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Chinese Students Choosing Hungarian Tertiary Education: a Systematic Review

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Abstract

China has been the leading source of foreign students pursuing tertiary degrees in other countries. The incoming Chinese students in Hungary comprised the third highest number of foreign students in the country in 2016. This paper examines the Chinese students' motivations for choosing the Hungarian education system, with the purpose of gaining a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the flow of Chinese students to Hungary. In terms of methodology, this paper uses the systematic review protocol by retrieving relevant literatures. The author developed the main factors influencing Chinese students' choice of the Hungarian education system, which are social class inequality and the modernization process from the Chinese perspective; meanwhile, the state policy perceptions, the institution, and community influence are encouraging from the Hungarian views. Moreover, individual motivation and the challenges of “invisible academic performance in the classroom” are explored with regard to Chinese students in Hungary. This article practically contributes to policy implications for Hungarian higher education in the international environment and inspires Chinese students who are from the lower socioeconomic classes.

Keywords Motivation · Chinese students · Educational mobility · Hungary · Systematic review

Introduction

The increased in the number of international students pursuing tertiary degree programs in different countries has been a subject of discussion, and it has been a result of the China's state-led modernization. Some researchers (Lewis 2005; Waters 2006) focused on international students moving from China to the major student-receiving

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destinations in North America, Canada, Australia, and so on [39, 59]. They compared Chinese students who studied in the UK, the USA, Australia, Japan and other countries, which are more attractive to Chinese students; nevertheless, many Chinese students choose to go to Hungary to study. Chinese students were among the top 11 groups of students from foreign countries in 2014 and ranked third in 2016 in Hungary. They ranked first among foreign nationals in non-European areas [2]. These two countries are strengthening cooperation in higher education, especially through Hungary's Tempus Public Foundation, which was launched in 2013 to benefit the educational process [16, 55].

In order to understand international Chinese students' motivations, cultural capital effect, experiences, and challenges, the following questions will be addressed in this article:

1. What are the motivations for Chinese students to seek international education?
2. What are the factors that induce Chinese students to study in Hungary?
3. What are the challenges for Chinese students in the Hungarian education system?

Methodology and Data

A systematic review not only inspires the author to understand the current themes in the mainstream, but also facilitates the research direction by analyzing the practical relevance of literatures. Therefore, a pre-planned systematic review protocol overcomes the problems related to tons of published research studies and quality variations. From the perspectives of sociology, education, and psychology, international education mobility is a hot topic which has received significant attention from many scholars with different affiliations. Therefore, this paper uses the systematic review protocol by retrieving relevant literatures that were published between 1 January 2005 and 31 December 2017 (except for the conceptual framework), and the reason for choosing this period is that Hungarian international students increased significantly from 2005 (STADAT – 2.6.12) [54].

I used a complex reference search engine to find the research questions for this topic. Some of the search terms were as follows: “Chinese students’ study abroad”; “international mobility”; “cultural capital”; and “Chinese students in Hungary.” Running a search on the above words yielded more than 2000 references. Thus, to limit the literature scanning process associated with the research questions, I narrowed the selection criteria by choosing the database that included the following subjects: education, sociology, anthropology, and European studies.

I limited this study to peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, e-journals, and available theses. With regard to methodology, I selected a quantitative methodology, a qualitative approach, and applied mixed methods. The total number of articles reviewed was 1157 English language articles and 205 Chinese language articles.

After the first-round search, articles were excluded immediately if they had little relevance to international or Hungarian academic mobility. For example, articles were excluded immediately if the content included “Illegal and involuntary international students’ mobility” or “second-generation immigrants.” Eventually, as can be seen from Table 1, based on the inclusion criteria, 61 articles met the criteria for the next phase of analysis.

Conceptual Framework

Bourdieu's social reproduction thesis (1977) concluded that education plays an essential role in abetting the reproduction of social inequality [57]. Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction gives evidence on explaining persistent inequalities in educational stratification, which is based on parental endowments to the next generation [7]. Therefore, cultural capital can be a key mechanism in maintaining education inequality [8]. However, Kearney and Levine define the relationship between education achievement and socio-economic background as follows: income inequality leads youth in low-income status to perceive that investment in human capital yields a lower rate of educational return [34].

The students who experience international mobility are highly likely to choose to carry out their future study abroad [53]. The benefits of doing so are establishing international networks [44] and decreasing the information costs of future mobility [21, 36]. Waters explored whether Chinese middle-class families value the international academic credentials at a time when improved provision has meant that the middle classes no longer have "rewards accruing by the exclusive ownership" from local higher education access [60]. Xiang and Shen shows on the impact of international student migration from China to other foreign countries, particularly in the area of different types of capital, like human, social, political, and cultural capital, which transform from one to another and bring a transnational dimension that explains social stratification in China [61].

DiPietro explained that higher education mobility enhances individuals' employment probability, language proficiency, expands opportunities to work abroad, and engenders European values [18]. Bilecen and Van also put forward that educational mobility contributes to labor markets and individual characteristics (career path, and social-cultural change) [4].

In terms of the Chinese (students and workers) in Hungary, Örkény and Székelyi describe the cultural resources of immigrants in Hungary, Chinese, and Turkish account for nearly one-third of immigrants who are diploma holders, and a quarter of the Chinese speak Hungarian quite well [50].

Table 1 Assessment of systematic review

Main key words	International mobility	Chinese student studying abroad	Cultural capital	Chinese students in Hungary
Themes and subjects	International mobility, international education mobility, Chinese students abroad, Hungarian higher education, Chinese students in European area, Chinese students in Hungary, higher education, sociology, educational immigration			
Themes and key words excluded	Illegal and involuntary international students' mobility, second-generation immigrants, internal mobility, children mobility			
Research domains	Education, Sociology, Anthropology, European studies			
Databases	Web of Science (Thomson Reuters Web of Knowledge), EBSCO, Wiley Online Library, World Development Indicators (WDI), Education Database; WanFang Database, Chinese Social Science Citation Index (CSSCI), and China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI)			
Content type	Peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, e-journals, available theses			
Content language	English, Chinese			

Findings

A Chinese Perspective: International Education Mobility

Social Class Inequalities in China: Impacts on International Education

In the last decade, there has been an increasing focus on the relationship among education, culture, and social class. Cultural capital can be regarded as an important element in social reproduction because of the cultural inequalities that exist in social class. Aschaffenburg et al. concluded that social inequalities are perpetuated as primitive differences in cultural capital, which become encoded in educational credentials, which in turn can shape students into social class positions that have a similarity to that of their parents [1]. Mitchell described that transnational middle class from East Asia were seeking language acquisition [47]. Waters explored “Western” education for East Asia’s middle class. It continued to develop as the middle class accumulate “institutionalized” and “embodied” forms of cultural capital transmitted by their parents with the growth of an international education market [59]. Xiang and Shen argued that international education in mainland China is primarily part of social inequality production rather than reproduction [61]. Sin extends Bourdieu’s cultural capital to explained experiences of occupational and status privileges, and framing this in the context of Malaysian students in the UK, they can acquire valuable human capital which contributes to enhanced skills and knowledge to economy [52]. Binzel and Carvalho discussed that the transmission of social-economic status across generation is higher in developing countries than in developed ones; through empirical studies, the reason can be explained by the expansion of education that allows for much more social mobility in developing economies [5].

Furthermore, a modern China needs a number of globally competitive talents promoting international mobility. However, China’s allocation of resources was directed to the politically and economically privileged party, and as a result, privileged people regard higher education as a resource of the capital (cultural) and additionally tried to secure the acquisition of Western education as an extra and superior form of cultural capital, from which a hierarchal structure emerged [13].

Chinese Students Overseas Studying as Part of a Modernization Discourse

From the Chinese view, students’ migration can be regarded as an integral power behind the state-led modernization process. China has experienced an increase in social, economic, and educational diversity throughout the last two decades, resulting in the demographic tendency of students to go abroad. In accordance with the Institute of International Education, around four million Chinese students have gone abroad to study since 1978, the year that marks the beginning of economic reform in China that reached a watershed in the late 1990s [61]. Approximately, 520,000 Chinese students have gone abroad in order to get tertiary education [46].

Traditionally, government officials are always privileged in economic matters, as reflected in their wealth status. Cao and Nee showed that rich entrepreneurs were given a low social status before the 1980s [13]; consequently, today, wealth in China has developed a strong reputation and symbolic capital status, and the 1980s can be seen as a time of triumph of political capital over economic power. Bian illustrated state-based

redistributive inequalities to social stratification based on groups' and individual's performance backdrop of a market-oriented economy. The modernization discourse underlying the reforms stems from the twentieth century, when it turned from being a period of "wealth creation" that benefitted the majority [3]. Specifically, socially stratified reproduction exists in different kinds of capital in China; we can see that greater economic capital has the ability to transfer economic resources into cultural and social capital in the market-oriented employment environment.

Yet, more and more underprivileged students from China pursued full-time training programs all over the world. Findlay et al. suggests that higher education is essential for the middle-income class in Asian countries, who are continuing to look for the education opportunities abroad [23]. In reality, the Chinese government initially encouraged many university students to study abroad in order to improve skills for the country's development. With the mature mechanism on the Chinese Scholarship Council (or make a bilateral agreement with other countries), it sets up scholarship gradually [16]. Education leads to social stratification in China. It enables people to accumulate resources and achieve social mobility. Compared with many Chinese university students who have been financed by their parents over the last century, many students pursue a good reputation through the acquisition of cultural capital in order to obtain a high-status job after graduation.

All in all, within the context of China's state-led modernization process, the decision to study abroad includes its effect on economic development and the creation of competitive status on the international stage.

A Hungarian Perspective: the Factors Inducing Chinese Students in Hungary

Much research has been conducted on Chinese students overseas, mostly in the USA, the UK, and Australia, from the aspect of the acculturation/adaptation into host universities and societies. Kajanus showed that Chinese international students most frequently choose English-speaking countries, like the USA and the UK [33]. But, in many European countries, internationalization activities depend on the higher education institutions themselves, and the policies and strategies encouraged by the European level. European Higher Education Area (EHEA) countries developed and implemented international educational mobility strategies in 2012, and the 2013 "European higher education in the world" communication encouraged EU member states to develop "comprehensive internationalization strategies" [20]. In addition, the European Commission's 2017b "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture" was created in order to boost educational mobility and facilitate cross-border cooperation [19]. Several countries in Europe reported that addressing student's incoming mobility strategically on the national level resulted in an increase in the total number of students in their countries. Eleven countries in Europe reported that all of their higher education institutions have an internationalization educational mobility strategy. In Hungary, the goal is to increase the number of foreign students from 23,000 in 2013 to 40,000 in 2023 [55]. Moreover, many institutions established regional programs based on the government level, and some of them operated bilateral, regional, and national programs, which attracts foreign students to study in Hungary.

The Hungarian central statistical office showed that in the academic year 2016/2017, there were 28,628 foreign students studying in Hungary, of which 26,519 were full-

time students from approximately 170 countries in 2016, representing an increase of 9.5% compared with the previous academic year [29]. In Hungary, Chinese students were among the top 11 incoming international students in 2014, and China ranked third in 2016 after Germany and Serbia, which became the first foreign nationals ranking among non-European areas [2]. The spectacular tripling of the growth of Chinese incoming students influenced the foreign national students in Hungary. Debrecen University is the favorite university among international students, and Chinese students account for 20% of the international student population; Corvinus University of Budapest ranked second in the fields of economics and social sciences, with Chinese students representing up to 18% of the foreign student body [2].

On a national scale, the Hungarian government aimed to attract more Chinese students so as to strengthen connections and intensify cooperation with China, which offers opportunities for cooperation in the future. Chinese students who study in Hungary have a positive network effect between Hungary and China. Hungary, as a non-English-speaking country, has a rising number of Chinese students for several reasons. Firstly, the Hungaricum Scholarship engages in both English and Hungarian languages, which is a major attractive element for international educational mobility [55]. Secondly, most Hungarian educational institutions offer language training programs to support international students who cannot meet the language requirement to begin their academic studies by offering a “bridge,” particularly aimed at incoming Chinese students, resulting in these students becoming acquainted with the necessary academic skills and adapting to the local culture. Moreover, the Hungarian education platform promotes academic mobility to other European areas, even worldwide through programs like the Master’s in International Management (CEMS). European Commission conducted a survey that explained the three main reasons behind the decision to study in Hungary: (1) high quality education; (2) a desire to learn about another culture; and (3) affordable prices for international students [20]. Evidently, prospective students know people who have studied in Hungary and recommended it, Hungary has joint programs with home universities, and there is a low level of discrimination against foreigners.

There is an increasing demand for international students to pursue their higher education in Hungary despite the presence of high quality education around Europe. To date, little research has been conducted on this group, making this article’s observations from macro-, meso-, and micro-levels a valuable tool for understanding the reasons why Chinese students choose to study in Hungary: (1) overview on the state policy perceptions; (2) systematic analyses on the institution and community influence; (3) individual motivation, does class matter? (4) the challenges for Chinese students on the cultural reproduction process.

Overview on the State Policy Perceptions

Overseas students exert a great influence on both home and host societies, which is a high concern of the state. Thus, Wang put forward that international educational mobility, to some extent, is subject to government policy interventions [58]. It should take a government view to analyze the international education cooperation between Hungary and China. In terms of the relationship between Hungary and China, the “One Belt, One Road” Initiative in China supports cooperation between the two countries. The Chinese and Hungarian governments created a bilateral educational relationship in 2014, which launched as a Chinese strategy as a 200-student exchange program. The

Chinese scholarship council granted an extra monthly stipend of 200 USD for bachelor's degree students who enrolled in the program, and offered a visa-fee waiver and round-trip airfare for all students [16].

The Hungarian government has demonstrated its commitment to strengthening cooperation with China and increasing the number of Chinese incoming students studying in Hungary. Scholarship redistributes resources. To be specific, in an act of foreign strategy, the Hungarian government launched a program in 2013 named the Stipendium Hungaricum Scholarship Program, which is managed by Tempus Public Foundation. It is a bilateral higher education agreement with other countries and between institutions, including those in China, which is one of the foreign policies of the state [55]. Specifically, the tuition fee of enrolled students is paid to the Ministry of Human Capacities, and the program administers monthly scholarships, accommodation contributions, and medical insurance. Its primary purpose regarding the education policy is to enhance international relationships with other countries in academic and research fields and strengthen higher education institutions cultural diversity as well.

The program was launched with 47 students in 2013 and dramatically rocketed to 3000 international students in the 2016/2017 academic year. More than 3800 scholarships were awarded in the 2017/2018 round. The Stipendium Hungaricum applicants' number is continuously increasing, along with the number of available scholarship slots. In the 2018/2019 academic year of applications, over 4200 scholarships were awarded. In fact, there were 60 sending partners engaged in the program from five different continents, and the worldwide scope of the program is spreading each year in 2019 [55]. Since 2016, China has been the first-ranked country supporting students studying in Hungary under Stipendium Hungaricum, followed by Jordan and Vietnam. Obviously, budgets for funding internationalization activities in tertiary education are an important issue. In Hungary, to achieve the student mobility targets, the government is financing a Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship program for foreign students with a budget of nearly HUF 7 billion (22 million euros) in 2016, and HUF 14 billion (45 million euros) in 2017 [55].

As for the functioning of bilateral government educational cooperation, Bislev et al. described that the “people-to-people ambassadors” strategy was established by the Ministry of Education in China in 2016, casting Chinese international students in the role of cultural public diplomacy [6]. This act illustrates how the Chinese government uses non-governmental tools in public policy and concentrates on spreading the Chinese culture through academic knowledge exchange. Gu demonstrated that Chinese overseas students become both more firmly committed to Chinese culture and more understanding to the host country's culture during the time in abroad [27].

Systematic Analyses on the Institution and Community Influence

Having Chinese students in Hungary is promoted on both state policy and institutional levels. Practically, Shanghai set up a consolidation with the Hungarian government; joint programs and joint degrees among different institutions contribute opportunities for many foreign incoming students in Hungary and the European area [51]. For example, in October 2018, a successful joint program was launched by Corvinus University of Budapest in Hungary and Fudan University in China, which was made available to students pursuing Masters of Science degrees in Economic Analysis with

English and Hungarian training. After completing 1 year of Hungarian courses at Corvinus, students returned to Fudan University to start their English-taught studies (Corvinus School of Economics 2018). The program is part of the support provided by the National Bank of Hungary (MNB), making it a trilateral agreement among Fudan University, Corvinus University, and the central bank [12].

The presence of a Chinese community in Hungary influenced students to come to Hungary to study, especially in the medical fields. Hungary has a Qi Huang medical association specializing in Chinese medical treatments that serves to build a connection between the two countries in the area of medical development [30]. Also, cohesive Chinese communities were established following the 16+1 cooperation, which is the China-Central and Eastern Europe countries (CEE) leaders' meeting. In particular, Shanghai serves as the architecture for the building of the relationship. Thus, this has deepened the China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership the Hungarian-Chinese community and is quite important for the overall incorporation of community and network-related elements.

An Individual Perspective: Motivation and Adaptation

Motivation: Does Class Matter?

Lareau and Weininger's understanding of cultural capital which emphasizes the "micro-interactive processes whereby individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills, and competence" [38]. Greenhalgh and Winckler believed that, in China, many parents believe that it is very important to undertake self-cultivation, basically, through school education, family harmony, social stability, and individual social responsibility [26]. Yet, some parents feel that students are too young to make decisions, and therefore, the parents control the process of international mobility decision-making, and exert a strong influence on their children's host country, university choice, and major [25]. Thus, what kind of mechanism could explain why Chinese international students choose Hungary?

Hauschildt et al. showed that students with low socioeconomic family background or students with disabilities are less likely to join in a mobility program [28]. Lörz differentiated students' motivations to pursue education abroad at various points [43]. For instance, some students who would like to study overseas might abstain because they lack financial support, have poor language skills, or low self-esteem [31]. Netz and Finger found that cultural reproduction in the framework of higher educational mobility determines that students with higher economic status have greater access to prestigious educations and have a greater chance for educational mobility [48].

A portion of the Chinese students who study in Hungary, to some extent, are regarded as the "lowbrow" of student mobility by the disadvantaged. There are few available literatures regarding Central and Eastern Europe countries (CEE). Russia, however, whose situation is similar with Hungary's, was analyzed by Kosheleva et al. for the reasons that students choose to study in Russia: (1) The students have fewer economic resources, (2) under-educated families, (3) are less talented students, (4) and exhibit poor English skills. Additionally, she showed that Chinese educational migrants have problems with principal differentiation and language barriers; they have unadapted to the instrumental characteristics of knowledge in Russia. Chinese graduates are not

interested in the low-prestige professions or low-skilled jobs being offered to them in Russia, and they are considering whether to stay or return to China or migrate to other countries [37].

The Cultural Difference and Adaptation of Chinese Students Abroad

Chinese culture is Confucian-based, while western countries embrace individual and freedom-based cultures. Yet, both cultures place a high value on education and academic achievement. Kennedy illustrated that Chinese students' style of learning differs from Western students in specific ways. Chinese students showed high collectivism, and therefore, they are subject to social groups [35].

Firstly, Chinese students are eager to study hard to become competitive because of their understanding of the reality of unequally distributed and limited economic resources. Chinese students typically obey authoritative figures, following the teachers and school administrators that have authority and power. In contrast, Gao asserts that students in Western countries believe that they share in an equal educational platform with their teachers, and strongly maintain that school should provide elaborate opportunities for students to help them towards academic achievement [24]. Secondly, these different perceptions of individualism and collectivism are a major cause of culture differences. The creation of social relations through the balancing of benefits and obligations works beneath the background of collectivism in China; conversely, individual needs, rights, and fairness deeply influence individuals' cultures.

Thirdly, based on the Chinese tradition of persistence, self-determination, and diligence, education becomes a long process towards achieving a goal. Fang et al. believes that Chinese students basically understand that focus on fundamental academic knowledge is quite important, and that they are willing to sacrifice short-term interests to obtain long-run intangible benefits, thus making the meaningful choice of the long-term educational mechanism [22]. By contrast, short-term orientation focuses on innovation and creativity, which is a leading education mode in Western countries. Regulate individual desire by persisting strictly social norms while indulgent culture supports enjoyable life. Li compared two dimensions of the lives of many students from East Asia, who are guided by virtue orientation, hardship endurance, perseverance, and concentration, but also a cultural background of indulgence characterized by self-expression, communication, active engagement, and exploration [40].

Chinese international students encounter academic difficulties in the Western study culture because of cultural differences. Li used qualitative methodology to explain four major challenges that Chinese students encountered in Germany: language barrier, pedagogical differences, knowledge gap, and cultural differences, and suggested that academic integration is a long and challenging process for international students who should be supported by, and provided guidance by, the institution [41]. Mikal et al. reported that most Chinese international students in the USA have problems with socialization and interaction with local students since they have different interests and lifestyles, and many Chinese students would like to stay or live in the USA, since they have an expectation of finding more suitable and equal job opportunities and a better working environment [45]. Cheng mixed method study with quantitative and qualitative methodology that sought to find the reasons why Chinese students were experiencing depression and negative emotions when they studied in Hungary. The first

factor is culture shock, including schooling stereotypes, and stress from intercultural learning and cultural adjustment. The second factor is social issues, such as the conational community, interpersonal relationships, internet, family, and public opinions. The third and last element is individual reasons: personal abilities, skills, and expectations [15].

Thus, adaptation is an essential issue to discuss with respect to international education mobility. Teaching quality, opportunities for cultural encounters, the opportunity to work in the host country after graduation, and better career prospects after returning to the home country are major perceived attractions in studying abroad [49]. Overseas study helps students to generate capital for success, and overcome personal shortcomings in ways that surpass their ability to do the same in China. Adaptation to study abroad is still a hot topic. Chen analyzed Chinese students studying in the USA, how they deal with the fundamental culture differences, and how they adapt to US culture. The study presents seven important elements: (1) People share different views on communication; (2) Chinese international students place a different emphasis on humanity; (3) emotional exchanges, cross-culture, use different methods (Chinese and American method); (4) definition of friendship and an understanding of “make friends”; (5) attitude towards others as an outsider after a long-term stay in the USA; (6) international Chinese students’ feelings about self-respect and its function; and (7) the kinds of changes that occur with students from their arrival in the USA to the end of their stay. These seven elements address the experience of Chinese student migration from the start of a trip through adaptation to the local society [14].

Despite the cultural differences between the East and the West, studying abroad still can be an alternative strategy for Chinese students from a worldwide view. Cultural adaptation in the host country, however, is a topic we should pay attention to, including managing expectations and challenges.

The Challenges for Chinese Students on the Cultural Reproduction Process

Jury et al. concluded that students in lower middle class who enter into higher education, face significant psychological barriers—for instance, negative self-perception and emotional depression, which damage their academic results [32]. In Hungary, the biggest academic problem that the Chinese student encounters is being “invisible” during class. Brown and Levinson [10] analyzed a face-saving view that the actions and values of every member in the community should be thought of as desirable. But, the Chinese concept of face-saving does not conform to what Brown and Levinson claim as universal. The Chinese concept of “face” refers to prestige and moral reputation; moreover, how an individual thinks his or her character or behavior is being perceived by, and respected by, surrounding groups [9]. Bruneau states that silence is rare in the Western cultures, whereas “Eastern culture seems to be characteristically silent” [11]. Tannen found that fast talkers are reminiscent of American students, while Chinese students were slower speakers. In terms of participation modes, slower speakers perceive that fast talkers dominate. Thus, because Chinese students are always speaking a second language, they always feel left out of the class “community” [56]. Liu conducted in-depth interviews with three Chinese students in the USA and analyzed Asian students’ silence in American classrooms in relation to five major categories: cognitive factors; pedagogical factors; affective factors sociocultural factors;

and linguistic factors. Performance can be described as condition participation, marginal interaction, and silent observation [42]. Coates used a qualitative methodology in Japan to collect information. It specified that the Chinese “hidden” settlement patterns are the result of various forms of inclusion that influence the experiences of Chinese in their everyday life [17].

Rather than a lack of representation, certain kinds of representation inform the spatial and sensory dynamics of the city, contributing to migrants’ desire to remain unseen. In sum, because of the hierarchical relationship between the teacher and the student, silence in classrooms is totally acceptable in Chinese culture. Chinese students tend to shield for self-protection or keep silence to show their conformity and harmony with the majority. Oppositely, silence may be viewed as “absence” or a lack of communication in Western culture, they being very active in discussion and asking questions to teachers. Therefore, differences result in misunderstandings in the classroom behavior. Chinese students tend to shield for self-protection or keep silent to show their conformity and harmony with the majority. Oppositely, silence may be viewed as an “absence” or lack of communication in Western culture, where students are very active in discussions and questioning of teachers [17]. These differences can result in misunderstandings about classroom behavior.

Conclusion

To sum up, there is an increasing number of Chinese students in Hungary, partially because of the government’s policy on the modernization process, and partially as a result of the joint program on the institutional level. Significantly, going to Hungary can help Chinese students remedy their disadvantages in resources and permit them to achieve improvement. Yet, the “invisible performance in the classroom” phenomenon remains a big problem for Chinese students on the study path in Hungary. This study will generate significant results for policymakers in China in order to help Chinese students to adapt to study pathways in the Hungarian education system and sociocultural experiences as well as provide strong pre-departure recommendations and guidance/training programs for international Chinese students. These programs will encourage students to participate in the wider study community, eventually enhancing the overall quality of the learning experience in Hungary.

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