this trend will increase over the next 10 years, so that by 2020, more than 600 million Chinese are expected to achieve middle class status, with the money and the ambition to obtain for their children an education with foreign-label cachet. *The Daily Telegraph* (2013) reported that HSBC had recently conducted a survey of 1000 Chinese respondents. The survey found that 68% indicated an intention to send their children overseas to study in the next 5 to 10 years.

As further reported in large media such as the *South Morning China Post* (2013), *USA Today* (2013), and the *International Herald Tribune* (2013) in the past 10 years Chinese students have made up the largest overseas group in their top 10 study destinations. Other countries included the US, Australia, Japan, Great Britain, South Korea, Canada, Singapore, France, Germany, and Russia. Thus,

Chinese students have become a major driving force behind the explosive growth in outbound educational tourism in the 21st century tourism industry.

Another noticeable change in China's outbound educational tourism has been a demographic shift. Before the turn of the new millennium, the market was dominated by older students seeking postgraduate degrees. Most of these were described as the brightest young people in China who went overseas with partial or full scholarships. But since then, this picture has changed. In 2001, 90% of outbound students were self-financing, and by 2012 more than 93% of students were self-funding their own studies overseas (Eol.cn 2012). The academic structure has also changed, such that more than half of overseas students are pursuing undergraduate studies or high school education. This also means that the average age of this market has become much younger while the economic contributions to the destination countries are higher. Currently, the Chinese outbound student market makes up s an annually increasing multiple-billion dollar business to each of the top education export countries in the world (e.g. Daily South Morning China Post 2013, USA Today 2013, The International Herald Tribune 2013).

The biggest revolution taking place in this market, however, is its increasing diversity. That is, this market is no longer dominated by students who travel abroad to study specifically for a college degree. The number of students who travel overseas to attend study camps during summer and winter break has also boomed. These camps last anywhere from 10 days to 1 month, during which students take courses, participate in school activities, live with local families, travel to major attraction sites, visit top university campuses, and so on in the destination country. Most of these students are high school and college students who want to check out the place they might be attending for an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. As reported by *USA Today* (2013), "US summer camps are increasingly popular in countries such as China, where [a] rising middle class can send their children to experience American life—and possibly set the stage for going to college in the USA."

Another new sector consists of students who obtain overseas internships. Since the turn of the 21st century, study, work, and travel (SWT) programs have become popular among current college and graduate students in China, inspired in part by the US Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (better known as the Fulbright-Hays Act), which according to its preamble sought "to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges." The size of this sector is relatively small, but is growing as fast as the others.

Indeed, through all Chinese history, the Chinese government has never been as open as it is today in granting permission to its average citizens to travel overseas; and the Chinese society has shown much harmony, peace and stability since the creation of New China. All these have resulted in the prosperity of the nation's leisure tourism, which used to be either a "forbidden" activity for the public or a "luxury" activity only for a minority of people. Leisure travel in New China has greatly enhanced Chinese people's knowledge and understanding of other countries. With increasing disposable incomes, Chinese families, many of

whom have only a single child as a result of the Chinese government's one-child policy, do not hesitate to send their children to countries they believe offer high-quality education that will make these young people internationally competitive in the future job market.

Nevertheless, some people partially credit the fast growth in overseas education tourism to the overly strict and stressful national college entrance exam (International Herald Tribune 2011). As of 1977, when formal admission to college through the open National College Entrance Examination was resumed in China, students in China's test-centric culture spend most of their high school years studying for the exam, which is the sole determining factor in whether a high school graduate will be accepted by one of the nation's oversubscribed universities. With more financial resources as well as the new freedom to travel abroad, now more and more parents let their children skip this exam and send them to colleges in foreign countries. As InsideHigherEd (2013) reported, 1.4 million high school students in China skipped the national entrance exam in 2012; and among those students, more than 20% went directly to foreign colleges. It predicted that more high school students will bypass the exam in the coming decade and will travel abroad to further their education.

And of course, technology, the Internet in particular, has added tremendous fuel to this market. This is an important issue concerning China, where all websites are under strict censorship by the government. Because the government considers educational websites "clean," its people have free access to them and can explore their options. Media such as color photos and video clips on the Internet make tangible what they have read and heard about Western education, culture, and society, thus greatly stimulating their desire to travel abroad to experience it all.

The ultimate impetus behind outbound travel can be explained by Chinese parents' strong belief in the value of education. For the average Chinese, attending college has long been an official way to change a family's status. A college degree, especially one obtained from an advanced country, means good job opportunities and a path to success. For elite families, a college degree from an "Ivy league-level" school in the world is an important symbol. Studying abroad helps fulfill the Chinese ancient maxim that to attain wisdom, a person must read thousands of books and travel thousands of miles, and no doubt helps realize every Chinese parent's dream for their child by integrating education and learning through travel. In addition, to many Chinese parents, the Western teaching style seems more relaxed and more focused on developing practical knowledge and skills than on taking tests, and so is appealing to those who work hard to give their children a good life.

Together, these factors have apparently created fertile ground for the growth of China's outbound education tourism, such that the practice of middle-class families sending their children abroad as part of their education has become pervasive. Some questions then naturally arise: what do these young, middle-class student-tourists themselves think about traveling abroad to study, something their parents never did? Do their expectations differ from those of previous generations of educational outbound tourists in China's history? How do these expectations compare with Western philosophies of travel as a learning device?

Outbound Tourism and Chinese Students' Expectations

Inquiry into these questions is meaningful since it could help all stakeholders gain a better understanding of this group of travelers by looking at this fast-growing market through a different lens to sustain its economic value. From a business perspective, addressing these questions, particularly students' own expectations of studying abroad is important since it is the first step in understanding their satisfaction with a host educational institution. In marketing, as elaborated by many researchers (Parasuraman et al. 1985, Brown and Swartz 1989, Saleh and Ryan 1991, Thompson and Yarnold 1995), satisfaction occurs when a customer's perceptions (i.e., actual experience) meets his or her expectations (i.e., anticipated experience), which is referred to as confirmation. The greatest satisfaction occurs when the customer's perceptions exceed his or her expectations; this is referred to as positive disconfirmation. Dissatisfaction occurs when a negative discrepancy is present between the customer's perceptions and expectations; this is referred to as negative disconfirmation.

Based on the Service Quality Gap Model of Parasuraman et al. (1985) in business, customer satisfaction is determined by the magnitude and direction of the gap between customer expectations and perceptions of product or seller performance (Parasuraman et al. 1985, Brown and Swartz 1989). The main sources for the formation of customer expectations, as Parasuraman et al. (1985) identified, include a customer's past experiences, both direct and indirect; personal characteristics (e.g., consumption philosophy, personal needs, etc.); external company communications (e.g., advertising, media releases, etc.); and word-of-mouth (e.g., friends, consumer reports, consultants, etc.).

Chinese students' expectations of studying in a foreign university seem to come from all five main sources: parental influence, past experiences, personal characteristics, external communications, and word-of-mouth. As an embedded part of the Chinese culture, parents have much to say about their children's lives. Going to college either in China or overseas is more of a parent's decision than the student's, as parents transfer their expectations of studying overseas to their children. Some students are lucky enough to participate in the decision-making process. Both parents and students are influenced by enormous promotional messages via multiple channels, such as websites, smart phones, TV, newspapers, radio, friends, relatives, teachers, and online cell phone chat rooms. To gain first-hand information about modern Chinese students' own opinions about studying abroad, this study used a mixed method of data collection: first, an in-depth interview, followed by a large-scale survey.

Research Methods

The empirical data collection in this study was composed of two stages. Since the measurements of Chinese student expectations of study abroad were not readily available in the literature, this study first applied the grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) and designed a qualitative research procedure focusing on collection of interview data to develop the expectation measurement. A questionnaire containing these “student expectation” measures was developed and administered to a group of Chinese students who were attending a large public university located in the Midwestern US. Then, principal factor analysis was used to identify the underlying dimensions of student expectations. The following text articulated these data collection and analysis activities.

Taking an inductive approach, this study first conducted in-depth interviews, online or offline, with 34 high school students in China during the summer break in 2014. All the interviews followed the principle of open sampling, described by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as “sampling those persons, places, and situations that will provide the greatest opportunity to gather the most relevant data about the phenomenon under investigation” (p. 181). The interviewees were recruited using snowball sampling or respondent-driven sampling with all the participants recommended by high school teachers and parents.

The average age of the interviewees was 18 years. The youngest age was 16 and the oldest was 24. There were more females (around 56%) than males. Most were attending high school, ranging from the first to the third years. All expressed interest in someday studying abroad to get a college degree; 65% would like to join a summer or winter camp before going to college, while 62% would like to do an internship abroad before landing a full-time job. Approximately 88% said that their families would pay for their college education, but some wished to be sent abroad by the Chinese government, while a small number were uncertain about their financial resources for college. The content analysis identified patterns, key words, and themes among students’ responses regarding their expectations of study abroad. This resulted in 20 expectation themes, which reflected both the students’ expectations of themselves and their host communities and universities.

Survey and Findings

A survey was then designed by using the expectation statements generated through the in-depth interviews. The online data collection website, SurveyMonkey, was used to distribute the survey. From February 26 to March 6, 2016, an invitation and several reminders were sent to more than 200 Chinese students who were studying at a large public university in the Midwestern US and whose contact information was recorded in a database by the university’s Chinese Student Association. The university’s fact sheet showed that more than 500 Chinese students were enrolled in a variety of disciplines at the time the survey was administered. More than 80 students filled out the survey, and 76 complete responses were usable, resulting in a response rate of 38%.

Characteristics of Respondents

Statistics show that the respondents came from 34 majors. At the survey time, more than 53% of them were undergraduate students, approximately 39% were graduate students, more than 5% were English as a Second Language (ESL) students, and the rest were exchange students. The average age of the respondents was 24.61 (median age 24.50, mode 24). The youngest respondent was 19 years old, while the oldest was 31. Most of the students, as many as 79.5%, said their studies in the United States were fully or partially funded by their families, with the rest funded by different sources, including scholarships and self. There were more female (58.67%) than male respondents. All the respondents had been in the United States at least 6 months; the average duration of studying in the country was 40 months (i.e., more than 3 years); the maximum was 106 months (more than 8 years), indicating that some of the respondents might have completed their high school education in the United States.

Principal Factor Analysis

A principle factor analysis was performed on all the expectation statements to reduce items and identify the underlying dimensions. A varimax rotation with a factor loading of 0.5 or higher was used. The value for Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was 0.91; the Chi-Square value is 885.20 (df = 76, $p < 0.000$) for the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, indicating the suitability of the collected data for the principal factor analysis. The number of factors to be extracted was determined by evaluating the screen plot and the eigenvalue scores. The latent root criterion of 1.0 was utilized for the factor extraction. Two factors were extracted from the expectation statements, accounting for 76.40% of the variance. A reliability analysis was performed to further refine the factors. These factors, the items loading on them, and the commonality are reported in Table 1. The factors were labeled based on highly loaded items and the common characteristics of the items they included. Factor 1 included 10 measures indicating respondents' expectations of learning new knowledge, cultures, customs, and English and was labeled *Intellectual Growth*. This factor explained more than 51% of the total variance. The reliability test of all the measures showed an alpha value of 0.971. Factor 2 included measures indicating students' expectations to meet good-looking people, to have freedom, and to live in the United States and was labeled *American Lifestyle*. This factor explained more than 25% of the total variance. The reliability alpha value was 0.862. An individual-item analysis indicated that all statements in each of the factors should remain.

Table 1. Principle Component Analysis of Expectation Statements

Factor	Loading		Commonality
Factor 1 Intellectual Growth (I...)			
expected to broaden my mind and horizon	0.877		0.828
expected to learn about different cultures and customs	0.876		0.811
expected to enrich life experience	0.873		0.805
expected to challenge and develop myself	0.848		0.802
expected to prepare myself for the competitive job market	0.801		0.779
expected to learn advanced knowledge and technology	0.785		0.769
expected to fulfill my curiosity about different lifestyles	0.731		0.764
expected to learn English	0.625		0.736
Factor 2 American Lifestyle (I...)			
expected to meet good-looking people		0.881	0.731
expected to have freedom		0.823	0.729
expected to have the possibility of living in the USA		0.809	0.622
No. of Items	8	3	
Alpha value (α)	0.971	0.862	
Eigenvalue	8.572	1.364	
% of Total Variance	51.164	25.234	
Total variance (%)		76.393	

Note: all the statements were placed on a 7-point Likert scale, as “1” referring to “strongly disagree” and “7” referring to “strongly agree.” Factor analysis rotation method - Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 3 iterations. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is 0.91; In Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the Chi-Square value is 885.20 (df = 76, p < 0.000).

Summary of Evolving Roles of Outbound Education Tourism

As part of the research project that was conducted in response to the phenomenal growth in education tourism as a viable outbound tourism segment in China, this study evaluated and reviewed relevant literature information published in both Chinese and English. The study surveyed the evolving roles of education tourism, including its origins and philosophies as well as educational travelers' expectations and motives throughout China's history from the Confucian era to China today. Table 2 presents a summary view of the evolving roles of outbound education tourism in China.

Table 2. *Evolving Roles of Outbound Education Tourism in China*

Timeline	Role	Information Source
Ancient and Imperial Times	Enrichment of knowledge and cultivation of personal character Creation of outstanding poems and essays	History books, ancient literature such as essays, poems, and famous quotes
Contemporary Era	- Path to peace	History books, ancient literature such as essays, poems, and famous quotes
New China before the 21 st century	- Political means - Leisure	History books, ancient literature such as essays, poems, and academic publications
New China the 21 st century	- Intellectual growth - Foreign lifestyles	In-depth interview and survey

This resulted in several significant findings. First, throughout the long history of China, traveling played a significant role in Chinese people's acquisition of new knowledge, cultivation of personal character, and inspiration in creating outstanding literature. In turbulent times during which China was invaded by other countries, traveling abroad became a path for Chinese patriots to seek ways to build up a strong and peaceful country. However, in the PR China, i.e., New China, traveling abroad in the 21st century to study has taken on a dramatically different connotation. Through in-depth interviews, the study revealed a set of measures reflecting the expectations of current Chinese students in traveling abroad to study. The quantitative study identified two dimensions underlining these expectations: Intellectual Growth and American Lifestyle.

Implications and Contributions

These findings have multiple implications. First and most importantly, it offers both academics and practitioners a view of the origins and history of educational tourism in China, which in turn explains the deeply rooted motivation for young Chinese people today to explore the world. Specifically, international academics engaging in studies of Chinese educational tourists can use this information to develop learning activities and course structures suitable for a Chinese audience. Since tourism marketers are eager to embrace this market as well, they can apply these background factors to effectively refine marketing and service strategies and to sustain the long-term success in this market. This paper presents an urgent call to the Chinese government for establishing relevant policies and regulations, which were very limited at the time of this article's composition, to guide the market growth and to protect their own young citizens studying abroad. This paper also dismisses such claims as "almost all Chinese scholars are spies" (Redden 2018) by some western governments. The findings of this study

confirm a significant role of outbound educational tourism: a way to give best education to students learning, to enhance knowledge, and to promote understanding of diverse cultures.

This paper makes several significant contributions. First and most important, it adds new value to the literature pertinent to educational tourism by developing a measurement scale of Chinese student expectations of studying abroad. It also offers both academics and practitioners a practical view on how they can develop practical learning activities and course structures suitable for a Chinese audience. Since tourism marketers are eager to embrace this market, they could also use the new information to effectively refine marketing and service strategies to sustain long-term success in this market.

Limitations and Future Studies

The study has several limitations which require the reader's attention. First, given the long history of China, the background information on education tourism development was relatively brief. Second, the low response rate of the survey was not surprising but limited more sophisticated data analysis. Third, the survey did not include those Chinese students who were not actively involved in Chinese students' associations at the target universities. The surveyed students all originated from Mainland China, and their views may differ from Chinese students originally from other parts of the world. Finally, the survey was conducted among Chinese students studying in the United States only and they might not share the same underlying expectations of those studying in other countries.

Nevertheless, this study presents a good foundation for future studies in outbound education tourism, particularly Chinese students' satisfaction level with their host universities: the expectation measures could be used as "correspondent perceptions" and the difference between one's expectation and perception is a good indicator of satisfaction. This is the first and critical step for host universities that target Chinese students to sustain and expand their current Chinese market share. In addition, another round of empirical data collection with more rigorous sampling could be collected to identify and validate the underlying dimensions that reflect the specific expectations of current students in traveling abroad to study. The origins and history of education tourism in different countries can be compared to reveal cultural differences and similarities.

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