Transactional Citizenship

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ABSTRACT: Over the last two decades, significant emphasis has been placed on highschool-student overseas migration as a means of internationalizing higher education throughout the world. A variety of institutional techniques have been used to let students consider studying abroad. At the same time, globalization for college has become a hallmark of accomplishment and social prestige in many ways for students' and their families, especially in China. Consequently, the number of students enrolling in higher education institutions outside their home countries has surged from less than 500,000 in last century to about three million now(2022).

Despite risks and hardships, many Chinese families support their teens preparing for university study abroad and remain committed to international education. They are undaunted by travel restrictions, official discouragement, and widely publicized claims about health risks abroad greater than those faced in China.

This paper explores some reasons for their persistence using insights from Vanessa Fong's work on the embrace of transnational citizenship" among segments of Chinese youth with hopes of studying abroad(Fong 2011). Fong's workwhich built on Aiwha Ong's analysis of the growth of "flexible citizenship" in the era of globalization since the 1980s, offers a persuasive context for interpreting current developments among Chinese families (Ong, 2008).

Through interviews with high school aged students intending to study abroad, this study captures some of the "post-modern" reasons for their ambitions, which coincide with practical and professional goals. Although China continues to rapidly develop from a partially pre-modern, traditional society to a thoroughly modern one, there are also elements of post-modernity in itspeople's global outlook and behavior. China's postmodern character appears in the numbers of its youth and families seeking international higher education, which are exceptional among countries. This determined pursuit is an important focus for educational research and may hold the promise of renewal and change in traditional forms of education in China.

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I. INTRODUCTION

As China continues to develop and assume a powerful role on the world stage, its citizens too become aware of their country's global destiny and of their changed identities as players on the world stage. One marker of this awareness is the notable interest of Chinese youth in international educational opportunities, especially for university-level study.

The numbers of Chinese youth studying abroad and intending and preparing to do so, are impressive and have been subject to different interpretations. Some contend that the numbers reflect the interests of members of the Chinese professional middle class in foreign travel, once it can be afforded (2022). Others view the interest as arising from frustration with traditional forms of Chinese education, deemed stifling and unimaginative by some families and their children with exposure to information about academic conventions abroad (P.A.W editorial 2022). For some, it might be a way to polish a resume to attract better career opportunities at home and improve earning potential (Dhawan. A. (n.d.) 2022)

Other scholars suggest that these and other such reasons may be folded into another, more encompassing phenomenon in Chinese society and that is the spread of a new form civic identity among well-off professionals and their children: a sense of global citizenship annexed to the identity and pride young people acquire as Chinese citizens. Reflecting the integration of financial systems, supply chains, productive systems across countries around the world, the sense of a global identity that emerges among people located in their national homelandssupports the rapid exchange of ideas and goods among countries and institutions. The global system has created global citizens, who have developed through new forms of global civic education, which is partly promoted through international educational exchanges.

I found in this work that Chinese students and families reflecting on plans to study abroad for higher education are not simply pursuing pleasure, self-interest, and opportunity, but they are acting as transnational citizens, with sense of identity that extends beyond their Chinese heritage with an eagerness to know and understand other cultures, and themselves, through their skill in working and thinking in international and cross-culturalsettings.

The power of this new transnational identity among Chinese youth has led them to persist in their

aspirations for study abroad, even though the global covid-19 pandemic, during which borders were closed and differences in the ways Western societies handled their pandemic outbreaks compared to the ways the Chinese govt pursued a zero covid strategy led to disparagement of Western approaches in Chinese media. Going to the west was portrayed as assuming needless risks to health and well-being.

The growth in the number of international students is determined by multidimensional factors, mainly the differences in education levels between countries, the increasing economic, social and cultural exchanges between countries around the world, the ease of access to international education due to global transportation facilitation, etc. At the same time, the internationalization of labor markets has promoted a large demand for internationalized and highly skilled personnel in countries around the world, which has driven more people to gain international learning experiences through study abroad.

International study itself has very positive implications, both for students themselves and for the countries in which they are involved and their home countries. On one hand, the study abroad experience provides an international perspective, making international citizens gain a global perspective; on the other hand, the worldwide alumni network formed by international students upon their return home is a huge human resource that can greatly expand their influence in the global economy and global politics. The expanding alumni network is also in line with the trend of globalization, as they receive education and training from the destination countries and are familiar with the society and culture of the destination countries. After returning to their home countries, international students will provide more opportunities for cultural and social development of the two countries and open up opportunities for cooperation between the two countries in the economic and social and cultural fields, thus enabling both countries to achieve a win-win situation under the competitive environment of globalization.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE: INTERNATIONALIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE POST-MODERN ERA

Transnational Mobility and the Context for Hopes for International Study

British scholar Anthony Giddens defines globalization as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in. such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles. away and vice-versa."(Giddens1990:64) New flows of people in this era of neoliberal migration of capital and internationalization of production and supply chains are closely linked to thecultural logic of globalization. Along with their wealth and access to power, many people associated with capital (investors, executives, etc.) have been found to have acquired "flexible citizenship". This identity does not always override the political and cultural logic framed by the nation-state. Its flexibility appears as citizens actively adapt their thinking and their strategies to diverse contexts of action – indomestic cultural and institutional settings, or in those abroad, or in an intentionally developed international context. For many citizens from "Eastern countries," the seemingly contradictory logics of Westernization and "Self-Orientalization" can be unified in the practice of intercultural flexibility. Already in high school, some Chinese youth have set themselves on the path to the development of a transnational identity.

The connotation of globalization

Globalization is a process driven by the cooperation of both political and economic influences, such as international trade and tariff cooperation, commodities, food, multinational enterprises, industrial development and standardization, intellectual property, and cultural circulation, and extends to every corner of the world. These concepts imply that international trade and economic activities are no longer confined to nation states in an interdependent world system. Many scholars have discussed globalization from a cultural perspective, and they generally believe that cultural globalization does not mean that the world's cultures have become more homogeneous, but rather that globalization is "global localization," i.e., the process of globalization in which a local culture spreads to the rest of the world, forming a globalized chain.

This new form of citizenshipbreaks with the traditional thinking of nation-states, and globalization means that mankind has left the era of traditional international politics, where nation-states dominated the international arena. Modern times have entered the post-international political era, where nation-state actors, must share the global stage and power with international organizations, non-international organizations, transnational groups and transnational social and political actors. In the process of change, the world is rapidly shaped into a common social space, resulting in a series of processes that generate interaction and exchange across regions.

Globalization is also a process of transformation, a shift in the "spatial organization" of global social relations and social exchange behavior. This transformation can be measured in terms of breadth, density, and speed, and will give rise to a variety of activities, interactions, and flows of power and domination across continents and regions.

Traditional Citizenship and beyond

Citizenship dates from the city states of Ancient Greece by the Encyclopedia Britannica defines its current meaning as follows (Encyclopedia Britannica 2022), "Citizenship is a relationship between an individual and a state in which an individual owes allegiance to that state and is in turn entitled to its protection."Citizenship is has come to be defined as the legal, moral, and cultural link between citizens and a nation, encompassing all of its rights and duties, including allegiance. As a world system developed in the 19th century of sovereign nations claiming the loyalty of their populations (and those in colonies and dependencies), citizenship was generally held to be unitary and exclusive. Individuals belonged to one nation. Political life, economic activity, cultural practices were framed by institutions, laws, and conventions of a single homeland. National educational systems reflecting long established cultural values and traditions formalized the development of national identities within a population, and equipped individuals with the tools to navigate a nation's institutions.International relations were conducted among persons holding legal and personal identities rooted in distinct nation states. Conventionally with immigration and acquisition of citizenship in a new nation, individuals surrendered their original citizenship.

Notions of citizenship began to change with the acceleration of international travel and commerce, especially in the later part of the 20th century. Diffusion of interests beyond one's homeland, frequency of travel, long-term residency abroad, and multiplication of relationships among members of different nations, has led to what anthropologist Aiwha Ong has termed as "flexible citizenship," and the development of new identities (Ong, 1999).The spread of global identity has created a new form of global civic duty that scholars have spoken of as transnational citizenship.

Navigating Transitional Identities

Global citizenship provides opportunities for individuals to investigate, conceive, comprehend, and act as a member of the global community in both local and international ways. The rapidly changing, boosting information, and increasingly diverse societies has heightened human aspirations, continued migration and increasing cross-border connections have also led to diversity of identity and belonging.

Education must be a priority concern for the young generation, regardless of where they originate from or where they reside and if they will be participating in the global economy, their educations will have to go beyond the conventional forms offered in their respective nations. In a new, global era, individuals must supplement the education they receive as members of a national community with exposure to ways of thinking and action that they will encounter among persons raised in other national cultural contexts.

The educations that individuals need, and which, in the case of Chinese students, they have begun to acquire abroad, reflect the variety and options available to global actors on where and how they may live and pursue their careers. In the system of flexible citizenship, individuals are their own free agent depending on their position in global production, not so much the country they are in. Individuals need to demonstrate that they can function without being restricted to their nation state.

Internationalization of higher education in China

Scholars have described as "post-modernity" the cultural articulation of globalization and the cultural experience of living with reduced boundaries and restrictions, alongside with the freedom to cultivate new sense of ideas, vocabularies, means of expression and to acquire new experiences outside of a limited national framework(Jesus Martin-Barbero and ZilkiaJaner 2000). The variety, experimentalism, inventiveness and playfulness associated with postmodernism in the arts, design, institutional forms, etc., reflect the diversity in experiences of individuals as they encounter and adjust themselves to differences among persons accustomed to distinct and local ways of thinking, all of whom are operating in an improvised, common space, where shared understandings and forms of communication must be developed.

Going abroad and immersing oneself as a "foreigner" in another way of life has long been a means to acquire the skills to operate in a setting different from one's place of origin. To reduce the effect of culture shock and misunderstanding among adults encountering one another in high stakes interactions across cultures, exposure to other cultures during developmentally important periods of young persons' lives has led to a huge increase in international study in the high school years and especially in university-level study. Well-educated families in the Chinese professional middle and upper classes, whose rise in prosperity followed the increasing engagement of China with Western economies, markets, and cultural values, have actively promoted their children's study abroad. From early ages, within the national system of education, young Chinese have been encouraged in learning new languages and been exposed to new pedagogies, that will facilitate their development of ease and comfort, proficiency and critical awareness of other, global, cultural practices.

What families have sought for their children abroad also seems to have affected some aspects of national education in China. As Chinese youth have gone abroad to polish their transnational identities, locals have taken steps to elevate national institutions in order to keep pace with westerns. In recent years, the

rankings of domestic colleges rankings have risen, seemingly reducing the pressures on families to seek updated and quality education for their offspring overseas.

The pursuit of international education and the embrace of global identities and transnationalism in China can be traced back to the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. Chinese youth continue to live through the global opening of China thathe promoted. Venessa Fong points out that China, before President Deng, was never going to follow the western path of development, it was going to be a socialist model producing for its people (Fong, V. L. (2011)) However, what President Deng opened in 1979 was that it is the time for China to join as fast as possible, the global club. Fong found that transnational students steeped in international education are the children of those parents who have confidence in the viability of western models for China's future. (Fong, V. L. (2011))

In extend, maybe those parents are the people who gain benefit through opening up economic policy, they realizing that there are other ways of studying rather than the gaokao model. There must be something burning in these young people and their families that would propel them to study abroad so they would take a calculated risk of covid and looking for independent sources of information, not just relying on the representation of the Chinese government which is defending its own version of handling the covid and media sources.

The age of study abroad students has also gradually decreased from the previous age of adults to minors. In the last decade, with the in-depth curriculum reform, the education level in China has been significantly improved compared to the previous data. However, studying abroad is still gradually becoming the educational option choice for many Chinese families, and the cost of studying abroad has become an important part of the education fund of Chinese families. With the booming supply of college graduates since the end of the last century, the competition for jobs is becoming unprecedentedly fierce. Foreign developed countries are also more receptive to China's initiative on study abroad. It has lead the current situation in China swiftly evolved from the "Sensible study abroad era" at the end of the twenty-century to the "Popular study abroad era" in the twenty-first century.

Higher education, as the name implies, is a step up from the basic education provided by the state to a higher level of training, which is generally accepted in today's society as a stage of education that produces professionals. Contemporary higher education, or more accurately, contemporary higher education studying methods are different from those of primary and secondary schools, and are still heavily modeled after those of typical China. At this time, many students choose to finish their studies in other countries, and students and parents who already enrolled in the international system are reluctant to drop out of the curriculum. International students have also become an important composition of the global "dispersed" population. China, as an important exporter and importer of international students, has gained more and more attention to the issue of international student identity. Chinese families unquestionably view the experience of studying abroad as a way for students to develop skills and institutional knowledge in global terms. They also stated that, generally, the extent of international mindedness of students is a consequence of the length of time they have lived in a nation with the amount of political openness. In this way, it might be assumed that Chinese high school students with plans to pursue international education might alter their plans. Interestingly, upon investigation, I discover no such thing. This paper explores some reasons for domestic students' and parents' persistence despite risks and hardships.

III. METHODOLOGY

Interviews were carried out in July 2022 with 5 students and parents from China who were participating in international education. This section discusses why certain students and their family were chosen as the most capable members of providing the data required for this research. Through selection, participants were chosen from a varied range of family structures, areas of origin in China, and amount of time spent in foreign education. The purpose of this study was to look at the larger social environment of foreign education in Chinese international students, as well as their expectations for long-term impacts. To achieve this, international high school students in China were questioned about their educational experiences in China and their future plans. Concentrating on obtaining data from students allows you to acquire the most detailed and direct data available.Because the experiences of Chinese foreign students are the focus of this research, they have been shown as the sole informants. Students and their family members are in the greatest position to reflect on their academic experience. The interviews I completed allowed students to reflect on both educational and personal experiences in China, as well as their motives for studying abroad.

Only international students who were enrolled in high school at the time and their parents participated in this study.All students in this study have been preparing for international study for average of 7 years. They are located inBeijing and attend private international schools or international divisions of the public schools. Two of them have travelled abroad; some have siblings or close relatives who have studied abroad.Participants were also primarily from the larger cities, as larger cities are wealthier and therefore people from there are likely to be able to afford abroad education.

Before each interview, I explained the project and its confidential and voluntary condition, the fact that the participant will not gain anything by participating, the interview process, and the fact that a transcript of the individual's record and an overview of the results obtained will be provided to them if they so wanted. Interviews took place with one participant at a time by face to face meetings or online meeting rooms.

The first part of the interview focused on the participants' education in China. They were then asked to talk about their experiences as overseas students, their perspectives on the Chinese system, their connections with their parents, as well as how this influenced their attitude toward their education. Participants' perceptions of what made their experiences engaging and relevant differed as well. Some concentrated on course comparison, while others concentrated on cultural preferences. However, the success of encouraging participants to tell their story showed up to lie in the fact that the interview appears to have come to be understood as being in the participants' control, with the interviewer acting primarily as a facilitator to help uncover the story they wanted to tell rather than as an inquisitor extracting information.

The second part of the interview focused on the factors that influenced participants' decision to travel overseas. The debate began in the same way as the previous part. For example, their course preferences, contrasts between Chinese and Western styles of education, their previous experience of traveling overseaswere all discussed. Participants were questioned about the effects of their experience studying abroad and the benefits they considered they had gained as a result. According to the responses in these interviews, a crucial advantage was the inner change that the participants had sensed in themselves.

The third part of the interview was devoted to exploring what the participants thought the future would hold for them. In many situations, there was great issues and risks regarding the specifics of what they expected to happen, including, but not exclusively with the parents. They were all able to discuss in depth on how they thought their experiences abroad and how the subsequent changes in themselves might influence their lives in the future. As a consequence, a significant portion of this segment of the interview included of participants describing how they anticipated their futures will vary as a consequence of studying abroad.

The final part of the interview involved a discussion about the participants' view of their citizenship. This was carried out in order to understand participants' perceptions of themselves as a global citizen, relative social standing and potential mobility as a result of studying overseas. A clicker question was offer to the participants, about where they consider themselves as a citizen of the world or citizen of a single country. After some though most participant were able to confidently define themselves, with most choosing the latter. However, one participant indicated himself as a "citizen of nowhere", which touched on a area not foreseen in the planning stage of the interview.

The data was analyzed as it was collected in order to follow the opportunities that the participants' tales revealed for the project's conceptual growth and the investigation of new themes. For example, the fear of academic failure in the Chinese gaokao system as a major motivation in decisions to undertake overseas study was discovered. This section will discuss some of the participants' features briefly. However, due to the small sample size and self-selected nature of the responses, these features cannot be generalized to conclude Chinese international high school students. Only three participants were intending to stay abroad after studies. Of the remaining 7 participants most reported that they were either definitely or maybe coming back to China for career.

IV. SUCCINCT PRESENTATION OF MAJOR FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS Attraction of Studying abroad and education in China

Every participant in this study's story begins with a sense of inadequate or substandard in China, which were due to both the students per se and China's educational system. Students and their families thought that studying abroad would not only help them to overcome the flaws that made living in China unacceptable, but would also satisfy other goals and ambitions. Some joined the international curriculum to escape the dismal academic and employment consequences they expected for themselves. Most participants, however, choose to study abroad because of a combination of perceived issues in China and possibilities in Western countries. It is obvious that their decision was most likely the perfect choice for them, whichever "perfect" is generally defined.

A high number of interviewees cited the Chinese school system's inflexibility as an issue. The topic of the Chinese education system's inadequacy to satisfy the demands of participants was widely discussed, and it can similarly be seen in the reaction to particular aspects of their schooling, such as Tim who did not like the content of the courses which "does not encourage development and expression", and Horace, who completed the first two years of high school in Chinese system, and for whom the school was "hard to get into. Students have no academic freedom, and the rules are too strict." Statements like these emphasis thehorizon is counterproductive to a good education.

Exam pressure and the consequences of academic failure also meant that students were less likely to be able to reach the next level of education they needed, which substantially increased the pressure they were under

and exacerbated their discontent with the Gaokao curriculum. Pressure exists in a competitive education system, but its severity is also connected to the views of the participants' parents about their children's academic success. The strong rivalry for excellent spots in the Chinese school system, as well as the battle to achieve in the rat race phenomena, lays behind individual sensations of pressure and stress.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND REFLECTIONS

Almost all participants reported that their way of thinking had changed to a greater or lesser extent compared to their age peers. The international curriculum and overseas experience has provided them with the requisite information necessary to form different views and they have also developed the ability to critically use this information to come to their own, often different, opinions. Being more broad minded are both worthwhile on a personal level and also beneficial for future career. These traits also exemplify the values of post-modernity necessary for life in a developed, globalized, post-modern world. The participants are learning to question authority, and enjoy cultural diversity. Practical experience of the large differences between the culture of China and Western countries act as a catalyst for the development of independent thinking and global perspectives. Developing these values challenges and changes their personalities and identities, which is intricately related to the flows of global culture and the development and reinforcement of habits in the context of globalization.

Although the students want to discover what distinguishes them from other Chinese citizens when they return to China, but they also wish to preserve what makes them Chinese. A number of participants stated that they intend to use their skills to apply Western concepts to the Chinese culture to bring new blood into China. Whether for their own careers or for the sake of China, these participants think they are in a unique position to apply Western knowledge and understanding of China, which we may consider as the embodied cultural capital of transnationalism, being able to blend cultures and ideas, and live out the new methods under a global perspective that they have gained while overseas.

Flexible citizenship

The focus placed on being able to pursue a career on one's own supports the implementation of idealist, post-modern concepts. Going abroad not only allows the formation of new objectives and values, while gives the capital to imply these ideals in toreal life, even in China. The decision-making rationale of participants has revealed the instrumental feature of flexible citizenship. These formed their opinions of their homeland and foreign cultures systems is based on transnational social relationships, whether they were developed through families or personal interactions through transnational online platforms. These contacts have provided students with both the capital and a wide variety of information needed to begin seeing themselves living and studying abroad.

Participants who have studied and maybe worked in Western nations believe they have more options for where they might be possible to reside within China if they want to return home. Being able to have more job options in China is directly tied to how much participants anticipate to rely on their family and connections. Furthermore, the likelihood of a connection-based profession in China is depending on the predicted level of scholastic accomplishment. Beyond the place they work, the participants feel they would get more career options than they would otherwise have.

The option of additional cross-border movement after studying abroad appears to be part of the participants' identity. Participants in international education have jumped into the rivers of globalization and learned to swim as a result of their enrollment. Bringing a border crosser and the freedom to take use of the many possibilities provides significant benefits in transit. Furthermore, as a result of these benefits, some participants have grown to regard themselves as transnational citizens or world citizens. This unanticipated cultural capital allows students to understand the many alternatives coming from their foreign education and to envision themselves traveling between nations. Their ability to be intercultural is also the reason behind the indifference participants have towards where they prefer to be working – they will go wherever the benefits suits for them, and feel comfortably in either (western countries or China)

The developed world as one imagined community

A major wave of cultural migration is also contributing to the phenomena of globalization, adding to culture variety. According to the research, individuals who attended university overseas had a more individualized perspective of people, instead of having views based on generic or stereotyped beliefs. Moreover, new developments in varies fields since the mid-20th century have characterized postmodern society around the globe. Postmodern educational theory does not seek to make everything in education "homogeneous," but rather emphasizes a variety of differences. It seeks a variety of "distinctive voices" rather than an "authoritative voice" under modernism. Therefore, the forms and structures of our education should be diverse, with no one education being universal and having absolute authority. Today, traditional education are still in a single structure and does not pay much attention to the development of students' individuality and creativity. Since post-modernism is

about difference, naturalness, and cultural pluralism, it is important to have a variety of educational aims.

VI. CONCLUSION – THE FUTURE TREND

Despite nationalist pushbackin China and in other countries that have been accepting Chinese students for international study, globalization and and the development of new forms of citizenship among Chinese and others are likely to be irreversible.

Studying abroad allows students to escape the severe competitiveness of their own country's educational system. It is still highly appreciated and serves as a method to both participate to modernization and benefit individually. We've also observed how their cultural capital is regarded differently in Chinese and Western social fields. What is interesting is that this study discovered that the cultural setting of this foreign education has influenced the students' lives in a variety of ways that go beyond their original materialistic and instrumentalist aspirations. These surprising changes, their newfound independence, create comprehensive and critical thinking abilities, and global perspective, have become crucial to them. This generation is now empowered to construct their own identities, perceive choices on a worldwide scale, and freely travel across boundaries thanks to their modified habits. They are now transactional, with the capacity to communicate and integrate the finest of various cultures. As a result, many young people are becoming more postmodern and global. If the values of the receiving nation mirror likely future values of the sending country, then as a result ofstudy abroad, the capital developed has the power to createconsiderableradical changes, especially in terms of inequality.

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