



Analysis of the Intention of Chinese High School Students to Study Abroad in the Post-Pandemic Era, Based on the Push-Pull Theory

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Abstract. This article aims to address these special circumstances in the post-pandemic era. Based on the investigation of the willingness of Chinese high school students to study abroad in the post-pandemic era, it adopts a combination of questionnaire and interview surveys and builds on the analytical models of push and pull factors proposed by foreign scholars to propose a new model that interacts with internal and external factors. The new model takes Chinese high school students studying in Canada as samples, focuses on individual student factors, and uses a four-subject, five-dimensional subjective and objective factor analysis model for research. The main exploration includes: (a) examining the changes in the push and pull factors of study abroad in the post-pandemic era; (b) understanding how objective driving factors and subjective factors interact to influence students' intentions to study abroad, and (c) exploring the essence of Chinese high school students' intentions to study abroad in the post-pandemic era and the relationship between internal and external factors.

Keywords: Post-pandemic era; Push-pull theory; Study abroad intention; High school students; Study abroad

1 Introduction

Covind-2019 outbreak Chinese students have become the group most affected by the epidemic. In the context of the global spread of the novel coronavirus pneumonia, the international situation has changed rapidly, and Western developed countries have constantly adjusted their policies for overseas students, bringing more uncertainties to Chinese students studying abroad [1]. The unpredictable epidemic situation and complex international situation have made Chinese students think about the purpose and significance of studying abroad in a new way, which has also become a very confusing and difficult choice [2]. In the post-epidemic era, studying abroad has undoubtedly faced great challenges, and the topic of studying abroad has increasingly become the

focus of the whole society, which prompts us to re-examine the purpose and significance of studying abroad and think about the trend of studying abroad in the post-epidemic era^[1]. Affected by this, will Chinese high school students' willingness to study abroad decrease, will they change or have changed their study abroad plans, and what changes have they made? In view of these special situations in the post-epidemic era, this paper explores the dilemma of Chinese high school students studying abroad in the post-epidemic era on the basis of investigating their willingness to study abroad. Based on the theory of push and pull, this paper analyzes Chinese high school students studying abroad in special period from the perspectives of individuals, families, society, institutions and governments. This paper adopts a combination of quantitative research and qualitative research, which is embodied in the combination of questionnaire and interview in the investigation process to analyze the factors affecting high school students' willingness to study abroad in the post-epidemic era.

2 A Review of Context and Background

2.1 Motivation of Chinese High School Students Studying Abroad

From the previous literature, research on adolescents' educational study abroad has focused on influencing factors, goals, potential expectations, and advantages and disadvantages effects. In previous research, researchers have tended to view economic factors as critical, as economic capital such as family affordability will determine students' access to resources^[3, 4]. However, as this phenomenon has been further explored, scholars have found that this is not the only factor that determines educational migration. For example, in a project called Bright Future, researchers suggest that there is a relatively weak link between the cost of going abroad and the choice to study abroad, a finding that rejects the dominant role of economic factors in the decision to study abroad, and explains why the main contributors to study abroad in China at this stage are ordinary families and not wealthy families^[5]. In addition to economic factors, personal conditions of the migrant such as personal intercultural competence, social adaptation, cultural adaptation and linguistic expression affect their plans for their future^[6, 7]. In addition, the gender, the life background and even the geographical location of the family also have a strong influence on personal choices, as the immigrant's environment, previous educational experiences and events may guide the choices they will make, imagine that if an educated student had a relatively short but not very pleasant memory of going abroad (travel experience, etc.), they may refuse to go abroad again^[8].

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In the 1980s, with the active advocacy of experts in comparative education studies in the United States, Western academics began to systematically conduct macroscopic comparative studies on study abroad education policies. Scholars, mainly Philip^[9], Mazzarol and Soutar^[10], Branco^[11] and others, advocated the introduction of push and pull factor theory and other aspects to research study abroad-related issues. To

date, scholars have increasingly focused on fieldwork and the use of sample surveys for comparison to research study abroad issues. For example, Ram ^[12], through a survey of more than 2,000 international students from countries in the Asian region who were expected to study abroad, Ram found that students' familiarity with the place of study. Six factors, such as cost of study, environment, geographical proximity, social connections, and recommendations from friends and relatives, have an important influence on the choice of study abroad. At present, most of the studies on international student mobility in various countries focus on the dimension of motivation analysis and explore the factors that drive or constrain international student mobility, and most of them are based on the theoretical framework of the mature push and pull factor theory ^[10]. Push and pull factor theory has become a more accepted theoretical basis for explaining the causes of international student mobility in higher education.

3 Research Modeling and Method

3.1 Research Modeling

On the basis of the comprehensive research results on the push-pull theory of student mobility at home and abroad, this study attempts to reconstruct the push-pull theoretical model affecting the international mobility of students in the post-epidemic era. The new push-pull theoretical analysis model takes the state, the university and the individual as the three subjects involved in student mobility. The subjective and objective factors affecting studying abroad are classified according to the five dimensions of politics, economy, education, society and culture, and it is believed that objective driving factors cannot directly determine students' mobility behavior, but must interact with subjective factors to determine students' mobility, and the decision of students' mobility can also have a reverse effect on objective driving factors. The political, economic, educational, social and cultural factors of the country and universities, personal educational background and ability, including the ability to pay, learning ability and cross-cultural adaptability, are classified as the objective driving factors for studying abroad, and the factors of personal willingness to study abroad, educational and social requirements and social values are classified as the subjective driving factors. Thus, a new three-subject, five-dimensional push and pull model of subjective and objective factors affecting students' international mobility has been formed, which can effectively explain the interaction of subjective and objective factors in the decision-making process of studying abroad in the post-epidemic era (see Figure 1). The model develops the one-way push-pull theory into a two-way push-pull factor theory, and holds that the sending and receiving countries have both the push factors that affect students' studying abroad and the pull factors that attract students to stay at home. Secondly, the political, economic, educational, social and cultural factors in the push and pull theory are classified as external factors, the personal factors of students are classified as internal factors, and the mobility decision of students is regarded as the result of internal and external factors.

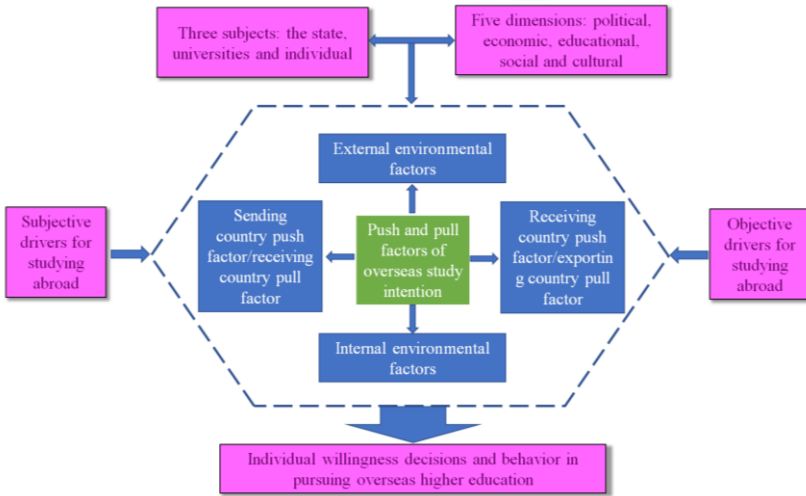


Fig. 1. Push-pull model of factors of students' willingness to go abroad

3.2 Research Methodology

In this study, the planned method is a semi-structured individual interview. For the qualitative analysis, the study will develop an interview. Qualitative case study is a research method that explores a variety of perspectives to discover multiple aspects of a problem. In the qualitative interview research, this research considers the following aspects (a) what research questions should be put forward to reflect the willingness of high school students to study abroad ^[1]; in the current background of study abroad in China, how to explore the focus of study abroad intention to focus on this research; and (c) , this study should aim to reveal the characteristics of an in-depth high school student's willingness to study abroad in Canada through case study questions. This study focuses on individual value orientations, so it is essential to allow participants to interpret their attitudes and feelings about studying in Canada in their own way. With the help of in-depth interviews, participants are encouraged to use their personal experiences to answer questions. By exploring the differences and similarities in the details of the participants, the findings of this study will be helpful to enrich the current selection of Chinese students to study in Canada. To explore the willingness of Chinese high school students to study in Canada, the researcher will recruit ten Chinese high school students attending an international middle school in Guangzhou, China.

4 Research Findings

4.1 Survey on Willingness to Study Abroad

The results of the questionnaire show that since the outbreak of the epidemic, it has had a great impact on Chinese high school students who have plans and are willing to study abroad. About one in five students said they would give up their plans to study abroad and switch to studying or working in China. About one in five students said they would change their study abroad plans due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including postponing or changing their study destination. In terms of changing study destinations, the survey results show that for the first time, the proportion of students who plan to study in Canada surpassed the proportion of students who intend to study in the United States, ranking first in the destination country, while the proportion of students who intend to study in a small number of countries increased. It is speculated that this is due to the strict visa policy and study abroad policy of the United States after the epidemic, leading some Chinese high school students to study in the United States, and turn to Canada, which has relatively relaxed policies, or go to smaller countries including Japan, South Korea and other countries that are closer and safer.

4.2 Basic Personal Circumstances Factors

Previous studies have shown that students' family background, including family income, father's education, mother's education, as well as students' academic background, including language tests, school GPA, and university level, will have an impact on Chinese high school students' willingness to study abroad. On this basis, this paper discusses whether these factors still affect Chinese high school students' willingness to study abroad in the post-epidemic era. The results show that the higher the family income, the higher the father's education level and the mother's education level, the more Chinese high school students are inclined to study abroad; Chinese high school students who have participated in the language test and achieved good results have a stronger desire to study abroad, and Chinese high school students with higher average GPA and higher academic level are also more willing to study abroad. In contrast, the family background and academic background of students in the post-epidemic era also affect their own willingness to study abroad. In contrast, the family background and academic background of students in the post-epidemic era also affect their own willingness to study abroad.

4.3 Domestic Environmental Factors

Including the surrounding environment and network public opinion environment. Previous research results show that the willingness of some Chinese high school students to study abroad is influenced by the people around them. Although the subjective willingness to study abroad is not strong enough and the judgment of their own situation is not clear enough, they still choose to follow the trend of going abroad, which is a psychological factor of conformity. In addition to the influence factors of

the surrounding environment, the current network public opinion environment may also have an impact on the willingness of Chinese high school students to study abroad. Since the large-scale outbreak of the epidemic abroad in March 2020, while students who have been studying abroad are facing the difficulty of obtaining a ticket to return home, on the Internet, a large number of netizens opposed the return of Chinese students who were studying in countries and regions with a high risk of the epidemic at that time, and expressed strong negative emotions towards the returnees. The results of the research show that the domestic network public opinion environment and the rising patriotic enthusiasm affect the willingness of some Chinese high school students to study abroad, and some Chinese high school students indicate that they will consider further study in China.

4.4 Foreign Environment Factors

It includes the security issues of the countries and regions studying abroad, study abroad policies and the attitude of foreign people towards Chinese students. As most of the major target countries and regions of Chinese students still have a high risk of epidemic, and are faced with the risk of medical system collapse and social unrest caused by the epidemic crisis, these safety problems have led to the decline of students' or their parents' willingness to study abroad, thus making students give up or change their study abroad plans. Despite the fact that the epidemic has not been effectively controlled, countries and regions such as the United States and Japan still restrict the entry of international students by restricting visa issuance, tightening visa extension examination standards, and limiting the number of flights. The strict study abroad policy has had an impact on the willingness of Chinese high school students to study abroad that cannot be ignored. The attitude of foreign people toward Chinese students has an impact on the willingness of Chinese high school students to study abroad. For example, in Australia and other countries, anti-China sentiment and unfriendly attitude of the people have led to the extremely difficult situation of Chinese students to study abroad, which has a negative impact on students' physical and psychological health, resulting in students' lower willingness to study abroad.

5 Conclusions

The results of the questionnaire survey show that since the outbreak of the epidemic, it has had a great impact on Chinese high school students who have plans and are willing to study abroad. Students' family background, academic background, domestic environment, foreign situation, study abroad experience, online teaching effect, language and cultural environment, sense of economic conditions and other specific influencing factors have an impact on the influencing factors of Chinese high school students studying abroad in the post-epidemic era.

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