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The Decision to Study Abroad: Evidence from International Students Based in Ireland

by

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A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Economics in University College Cork

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Declaration

This is to certify that the work I am submitting is my own and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. All external references and sources are clearly acknowledged and identified within the contents. I have read and understood the regulations of University College Cork concerning plagiarism.

Sign _____

Date _____

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Abstract

Foreign study is an emerging trend in the education market. Increasingly, students choose to leave their home country to study abroad. This decision is not only coupled with financial and time costs, but also involves the challenges of new cultures. The number of international students globally grew from 1.3 million in 1990 to over 4.5 million in 2012 (OECD, 2013). More and more destination countries are participating in this market, and the competition between destination countries and destination universities is more and more aggressive. To understand this market, it is important to explore why international students choose to leave their home country, and understand how they select the destination country and destination university. This thesis examines, for international students in one Irish university, push and pull factors, investments and expected returns on foreign education, and parental influences on international students' foreign study decision. Although, the analysis and results are specific to one university and context, they may help other universities who would like to develop and expand their international education market to better target international students and promote their university or country more effectively.

This research uses a concurrent triangulation design to collect data, which involves the collection of quantitative and qualitative data at the same time. Moreover, there is no priority given to either quantitative or qualitative data. This research uses both quantitative and qualitative data to examine the three categories of factors, push and pull factors, investment and expected return on education, parental involvement in the foreign study decision-making process, and quantitative and qualitative data tests the decision-making process from different perspectives. This thesis uses original survey and interview data from international students in University College Cork (UCC) in Ireland. Since UCC has the largest number of non-EU international students and the second-largest number of international students in Irish universities, it is an appropriate institution for which to conduct this study.

To collect quantitative data, the research used an online questionnaire with 216 responses. Around three quarters of the respondents were female. Most of the questions' response rate was over 90%. In-depth semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. The interview included 9 main questions, with sub-questions and follow-on questions arising from interviewees' answers. 26 interviews with international students studying in University College Cork at the time were conducted with 24 interviews ultimately used in this research. The thesis used original data. There is a significant lack of data on international students that goes beyond statistics on flows, to drill down into the motivations and choices of those students. The richness of the data fathered for this thesis is an important contribution.

Quantitative data results indicate that personal factors, which include satisfying language and academic requirements, are the most important factor in international students' foreign study decision. International students who failed to reach the requirements may not be accepted by the destination university/country. Destination university's programme availability was the factor that had the highest percentage (74.9%) of students agreeing that it has at least some influence on their foreign study decision. Other factors, such as destination university's ranking and attitude toward international education, parents' permission and earnings, destination country's environment, culture, social safety and social life all had over half of respondents agreeing that it has some or a lot of influence on the foreign study decision.

Respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* perceived stronger influence from parents compared to respondents from *the EU* and *the Americas*. Respondents from University College Cork's College of Medicine and Health had the highest average expected earnings compared to the respondents from the three other colleges.

Qualitative data showed that the push factors discussed in the interviews most frequently were lack of programme availability in the home country, the length of time to study for certain programmes in the home country, and the preference of interviewees to avoid

competition in university applications and subsequently in the jobs market. The pull factors most frequently discussed in the interviews could be divided into six categories, destination university pull factors, destination country pull factors, family and peer influence, interviewees desire for self-development, and agency's recommendations. Some other factors that do not easily fit in any of these categories, include factors such as the sequence in which university offers were received by respondents and home country' s norms related to foreign study.

On the questions related to parental involvement in foreign study and career decisions, the results were similar with quantitative results. Interviewees from East Asia indicated stronger perceived influence from parents in the decision to pursue foreign study, career, and future development plan, compared to interviewees from other regions.

The thesis also provides recommendations and advice on international education marketing promotion's approaches and channels. Social media networks emerge as a very important potential new channel to promote destination universities.

Introduction—Thesis Rationale and Contributions

1.1. Description of Thesis

This thesis explores the factors that influence the decision of students to study abroad. Particularly, this research will focus on the effect of ex-ante earnings expectations, parental influence, and push and pull factors on that decision.

By using original survey and qualitative interview data this thesis will estimate the effect of various "push and pull" factors on students' decision to study abroad. Given the relatively high financial and time costs associated with foreign study for students the thesis will focus particularly on the role of earnings expectations which has much literature to support this idea. Mincer (1975) argues that education can influence earnings in each period of an individual's working life. Education affects participation in the labour force, to different extents in different periods of the working life, the frequency, and duration of employment. Moreover, empirical research demonstrates that workers who attain higher levels of education have longer working lives than workers with lower levels of education (Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006). These effects are seen after education is completed, while the decision on investing in education, including whether to study abroad is made ex-ante. Therefore, this thesis will focus on earnings expectations in decision on foreign study.

This thesis will also consider a potentially important factor for the decision of international students to study abroad, which is the effect of the relationship between students and their parents on the study decision. The effect of parents on students' decisions is an important element, and one on which universities in destination countries require more information. In China, for example, parental influence may be significant and is referred to as the Xiao Qin effect or Filial Piety. The importance of this effect for China stems from the One Child Policy and the lack of a social welfare system in China. The government introduced the One Child Policy in 1973 (The Central People's

Government of the People's Republic of China, 2005) which has been changed recently (National Health and Family Planning Commission of the PRC, 2015). Each family may only have one child (with some exemptions) and combined with the lack of pension, retirement insurance and unemployment insurance, Chinese parents 'invest' in their child's education to help support the family and also ensure they can live well when they retire (Qu, 2014). Filial Piety defines and regulates how children should love and respect their parents and other older family members (Chow and Chu, 2007). Through academic achievement, Chinese children fulfil the obligation of Filial Piety and this achievement acts as a form of repayment to their parents (Chow and Chu, 2007). It may be the case that similar effects exist in other countries. This thesis explores the effect of parental influence and the degree to which it may vary across nationalities.

1.2. Contributions of this research

This research makes several contributions. This will be the first study to measure the range and relative importance of influencing factors for international students who chose Ireland as their destination country. There is no Irish study of the factors influencing the decisions of international students. This research then will be timely given the stated increasing importance of income from international students for Irish universities, in the context of reductions in public financial support.

Secondly, this research will use concurrent triangulation design to collect, transform, interpret and analyse data, which would be the first research to use triangulation design to collect and analyse data to examine the theory of investment and return on education decisions and earnings expectations, and push and pull factors in the foreign study decision. In the past, the literature in these two areas, was performed mainly using quantitative data or qualitative data singly, or use two-phased mixed methods. Previous literature using two-phased mixed methods generally used explanatory design or exploratory design, which is collection of two types of data sequentially and priority is given to one type of data. This thesis treats both of quantitative and qualitative data equally, and none of them is prioritised during analysis. The data will be very rich, in that

it will move beyond the statistics of international student movements, to shed light on the motivations and experiences of international students.

Thirdly, this thesis will focus on international students, which is different from previous research which focuses on one country, or one continent. Previous research that explores the factors of international students studying abroad mainly focuses on one country or one continent. This thesis targets all international students studying in University College Cork. It will cover Asia, Americas, Africa and Oceania. It will provide a wider range of information to analyse international students' decision-making process and will allow for comparison of international students with different characteristics.

Fourthly, it will focus on students' (and parents') perceptions of future earnings *a priori*. Most studies analyse the relationship between levels of education and actual subsequent earnings though; this research will explore the impact of perceived earnings on the decision-making process.

Fifthly, this research will explore the relationship between education investment and earnings expectations for international students' decisions to study abroad (Mincer, 1974, 1975). Previous studies of the relationship between education and earnings mainly focus on education, on-the-job training, earnings or expected earnings and the relation between investment and estimated earnings. Also the previous studies mainly concentrate on the situation in United States and the United Kingdom. This study will be the first paper to explore the relationship between investment and return expectations, and international students' decision to study in Ireland. Moreover, in previous studies, there is little exploration of the source of earnings expectations and they tend not to control for other factors in the study decision, which this thesis will do. This thesis will consider the influence of education investment and return expectation, but also additional factors such as parental involvement, push and pull factors. It will give international students in Ireland a deeper insight into the variety of factors that influence their decision to study abroad. Finally, this thesis also will develop strategies for universities and policy makers.

This thesis will focus on the factors that influence international students' decision to study in Ireland. It will provide advice on future promotion and expansion into the international education market.

This thesis will provide original survey data on international students' decision to study abroad. Given the lack of data in this area, it will be a significant contribution of this thesis.

1.3. Background to International Students Studying Abroad

OECD (2013) distinguishes between international students and foreign students. International students, who are also regarded as "mobile students" are students who leave their home country and study in a foreign country (referred to as destination country in the following sections). The sole purpose of their movement is assumed to be education. These students may or may not enrol in education in different destination countries before they arrive in their current destination country. Foreign students are students who are not citizens of the current destination country, but may have long term or permanent residency (such as moving to the destination country with parents when they were young), or were born in the destination country. International students are a subcategory of foreign students.

OECD (2013) shows that the number of international students going to foreign countries for third level education increased in recent years. The report also shows that in 1990, the number of international students studying abroad for third level education was 1.3 million, while in 2012, the corresponding figure is over 4.5 million. This is an average annual growth rate from 2000 to 2012 of close to 7% (OECD, 2014). According to information from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2016), the top three destination countries for international education are United States, which has 18% of overall mobile international students, United Kingdom (11%), and France (7%). Other counties, such as New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Korea, the Russian Federation, and Spain, are also active in

the international education market in the recent years (OECD, 2013, 2014). Over 50% of international students are registered to study in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, UK and US combined (OECD, 2015). In the top 10 international education destination countries, 4 of them are English speaking countries.

In terms of countries of origin, 53% of students are Asian and 23% of them are from the European Union (OECD, 2013, 2015). In 2011 the top three countries sending students abroad were China (723,000 students), India (223,000 students) and Korea (139,000 students) (OECD, 2013). In the report from OECD (2015), China, India and Germany were the top 3 countries that send international students to OECD countries to study. Of all international students registered to study in OECD countries, 22% of them are from China, 6% of them are from India, and 3.9% of them are from Germany. In 2016, the number of students from China studying abroad deceased to 712,157 but is still the highest among all the international students' origin countries (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016).

1.4. Evidence of Influences on Decisions to Study Abroad

In an OECD (2013) report, the destination country's reputation in higher education, different programmes' reputation, tuition fees, language, and immigration policies influence international students' choice of destination country. English-speaking countries are more attractive to international students, and some non-English speaking countries have begun to offer courses through English to attract international students (OECD, 2013). Moreover some OECD countries, such as Finland, Norway and Canada have changed immigration policies to encourage more international students (OECD, 2012). However, not all OECD countries have moved in the same direction on immigration policies, for example the US and UK have made the relevant policies more difficult for international students.

Tuition fees are another factor that influences international students' foreign study destination choice. For the same education programme, most OECD countries' public education institutions charge higher tuition fees for international students compared to domestic students (for some the EU countries, international student refers to non-EU or non-European Economic Area (EEA) students). OECD (2013) points out that the US's declining share of the international education market may be a result of their high tuition fees, especially when some of the US's competitors are also English-speaking countries and offer similar but cheaper education programmes. According to OECD (2013), Australian universities charge international students an average tuition fee of US$16,297 per year, New Zealand universities charge US$11,125, and Irish universities charge US$16,284. US universities are the most expensive, charging tuition fees of US$29,910 per year on average to international students. This means the average US annual tuition fees are 23% higher than the next highest level (Canada) and 84% higher than Ireland.

However, tuition fees are not the only factor to explain which country international students go to study. Some Northern EU countries offer education programmes in English and have low fees or no fees for international students. However they still have lower ratios of foreign students (which includes international students). Higher tuition fees have not stopped the US and UK from becoming the top 2 most popular destination country choices for international students. International students are not discouraged by higher fees because of scholarship, grant or loan availability, and destination country's employment opportunities. It may also be due to the reputational advantage of a degree from leading US and UK institutions. From international students' view, the level of tuition fees could be seen as a signal of quality. Price has been seen as a signal of product's quality (Monroe, 1973; Bagwell and Riordan, 1991). Goenner and Snaith (2004) pointed out that "price as a signal of the quality of the education provided by a given university". The universities which charge higher tuition fees would be expected to provide better education and bring gradates higher potential earnings. It is reasonable to consider that from students' view, tuition fees are the price of the product they consume,

education. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why international students see tuition fees as the signal of education's quality.

1.5. International Education in an Irish Context

According to Education in Ireland (2012a), there were around 32,000 international students enrolled in Irish higher education institutions in 2012, which is an increase of 2% since 2011. Based on their estimation, international education contributes around €1 billion to the Irish economy. Of this figure, €700 million of that is attributable to students in third level institution. The €700 million can be further divided into €240 million from tuition fees, €345 million from students' expenditure (such as accommodation and groceries), and the balance (€115 million) from visitors (such as parents and siblings). The rest of the income is from the English language sector. However, as the government tightens regulations on the English language sector, 14 private English language schools have closed in Ireland as of May 2015 (The Irish Times, 2015). Due to the English language sector's recent issues, this thesis will only focus on the third level education.

In the period 2011/12, Ireland has accepted international students from 170 countries or regions which is an increase from 163 countries or regions in the period 2010/11. 52% of international students in Ireland are female. In 2011/12, 70% of international students are registered in the university sector, and the rest of them are registered in the institutes of technology (IOT) (16%), private college sector (13%) and other state aid colleges (OSA) (1%).

The Education in Ireland (2012a) report also showed that most international students in Ireland are enrolled on bachelor programmes (Level 8 of National Qualification Framework). Level 8 of National Qualification Framework includes honours bachelor degree and higher diploma (Quality and Qualifications Ireland). The number of students in Level 9 programmes is decreasing compared to the level during 2010/11, meanwhile, the proportion of students studying PhD increased from 16% in 2010/11 to 20% in 2011/2012. On the top 10 origin countries of international PhD students in Ireland,

international PhD students from the EU (Italy: Number 1, UK: Number 3, Germany: Number 4, Poland: Number 7, Spain: Number 8 and France: Number 10) account for 51% of all international PhD students. The remaining top 10 origin countries are China (Number 2), USA (Number 5), India (Number 6), and Malaysia (Number 9).

The top 3 subject areas that international students choose to study PhD are science, humanities, and computer and information technology (IT). For all international students, the top 3 subject areas are business and administration (includes business related subjects), humanities (includes arts, creative arts, and other related subjects), medicine and other health fields.

While on a global level, according to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2016), China, India and Korea are the top three origin countries of students studying abroad, while according to OECD (2015), China, India and Germany are the top three origin countries. The situation in Ireland is slightly different, as the US, China and France were the top 3 origin countries of international students (Education in Ireland, 2012a).

Education in Ireland (2012a) also shows that in 2011/12, 89% of students from US were registered in the university sector to study, 2% were registered in IOTs, 8% were registered in private colleges and 1% were registered under other education institutions. The top 3 subject areas that were favoured by US students were humanities, business and medicine (all three subject areas included related subjects). 22% of international US students in Ireland were enrolled on full-time courses. The total tuition fees revenue from these students was €34 million.

55% of Chinese students in Ireland were registered in the university sector, 35% of them were in IOTs, 9% of them were in private colleges and the remaining in other education institutions. The top 3 subjects that Chinese students chose to study in Ireland were business, computing and IT, and engineering. Compared with US international students in Ireland, more Chinese students (51%) enrolled on full time courses, however, the

contribution from tuition fees was lower (€26 million). The reason that there were more Chinese students enrolled on full time courses may be the requirements of Chinese students' study visas. One of supporting documents that are need for the Non-EEA students to apply for study visas in Ireland is the evidence that they have been accepted and enrolled on a full-time course (Irish Naturalisaion and Immigration Service). Even though there are more Chinese students enrolled on full time courses, as most of international students are from the US, income attributed to Chinese students is still lower than the one come from American students.

Most non-Irish EU students (79%) were registered in the university sector in Ireland, 19% in IOTs, 11% were in private colleges, and less than 1% study in other education institutions. 47% of non-Irish EU students were enrolled in full-time courses in Ireland. The tuition fees were €29 million. Based on HEA (2010)'s definition, full-time enrolment means that students attend a day course in a third level education institution for at least a full academic year, and they will spend their whole working time at their studies. Students will receive an academic award at the end of their study.

In the report about Ireland higher education system overall performance from 2011 to 2012, HEA (2014a) reviewed 7 universities (university sector), 6 colleges (college sector), and 14 institutes of technology (institute of technology sector). In 2011/12, in the university sector, there were 90,110 students enrolled in full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses. 10% of these students were international students; 3% of them were from the EU and 7% from non-EU countries. During the same period, there were 9,037 students studying in full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the college sector. 15% of them were international students, only 1% were from the EU and the rest of them were from Non-EU countries. The Institutes of Technology sector had 3% full-time international students and 2% of them were from Non-EU countries. For all HEA-funded institutions, there were 163,021 full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students, and 7% of them were international students. 5% of these international students were from Non-EU countries. In comparison to other sectors, the university sector had

the highest percentage (10%) of international students in full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

The following paragraphs will set out the relevant data on international students in Ireland. It includes the percentage of internationals students in Irish universities, degree level and countries of origin, and sector (university or institute of technology) and countries of origin.

Table 1.1 shows the number and percentage intentional students in all 7 universities in Ireland in the academic year 2011/12. Among the 7 universities, NUI Galway has the highest percentage (15%) of international students in their student population. They also have the highest number (2,060) of international students. TCD has the highest percentage (6%) of the EU students in their student population. The number (889) of the EU students in TCD is also the highest in all 7 universities. NUI Galway has the highest percentage (10%) of students from non-EU countries. However, UCC has the highest number of non-EU students (1,402) among all the universities.

Table 1.1 International students in Irish Universities in the Academic Year 2011/12 — Number of Students (Percentages of Total Student Population in Parentheses)				
University	Total full-time undergraduate and postgraduate	International students	Number of international students from EU	Number of international students from Non-EU
University College Dublin (UCD)	19,536	1,567 (8%)[1]	370 (2%)	1,197 (6%)
University College Cork (UCC)	16,006	1,599 (10%)	197 (1%)	1402 (9%)
National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway)	13,873	2060 (15%)	718 (5%)	1,342 (10%)
Trinity College Dublin (TCD)	14,482	1,762 (12%)	889 (6%)	873 6%)
National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUI Maynooth)	7,594	328 (4%)	65 (1%)	263 (3%)
Dublin City University (DCU)	8,352	775 (9%)	317 (4%)	458 (5%)
University of Limerick (UL)	10,267	489 (5%)	122 (1%)	367 (4%)
Total	90,110	8,580 (10%)	2,678 (3%)	5,902 (7%)

1. For example, this means 8% of students in UCD are international students.
2. The order of universities is based on the original HEA (2014a) report.

Source: (HEA, 2014a)

In the HEA (2014b) report of higher education performance during the 2012/13 period, there were 41,413 new students registered in full-time undergraduate courses. More than 200,000 students study in higher education institutions; 81.2% of them study full-time courses, and 17.4% of them were in part-time courses. The rest of them were remote, such as those enrolled on online course or distance education.

Table 1.2 shows the origin of undergraduate and postgraduate students in Ireland in 2012/13. In the table, it can be seen Asian students comprise of the highest percentage of international students in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. North American students comprise the second highest percentage of international students in

undergraduate course, and students from EU have the second highest percentage in postgraduate course.

Table 1.2 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students Enrolled in Higher Education by Domiciliary of Origin in Year 2012/13 Number of Students (Percentages in Parentheses)		
Region	Undergraduate	Postgraduate
Europe (EU)	2,098 (1.5%)	1,323 (6.1%)
Europe (Non-EU)	104 (0.1%)	124 (0.6%)
Asia	3,678 (2.6%)	1,546 (7.1%)
Oceania	55 (0.0%)	25 (0.1%)
Africa	265 (0.2%)	214 (1.0%)
North America	2,808 (2.0%)	618 (2.8%)
South America	21 (0.0%)	50 (0.2%)

Source: (HEA, 2014b)

Table 1.3 shows that EU students were the largest group enrolled in the University sector (38.0%) and Institutes of Technology (35.0%) Asian students were the second largest group in both sectors (35.0% and 31.0% respectively).

Table 1.3 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students are Enrolled on Higher Education by Sector in Year 2012/13 Number of Students (Percentage in Parentheses)		
Region	University	Institute of Technology
Europe (EU)	38.0%	35.0%
Europe (Non-EU)	0.0%	2.0%
Asia	35.0%	31.0%
Oceania	1.0%	2.0%
Africa	5.0%	18.0%
North America	20.0%	0.0%
South America	1.0%	1.0%

Source: (HEA, 2014b)

Table 1.4 lists the top ten origin countries of students studying full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Ireland. In 2013/14, in all sectors, the number of undergraduate students enrolled on full-time courses was 147,420. Of these, 12,022 were international students. There were 2,573 (21.4%) students from the United States which was the highest number in all international students. During the same period, there were 21,566 postgraduate students enrolled on full time courses. Of these, 4,486 were international students. The origin country with the highest number of international students studying postgraduate courses in Ireland is China (766; 17.1%).

Table 1.4 Number of Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students in Ireland Education System by Domiciliary of Origin in Year 2013/14
Number of Students (Percentage in Parentheses)

Domiciliary of Origin	Undergraduates	Domiciliary of Origin	Postgraduates
United States	2,573 (21.4%)	China	766 (17.1%)
Malaysia	1,398 (11.6%)	United States	537 (11.97%)
Great Britain	1,169 (9.72%)	India	493 (10.99%)
Canada	960 (7.99%)	Great Brittan	281 (6.26%)
China	940 (7.81%)	Germany	273 (6.09%)
Brazil	799 (6.64%)	Italy	172 (3.83%)
Saudi Arabia	699 (5.81%)	Saudi Arabia	169 (3.77%)
Kuwait	397 (3.30%)	France	167 (3.72%)
France	280 (2.33%)	Canada	110 (2.45%)
Germany	267 (2.22%)	Spain	85 (1.89%)
Total International Undergraduates	12,022 (100%)	Total International Postgraduates	4,486 (100%)

Source: (HEA, 2014-2015)

University College Cork provided disaggregated data on the structure of the international student cohort for 2015/16 academic year. For commercial reasons, this data cannot be reported. The data, however, provides a basis for comparing the sample structure with the composition of the population, to assess its representativeness. Based on this information from UCC, the highest proportion of students in the population were Asian followed by the EU and then the US. The proportion of students in the study sample from these regions were very similar to the proportions in the population. On other parameters, compared to the UCC population data, the sample data was over-represented by the College of Business and Law (smaller proportion of international students in the population relative to the sample) and underrepresented by the College of Medicine and Health (larger proportion of international students in the population relative to the sample). The sample data also was over-representative of undergraduate students and underrepresents postgraduate students (including PhD students).

This research aims to contribute to our understanding of the factors driving this increase in demand for foreign study by exploring the determinants at individual student and family levels for one university in Ireland.

1.6. Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 will set out the important conceptual and empirical literature informing the thesis. It will include an analysis and discussion of literature related to push and pull factors in the decision to study abroad: investment and return on education, and parental involvement and Xiao Qin effect.

Push factors that influence the overseas' education decision include education factors, such as insufficient qualification and recognition by labour market and employers, insufficient teaching and research facilities, employment factors such as employment opportunities and wage level, economic factors, and political factors in the origin country. Pull factors include concentrating on the education advancement, scholarship availability, tuition fees, domestic factors such as climate and lifestyle, geographical

location in the destination country, and connections between students' families and their friends and family members in the destination country.

The second section will explore the investment and return on education, and the investment and return on immigrants' education. Previous research also mentions a specific type of migration, students, and their single motivation to immigrate, education. Their migration plan and future development plans are uncertain, so they may choose to return to home country after graduation, or stay in the current destination country to study or work. Alternatively, they may move to another destination country to study or work. Language and ethnic effects on the return on immigrants' education are also discussed in this section.

The last section focuses on parental involvement and Xiao Qin effect (Filial Piety). Research shows that parents strongly influence their children's schooling choices, education decisions and outcomes. Chapter 2 will explain and discuss the current literature on parental involvement and Filial Piety (Xiao Qin effect)'s impact on the students' education.

This thesis will use both quantitative and qualitative data to analyse the factors that influence international students to study in Ireland.

Chapter 3 will discuss quantitative and qualitative survey methodology. Moreover, this chapter will describe the rationale, sampling method, and implementation of the quantitative and qualitative surveys.

Chapter 4 discusses the quantitative data collected through online and paper-based surveys. The quantitative results are categorised by push and pull factors, investment and expected return of education and parental involvement. The relative weighting of factors and ranking of the importance level in the decision-making process will also be

described. This chapter also discusses how the factors' impacts vary from the respondents with different characteristics.

Chapter 5 explains and discusses qualitative information collected through in-depth interviews based on 24 interviews. The qualitative results are categorised into the following groups, push factors, pull factors, parental involvement and other qualitative findings. This chapter also reveals some of the factors that have not been explored in previous research, such as competition and social norms in the home country.

Chapter 6 will also briefly review the quantitative and qualitative survey methodologies which include the survey design, sampling method and rationale for question selection. It will also summarise the quantitative and qualitative results, and compare them. The last chapter, Chapter 7 will briefly review the literature of push and pull factors on international education, investment and return on education, and parental involvement on education and Xiao Qin effect (Filial Piety). Moreover, chapter 7 will explain the contributions and limitations of the research and provide recommendations on foreign study to destination universities, Irish education authorities and policy makers, international students and their parents. Finally, the chapter will highlight future research that is needed in this area.

Chapter 2 - Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks for Foreign Study Decision-Making

2.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out the important conceptual and empirical literature informing the thesis. First the factors influencing the decision to study abroad are discussed. These are considered as push and pull factors, where the former refers to conditions in a student's origin country and the latter refers to conditions in the destination country and/or host institution. Secondly, this section considers the literature on investment in and returns to education. Theories on general investment and returns to education are explored. There is also a section on investment and return to immigrants' education. Language and ethnic effects on the investment and returns to immigrants' education, and investment and returns to immigrants' education will also be explored.

Thirdly, the concept of parental involvement in study decisions is introduced and discussed. This discussion will consider the impact of parents' education background, parents' education expectation, and ethnic identity on students' decisions.

2.2. Perspectives of the Impact of Push and Pull Factors in Decision to Study Abroad

There are several factors contributing to international students' decision on overseas study. The use of Push and Pull Factors as an organising framework for a discussion of students' decision-making process has become more common (Wilkins et al., 2011). The push and pull factor framework have also been used to consider other economic phenomena such as FDI, migration and education (foreign study). These are considered briefly in the next sections.

2.2.1. Push and Pull Factors in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), is an activity of a form that is charged, managed and organised by a firm or firms outside its/their domestic countries (O'Hagan and Anderson, 2000). The reason to use push and pull factors of FDI in the research is using the frame to think about international education choice, and the movement and distribution of international students, rather than using the push and pull factors of FDI to analyse the research results. Here are some examples of push and pull factors of FDI.

Push and pull factors are regarded as the influences from the supply side and demand side of FDI (Tsai, 1994; Ning and Reed, 1995; Lall et al., 2003). The factors from supply side (FDI providing countries) are labour, such as high level of local labour's skills and literacy and cheaper labour, research and development and infrastructure conditions (Tsai, 1994; Ning and Reed, 1995; Lall et al., 2003). The factors of demand side (receiving countries) are the domestic economic signals, social conditions and other pull factors such as the level of tax and tariff, interest rate, foreign exchange, minimum wage and average wage level, labour such as expensive labour or low level of domestic labour's quality, fiscal and monetary policies, local market size, geographical location and other factors (Karakaplan et al., 2005). Moreover, there is another type of factor, "institutional factor", which are cultural differences, intellectual property rights, infrastructure, risk and potential risk of politics, level of corruption and bureaucracy (Tsai, 1994; Ning and Reed, 1995; Lall et al., 2003).

Although tax, interest rate, foreign exchange rate, minimum wage, average wage level and geographical location are pull factors of FDI demand side, these factors could also explain the movement of international students. International students belong to a special category of migrants as their future plan is uncertain. They may choose to go back to home country, stay in the current destination country or go to another destination country. These factors could influence their future plan on education, career and migration. Foreign exchange rate influences international students' foreign study decision directly as

it decides their financial cost. Foreign exchange rate fluctuation may result in their tuition fees and living cost more expensive or cheaper. When the foreign exchange rate of the destination currency is cheap, it may encourage international students to study abroad as it is more affordable. This factor is discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2 Destination Country Pull Factors. Respondents considered the foreign exchange rate when they make decision between different destination countries, such as UK and Ireland. After comparing Sterling and Euro's foreign exchange rate with their home country's currency, they choose to study in Ireland as Euro's foreign exchange rate is more competitive.

Minimum wage and average wage level are important to the international students who are interested in working abroad. The relative high minimum wage and average wage level in destination countries could attract them to work abroad rather than work in the home country. Tax level and interest rate may influence international students' long term plan on career and migration. If international students plan to stay in the destination country long term, they would consider whether the destination country's tax policy is acceptable. Low interest rate in the destination country may also encourage international students to stay in the destination country as it is more affordable to pay a mortgage which may relate to international students' long term plans. Geographical location is also important to international students' decision to study. Some of the international students prefer the destination country to be close to their home country. This factor is also discussed in Page 257, Section 5.2.2 Destination Country Pull Factors. The answers show respondents' different perspective toward geographical location and distance.

These factors, FDI demand side's pull factors, may also link to international students' decision on education, career and migration. Page 33, Section 2.2.4 Pull Factors of International Education Choice include financial cost, countries' laws and policies, and geographical location, all of which influence international students reside, study and work in the destination country. These two factors could link to the FDI demand side's pull factors.

Location differences between receiving countries, as a pull factor, are mainly about the natural environment, government policies and regulations, transportation conditions, macroeconomic and social stability, and local culture (Dunning, 1976, 1992; Anyanwu, 2012). Basic macroeconomic and other factors are also pull factors. They are related to GDP and its growth rate, real income, inflation rate, exchange rate and other macroeconomic signals. Research has shown that GDP has a strong influence on FDI inflow (Klein and Rosengren, 1994; Jeon and Rhee, 2008). The level of real income also has a significant effect on FDI inflow (Brahmasrene and Komain, 2001). Moreover, GDP growth is an important factor that influences FDI location choice rather than GDP per capita (Nnadozie and Osili, 2004).

This section has explained the push and pull factors of FDI from the supply and demand sides. These factors are used as a framework to help to understand international students' decision to study abroad. Some factors, such as foreign exchange rate, minimum wage and average wage level, tax, interest rate and geographical location could be used for analysing both FDI and foreign study decisions. International students belong to a special group of migrants as their future plan is uncertain. They could be short-term migrants if they go back to home country after graduation. They could also choose to become long term or permanent migrants if they choose to stay in the current destination country for an extended period of time. they may also move to another destination country. The next section explores push and pull factors on migration to help understand international students' decision to study abroad.

2.2.2. Push and Pull Factors in International Migration

Migration is defined as people's movement (Martin and Zürcher, 2008). Originally migration is the movement of people from one region to another to find food, but with the development of society and globalisation, the reasons for migration are more complicated than searching for food (Martin and Widgren, 2002). International migration involves movement across nations (Martin and Widgren, 2002), which can be for many varying

reasons. Dustmann and Glitz (2011) raise a point that in the category of international migration, some immigrants' single motive for immigration is education accumulation. They are students, and their single motive to immigrate is education. Their migration plan and future development plan are uncertain; they may choose to return to origin country after graduation, stay in current destination country to study or work, or move to another destination country to study or work. Therefore, understanding the push and pull factors influencing international migration could help to understand the push and pull factors influencing international students' decision to study abroad as they share commonalities. More importantly, the push and pull factors of international immigration are helpful to provide a theoretical framework for push and pull factor of international education.

International migration decisions are normally made by individuals or families, and international migration is not common as people are not motivated to move from their home country to a foreign country and leave their family, friends and environment with which they are familiar. Also, international migration mostly depends on the foreign country's (also known in the literature as receiving country or host country) relevant policies, which introduce uncertainty to the migration process (Martin and Widgren, 2002; Martin and Zürcher, 2008). Nevertheless, the rate of global migration has increased in past decades (Martin and Widgren, 2002). The amount of migrants in industrialised countries has increased from approximately 55 million to 120 million between 1985 and 2005 (Martin and Zürcher, 2008). In 2005, 3 percent of the world's population moved from their home countries to foreign countries to live for at least one year. Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States are the four most popular migration destinations and their governments have a positive and welcoming attitude towards international migrants regardless of whether for temporary stays or as a permanent resident. An example is that the United States accepts around 800,000 official migrants every year (Statistics Canada, 2001; Martin and Widgren, 2002; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014). Foreign workers who must leave the host country after a certain number of years' working, but there will always be a number of migrants who enter and/or stay in host countries illegally which violate the immigration laws and regulations of host

countries (Martin and Widgren, 2002). It is important to discover the reasons that migrants leave their home country, away from their family and friends, and perhaps even violate laws.

Generally, the factors that trigger international migration are economic growth and population growth (Martin and Widgren, 2002; Martin and Zürcher, 2008), differences in resources, employment opportunities, social welfare, and human rights (Martin and Widgren, 2002). Economic divergence and inequalities, improvements in telecommunications, transportation and other infrastructure, also have become new accelerators of migration growth (Martin and Zürcher, 2008). The main reasons for international migration can be separated into two categories, economic reasons and non-economic reasons. The factors that actually make migrants move to foreign countries can be grouped into three areas, demand pull factors, supply push factors and network factors (Binational Study on Migration, 1997; Martin and Widgren, 2002; Nurse, 2004; Martin and Zürcher, 2008; Parkins, 2010). Table 2.1 presents a summary of several factors which may impact on an individual's decision. Factors could be related to each other, for example, supply (push) factor is home country's lack of job opportunities; demand pull factor is destination country has many of job opportunities; and network factor is the flow of job recruitment information between friends and family members. These three factors are related to each other, especially for supply push factor and demand pull factor. They could be the same factor, the relative difference makes the factors work differently in home country and destination country.

Table 2.1 International Migration Determinants			
Reasons for International Migration	Factors of International Migration		
	Demand Pull Factors	Supply -Push Factors	Network Factors
Economic Reasons	Job opportunities; Level of wages	Unemployment; Underemployment (national wide); Relative low level of wages; Social welfare	Job recruitment and wages' information flows
Non-Economic Reasons	Family reunion	War, persecution and unstable political environment (in this situation, migrants are mostly refugees and/or asylum seekers)	Infrastructure (especially communication and transportation); availability of relevant assistance organisations and quality of their work; motivation of having different life experience

Source: Martin and Widgren (2002)

The factors listed above are relative, using job opportunities as an example, home country's lack of job opportunity is a push factor which pushes migrants to leave their home country to look for jobs. The availability of job opportunities in the host country is a pull factor here, as it attracts migrants to come to work. Even though Martin and Widgren (2002) listed infrastructure as non-economic area of network factors, it may be more appropriate to add it as economic area of network factors. Infrastructure is a signal of the level of the destination country's economy. Its availability and quality could influence migrants' decision to migrate.

In many studies, demand push factors, supply pull factors and network factors do not weigh equally in the international migration process (Martin and Widgren, 2002; Martin and Zürcher, 2008; Parkins, 2010).

Demand pull) factors which include wages, working conditions, job opportunities, information network, and transportation to host countries, encourage migrants, including skilled migrants to move to developed countries to work and explore opportunities (Lowell and Findlay, 2002). Information about wages, working environment and conditions could spread through the network of family, relatives and friends which are available to more people who would like to migrate to other countries.

Other supply push factors, the factors of economic contraction and decline, social inequality and instability, rising of crime, life quality and political crisis have become the main forces that drive people to move to host countries (Nurse, 2004; Quinn and Rubb, 2005; Parkins, 2010). In research by the World Bank (World Bank, 2004), unemployment rate, lack of job opportunities, and slow even downward economic growth were the main reasons that push people to leave Jamaica, and migrate to host countries. One of the supply push factors is that an individual's job does not match his/her skills and/or knowledge (Parkins, 2010). Migration can happen when an individual is not able to find a job that matches their skill and knowledge, highlighting that the "education-occupation" factor works in the international migration decision-making process (Quinn and Rubb, 2005). They also conclude that government policy also influences international migration, especially education and employment policy. In the case of Jamaica, the push factors also included crime and violence, economic instability causing unequal social and economic opportunities and competitions, and career shortage, and social safety (Parkins, 2010).

In other research (Martin and Widgren, 2002), non-economic factors are also important to the international migration. It includes family reunion, wars and political instability, and risk. The migrant could move to a foreign country due to demand pull factors or supply push factors in the beginning, and his/her husband/wife, parents, children and other family relatives may also move to the host country. This is known as family chain migration behaviour (Martin and Widgren, 2002). This is also known as social ties by Babcock and Conway (2000), that migrants move to the destination country where their

family and friends are. The reason that they would like to move to the specific destination country could be because of family reunion (Martin and Teitelbaum, 2005). Adamson (2006) explained family chain migration behaviour from the angle of voluntary migration and economics migration, and in both situations, the family chain migration behaviour is triggered by the wish to be reunited with their family. Koser (2010) also explained social ties as migrants choosing to move to destination countries where their family/friends have stayed. Social ties build up migration networks. Migrants' family/friends who have settled in the destination country could provide information, financial help and other economic and social support to migrants so as to attract them to migrate to the destination country. Social ties also work in the international students' foreign study decision, however there is still a difference between the social ties on migration and on international education. For example, it is common to see migrants move to another country to reunite with their family, which is not common to see on international students' decision to study abroad. International students use social tie networks to get the information that they are interested in. Their family members and/or friends could have been to the destination country before or are in the destination country currently. Their recommendations are useful to international students even though some of their family/friends have left the destination country already. In the migration process, migrants tend to choose the destination country where their family members/friends are. Family/peers' influence on international students' foreign study decisions will be discussed in the next two sections, Page 29, Section 2.2.3 Push Factors of International Education Choice and Page 33 Section 2.2.4 Pull Factors of International Education Choice.

They also posit that as the result of wars, political instability, and risk, some migrants move to the other countries as refugees which is according to the 1951 Geneva Convention. Moreover, recently many people have begun to study abroad or migrate for personal achievement and enrichment rather than migrate simply because of wages, citizenship, and job opportunities. This is more apparent in younger age group.

There is also a trend in international migration which is influenced by the relationship between home country and host country. Even after colonial independence, a link remains in the history and relationship between colonies and colonisers, and migration still continues between the home country and host country. An example is the migration stream between India and the United Kingdom. Government immigration policy also influences international migration (Martin and Widgren, 2002). The policy's main purpose is attracting more tourists and workers with high levels of education and skills, and to refuse the unwanted migrants. The more strict the host country's immigration policy is, the less migrants go to that host country and vice versa (Martin and Widgren, 2002).

Network factors, including the networks of personal connections such as through family relatives and friends, and the networks of business connections such as through recruiters and labour brokers, expands the scale of migrants moving from Mexico to America. For Mexican-born migrants, it opens more choices of occupations for them (Binational Study on Migration, 1997). Through existing networks and new networks, newly-arrived migrants' family members and/or friends who have settled in America provide them with financial help, suggestions, shelter and employment opportunities even if some of those newly-arrived migrants are illegal and unauthorised (Binational Study on Migration, 1997). By using these channels and relying on the help from different networks, unauthorized migrants finally join their family in America and become legal migrants under family unification policies (Binational Study on Migration, 1997).

Most Latin American and Caribbean counties export labour to other countries and are also influenced by the three main factors, demand pull factors, supply push factors and network factors. Supply push factors are mainly economic contraction, nationwide social and economic inequality, poverty, crime, income gaps, and political risk, and the main demand pull factors are population age and slow, even downward population decrease in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development membership countries (Nurse, 2004). The population decrease results in inadequate labour availability in

agricultural, science, services and other areas. Particularly affected are jobs with lower wages and relatively poor working environment, which local people are rarely interested in (Nurse, 2004). Migration decisions are made by migrants' families, and moreover, over 80% of the money earned by the migrant, are sent home to pay for expenses, welfare and business investment (Nurse, 2004). In the case of Mexico (Chimhowu et al., 2003), results show that in Mexico, 20% of migrants' remittances are used to invest in small businesses in the urban areas.

Caribbean countries, such as Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Guyana, are also migrant-sending countries. A large portion of Caribbean migrants move to America, Canada and European countries (Nurse, 2004). From 1971 to 1998, approximately 2.4 million Caribbean migrants moved to the United States (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2002). Using Jamaica as an example, crime and violence contributes a lot to Jamaicans' international migration decisions, the research also states that without government deterrence of crime and violence, Jamaica cannot be a harmonious country to live in (Thomas-Hope, 1992). In Parkins (2010) the research focuses on highly-skilled Jamaican workers. The lack of social and economic opportunities, inequality of their opportunities for the great majority people in Jamaica make it difficult for them to refuse the attractiveness of lifestyle and living environment and chances in developed countries.

There have been two main waves of Caribbean migration (Nurse, 2004). First wave happened after the Second World War and was the result of the economic development in Western countries, the demand pull factors, such as inadequate labour in host countries played an important role in this stage (Nurse, 2004). The second wave began from the late period of 1970s because of demand pull factors such as increasing recruitment in areas such as education and healthcare in North Atlantic countries. Additionally, political instability and risk also contributed to the second wave of migration (Migration and ONU, 2000; Nurse, 2004). Caribbean migrants could be regarded as an expanded kinship group (Segal, 1996). Similarly, another study (Schmid, 2003) also showed this kinship

migration; a large number of children, generally companied with their grandparents, elder siblings, and other family members and family's friends, stay in their home countries until their parents are settled in the host countries to collect them for family reunification or return back to the home countries. Additionally in 1998, 98% of migrants move to foreign countries from Caribbean countries through kinship, family unification and as refugees (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2002).

Moreover, the huge labour outflow from Caribbean countries brings a problem, brain drain (Carrington and Detragiache, 1998). Caribbean countries have the highest levels of brain drain. Brain drain in Caribbean countries is caused by the labour export to the host countries of highly educated and skilled people rather than surplus or under-qualified labour. These highly educated and skilled migrants are higher educated than the average education level of the migration home countries' population. They are also highly demanded by Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development membership countries, at the meantime, they are able to pay for the migration costs (Nurse, 2004). Caribbean-born migrants, generally occupy a bigger portion of employment in the areas such as finance, education, and services (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2002).

The income gap between migration host countries and home countries attracts highly educated and skilled labour to leave as it makes the home countries less attractive and competitive in the international labour market (Nurse, 2004). In other words, the wage does not match the job. The high quality human capital outflow has drained Caribbean significantly, causing slow growing economies and brings social, community and family displacement problems to those migration-sending countries (Nurse, 2004).

This section discussed the push and pull factors that influence migration decision. The factors are categorised as demand pull factors, supply push factors and network factors. From the explanation, it is clear to see that some of the pull and push factors are different

sides of the same coin. For example, a home country that lacks employment opportunities is a supply push factor that pushes migrants to move abroad. A destination country that has many job opportunities is a demand pull factor that attracts migrants.

International students are a special type of migrant. Their migration decision is not finalised. Their decision on the destination is uncertain. It is unclear whether they will go back to home country after graduation. They may stay in current destination country or move to another destination country. The length of time that they will stay in the current destination country or another destination country is also uncertain. However, there are similarities between international students' decision to study abroad and migrants' decision to migrate. Some of the supply push and demand pull factors are also common to see in the push and pull factors of international education, such as availability of job opportunities, social safety, and political stability.

Network factors of migration focus on migrants' social ties. They can get financial and social support from their family members/friends who have settled in destination countries. They may also want to move to a destination country because to reunite with family members. Network factors also work on international students' foreign study decisions. There are differences on how network factors work on migration decisions and foreign study decisions. For example, it is common to see migrants migrate to reunite with their family, but not common to see on international students study abroad for the same reason. Migrants tend to move to countries their family/friends are settled in. International students collect information from their family/friends/peers that are currently living or have lived in the destination country, even though they may have left the destination country. In the following sections, these factors will be discussed.

2.2.3. Push Factors of International Education Choice

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) define push factors as a group of factors that come from a home country which encourage students to study abroad. Similarly, Pimpa (2003);

Wilkins and Huisman (2011) and Wilkins et al. (2011) define push factors as factors that operate within the source country to influence students' decisions on overseas study.

McMahon (1992) builds up a push model and pull model to research the flow of international students from 18 developing countries. The push model explained that decision for international students to study abroad depends on home country's economic development, whether home country's government put education at priority, and the availability of education opportunities. The pull model will be discussed in the pull factors of international education choice section.

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) explain that there are three stages in the foreign study decision-making process. In the first stage, push factors are the main influences of whether a student studies in home country or destination country. After deciding to study abroad, in the second and third stages, pull factors are the main influences on the student's decision. In the second stage, pull factors of the destination country would influence on the destination choice. In the final stage, student will decide which specific education institution to study. Pull factors of destination institutions play an important role in this stage. In their research, there are two push factors, students' perception of domestic education's quality, and domestic course/programme availability and accessibility. Their research results show that when international students perceived that international study is better than domestic study it pushed the students to make their foreign study decision at stage one. Also the unavailability of certain courses/programmes or difficulty in entering courses in the home country could push students to look for other options in foreign countries.

Some push factors are listed in the research are low quality of courses in the home country, difficulty enrolling in courses, long term migration plans (Mazzarol, 1998; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2001). Moreover, push factors, such as home country's slow economic development, poor law system, technological development gap with other countries, and course/programme unavailability also discourage students from studying in

their home country (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). In Zeeshan *et al.* (2013a)'s research, economic or political push factors are also mentioned.

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) and Pimpa (2003) both mention the influence of family. Family influence is defined as a push factor for international education. It includes financial help, such as pay for tuition fees and/or living costs, and providing recommendations.

Wilkins and Huisman (2011) also list some common push factors, includes lack of access to higher education and/or certain courses in the source country, insufficient qualification or recognition by employers, and scarcity of employment opportunities for students who complete their study in the origin country. Push factors include economic problems, political problems and military conflict (Wilkins et al., 2011).

For China, strong push factors include low salaries, insufficient teaching and research facilities, scarcity of advancement and employment opportunities and the political climate (Pan, 2010).

Based on the research results, Pimpa (2003;2004) discusses five decisions that Thai students need to make in the foreign study decision-making process. The decisions are relevant to whether they study abroad, which destination country, destination city, course/major/programme, and destination university/college they choose. In the research, five types of family influences are discussed.

Research shows that Thai students perceived family's financial support, which is previously described as a push factor, as influencing their foreign study decision the most. Due to the unavailability or limited availability of scholarships/grants, family's financial support decides whether they can afford to study abroad. Additionally, as different courses/majors/programmes and universities charge different levels of tuition fees, family's financial support also decides which of these the students can apply for.

Family influence includes not only providing financial support to students, but also providing information to students on their foreign study decision. The students are interested in the information that is relevant to their intended destination country, city and education institution. Even though these surveyed students ask their parents or other family members for information, they more rely on the information come from other sources, such as websites.

Pimpa (2003;2004)'s research shows the importance of family expectation on foreign study decisions. The Thai students surveyed reported that family's expectation also influenced their foreign study decision, and the other choices, such as choice of destination country and courses. Some of their parents told them that foreign education is better than domestic education since they were children. Based on the students' answers, the family's expectation could be perceived as obtaining a foreign qualification, foreign language fluency and having valuable life experiences. Many students sought to live up to their families' expectations. Obedience to family expectations will be discussed further in the section on parental involvement and Xiao Qin effect (Filial Piety).

Another family influence is family competition. This is competition between students and other family members, such as siblings. The students compare their education achievement and status, such as degree level, with other family members. However, postgraduate participants pay more attention to competition with peers and colleagues, than on the competition with family members, as the former are relevant to their career opportunities, promotion prospects and salary levels. The last one is family persuasion. Family members' persuasion plays an important role in their foreign study decision-making process. Many Thai students reported that their family members convinced them to study overseas. Even more family members would convince them to select specific destination countries or universities.

Based on the research results, Pimpa (2003;2004) concludes that family financial support and expectations have strongest impact on Thai students' foreign study decision.

Moreover, research results show that family influence has more effect on the decision of study overseas, destination country and city, compared to the decision of course/major/programme and education institution. Foreign study decisions are made with both students and their families' involvement.

O'Brien et al. (2007) discuss that Indian students would look for information from their family. Additional information on destination countries would come from their friends, home university's academic staff, and alumni. Family and friends had a strong role in the decision-making process as guides to help the students to find the appropriate destination university to study.

This section explains the main push factors that influence international education choice. Push factors are the factors that operate in the home country to influence international students' decision to study abroad. They mainly influence at the first stage of the foreign study decision-making process, whether they will study abroad or not (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). The common push factors discussed in the literature are low course quality in their home country, insufficient qualification or recognition by employers, and scarcity of employment opportunities. Family financial support, expectation and persuasion also influence international students' decision to study abroad. International students also look for information from their family members and/or friends to decide whether to study abroad. The family factor would also be discussed further from the Page 56, Section 2.4 Parental Involvement and Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety).

2.2.4. Pull Factors of International Education Choice

McMahon (1992) explains in the pull model, host countries' economic development relative to international students' home country economic development, economic and cultural links between home country and host country, and scholarship and/or fund availability. In the research of Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), pull factors come from destination countries that encourage international students to come to study.

A pull factor is one that can attract students to go to the destination countries (Pimpa, 2003; Bodycott, 2009). These may include abundant courses available to attract students, the opportunities to study and work with other international students, opportunities to improve foreign language fluency, learn about foreign cultures, gain an experience of living in a foreign country, and the possibility to get a qualification which will be highly regarded by employers in both destination and source countries (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011).

Mazzarol et al. (1997) discussed six pull factors that influence international students' choice of destination country/host country. The first factor is how much international student awareness and knowledge of the host country. It includes not only destination country's information availability, but also destination country's education quality and reputation, and whether the degree/programme would be recognised by the home country's education system. Secondly is personal recommendation, *i.e.* recommendations from parents, family members/siblings/relatives, friends, peers and other people who have been to the destination country before. Thirdly is cost, which includes financial cost and non-financial cost. Financial cost covers tuition fees, living costs, and travelling cost, such as flying tickets. Non-financial cost is defined as social cost, such as social safety and discrimination. Destination country's environment is also an important influence on international students foreign study destination's choice. It includes the natural environment, climate, and lifestyle. Moreover, it covers study environment in the destination country. The fifth factor is geographical distance and time difference. The last factor is social link. In the other words, an international students' family and/or friends' connections in the destination country. For example, whether siblings or friends studied in the destination country before or are studying in the destination country currently.

In another study, Mazzarol (1998) mentioned other pull factors that influence international students to choose destination countries. Destination country's education institution's characteristics, such as quality, reputation, course availability, co-operation with home country, distance learning programmes, quality of academic staff, resource

availability, and marketing promotion. All these factors could make a specific destination institution (college/university) more attractive to the international students.

Pull factors also could be the reputation of the higher level institution and overseas education agency, the ranking of the higher level education, familiarity with the culture and prospects in the international labour market (Wilkins et al., 2011). Bodycott (2009) identifies ten common pull factors. These are:

1. The knowledge, awareness, reputation and general knowledge of the institution in the destination country.
2. The destination country has a positive attitude to support international education.
3. The information and recommendations from relatives, parents and friends.
4. The tuition fees, the cost of living, travelling and social activities in the destination country.
5. The condition of the surroundings, i.e. climate, lifestyle, crime, safety and racial discrimination.
6. The geographical distance of the destination country from the home country.
7. The social and/or educational links to the family or friends living or studying in the destination country.
8. Whether there are immigration prospects after graduation.
9. Preference for higher level of education and more employment opportunities.
10. The availability of scholarships.

International students are a special group of migrants. Their ability to reside, study and work in a given country are affected by that country's institutions, laws, regulations and policies (Mahroum, 2000). They can be regarded as migrants, as they are moving to a foreign country, but their final destination, which could be their home country or another destination country, is unknown (Mahroum, 2000). International students are able to enrol in foreign education by joining international or cross-university exchange programmes, which encourage their interest in their major (Stein and Kurtz-Newell,

1995). The factors that influence international students' mobility and decision could be categorised into Push and Pull Factors (McMahon, 1992). McMahon (1992) suggests that under the push model, international students flow as their home country has a lower level of economic growth, involvement of global economy, or lack of priority on education and availability of education opportunity. Under the pull model, the destination country's relatively higher level of economy growth, or economic link, political link and culture link between home country and destination country, scholarship and other assistance accessibility are factors that attract international students.

Factors like financial institutions and services, level of bureaucracy, international workplace accessibility, political situation and crime problems (Mahroum, 2000), could be push factors and pull factors. It is the relative difference between them that decides whether they work as a push or pull factor in the decision-making process. For example, if a home country has a lack of international workplace accessibility, it will push students to go to another country; on the other hand, if a destination country has high international workplace accessibility, which will pull students to choose it.

Historical or colonial connection between home country and destination country also influence on the international students flow (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). Some other pull factors, such as official language, availability of subjects, majors and programmes, average quality of third level education institutions and the percentage of high quality third level education institutions, and national wealth, which is generally measured by GNP and GDP also influence the demand for international education (Lee and Tan, 1984). Income per capita in the home country, the differences in education cost, expected benefits and education opportunities availability between home country and destination country are suggested to explain the fluctuation in international students flow (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002).

In Mazzarol et al. (1996) and Mazzarol and Soutar (2002)'s research, there are another six factors have been found have impact on international students' choice of destination

country. First is international students' knowledge and awareness about the destination country. This factor is affected by the availability of information about the destination country in the home country, destination country's general impression and reputation are also part of this factor. Second is personal recommendations from parents, family relatives, friends, acquaintances and other people. The third factor is the financial cost of foreign study which includes tuition fees, living costs, travel and social expenses. Accessibility of local labour market in the destination country and availability of job opportunities are also the components of this factor. The fourth factor is environment, which includes physical environment and social environment, such as lifestyle. Fifth is the geographical similarity and distance between home country and destination country. The last factor is social connection, in other words, whether the international student has or had any family relatives, friends or acquaintances living, working or studying in the destination country.

International students are influenced differently to different factors; literature research shows that some factors that respondents think are most important factors to them are knowledge and awareness of destination country, better international education, difficulty obtaining education in their home country, inability to access certain courses in the home country, better understanding of western culture, and migration opportunity (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). Parental influence is also important for the decision-making process and the influence on the students from Indonesia and China Taiwan are highlighted (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). Some pull factors of the destination education institutions, such as an institution's education reputation and quality, cross-institution connections, especially the connection between the destination institution and the international students' home institution, institution's staff reputation and quality, institution's alumni and word-of-mouth impressions, institution's size and number of students, and whether the destination institution will accept international students' current qualification, are important to the foreign study decision-making process.

Shanka *et al.* (2006) list seven pull factors that have an important influence on international students' choices of destination education institutions. Based on their research, destination education institution's reputation, quality, number and variety of courses, campus' safety and location, tuition fees and other people's feedback and opinion of the institution are the criteria that international students use to select a destination education institution. Parents and friends are one of the most important sources of information, and their information influences the decision of destination education institution (Shanka et al., 2002).

Zeeshan *et al.* (2013a) list some pull factors that influence international students' decisions such as education institutions' reputation, qualification recognition, education quality and tuition fees. The research also discussed pull factors such as career prospects of courses/majors in the destination country, country safety, and cultural acceptance also impact on international students' foreign study decision. Zeeshan *et al.* (2013a) use Malaysia as example to explain cultural acceptance's role. One of the main reasons that the students come from Middle East and Arab countries choose Malaysia as their destination country is that Malaysia is Islamic country which has similar culture with these students' home countries' culture.

The research explains that international students would consider whether foreign qualification could be accepted and recognised not only in home country, but also worldwide. The ability to learn a foreign language, such as English, and gain experience of foreign culture are also pull factors to encourage students to study abroad (Davey, 2005).

Pimpa (2003) discusses that Thai students collect information about their intended destination country and city, destination university/college's reputation and course/major/programme, part-time working opportunities and accommodation to make their decision. This information could be seen as pull factors that attract students to choose specific destination.

Spaulding and Olswang (2005) described how tuition fees have a direct influence on the decision to study in a destination university after students receive offers from universities. Moreover, fund/scholarship availability will also have positive influence on their final decision.

O'Brien *et al.* (2007) discuss some pull factors that influence Indian students' choice on university/college in their research. Suitable programmes, university/college's international reputation, fund/scholarship availability, academic staff's quality, and career prospects after graduation are the top five pull factors that influence Indian students' choice of destination university/college. Other than these five factors, the university's ranking, tuition fees, living cost, home university academic staff's recommendation (this applies to situations where the home university and destination university have a co-operation agreement), and social safety are also pull factors that influence Indian students' choices about destination country, city or university/college. Obtaining visas, application procedure, administrative staff, and accommodation can also influence on the choice.

O'Brien *et al.* (2007) explain the reason why destination university's ranking is important to Indian students. To these students, the decision to study abroad is an investment in their life and future. It is important to them to consider their opportunities and career prospects after graduation. In this circumstance, the students will look for high ranking universities first and then based on the courses provided, fund/scholarship availability and other factors to narrow down the number of choices.

In Kusumawati (2013)'s research about Indonesian students' choice of local university, some interesting pull factors arise. Even though the decision is not about choosing to study in foreign university, it is still helpful to understand how they make their decision. Kusumawati (2013) finds that expense (which includes tuition fees, living cost and other relevant costs), education institution's reputation, location, and career prospects after graduation are the most important four pull factors. Other pull factors that are also important to Indonesian students are education institution's academic quality, facilities,

campus environment, course content and variety, competition, advertisement, easy to pursued further education and scholarship. Moreover, influence from people outside of family, such as high school teacher, friends, peers, and alumni are also important in the decision-making process.

Hedges *et al.* (2014) refer to that the extrinsic motivation in students' choices in module selection. Students may choose a module in which they have less interest because they expect to get a better job or better further education opportunities. This may also apply to international students; international students could make the foreign study decisions based on their expectation of foreign study's benefits, such as bringing them advantages in employment competition and further education, rather than through any intrinsic interest in their subject area or living abroad.

To most of surveyed Indonesian students, expense is the most important factor. When they make the decision, they would choose the destination with lower living cost, and destination university with lower tuition fees. These students need to consider whether their parents' can afford their foreign study choice, moreover, as their parents pay for their study, parental involvement in the decision-making process is hard to avoid.

Destination university's reputation could be judged by its status (public university or private university), ranking and academic achievement. The research explains that surveyed Indonesian students and their parents prefer public universities as they believe it provides superior education, has better credibility and is more recognised than private ones. The research also explains that Indonesian respondents use ranking as a measurement of destination university's quality. In the other words, better quality university has higher ranking and vice versa. Moreover, respondents and their parents perceived that higher ranking destination university's qualification could help the students to get better job. Another perception of destination university's ranking is related to competition. Higher ranking destination universities are able to attract large number of applicants, which means the competition is more aggressive than the lower ranking ones.

It is hard to say if destination university's ranking is a pure push factor or pure pull factor but is more likely a combination of both. Destination university's academic achievement could be measured by their academic requirements of enrolment, lecturers' performance and ability, and teaching methods.

Location is also important to the Indonesian students' decision as them and their parents prefer to choose the destination country or university that is closer to them. A closer location allows students to visit family more frequently. Moreover, it may keep their living costs low as they could stay at home more easily. Career prospects have a connection with destination university's reputation. These surveyed students choose to study in a university as they perceived it would bring them a higher salary and/or a better job. From their view, a qualified destination university is an assurance of their future career. They would also consider the course/programme in the destination university could bring them a bright career prospect.

Push and pull factors could be the same factor. Using course/major availability as an example, a home country lacking a certain course/major is a push factor (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). A destination country with many courses/majors for students to choose is a pull factor (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011). By using both questionnaires and interviews, it would be clear to see what factors influence respondents' foreign study decision-making process and the effect of the influence. The methodology section of the thesis will explain how push and pull factors influence the different stages of the foreign study decision-making process.

This discussion of push and pull factors results in the hypothesis that international students' foreign study decisions are influenced by push and pull factors. The relative importance of push and pull factors' influence on decisions may vary by international students' characteristics.

To conclude both push and pull factors are external factors that influence students' decisions to study abroad, however, there are some individual preferences and other factors which are not included in the Push and Pull Factor Model. These factors not only impact on the students' decision-making processes before they study abroad, but also affect their future plans after graduation.

The Push-Pull Factors framework alone is not sufficient to explain why international students are keen to study abroad. Using China as an example, some of the push factors are not able to explain this situation. Up to 2010, there were 316 science and technological institutions and 797 education institutions for postgraduate study in China (China Statistic Office, 2011). Up to 2011, there were 2,409 third level education institutions (third level education institutions include universities, colleges and the colleges that have diploma degrees which are higher than a high school graduate degree but lower than bachelor degree), and 1,129 (46.8%) of them were universities (China Statistic Office, 2011). In addition, the number of universities and colleges was 1,700 and there were 120 high quality third-level educational institutions and universities (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2009). In 2011, the number of graduates from high schools was 7,877,401, and the number of expected new students enrolling in third level of education was 6,815,000, the number of students enrolled universities and colleges study was only 3,566,411. In other words, only 45% of high school graduates enrolled in universities and colleges (China Statistic Office, 2011). The net enrolment ratio of universities and colleges was 86.5%. This indicates that even though there were many high level educational institutions, universities and colleges available for Chinese students to select, it still did not have enough education institutions and lacked enough universities (only 46.8% of third level education institutions are universities) for all Chinese students. Also, as mentioned before, the investment in studying abroad is much higher than the cost of study in China.

Moreover, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2014) showed that from 2006 to 2013, in India the gross enrolment ratio of tertiary education increased from 11.54% to 23.89%,

but the growth rate decreased from 8% to -2%. However, from 2006 to 2012 the net flow of international mobile students was negative. The number of outbound students over inbound students has increases from 133,165 to 160,456. The negative net flow means India has more students studying aboard than the number of international students it attracts. In 2016, there were 181,872 Indian students studying abroad (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016). In India, there are 659 universities and university-level institutions, which includes public universities and private universities (British Council, 2014).

In Thailand, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2014)'s data shows that in recently (from 2011 to 2013), the gross enrolment ratio of tertiary education decreased from 52.74% to 51.38%. In the same period, the growth rate decreased from 5% to 0%. The net flow of international mobile students was also negative which means there were more Thai students studying abroad than the number of international students studying in Thailand. In 2016, the number of Thai students studying abroad reached 25,517. Based on information from UNESCO (2008), there were 165 higher education institutions are in Thailand. Of these intuitions, 78 were public higher education institutions.

These three countries have many local education resources, however students continue to study abroad. To explore the reasons international students to study abroad, the Pull and Push Factors framework will be used to generate a range of factors for which this study must control in considering the relationship between expected returns and foreign study. The study will also capture the effect of parental influence on the foreign study decision.

According to the literature on push and pull factors of international education, Cork is favourable in many of the pull factors previously described. Ireland is a European country with English as a native language, international students study in Cork and Ireland could improve their foreign language fluency, learn about foreign cultures and gain experience of living in a foreign country. University College Cork is ranked joint 178th in the Times Higher Education Best Universities in Europe 2017 (Times Higher Education, 2016a) and is ranked in the 351-to-400 group in the Times Higher Education World Universities

Rankings 2016-2017 (Times Higher Education, 2016b). International students could be attracted by a qualification which possibly will be highly regarded by employers in home countries and in Ireland. By comparing the tuition fees with other popular international education destination countries, such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Ireland's tuition fees level is lower, which could encourage international students to come to study. Cork's natural environment, social safety, and convenience for travelling and transportation are also pull factors to attract international students. In Chapters 4 and 5, quantitative and qualitative data will highlight whether these pull factors influenced the international respondents' decision to study in Cork, and how their decisions were made.

2.3. Education: Investment and Return

An important factor influencing an individual's investment in education and training is future wage growth, referred to as the return on education (Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006). All other things being equal, a worker who wants to move to an educational program which requires one more year of study will do so if he/she foresees proportionally higher future annual real earnings (Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006). This is potentially an important factor for the decision of a student to study abroad since this is likely to involve substantially higher cost than domestic study, or what can be considered a greater investment.

For example, the level of tuition fees in China is low, ranging from 4,200 RMB to 16,000 RMB per year, while some majors are lower than the general level cost approximately 2,500 RMB (Xinhua Net, 2014). This equates to €571 to €2,175 (European Central Bank, 2016a) per year excluding living costs.

In comparison, in popular destinations for international students to study in, for instance, the tuition fee and other fees in the United States is from $3,435 to $32,405 per year for undergraduate full-time courses depending on whether the university is public or private (College Board, 2015) which equates to €2,520 to €23,775 (European Central Bank,

2016b). In Ireland, tuition fees for non-EEA students in full-time undergraduate courses is from €10,000 to €21,600 per year (Education In Ireland). Majors like medicine and related courses are more expensive, from €37,128 to €52,000 per year.

Based on the given the difference in tuition fees between countries, it is worthwhile to explore the reason that international students are willing to pay for higher tuition fees to study abroad.

Education can influence an individual's earnings in each period of his/her working life (Mincer, 1975). Education also impacts on participation in the labour force at different stages of working life and the frequency and duration of employment. Moreover, workers who attain higher levels of education have longer working lives than workers who attain a lower level of education (Mincer, 1974; Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006). Even where a higher level of education does not lead to higher output and productivity of an individual, a higher level of education still has a positive effect on the wage of workers, because education acts as a signal of worker quality in the presence of asymmetric information (Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006).

There are at least two main costs associated with education investment, the financial cost and time cost. The largest cost of education to individuals is time cost (Mincer, 1974). Every one additional period of education or training will delay the time in which individuals can work and get earnings (Mincer, 1974; Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006).

Mincer (1991) also suggests that higher wages are always coupled with higher level of education. The demand for education is derived from the demand for educated labour. Assuming a fixed supply of highly educated workers, an increase in the demand for educated labour will lead to increases in the return to, and in turn the demand for, education.

The return on education has been applied to studies of on-the-job training. Workers who undertook on-the-job training had a steep wage profile and those that didn't had a flat one (Rosen, 1982). On-the-job education increases the wages of new workers by approximately 7.5-15% per year (Barron et al., 1989), moreover on-the-job training can result in 9% wage growth (Brown, 1989). Workers who receive on-the-job training, based on the data set covering 1968 to 1982, had wage growth of 4.4% (Mincer, 1989). Blundell *et al.* (1998) find that education increases economic returns. The level of return differs based on the person's type and level of qualification, higher education' academic areas, and time length. Dearden *et al.* (2006)'s research results find that in UK, training would bring a statistically and economically significant impact.

Learning has a greater effect on younger workers (9.5%), defined as workers' employed for 12 years or less compared to older workers (3.6%) (Stafford and Duncan, 1979). Those findings demonstrate that greater education can result in higher wages. People who have a higher level of learning ability and better financial capability invest more in education than those who do not. In addition, education and schooling are the basis of on-the-job training, which is workers who have higher levels of education have greater ability to learn on the job. In all of these studies, there is a positive relationship between education and wage growth (Mincer, 1989; Polachek, 2008).

Four college choice models: econometric, consumer, sociological and combined are used to analyse the factors that influence students' postsecondary education decisions (Hossler et al., 1989). In these four models, the econometric model shows that there are five factors that influence students' postsecondary education decision process: direct and indirect expected costs, expected future earnings, the characteristics of students' background, their high school and college. The hypothesis of this model is that the return to students' postsecondary education is greater than the return to not enrolling on it.

The consumer model analyses the lowest cost and risk of students' postsecondary education decision (Young and Reyes, 1987). There is another model (Kotler and Fox,

1985) which is also used to analyse students' college decision process using these two factors. In their model, there are four stages:

- Need arousal stage: which means the initial interest of enrolling in postsecondary education institution and its development;
- Information-gathering stage: which means students collect information that they need and they think it will be relevant to their decision process;
- Decision-evaluation stage: which means evaluating the decisions or narrowing down the choice sets;
- Decision-execution stage: in this stage, if the students chooses to study in college, it means they think the choice of enrolling in postsecondary educational institutions is better than other choices.

2.3.1. Investment and return on immigrants' education

In the individuals' migration decision process, education and skill acquisition is an important factor, the difference in return to education and skills between the origin and destination country is the trigger of migration decision (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). In the origin country or the destination country (or the potential destination country), education is a key determinant of salaries. Additionally, education acquisition becomes one of the main reasons for migration to countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, which have become the "learning centres" and provide education products to the international market (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011).

After graduation, the students' choice of staying abroad mainly depends on the regulations in destination countries; whether they are allowed to remain after they complete their study. In many countries, especially in Europe, existing policies make it difficult for international students to stay and/or get work permits (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). It may explain some students' future development plans after graduation from postsecondary institutions in destination countries. Stringent policies on migration and

employment visa as foreign people in destination countries would make international students to go back to their home country or move to another destination country to pursue further study or work.

Also, the decision to return to their origin countries may be influenced by preferences, such as social welfare, or purchasing power which is related to the currency exchange rate between origin countries and destination countries. The immigrants also need to consider about whether the human capital obtained in a destination country could be used in the origin country to increase its return. Reunion with family and friends is another reason that international students choose to go back to home country.

After migration, individuals tend to acquire further skills and/or education in a destination country, because their skills and/or education cannot be fully transferred to destination country's labour market. Generally they have lower wage than natives, even when they have the same skill level (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). The transferring of existing skills and knowledge, such as language, and acquisition of new skills, can help the new immigrants increase their wages, and with a faster rate than native workers (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011).

There are differences in the return to education obtained in destination country and the origin country. In a study of the Israel, Friedberg (2000) finds that the return yield on each year of added education obtained in Israel was 10% for natives and 8% for immigrants, but the return on education in immigrants' origin countries was 7.1%. She also indicates that the work experience accumulated in the origin countries brought very low returns. Every additional year of experience in the origin country yielded 0.1%, however, every additional year of experience in Israel, the destination country in her research, yielded 1.1%. Her findings show low returns on education and experience in origin country compared to the return on education and experience in destination country. Additionally, this has been shown to be true for other countries, such as the United States (Kossoudji, 1989; Bratsberg and Ragan Jr, 2002), Australia (Beggs and Chapman, 1988b)

and the Netherlands (Kee, 1995). To conclude, the human capital (education, skills and experience) immigrants acquire in origin countries provides low yield in destination countries.

Friedberg (2000) also finds an exception to this where the education and skills are obtained in developed origin countries, which can yield relatively high returns in developed destination countries. The reason could be the similarity of culture, institutions, technologies and economies between the origin countries and destination countries so that the education and skills can be transferred easily. Immigrants from developed countries, also have higher returns in destination counties compared to immigrants from less-developed countries which shows the complementarities between education acquired in origin countries and the education acquired in the destination countries (Basilio and Bauer, 2010). Such complementarities can also explain that the education acquired in destination countries has a positive impact on the return to origin countries (Friedberg, 2001). This can be explained that education obtained in destination countries can help immigrants to transfer their skills and experience obtained from origin countries more easily and effectively to destination countries' labour market.

The expected time that migrants will spend in the destination country plays an important role in their education investment decision in the destination country (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). The expected time spent determines the time horizon of return. The longer the time horizon is, the stronger their investment motive is. If migration is expected to be permanent, the immigrants who arrive in destination countries at a younger age should have a stronger motive to invest in human capital accumulation in destination countries so that their earnings will be higher and their earnings growth rate will be steeper (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011).

One of the reasons that refugee immigrants have steeper wage growth rates than economic immigrants in the United States is the expected stay time horizon of the destination country (Cortes, 2004). As the refugee immigrants cannot or are not willing to

go back to the origin countries, they have a longer time horizon or expected stay duration in the destination countries than economic immigrants do, and so they have a stronger motive to invest in their education (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011).

In an empirical study, Khan (1997) finds the refugee immigrants to the US from Cuba and Vietnam have more investment and higher possibility to invest in education than immigrants from other countries. Khan (1997) finds in the US that the pre-immigration education level is a substitute for the education in the United States. In other words, the higher degree the immigrants have had before they go to the United States, the less chance they would pursue education in the destination countries. The research also suggests that if immigrant obtains PhD degree or other professional degree at pre-immigration stage, the degree would play a role as substitute rather than complement in US. Borjas (1982) also has the same idea through his research about Hispanic male immigrants. In Australia, adult immigrants' pre-immigration education and career have major impact on their post-immigration education which include the additional education (Chiswick and Miller, 1992). Their research results show that pre-immigration education has a strong positive impact on the post-immigration education. Moreover, the more skilled career immigrants had before immigration, the higher probably that they will pursue post-immigration education.

Some immigrants' single motive for immigration is education accumulation, which is done to get higher salaries when they are back to the origin countries (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). This phenomenon is obvious in those countries that have abundant international students studying there, such as Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom. In the United States, foreign born students were 31% of all PhD students in 2006. In the United States, foreign born students have higher proportion in the fields such as physical sciences (44%), engineering (59%) and economics (59%) (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). Moreover, to the immigrants, if the return on education is higher in the destination country and there is a positive possibility of immigration or long term residency in the destination country, they will have stronger motive to invest in education.

This section explains that the investment and return on immigrants' education. Previous literature shows that transferring the migrants' skills and knowledge could help them to get increased wages and with a faster growth rate. It also explains one of the reasons that has been discussed in the push and pull factors of immigration, salary difference between home country and destination country. Literature shows lower return on education in home country compared to destination country. The investment on education is decided by how long the migrant stay in the destination country. The longer they would like to stay, the stronger is their investment motive. This point is also discussed from Page 54, Section 2.3.4 Investment and return on return immigrants' education. If immigrants plan to go back to home country and the plan includes their children, they will choose to decrease the investment on their and their children's education. Empirical research has found other factors that affect the investment and return is education for immigrants. These are discussed in the next two sections.

2.3.2. Language effect on the investment and return on immigrants' education

Language is an important human capital factor for immigrants' productivity in destination countries (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). It determines whether the immigrants can be employed in particular occupations in the destination country's labour market, and whether they can complete their work correctly and effectively. Language is also significant in itself, but it is a complementary skill to other skills and education (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). Some occupations have specific requirements for language proficiency, such as law, pharmacy, biotechnology, and medicine. On the other hand, investment in the foreign language skills for immigrants in their home countries is not as worthwhile as in destination countries (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). The reason is that immigrants have less chance to use the foreign language skills in the home country compared to the destination country. In the destination country, immigrants need to practice and use foreign language (destination country's language) all the time. The level of the language fluency would help them on their job, and will even influence their salary.

Even though language is a crucial complementary component to current and future education and skills, it is also the skill that is hardest to transfer from destination country to origin country, and research findings show that improving language skills is one of the main reasons that immigrants have increasing wage growth rates.

Language skill has a positive relationship with immigrants' wage level in destination countries (Chiswick, 1991; Dustmann, 1994). Immigrants who have good or excellent English reading skills earn 30% more than immigrants who have a lack of or have weak English reading skills (Chiswick, 1991). Chiswick (1991) also finds reading skill influences speaking skill, but the latter doesn't have extra influence on immigrants' earnings. Additionally, English fluency can bring a 17% increase in earnings in children compared to their immigrant parents' wages in the United States (Chiswick and Miller, 1990). Immigrants who have good or excellent German language skills have 7% higher earnings than those immigrants who have bad or lack of German language skills in Germany (Dustmann, 1994). He also finds that the immigrants who have good or excellent German writing skills earn 7.3% (males) and 15.3% (females) more than those immigrants who have bad or lack of German writing skills.

Language is not only complementary to skills and education in destination countries, it also has a complementary effect on pre-immigration education transferability (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). Language skill can increase the return from pre-immigration human capital accumulation (education and skills accumulation), if an immigrant has good language skill in the destination country (Chiswick and Miller, 2002, 2003). It can enhance the impact of pre-immigration education and skills accumulated in the origin country on the return to education. In other words, if immigrants are not able to use the local language to communicate, it is hard to transfer the human capital acquired in the origin country to the higher level of salary in the destination country (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). They also believe that language is not only a factor that improves immigrants' productivity in the destination country, but also an indicator of whether immigrants are able or willing to acquire further education in the destination country

(Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). Sanromá et al. (2009) reports the return for immigrants who obtain education in Spain is 4.4% higher than the immigrants from Latin America who can speak Spanish, and it is also 3.6% higher than immigrants from East Europe. Moreover, in Australia, education can increase the return for natives by 9.0%; for immigrants from English-speaking countries it is 8.4%, and for non-English-speaking countries is 4.9% (Beggs and Chapman, 1988a).

Language skill is also a component that can explain the immigrants' children's education achievement. The sole significant reason that can explain the education achievement difference between immigrants' children and natives' children in the United Kingdom is their spoken language at home (Dustmann et al., 2011).

This section discussed the language effect on immigrants' education. Language skill level decides whether the immigrants can be employed in particular job in the destination country and whether they could complete the work correctly and effectively. Literature shows that language skill is also a complementary skill to other skills. It also influences how much immigrants can transfer their skills and education gathered from their home country to the destination country. If immigrants have low language skills, even if they have received same education level with other immigrants and local people, they would receive less return from education.

2.3.3. Ethnic effect on immigrants' education

Immigrants tend to build up their own ethnic communities where they live in destination countries (Bartel, 1989; Jaeger, 2007). Furthermore, by using data from 1990 U.S. Census, Chiswick and Miller (2005) found that immigrants living in the ethnic community which uses their mother language more frequently has a negative effect on their potential earnings. Dustmann *et al.* (2011) found that in Germany, immigrants obtain information of wage and job vacancies through the ethnic community's network. If a company hires a large number of immigrants from one ethnic group, it is more likely other immigrants from the same ethnic group would get jobs from this network.

The effect from the social situation in which immigrants' children grow up is referred to as "ethnic capital" and affects immigrants' children's education achievement (Borjas, 1992). Immigrants' children are mainly influenced by the destination countries' education system structures and institutions. If the knowledge taught in destination countries cannot be adapted in ethnic communities, ethnic groups will have a negative effect on immigrants' children adaptation to destination countries' education system. Moreover, in the research of OECD countries, Dustmann and Glitz (2011) found that the ethnic community shapes parents' values and motives, which also influences children's preferences on education and career. Ethnic capital can also be understood as peer effects, model effects, and ethnic communities' ambitions, which will impact on the immigrants' education achievement and on second-generation education enrolment. An instance of ethnic effect is the South and South-East Asian immigrants' children's success in education achievement which is partly attributable to their ethnic community's emphasis on the importance of study and education (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011).

Ethnic effect shows that the immigrants' ethnic community would influence immigrants' values and motives and positively and negatively influence their children's preference on education and career. The emphasis on education in South and South-East Asian ethnic communities is also discussed in section 2.4.2 Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety), Page 61.

2.3.4. Investment and return on return immigrants' education

As mentioned previously, the decision to return to origin countries after immigrants' graduation mainly depends on their social welfare preference, purchasing power which is related to the currency exchange rate between source country and destination country. It also depends on the regulations and policies of immigration and local labour market. For immigrants, the decision to return shapes their education investment in the destination countries, and it also influences their children's education investment.

Education is an important determination of earnings and outcomes for immigrants (Smith, 2006). Smith (2006)'s research of America shows the level of education they achieved before arriving in the destination country, the amount of additional education they received in the destination country and how the education helped their performances in the labour market are the three main determinants to decide whether immigrants would be able to survive in the destination country and how well they live.

If immigrants' families tended to go back to their origin country, and this return included their children, they invested less in children's education compared to the permanent immigrants or the immigrants who were willing to stay in destination countries in the future (Dustmann, 2008). He also found that if compared to origin countries, the return of human capital was higher and the purchasing cost was lower, immigrants increased their investment in children's education and also increased the possibility of permanent immigration, and vice versa. These findings will be helpful for exploring the factors that influence Chinese students' long-term education plan and education decisions.

As students can be categorised into a specific group, they are different with permanent immigrants and temporary immigrants, as their future plan is uncertain. Students who study abroad, could choose to go back to their origin country after graduation, or stay in the current destination country to study further and/or work, or they could go to another destination country to study and/or work. This research focuses on this specific group and adopts relevant theories to explain their decision-making process to determine the main factors that influence their final decision.

Investment and return on education suggests that international students' foreign study decisions are influenced by expected earnings. The expected earnings will change by international students' characteristics.

2.4. Parental Involvement and Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety)

Most students do not invest themselves in their education, rather it is an investment made by parents on their behalf. A study that explores the decision to invest in education must consider the effects of parental influence.

2.4.1. Parental Involvement

Parental involvement includes "parents' expectations, values on education, and feedback perceived by the students" (Chow and Chu, 2007). Several studies show that from a very early stage Chinese parents affect their children's school work and education plans, even up to university (Chao and Sue, 1996; Chen et al., 1996). Chinese parents influence their children's education, expectation of academic achievement and academic performance (Chow and Chu, 2007). In a comparison with American parents, Chinese parents have greater control over their children's education (Lin and Fu, 1990). The study indicates that parents who attained a high level of education could provide monetary and non-monetary support for their children's education and be involved in the decision-making process, and that they were also more capable of persuading their children to reach a higher level of education (Corak, 2001; Portes et al., 2005).

There are several studies from sociology, psychology and educational research, indicating that parents strongly influence their children's education decisions and outcomes. For example, children who live at home are more influenced (in the areas of educational expectations, academic performance and academic achievement) by their parents than children who have attended boarding schools (Maqsud and Coleman, 1993). Similarly, some researchers found that parental involvement has a positive influence on teenagers' achievement (Portes et al., 2005). Additionally, parents' value on education has a positive correlation with their children's academic achievement (Chow and Chu, 2007). In addition, there is a positive relationship between the level of education that the parents attained and their children's likelihood of progressing to higher levels of education (Hossler and Stage, 1992; Thomas and Webber, 2009). Although both parents' education

levels influence their children's university completion rate (Abada et al., 2009), Chow (2000) indicates that fathers have a more important influence on their children's education and academic achievement than mothers. Thomas and Webber (2009) also indicate that fathers' education background is important to girls' further education and college education decision. The adolescents whose father graduated from university had a university completion rate 31% higher than the adolescents whose fathers did not have a university degree. Additionally, the average level of education of other family relatives also has an influence on educational attainment (Borjas, 1995).

There is a series of studies exploring parental impact on schooling and education choice of their children. There is a strong relationship between a father's education background and his child's postsecondary education enrolment (Carpenter and Fleishman, 1987). Based on research from Yang (Yang, 1981), after testing 1,741 high school senior students throughout the final year in high school and the first year in college, the study found that a father's education has a stronger impact on students' aspiration than a mother's, however a mother's education background has more effect on actual education attendance rates. Through testing the samples from Indiana high school students, the research found that mothers' education levels have a positive but indirect impact on both male and female students' educational plans after secondary school (Stage and Hossler, 1989). In comparison, a father's education levels have positive direct influences on male students and positive indirect impact on female students' educational plan after secondary school. The results of a study comparing students with less-than-high-school-educated parents and the students with parents, who have a college education or more (Manski and Wise, 1983) are consistent with other research (Stage and Hossler, 1989). Students whose parents have a college education began thinking earlier about their children's study after graduation from high school (Gilmour Jr et al., 1978).

There is research exploring the influence of parental educational expectations and encouragement on the students' aspirations after high school. Researchers found both parental educational expectations and encouragement were related to the possibility of

individual student attendance at a tertiary educational institution (Soper, 1971; Tillery, 1973; Gilmour Jr et al., 1978; Russell, 1980; Conklin and Dailey, 1981; Murphy, 1981; Ekstrom, 1985; Carpenter and Fleishman, 1987; Stage and Hossler, 1989).

A positive relationship between parental educational expectations and students' postsecondary education aspirations is shown in some studies (Soper, 1971; Tillery, 1973; Russell, 1980). Based on a study (Murphy, 1981), 43% of all students said the idea of attending a PSI (Post-Secondary Education Institution) was first raised by their parents. Parental educational expectations do not have a direct influence upon pre-disposition of students (Carpenter and Fleishman, 1987). However, they mention that the increasing level of parental educational expectations was the cause of increasing the achievement level. Parental educational expectations can explain 37% of the variance of students' postsecondary aspirations (Sewell and Shah, 1968b). It also indicates that there is a reciprocal relationship among student's achievement and students' predisposition, the better the students perform in school, the higher the level of parents' expectations (Hossler and Stage, 1992).

Additionally, parents played an important role in the educational achievement and socio-economic development of their children (Eccles, 1992), which is also supported by other research (Eccles and Harold, 1993). Active parental involvement is critical to their children's academic achievement at all grade levels, in other words, it has positive effect on students (Epstein, 1987).

The reasons for lack of parental involvement are lack of time, energy, and/or financial resources, knowledge shortage, and failure to understand parents' role in a family (Eccles and Harold, 1993). The level and scale of parental involvement influences children's education achievement which is impacted by a series of factors, including parents' income, education level, social status, ethnic group, marriage status, careers, age and the number of children they have (Eccles and Harold, 1993; Thomas and Webber, 2009) . For instance, the better educated the parents are, the more they are involved in their

children's education and schooling plan. Also, the less children the parents have, the more involvement they have in their children's study. They gave eight characteristics which are important to parental involvement and so are useful to this research's questionnaire design.

1. The first factor is the social and psychological resources available to parents. It includes social network, resources, demands on parents' time and their mental health.
2. Secondly, parents' efficacy beliefs which include parents' views of their level of involvement in their children's educational plan and choices, and how confident they are when they help their children to solve educational and/or social problems.
3. Parent's perceptions of their children mean their confidence in children's educational ability and achievement. It also includes parents' expectations and aspirations for their children's education and career and their views about children's current and future plan.
4. The fourth characteristic is parents' assumption about their roles in children's education. It describes the roles parents play in their children's study and what they believe about their children academic achievement are important to their parental involvement behaviour.
5. Parents' attitude about the school and roles that they believe the school want them to have. It most concerns about their previous experience of cooperation with the school.
6. Parents' ethnic identity means what ethnic group the parents belong to. It influences parental involvement as it shows parents' social identity, goals and cultural belief about children's academic education achievement.
7. Parents' general empirical socialisation more concerns how they manage or control their children's education plan.
8. The final characteristic is parents' involvement in their children's education history, which are their experiences with school's activities, and contact and

cooperation with teachers and school. These eight factors are important to explore parental involvement, and they are helpful to set up the direction of questionnaire in the data collection process.

The impact of parents plays an important role in the decision-making process to study abroad. Most of the students interviewed in his study revealed that their parents contacted and negotiated with agents and institutions (Bodycott, 2009). In the negotiation process, parents paid attention to the factors that they thought were significant to their children's future. In this process the children had little participation.

In research of Indonesian students' decision to study in a domestic public university, Kusumawati (2013) also discussed parental involvement in the decision-making process. In the family both father and mother had equal influence in the destination university decision-making process. Some of surveyed Indonesian students were convinced by their parents to choose the destination university which they lived close to. As some of them were the first child or the only child in the family, their parents preferred their children stay close to them. Moreover, research mentioned that respondents' parents preferred students stay close to them to provide help. Some respondents perceived that their parents would not support them to choose a destination university far away from where they live.

Additionally, all respondents in Kusumawati (2013)'s research got financial support from their parents. Financial support is the most common way that parents are involved in the decision-making process. These respondents' parents were directly involved in the decision of destination city, university and course/major. Some respondents explained that they followed their parents' suggestion as they needed to rely on their parents to pay all expenses.

Parents' involvement is also displayed as their encouragement. Parents use their own experience to inspire the students to study hard and to have a better life. They also use their negative experience to encourage children to work hard to achieve what they could

not and have a brighter future. To the respondents, parents' experience turns into a type of motivation to empower them to study hard.

Many surveyed Indonesian students also mentioned that their parents expected them to study in university. Their parents had a strong influence on their choice of destination university. In the decision-making process, satisfying parents' expectations plays an important role.

This section shows parental involvement in education and its influence on students' education enrolment and choice. Parental involvement includes parents' expectations, values on education and feedback perceived by students (Chow and Chu, 2007). Literature indicates parental involvement has a positive influence on students' achievement (Portes et al., 2005). Parental involvement includes financial support and non-financial support, such as encouragement and expectation. The parents use their own experience to encourage the students to study hard to have a better life, moreover parents' expectation would also influence the students' choice of tertiary education (Kusumawati, 2013).

This research makes clear that any study seeking to shed light on the decision to study abroad by international students must consider parents' influence on the decision and this will be an important element of this study. It is also a significant contribution to this research area.

2.4.2. Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety)

The Xiao Qin Effect suggests that Chinese parents prefer to make decisions to maximise their children's utility function, especially when each family has only one child (Bodycott, 2009). It can be treated as a type of institution in Asia, especially exists in China. Based on the research result (Hodgson, 2006), institutions are structures concerned with the social realm, which is a system that made up of prevalent social rules and regulations that structure and frame social life and interactions. Institutions work in

social life because their rules include shared habits, and preference of thoughts and behaviour (Kilpinen, 2000). Moreover, institutions structure and regulate human behaviour, which can be divided into two categories, agent-sensitive institutions and agent-insensitive institutions (Hodgson, 2006). As Xiao Qin Effect does not change significantly when the preference and/or dispositions of the agents change, it is an agent-insensitive institution that creates the basement and rules of social life.

Xiao Qin effect explains the relationship between Chinese children and their parents which may influence the decision-making process and is considered in this research as it is likely to affect the decision to study (Chow and Chu, 2007). This relationship defines and regulates how children should relate to and respect their parents and other older family members (Chow and Chu, 2007). It is argued that through academic achievement Chinese children fulfil the obligation of Xiao Qin (Chow and Chu, 2007) which can also be treated as a form of repayment to their parents.

This may be of particular relevance in the Chinese case due to the One Child Policy, which has been changed recently (National Health and Family Planning Commission of the PRC, 2015), and the lack of social protection structures, such as pensions. In the context of foreign study, where tuition fees are more than ten times the Chinese level, Chinese parents spend a large proportion of their savings, perhaps also borrowing, to fund their child's study in a foreign country. Using income smoothing theory (Copeland, 1968), it may be anticipated that, since the investment from Chinese parents in their child is mostly in the middle stage of their life, they expect a higher return in later stages of life.

The Xiao Qin Effect is important however than the decision to invest in foreign education as there is a complex interaction between parents and their child's decision-making process and academic motivation.

Xiao Qin as a type of authoritarian moralism; children regard their parents' needs and wants as part of their achievement and become the kind of person that their parents expect them to be (Boey, 1976; Ho, 1987; Yau-Fai Ho, 1994). Under Xiao Qin, children should study hard not only for personal academic achievement, but also to repay their parents and bring honour to the family, in other words, because of Xiao Qin (Filial Piety) (Chow and Chu, 2007). Filial Piety can be regarded as motivation for East Asian children's academic achievement (Salili, 1994, 1995; Abada et al., 2009).

References to Xiao Qin to explain the relationship between parents and children in Chinese families, Chinese children will provide long-term respect and care to parents to repay their parents' sacrifices to ensure their children can receive the best education (Bodycott, 2009). For instance, a child may display an unquestioning attitude towards his or her parents' plans for future study and career, even if that plan does not satisfy the child's own wants (Bodycott, 2009).

Additionally, there is one study that links Xiao Qin with hierarchic cultural structure and "face" (Mianzi) (Hsu and Wang, 2011). They cite another research (Lin, 2004), who points out that the hierarchical structure of society, harmonious family and interpersonal relationships are key factors of Chinese culture. It explains why filial piety is a prevailing belief and is supported by Chinese culture and society. Also, some research suggests that preserving parents' "face" (Mianzi) means preserving the honour and respect of their parents and their family, as would be expected of them according to filial piety (Kwan, 2000; Kuo et al., 2011). To the students, they should behave well and study hard to achieve a good education. It is a result predicted from filial piety, as they learn from teachers and relatives in their family that poor examination results or education achievement will make their parents lose face, which would violate the theory of filial piety (Yeh and Bedford, 2004).

The Dual Filial Piety Model (Yeh, 1997; Yeh, 2003; Yeh and Bedford, 2003) divides filial piety into two independent categories, reciprocal filial piety and authoritarian filial

piety. The former is concerned with keeping a harmonious relationship in the family with affection and gratitude, and the latter emphasises obedience and indebtedness to parents (Yeh and Bedford, 2003; Hsu and Wang, 2011). Both types of filial piety will be useful to explain the influence of this belief on students' education choices, including whether they will study abroad.

Xiao Qin is very common in Chinese culture and traditions, also in Confucian values. Chinese society and environment emphasise the duties that children have to parents (Yeh and Bedford, 2004). In addition, nearly all parts of Chinese society emphasise the value and importance of filial piety: media, peers, family relatives, books and newspapers, social conferences, and teachers. All of these factors contribute to form the definition and concept of Xiao Qin in a child's mind (Yeh and Bedford, 2004).

Filial piety is the basic principle which regulates children's behaviours and presents in their parents, and is very common in Chinese culture (Chow, 2006). This relationship exists unacknowledged and invisible, but because of it, both parents and children are obliged to provide care and support to each other. In Taiwan it also means children are obliged to support their parents and relatives (Chow, 2006). The research describes three levels of filial piety in practice, based on Confucian theory (Chow, 2006). Satisfying parents' physical needs, wants and comforts; following their wishes; and bringing parents honour and respect in the community (Chow, 2006). These three levels of filial piety are the three elements which make up basic filial piety theory. Also these three levels demonstrate how and why Chinese students' choice of study abroad can be influenced.

Filial piety does not exist only in China. It also exists in other Asian countries. In East Asia, filial piety is a prevailing belief of culture in society which affects people's behaviours through unspoken rules and social expectations with respect to their loyalty and obligations to their parents, even the whole family (Ikels, 2004). It includes children's duty to respect, obey and please their parents. Research also suggested that filial piety forms a variety of roles in the family and society, based on age, gender and

generation, with their own responsibilities. Moreover, these roles and their responsibilities are supported by society and are influenced by the person's public status (Ikels, 2004).

In Lawley (1997)'s research of Thai and Malaysian students in Australia, research results showed that family opinion has an important impact on their choice of course and destination country. To the international students who are from China and India, Mazzarol and Soutar (2002)'s research results also showed that parents' recommendations ha important impact on the foreign study decision.

Pimpa (2003;2004)'s research reviewed Thai students foreign study decision-making process. During the process, parents would transfer their expectations of their children's education goal. Surveyed Thai students said their parents told them foreign education is better since they were children. They also reported their parents' and siblings' expectations had great influence not only on their foreign study decision, but also on the choice of destination and course/subject. Their foreign study was to satisfy expectations, such as obtaining a foreign qualification, become fluent in a foreign language and get a better life. The research results show that their parents' persuasion had a significant impact on Thai students' choices about their decision to study abroad.

Kusumawati (2013)'s research discussed the process of Indonesian students' decision of domestic universities. Parents' influence was one of the five most important factors influence on their decision. Surveyed respondents' parents required the students to choose the university which was close to their hometown to help or monitor them conveniently. Some of the students were required to go to the local university as they were the only child or the first child of the family. Surveyed students choose the university in hometown as they perceived their parents would not support them if they chose a university outside of where they live. Research also showed that parents would use their past experience, stories and expectations to motivate surveyed Indonesian students to work hard to obtain a better life. The research also stated that many surveyed

students had pressure to consider parents' expectation on their decision of university. Most of them mentioned that parents had expectations for them to study in a particular university. The majority of students decided to satisfy their parents' wishes and expectations. In this case, the Xiao Qin Effect can be clearly seen. Children having an unquestioning attitude towards parents' decisions and following their parents' wishes are the signs of Xiao Qin Effect.

Filial piety is the cornerstone of the parent-child relationship and also the base of family relationships, though recently younger generations have been influenced by Western culture (Compton, 2000). Some of the social values and norms, such as the practice of filial piety have been challenged as a result of Western social, economic, and cultural influences, such as individual-centred perspectives and rights from past decades (Hsu and Wang, 2011). It is also seen in immigrants, that parents hold traditional norms of filial piety and children are raised in Western culture (Lieber et al., 2004). The differences in value and opinion of filial piety between immigrants' parents and children make practicing filial piety a challenge. Yeh and Bedford (2003) argue that in modern Chinese society, Western culture and values have a negative influence on authoritarian filial piety but do not diminish reciprocal filial piety's influence. The former emphasises on hierarchy, obedience and indebtedness to parents while the latter focuses on keeping a harmonious relationship in the family. Authoritarian filial piety conflicts with Western values of individuality, equal and democratic opinion which may explain why its influence is getting weaker.

This section has shown the Xiao Qin effect (Filial Piety) mainly exists in East Asia. It is seen as an unspoken rule and social expectation that children will respect and be loyal, and fulfil their obligations to their parents, even their family (Ikels, 2004). There are three level of Xiao Qin effect, satisfying parents' physical needs and wants, following their wishes and bring them honour and respect in the community (Chow, 2006). Under Xiao Qin Effect, students should study hard to bring honour to their parents and family (Chow and Chu, 2007). Children with poor examination results or education achievement will

make their parents lose face (bring their parents shame) in the community which would violate the theory of Xiao Qin (Yeh and Bedford, 2004). It can be regarded as motivation for East Asian children's academic achievement (Salili, 1994, 1995; Abada et al., 2009).

As discussed on Page 53, Section 2.3.3 Ethnic effect on immigrants' education, South and South East Asian immigrants' children' success could be explain by the ethnic community's emphasis on education. This ethnic effect could be seen as a side effect from Xiao Qin Effect. As East Asia's society emphasises the value and importance of the Xiao Qin Effect, when immigrants move abroad, they still carry this institution with them and so influence their children's education achievement.

There are factors, other than the expected financial return, that may influence the decision to study abroad. These are factors for which this study will control. They are considered in Page 100 Section 3.4 Quantitative Survey Methodology and Page 128, Section 3.5 Qualitative Research Methodology.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the main conceptual and empirical literature informing the theoretical framework of the thesis. The literature review highlighted three categories of factors, push and pull factors, investment and return on education, and parental involvement and Xiao Qin effect (Filial Piety).

The section on push and pull factors revealed the push and pull factors of FDI, migration and international education. Even though the factors influencing these decisions are different, the push and pull factors of the decision on FDI and migration could help to build the frame of push and pull factors and help to understand how they work. There are similarities between the push and pull factors of FDI, migration and international education decision. Some of the factors of FDI and migration, such as foreign exchange rate, geographical location and social ties (network factor) appear to be push and pull

factors for international education decision. Moreover, as international students are in a special group of migrants because their future plan is uncertain, *i.e.* it is unclear whether they will stay in the future and their duration of stay. Some factors that influence migration, such as social ties and job opportunities, also influence the foreign study decision.

The push and pull factors differ mainly on which country is being focussed upon. A factor which is a push factor in the home country and the factor exists in the destination country as a pull factor.

In the section of investment and return on education, previous literature shows that education could influence individual's earnings in each period of working life (Mincer, 1975). Keeping all the other conditions the same, individuals who want to pursue education which requires one more year of study will do if the individual expects to earn higher future earnings (Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006). This may explain why international students would suffer high financial cost, such as tuition fees and living cost, and non-financial cost, such as time and give up potential job opportunities abroad. They may look for good return from foreign study decision.

This section also discussed the investment and return on immigrants and return immigrants' education. The length of time that immigrants expect to stay in the destination country determines their investment on education in the destiation courtry. If the immigrants want to return to home country and the plan includes their children, they will invest less on their children' educaiton compared to the permanent immigrants or the immigrants will stay in the destination country long term (Dustmann, 2008).

Langauge effect and ethnic effect on investment and return on education are also discussed in this section. Language determines whether the immigratns can get a particular job in the destination country. It is also a complementary skill as some careers have specific requirements for language proficiency, such as law and medicine (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). Immigrants with better langauge skills have higher earnings than the immigrants who do not (Chiswick, 1991; Dustmann, 1994). Ethnic communities

have an influence on immigrants' potential earnings and education decision. Dustmann *et al.* (2011) found that immigrants get information about wage and job vacancies through their ethnic community network. Some of ethnic communities, such as South East Asian ethnic communities, emphasise the importance of education, positively influencing immigrants' decision on their children' education and the second generation education achievement (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011).

The last section discussed parental involvement and Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety). Parental involvement includes parents' financial and non-financial support, and expecations. Parents' value on education has a positive correlation with their children's academic achievement (Chow and Chu, 2007). Previous literature revealed parental involvement in the education decision, such as negotiation with agents and institutions, convincing their children to study in certain university, providing financial support, and encouraging children to study hard. Compared to parental involvement, Xiao Qin Effect only exists in Asia area. It is a type of authoritarian moralism which explains the relationship between parents and children. The previous literature discussed the two different types of Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety), reciprocal filial piety and authoritarian filial piety, and three levels of Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety). Literature on parental involvement and Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety) help to explore the theoretical factors that could influence international students' foreign study decision. In the quantitative and qualitative survey design, these two factors will be considered and included.

Even though previous literature on push and pull factors of international education choice, investment and return on education, and parental involvement and Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety) have built up a very good framework, gaps in the literature still exist.

In the past, push and pull factors of internatioanl education, previous literature relied on the research of one country's or one continent's students, but not students from different backgrounds. This thesis will perform research on international students from Asia, Africa, the Americas, the European Union, and Oceania. The targeted international students are from different schools within University College Cork (UCC) and different stages of education. Their purpose of studying abroad is also different. Some of them

study in UCC for a degree and some of them are visiting students. The various cutlures and education backgrounds could help to discover foreign study decision patterns of international students from different backgrounds. Moreover, this research collected both quantitative and qualitative survey and analysed both data at the same time which could explore new factors through comparison and contrast. Previous literature uses only quantitative or qualitative data, or collect and analyse these two types of data at different stages that gives priority to one type of data. This may result in weaker comparisons between quantiative and qualitative results and may miss some factors.

Secondly, previous literature on investment and return on education focuses on investment and actual return on education. This thesis will explore the relationship between investment and expected return on education when the international students made the foreign study decision, they can only expect how much they could earn after graduation. The thesis will reveal whether respondents investing more on educaiton would look for higher level of earnings in the future.

Moreover, previous literature on investment and return on educaiton of immigrants focuses on the immigrants moving to foreign country because of family reunion, career relocation, and forced migration (refugees). However, the literature does not explore from the perspective of international students. International students are a specific group of immigrants as their future plan is uncertain. As the difference between international students and other immigrants, using the literature of investment and return on educaiton of immigrants completely is not suitable for analysing international students' decision to study aborad. This thesis will fill in the gap to perform the first research that explores influence from investment and expected return on education on international students' decision to study abroad.

Previous literature on parental involvement and Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety) also lacks a comparison and contrast between quantitative and qualitative data and only focuses on one country or one continent. This thesis explores parental involvement and Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety)'s influence on foreign study decisions from the perspective of

international students with different backgrounds. It would be more clear to see the difference in perceived parental involvement and its influence on foreign study decisions.

The next chapter will discuss the quantitative and qualitative survery method and data collection. The survey questions rationale will also be discussed.

Chapter 3 Quantitative and Qualitative Data and Methods to Analyse Factors Affecting the Decision to Study Abroad

3.1. Introduction of Data Sample and Collection Methods

As secondary data relating to students' decision to study abroad is not available, it is necessary to collect primary survey data from students and then analyse it. Through the use of a survey instrument, data was gathered on the factors affecting students' decision on foreign study. The design of the survey instrument will be informed by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks from the literature.

Table 3.1 shows from 2011 to 2012, Ireland's all HEA funded institutions had 163,021 students enrolled on full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses. 7% (11,661) of these students are international students. 8,481 international students were from non-EU countries and the rest of them were from EU countries. In university sector, in total 90,110 students were enrolled in full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses in 7 universities in Ireland (HEA, 2014a). 10% of these students were international students, and 3% of them were from EU and 7% of them were from Non-EU countries. In UCC, from same period, there were 16,006 full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students, and 10% of them were international students. 9% of these international students were from Non-EU countries. The rest of them (1%) were from EU. Moreover, UCC has the third highest number of international students in the 7 universities in Ireland (HEA, 2014a).

Compared to HEA-funded institutions' percentage of international students in the total full-time undergraduates and postgraduates, UCC's percentage of international students is similar to the overall level. Although using data from a single university is a limitation of the thesis, using UCC's data is representative of the university sector of Ireland and the data is accessible.

Table 3.1 Number of students in UCC and Ireland (includes all HEA-funded institutions)				
Institution	Total Full-time Undergraduate and Postgraduate	International Students	International students from EU countries	International students from Non-EU countries
University College Cork (UCC)	16,006	1,599 (10%)	197 (1%)	1,402 (9%)
Ireland (all HEA funded institutions)	163,021	11,661 (7%)	3,180 (2%)	8,481 (5%)

Source: (HEA, 2014a)

The research collected quantitative and qualitative data from UCC international students. Data collection lasted 3 months, from August 2015 to October 2015. The reason this time period was chosen was that international students began to arrive on campus in August, and September and October no exams are held, so international students would have less academic pressure to study and more likely to take part in survey.

The information collected from them was categorised into four areas, general information, push and pull factors, investment and expected return of education, and parental involvement, as influences on their decision-making. The thesis will explore how the latter three factors influence international students' decision-making process.

The thesis used triangulation design of mixed methods to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Both types of data were collect concurrently. At the data collection and analysis stage, no priority given to any of them. Quantitative data was collected through online questionnaires, and qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews.

The following sections discuss the methods for collecting quantitative and qualitative data, sampling methods, survey methods and design for both types of research in detail.

3.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Data Collection and Methods Design

This research used appropriate statistical techniques to analyse international students' decision to study abroad. This research explored the effects of push and pull factors, investment and earnings on education, and parental involvement. It controlled for other factors affecting the decision, including the decision on where to study and the programme of study.

This section will discuss the theories that provide the framework for the survey design, mixed methods used for data collection and analysis, quantitative and qualitative survey methods, sampling methods and survey design.

3.2.1. Methodology Theory Provides Survey Design Framework

Except Mincer's earning regression (Mincer, 1974; Heckman et al., 2006), there are other useful models and theories to develop the research model.

In a study (Stage and Hossler, 1989), researchers mentioned four theoretical models that could be adapted to this thesis. These four models are econometric model, consumer model, sociological model and combined model. As explained in Chapter 2, the econometric model suggests that students will enrol in postsecondary study if they can gain more benefits than not engaging in further study. This model compares the cost (includes direct and indirect cost) and benefits (expected future earnings), also contains the factor of students' background, secondary schools' characteristics and tertiary education institutions' characteristics. The consumer model mainly focuses on the marketing view of college choice. Consumer model divides students' decision-making process into four stages, need arousal, information gathering, decision evaluation and decision execution. The sociological model is concerned with the identification and inter-relationship of factors that impact on students' aspirations for attending tertiary education institutions. The combined model is a combination of the above three models.

Based on the results of a study (Hossler and Stage, 1992), their theoretical model investigates three factors, the relationship between family and students (based on my research topic, it can be expanded to Xiao Qin / Filial Piety effects); the influence from students' secondary school experience; and the education plan after graduation from secondary school. The framework of the theoretical model called the Hossler – Gallagher Model, lists three steps in students' postsecondary education plan decision process:

1. Predisposition: whether students decide to continue their education after graduating from secondary school.
2. Search: if students decide to continue their education, they will have a search process to collect information and decide to which type of tertiary education institution they will apply.
3. Choice: make the decision and implement it.

The factors that affect the decision process for step 1, predisposition, includes socioeconomic status, students' education achievement, ethnicity, gender, parents' education expectations, students' secondary school quality, the subjects and modules students take in secondary school, and the activities that students were involved in secondary school (Hossler and Stage, 1992). In this thesis, these three steps will be changed as follows:

1. Predisposition: whether students decide to study abroad
2. Search: students search and collect information and decide to which destination country they will go to and which destination university they will apply.
3. Choice: make the decision and implement it.

Through interviewing respondents, the decision-making process of predisposition would be reviewed. The thesis explores the factors that influence international students to choose to study abroad from beginning. Steps 2 and 3 were explored through using both qualitative and quantitative data. These data provided a deeper insight into the factors

influencing international students'' choices of destination countries and universities. The Hossler – Gallagher Model was helpful to this research to develop the theoretical model and to design the quantitative and qualitative data collection.

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) also explored international students' foreign study decision-making process and their model had three stages. In the first stage, students decide between studying in the home country and studying abroad. In this stage, push factors from their home country can influence the decision. Once students decide to study abroad, pull factors will make one of the host countries more attractive and suitable than the other options in the second stage. During this stage, push factors have little influence and pull factors begin to influence more on the final decision. In the last stage, the pull factors associated with destination education institutions, such as universities and colleges, will influence students' final decision. The pull factors, such as the destination education institution's reputation, ranking in the world, teaching, and research facilities could make one education institution more preferable to others. There may also distinctions in the range of courses, international teaching programmes, quality of staff, innovation level, information technology level, and marketing promotion such as overseas agents and advertisements (Mazzarol, 1998; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2012).

Based on those models from previous researches and studies, this research selected the factors that will be helpful to answer research questions, and decided the econometric model. By using this three-step model, step two showed how international students made the choice of foreign study and step three showed the final choice that they made, which is known. Drawing on these methods, this thesis analysed all three steps in international students' decision-making process, to explore how and at what level push and pull factors, investment and return on education, and parental involvement impacted on the foreign study decision. The thesis used bivariate and multivariate analysis to analyse the quantitative data. Qualitative thematic analysis was used on qualitative data.

3.3. Sampling Method and Data Collection Method

This study used questionnaires and interviews to collect data and information. This research method design is called mixed methods (Greene et al., 1989; Morse, 1991; Creswell and Clark, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 2014). Mixed methods research design includes both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single research or study (Jick, 1979; Greene et al., 1989; Morse, 1991; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Creswell and Clark, 2007; Johnson et al., 2007; Greene, 2008; Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 2014). The method provides the characteristics and advantages of both qualitative and quantitative data as a methodology to serve the research purpose rather than simply collect two types of data, quantitative data and qualitative data (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2010). The quantitative research instrument included closed-ended questions about behaviours, attitudes, and opinions (Creswell and Clark, 2007). One of the most common quantitative data collection methods is a questionnaire. The qualitative research instrument included open-ended questions which usually involve respondents or participants in individual interview or group interview (focus group) (Creswell and Clark, 2007). Mixing two different types of data-gathering techniques provides a clearer and better understanding of the research question than either of them individually (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

3.3.1 **Mixed Methods**

Mixed methods approaches to research are based on pragmatism. The philosophy of pragmatism is to prioritise the research question, in the other words, choose specific data, either quantitative or qualitative data, to answer specific research question or sub-question rather than only use one single type of data to try to answer the research question (Mertens, 2014). Mixed methods approach fits the research purpose and provides data to support. Additionally, it is easy to implement which is important to this thesis.

Mixed methods approaches are influenced by factors such as the timing of data collection, weighting of quantitative and qualitative data, the level of mixing, and the specific theory,

structure and requirements of the research (Creswell and Clark, 2007; Greene, 2008; Creswell, 2009). Timing of data collection means whether collect quantitative and qualitative data concurrently (at the same time) or sequentially (in different phases) (Creswell, 2009). According to specific research requirements, researchers could treat and analyse both types of data equally (*i.e.* no priority is given to any type of data) or unequally (*i.e.* one type of data, quantitative or qualitative data is given priority on collection and/or analysis) (Creswell, 2009). This is a research priority decision (Morgan, 1998). Researchers may make the decision based on conceptual or theoretical factors (Morse, 1991), the suitability of the data collection method (Morgan, 1998) and/or practical conditions (Creswell et al., 2003). The level of mixing is also influenced by the specific researchers' questions (Creswell, 2009).

Researchers could choose to conduct both types of data gathering concurrently, then transform the data sets and merge them so that the data can be compared and contrasted (Creswell, 2009). Researchers could also use the mixed methods by integrating quantitative and qualitative data sets. In this situation, researchers prioritise one form of data and uses the other form of data to validate, check and clarify (Creswell, 2009).

This thesis uses mixed methods, as quantitative and qualitative data is required to answer the research question, adopt and/or validate the hypothesis (Creswell, 2009). The quantitative data can help to build up the dependent and independent variables to identify the relationship between variables and test the hypothesis (Creswell, 2009). Moreover, through using scale and ranking questions in the questionnaire, the strength of different factors' influence on students' foreign study decision will be clearly displayed. It would also be easy and convenient to compare strength of different factors' influences. The qualitative data could detect their behaviours, attitudes, opinions and reactions towards certain factors and/or influence. It could help to expand the explanation (Creswell, 2009) and may bring in new ideas and perspectives. Mixed methods merges them during data collection, transformation, analysis and/or interpretation. Each single or multiple stage, could help to provide a more clear and completed answer to this research.

Even though mixed methods approaches have limitations, such as being more time-consuming and more resource-intensive than other methods, and requires knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative methods, it is the most suitable data collection method for this research. In order to explore the factors that influence international students' decision-making process, either quantitative data or qualitative data solely would not be adequate to find the deeper insight. Using mixed methods to collect both sets of data would provide information to analyse push and pull factors, investment and earnings on education, and parental involvement's impact on different stages of decision-making process.

3.3.2. Triangulation Design of Mixed Methods

Creswell and Clark (2007) and (Ivankova and Creswell, 2009) identify four types of mixed methods approaches: triangulation design, embedded design, explanatory design and exploratory design.

Triangulation design, also called concurrent triangulation design (Creswell, 2009), is the most well-known method of the four mixed methods designs, which the other three are embedded design, explanatory design and exploratory design (Creswell and Clark, 2007; Ivankova and Creswell, 2009).

Embedded design mixes the quantitative and qualitative data in two different levels in one or two phases that one type of data is embedded in the other type of data's methodology framework (Creswell et al., 2003; Creswell and Clark, 2007). If one type of data is not sufficient to answer the research questions, it would be necessary to bring in different types of data (Creswell and Clark, 2007). In this method, one type of data supports the other type of data. Generally, the embedded design's primary data is quantitative, and the qualitative data is supportive (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

Explanatory design which includes two stages (Creswell and Clark, 2007). This design's idea is to use qualitative data to support or explain original quantitative findings

(Creswell et al., 2003). Explanatory design suits researchers who must use qualitative data to explain or illuminate the significance of quantitative data, and any outliers and surprises from the original quantitative findings (Morse, 1991). Generally it is quantitative research followed up with qualitative research (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998), or the use of the respondents' characteristics from quantitative research as a standard to guide qualitative data collection in the second stage (Creswell et al., 2003).

Exploratory design also includes two stages (Creswell and Clark, 2007). Different from explanatory design, exploratory uses qualitative method to build up or develop the quantitative method design (Greene et al., 1989). It is a qualitative-oriented design which is suitable for the following situations, unavailable research instruments or measurements, has important variables which need to be analysed quantitatively but variables are unidentified, or has no theory to guide the research (Creswell, 1999; Creswell, 2004; Creswell and Clark, 2007).

The first stage of exploratory design is qualitative data collection and analysis, and followed by the quantitative phase (Creswell and Clark, 2007). In the qualitative phase, the researcher collects and analyses data so develop the research instrument, identify the unknown variables or begin to test the theory (Creswell and Clark, 2007). This design connects the qualitative stage with the quantitative stage to answer the research question, It gives priority to qualitative methods (Creswell and Clark, 2007). It is easy to describe, explain, comply, and form the research (Creswell and Clark, 2007). It not only suits single research, but also applicable to multi-stage research (Creswell and Clark, 2007). Moreover, it highlights the qualitative part of research with support from quantitative data so that make the research result more acceptable (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

The mixed methods design could also be categorised as pragmatic and transformative (also called emancipatory design, and each of them has two sub categories, parallel and sequential) (Mertens, 2014). Triangulation design, which this thesis uses is in the category of parallel pragmatic mixed methods design. The brief is shown below:

Table 3.2 Mixed Methods Designs		
	Pragmatic Mixed Methods Design	Transformative/ Emancipatory Mixed Methods Design
Parallel	• Collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data to answer research question • Two types of data are collected in the same time phase or with a small time lag	• Research targets on change at any level from person to political • Gives priority to value-based and action-oriented measurements • Uses parallel data collection and analysis
Sequential	• One type of data builds up the base for the other type of data • First phase, the researcher formulates the question and collects and analyses data in the second phase in order to provide research question's answer. The second phase could also be used as proving or disproving first phase's inferences	• Similar target with transformative/emancipatory parallel method • Data collection and analysis share similarities with pragmatic sequential method

Source: (Mertens, 2014) Page 309

As triangulation design combines the advantages of quantitative and qualitative data, in order to serve the research purpose, the researcher can compare and contrast between the two types of data to address the research question (Morse, 1991; Creswell and Clark, 2007). This approach involves gathering both types of data concurrently and analysing them with equal importance (Creswell and Clark, 2007) which means there is no priority given to any one type of data. The data collection and analysis of the two types of data are concurrent and separate which could help the researcher to understand and validate research question. The merging of two types of data happens in the data transformation and interpretation stage (Creswell and Clark, 2007). This method is direct and intuitive which is suitable for researchers not familiar with mixed methods; it is also an efficient method which collects two types of data in one phase; collecting and analysing two types of data separately could allow the researcher to choose suitable and appropriate methods and techniques to implement (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

Based on what mentioned before, choosing a design of mixed methods mainly depends on timing, weighing and mixing (Creswell, 2009). The timing of data collection in this thesis was concurrent. The data collection period was 3 months (August 2015 to October 2015) as international students began to arrive in August and for the first two months they would have less pressure and be more willing to attend the survey (questionnaire and interview.

Under this circumstance, concurrent data collection would be more effective and efficient in comparison with sequential data collection. Concurrent data collection gathers data in the same time period which saves time for the research. The weight of quantitative and qualitative data were the same. Both of them were equally important to the research. The quantitative data collection method provided data to test and validate the theory and the qualitative data collection method provided information to explain participants' behaviour, attitude, and opinions, and to examine the research questions from a different perspectives. Both types of data were mixed during the transformation and interpretation stages. Additionally, triangulation design is suitable to researchers who are new to mixed methods, which was also helpful to this research considering the lack of experience of using mixed methods. Considering these three conditions, triangulation design would be the most suitable.

The reason that the research did not use explanatory design was that it uses quantitative data to build up the base and then collect qualitative data to gather in-depth information. (Creswell and Clark, 2007) As this research's survey was sent by email anonymously, it would be hard, even impossible to know who the respondents were and then follow-up to collect qualitative information from them. In the other words, the participants that attended the interviews or focus groups may not have answered the questionnaire. Testing different samples in two phases may result in divergence and false "surprise"/outliers. Moreover, quantitative data collection and analysis may mislead the direction of qualitative data collection. Therefore, collecting in-depth qualitative

information after collecting and analysing quantitative data is not appropriate in this situation.

Exploratory design was not suitable for this research either. Exploratory design collects and analyses qualitative data firstly in order to help to build up the research instrument and identify variables to test (Creswell and Clark, 2007). The qualitative data explores the information and develops the second stage, quantitative data collection (Creswell and Clark, 2007). This research's survey, quantitative data collection method, were developed based on literature from the areas of investment and return on education, push and pull factors, and parental involvement. Abundant information and analysis from the literature identified variables to test by using quantitative data collection method. Therefore, using qualitative data to build up quantitative data collection was not necessary in this situation. Moreover, explanatory design, exploratory design, and embedded design (concurrent data collection) all give priority to one type of the data, quantitative data or qualitative data. As it was preferred to give both types of data equal importance, triangulation design was more suitable compare all the strengths of mixed methods designs.

This thesis used triangulation design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in the same time period. This method gives both types of data the same priority in data collection and analysis. One of the thesis contributions is it would be the first one to use triangulation design of mixed methods for data collection in the areas of push and pull factors, investment and return on education and parental involvement. Moreover, this thesis focuses on international students, which is different from previous research that focuses on one country, or one continent.

Here are three tables that summarise the methods used in other studies in the area of push and pull factors, investment and return on education and parental involvement. Based on the tables, most research used single method rather than mixed methods to collect data. For research using mixed methods, the researchers all use two-phase mixed methods to collect quantitative and qualitative data at different stages of data collection.

Table 3.3, Table 3.4 and Table 3.5 summarise the methods used in other studies. In research that explores push and pull factors impact on international education (Table 3.3), Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), Pimpa (2003;2004), Li and Bray (2007) and Bodycott (2009) use two-phase mixed methods design for the research. Their research focuses on Asian areas, such as China (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002), Hong Kong (China) and Macau (China) (Li and Bray, 2007), Taiwan (China) (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002), Thailand (Pimpa, 2003, 2004), India and Indonesia (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002).

In research that explores parental involvement impact on international education (Table 3.4), Williams et al. (2002), and Bodycott and Lai (2012) use two-phase mixed methods design to collect data. Schnabel et al. (2002) use one-phase strategy, however, the research only focuses on two countries. Other research focuses on America and Germany (Schnabel et al., 2002), Britain (Williams et al., 2002)and China (Bodycott and Lai, 2012). In the area of investment and return on education, there is a paucity of research using mixed methods design to collect data (Table 3.5).

This thesis used triangulation design of mixed methods to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in the same time period. This method would give both types of data the same priority on data collection and analysis. One of the thesis contributions is that it is the first study to use triangulation design of mixed methods for data collection in the areas of push and pull factors, investment and return on education and parental involvement. Moreover, this thesis focuses on international students, which is different from previous research which focuses on one country, or one continent.

Table 3.3 Specifically Push and Pull Factors Methods used in Researches and Studies of International Education		
Study	Researcher Focus	Summary of Methods
Mazzarol and Soutar (2002)	Exploring the push and pull factors that affect international students' foreign study destination choice	• Mixed method, two-phase strategy • Researchers build up the research in four countries from 1996 to 2000, there are 2,485 respondents. • Research methods include questionnaires and focus group interviews. • Focus group interviews were implemented before the questionnaires were conducted. Students from different levels who enrolled in schools, vocational education and training programme (VET) and other programmes participated in focus group interviews. • The questionnaire was sent to the students who enrolled in secondary school, language programme, and VET. • Research focused on China, Taiwan (China), India and Indonesia.
Pimpa (2003)	Exploring the factors that impact Thai students' foreign study decision	• Mixed method, two-phase strategy • Researcher used focus group interviews and questionnaires to collect data. • There were three focus groups with 9 participants each. • Research used snowball sampling technique to access more participants after the first focus group. • Questionnaire was distributed to 1,600 international students who pay full tuition fees, and there were 803 responses.
Pimpa (2004)	Exploring the family influence of Thai students on their foreign study decision	• Mixed method, two-phase strategy • In the research, the researcher only mentioned using questionnaires and focus group interviews. • 803 out of 1600 people answered the questionnaire. 373 of them were male, and the rest of them were female.

Li and Bray (2007)	Exploring the push and pull factors, and the motivations that encourage Chinese mainland students study in Hong Kong (China) and Macau (China)	• Mixed method, two-phase strategy • Researchers conducted questionnaire and interviews for research purpose. • The questionnaires were distributed in 2002/2003, and the interviews were conducted in the year after • There were 385 questionnaires distributed and 323 of them were returned with valid responses. • 28 students attended the interview.
Bodycott (2009)	Exploring the factors that influence Chinese mainland parents and students' foreign study decisions	• Mixed method, two-phase strategy • Researcher conducted questionnaires and focus group interviews for answering the research questions. • Questionnaires were sent to 251 parents and 100 students from mainland China • There were five focus groups. Each of the groups had 5 parents and 5 students. 25 parents and 25 students attended the focus group interview.

Poh and Townsend (2006)	Exploring international students' perceptions and expectations' similarities and differences between live in Australia and Asian home countries.	• Single method (qualitative). • Researchers used the qualitative method because of most research in the area was quantitative in nature. In order to collect in-depth information, the researchers decided to use interviews only. Researchers also believed that the strength of interviews were to bolster the quality of research. • There were 10 ethnically-Chinese, international students interviewed.
O'Brien et al. (2007)	Exploring Indian students' foreign study decision-making process	• Single method (qualitative), but used two different types of qualitative methods. • Researchers chose to use unstructured interviews and focus group interviews to collect information. • Sample population was 67. 4 students attended unstructured interviews. There were 2 focus group interviews and each of them had 5 people.
Lee (2013)	Exploring the factors that influencing Taiwan students foreign study destination	• Single method (quantitative). • Researcher used questionnaires to collect information. • 90 questionnaires were sent and 72 responses were returned. Of these 72 people, 32 people were male and 40 were female.
Kusumawati (2013)	Identifying and exploring the factors that influence the education decision of students who are in Indonesian public universities	• Single method (qualitative). • Researcher used semi-structured interviews. 48 participants who studied economics and business in Indonesia attended the interview.
Zeeshan et al.	Exploring the	• Single method (quantitative).

(2013b)	motivations for international students choosing to study in Malaysia	• Researchers used questionnaires to collect information. • Researcher distributed 116 questionnaires to two private universities in Malaysia and there were 110 responses.

Table 3.4 Specifically Parental Involvement Methods used in Researches and Studies		
Study	Research Focus	Summary of Methods
Schnabel et al. (2002)	Parental involvement's influence on students education in U.S.A. and Germany	• Mixed methods, one-phase strategy • Researchers used questionnaires or interviews collect information from students in every few years until they are 25 years old. Meanwhile, researchers also accessed students' school records, such as test result and class enrolment. • 1425 American students were enrolled in the sequential research and 1755 German students were enrolled in the sequential research.
Williams et al. (2002)	Parental involvement's influence on education	• Mixed method, two-phase strategy • Researchers used telephone surveys (England only) to collect information from households that had children enrolled in primary or secondary education. Parents were randomly selected for interview. • 2019 British households were surveyed. 56% of these households attended the interview
Bodycott and Lai (2012)	Culture's influence on Chinese students cross-border high education choice	• Mixed methods, two phases • Researchers used quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) methods to collect data. • There were 95 Chinese mainland students who answered questionnaires in the first phase, and 24 of them participated in interviews in the second phase.
Sewell and Shah (1968b)	Exploring the influence from social class, parental involvement and education aspiration	• Single method (quantitative) • Researchers used questionnaires to collect data.
Carpenter and	Explaining Australian	• Single method (quantitative)

Fleishman (1987)	students' tertiary education plan and college enrolment	• Researchers used a two-stage cluster sampling method to build up the sampling frame. • The quantitative research included two stages. In the first stage, researchers used questionnaires to collect students' information, such as social life, post-secondary school plans and attitudes of tertiary education. In this stage, there were 1,208 valid responses and the response rate was 86%. The second stage happened two years later. Respondents were reached by mail or telephone; response rate in this stage was 77%.
Stage and Hossler (1989)	Explaining and exploring family's different influence on ninth grade students' tertiary education plan	• Single method (quantitative), two phases • Researchers used questionnaires to collect information from 21 high schools in the State of Indiana in America. Students and parents both received questionnaires to complete. • The first phase was questionnaires designed for students and parents separately. In the second phase respondents receive additional surveys for students and parents separately.
Lin and Fu (1990)	Compare children rearing among Chinese, Chinese immigrants and Caucasian-American parents	• Single method (quantitative) • Researchers used questionnaire to collect information from 138 children's parents. 44 of them were Chinese parents, 46 of they were immigrant Chinese parents, and the rest of them were Caucasian-American parents
Glick and Sahn (2000)	Parents' education, income and household structure's influence on West African country's children schooling choices	• Single method (quantitative) • Researchers chose questionnaires to collect information about education, income, assets and other relevant factors. • 1,725 households were surveyed in total.
Yeh and Bedford	Filial Piety	• Single method (quantitative)

(2004)		• Researchers used questionnaires to collect data. 73 students from Taiwanese secondary schools participated in the survey. Approximately 8.2% (63 students) responses were not valid.
Chow and Chu (2007)	Parental involvement and Filial Piety's influence on Chinese students' education achievement	• Single method (quantitative) • Researchers used questionnaires to collect information, such as, parental involvement, academic achievement and motivation. • 299 responses were received.
Duanmu et al. (2009)	Exploring the factors that influencing on international students' education achievement. Comparison is between Chinese students and other non-Chinese international students.	• Single method (quantitative) • Researchers used questionnaires. • Research was conducted in School of Management in University of Surrey. 93.1% of 435 students in this school were international students, 178 of them responded to the questionnaire.

Table 3.5 Specifically Investment and Return on Education Methods used in Researches		
Study	Research Focus	Summary of Methods
Dustmann et al. (2011)	Exploring career search network	• Single method (qualitative), two phases • Researchers used observation to collect data for the study. In the first phase, researchers observed the sample population (workers) in each selected firm. In the second stage, they were allowed to follow workers and their colleagues.

3.3.3. Literature of Survey Design

3.3.3.1. Push and Pull Factors

As push and pull factors' influence on Chinese students' decision-making process is also a part of the research, based on previous research (Wilkins et al., 2011), both push and pull factors have external influences on students' behaviour and decision-making process, and different students react to the same factors in different ways. The push and pull factor model can be highlight students' concerns about their situation.

A questionnaire which includes 40 items was used to test the push and pull factors' influence. All the items used seven-point rating scale ranging from 1 which means not true or not important at all to 7 which means important or extremely important (Wilkins et al., 2011). The questionnaire also contained two open questions which asked participants to identify the advantages and disadvantages of studying in a branch university or college in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) rather than study in the university or college in the UK, Australia or other countries. The questionnaire was completed on paper or online.

In the questionnaire, collected data included participants' gender, nationality, and level of education. They were also asked questions about ease of life and study (location of university or college, distance between UAE and origin countries, access to job, study programme, social life, close to friends and/or families, language difficulty), and country's attraction (safety, pleasant to live and/or study, and culture and lifestyle difference) (Wilkins et al., 2011). They sent questionnaire to the students in their capstone project, which is a type of final year subject at an international branch university campus in the UAE, by sending a survey link on Facebook and sending emails with questionnaire to students. The questionnaire distribution process lasted for five weeks. However, this method was not perfect, as sending questionnaires online or by email resulted in a low response rate; only 320 usable responses were obtained (Wilkins et al., 2011). Also, as their sample was only for students studying in international branch

university in the UAE, there was no comparison group to compare how different push and pull factors work.

In the research, they used the push and pull factor model to analyse international students' choice of destination countries, and this research still focused on the decision and consideration about branch universities and colleges (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011). Their pre-study included twelve individual interviews with international students, and each interview was in a semi-structured format, and lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. All interviewees were international postgraduates aged between 22 and 35. There is no doubt the sample does not represent international students' decisions and study choice in branch universities and/or study abroad, however, based on their research purpose, the sampling method and interview did not influence their study much. After the pre-study, they used questionnaires to examine the research questions. The whole questionnaire survey period lasted 3 weeks and 160 international students participated.

In the questionnaire, there were 35 items to test exploratory factors. To avoid systematic error, all questions were divided into three topics, decision to study abroad (9 items), decision about destination country (10 items), and decision about education institution (16 items). For each item, they used a four-point scale to test the level of agreement/disagreement or importance for international students. A further 20 questions were used to test the international students' views about available choices of destination countries, branch universities and colleges. The final question examined students' choices and considerations about whether they would consider study in branch universities and colleges, or study abroad after they finish current programme or graduated.

In the literature studying family influences on Thai students' foreign study decision, the researcher used two-phase mixed methods including a qualitative phase with focus group interviews and a quantitative phase with questionnaires, to collect information (Pimpa, 2003). There were three focus group interviews organised and each of the groups had nine participants (Pimpa, 2003). The first group of participants were recruited from

relevant students' associations, and the rest of them were recruited using the snowball technique. The researcher moderated all the focus group interviews (Pimpa, 2003). The interview contained introduction to the study, general information collection (such as age and gender), foreign study choice and family influences discussion.

The questionnaire was for Thai students who were undergraduate, master or doctoral degree students in Australia. In total there were 803 valid responses for analysis (Pimpa, 2003). The questionnaire included 30 scale questions that covered the five factors mentioned above. Respondents could choose from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strong agree) to answer each of the questions (Pimpa, 2003). The method used for data analysis was one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) in order to test, investigate, compare and contrast the differences on their perspectives of the family influence on the foreign study decision between students from different levels of education (Pimpa, 2003).

Similar to that study, a study on the motivation of students from mainland China to study in Hong Kong and Macau also used questionnaires and interviews to collect quantitative and qualitative data (Li and Bray, 2007). The interviews were conducted to collect information about students' perspectives, attitudes and motivations for choosing to study in Hong Kong or Macau (Li and Bray, 2007). In total there were 28 students interviewed, 18 of them were in Hong Kong and the rest were in Macau (Li and Bray, 2007).

Bodycott (2009) also used two-phase mixed methods to collect data. Questionnaires and focus group interviews were both used as survey methods. 251 parents and 100 students from mainland China (Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou) completed the survey (Bodycott, 2009). The literature suggested using two-stage survey strategy which incorporated the use of quantitative methods (questionnaires) and qualitative methods (focus group interviews) to collect data (Moschis and Moore, 1979; Golafshani, 2003; Bodycott, 2009). The quantitative method was used to collect statistical information including foreign study destination information and its sources, factors influencing foreign study attitude and factors that influence foreign study destination choice

(Bodycott, 2009). The qualitative method probed respondents thoughts, opinions, and attitudes towards different factors and their influences in the decision-making process (Bodycott, 2009). For the purpose of understanding the factors that influence the foreign study decision, the focus group interviews asked three main questions; reasons study abroad, their opinion of their ideal foreign study destination, how to one institution from many education institutions (Bodycott, 2009). The focus group interviews were conducted in Mandarin. 25 parents and 25 students were interviewed, and interviews were recorded, transcribed, collated and analysed (Bodycott, 2009). The study used ANOVA to identify and analyse parents' and students' different attitudes and opinions towards push and pull factors (Bodycott, 2009).

3.3.3.2. Parental Involvement

In order to examine the relationship between parents' education achievement and their children's education aspirations and achievements, researchers collected data through questionnaire surveys and telephone interviews to increase the response rate in the study and follow up (Sewell and Shah, 1968a). The sampling frame of the questionnaire survey and telephone interview included all secondary school senior students in Wisconsin public, private and parochial secondary schools. The follow-up study was conducted in about one-third of the target students.

In the variable measurement and test section, parents' education was divided into two groups, father's education and mother's education (Sewell and Shah, 1968a). Each of them was measured by a six-category scale ranging from elementary school to graduate work. The independent variable, intelligence, was secondary data which was collected from Henmon-Nelson Test of Mental Ability which is administered to all junior students in high schools in Wisconsin. Based on the data, intelligence is labelled by high, middle or low (Sewell and Shah, 1968a). Perceived parents' encouragement indicated parents' attitude to their children's education plan. In the questionnaire, it was a four-item scale question which included four options; parents want children to study in college, parents do not want children to study in college, parents do not care about it, and parents do not

allow children to study in college. The independent variable, college plan, measured whether the student, as a senior student in the secondary school, planned to study in college, university or another choice. College attendance and college graduation were based on whether students attended and gradation from college. Students were classified as high if they attended college and/or they graduated from college, and all others were classified as low.

In order to test the influence of family on male and female students' postsecondary education plan, the researchers used questionnaires and telephone interview survey methods to collect data (Stage and Hossler, 1989). Their data was collected from 21 secondary schools in Indiana. Meanwhile they used a cluster sampling method to select schools to represent different categories or groups under their model. Ethnic group and socioeconomic status were independent variables (in Step of Predisposition). They posted a package to ninth-grade students from the targeted schools and their families. Each package contained two surveys, one for the student and one for one of their parents. They sent a reminder package one month later. The four questionnaires covered areas including demographics, family background, secondary school experience, and parents' education expectations. To those who did not return any surveys, they adopted a telephone interview method to collect data, and compared the data gotten through this method to the data gotten through the questionnaires to see whether there is a significant difference between them. Based on their research, there were a few significant differences between the data collected from questionnaire and data collect from telephone interview.

For the questionnaire, they used a seven-category scale ranging from completion of grade school to postgraduate degree. A ten-category scale was used to measure total family income, which ranged from $10,000 to above $50,000 and the difference between each category was $4,999. Both parents' education expectations for students, and students' own education aspirations were measured by a six-item scale ranging from uncertain/high school diploma to professional degree. Students' education achievements are mainly focused on their secondary school education achievement, as they were high school

students. They were measured using a five-category scale ranging from an A grade to an F grade. Students' education achievements were self-reported rather than collected from schools and/or teachers. High school activities were measured by a four-point scale ranging from very active to not active. They used data collected from questionnaires and telephone interviews which are mainly focused on the factors in the predisposition stage to analyse variables' impact on the search stage and the choice stage.

Williams *et al.* (2002) used mixed methods design to collect quantitative and qualitative data. They conducted a telephone survey which reached 2,019 English households. In the questionnaire, they used closed questions to collect general information. Ordinal questions and interval questions were used to test parents' attitude towards certain parental involvement behaviour, such as visiting the teacher, and ensuring children go to school on time. Moreover, they used categorical questions to identify parents' perspectives, such as their responsibility and school's responsibility on children's education. They also used open questions to gather information about parents' opinion, such as their involvement of children's school life. In the second stage, they used some of the questionnaire's questions in the interview to collect qualitative data.

Schnabel *et al.* (2002) used questionnaires and interviews to collect information on parental involvement on education in America and Germany. In the questionnaire, they used ordinal questions, scale questions and open questions to collect data about parental involvement. The ordinal questions gathered general information such as parents' education level. Scale questions were used to test students' psychological variables, such as their perspectives towards a certain course, and exams. Parents' occupations were asked as open questions and then coded by using Standard International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI) (Ganzeboom et al., 1992).

Bodycott and Lai (2012) used mixed methods design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. In the research, they used questionnaires in Mandarin to collect

information from 98 students to explore the factors influencing their decision-making. In the second stage, they interviewed 24 students to collect qualitative information.

The research used interviews to collect qualitative data. Those studies' sampling methods and data collection methods will be helpful to decide the sampling frame, sampling method and data collection in this research.

This research analysed students' decision to study overseas. The original data was about the education and earnings (or earnings expectation) of students. Previous studies mainly used secondary data from PSID (Panel Survey of Income Dynamics), US Census, SIE (Survey of Income and Education), Population Censuses, BIS Surveys of Consumer Expenditures, the periodic Current Population Surveys of the Census Bureau, the Michigan Surveys of Consumer Finances, PISA (Programme for International Students Assessment), EOPP (the Employer Opportunity Pilot Project), and NLSY (the National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth).

Because of the paucity of secondary data relating to international students' decisions to study abroad, it was necessary to collect primary survey data from international students. Using an original survey instrument, data was gathered about students and the factors affecting their decisions on foreign study, both decisions to study abroad or not to study abroad. The design of the survey instrument was informed by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks from the literature.

The questionnaires used closed questions (for general question: gender, age group, education level, region belongs to, etc), scale questions (to test the importance of the assumed factors) and open questions (to explore the factors that influence the decision-making process). The questionnaire was administered electronically through online survey system.

The target population was all international students who were studying in Ireland, and the sample frame was all international students who were studying in University College Cork. The sampling technique was convenience sampling.

Additionally, this research used additional secondary data from the China Statistics Office, China Education Department, and Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ireland. The secondary data was mainly used to make comparisons between different time periods and also to display the variation in Chinese students' overseas study after 1978, when the Reform and Opening-up Policy was initiated.

3.4. Quantitative Survey Methodology

As mentioned in literature review, this research mainly focused on three theories, investment and return on education, push and pull factors, Xiao Qin Effect (Filial Piety) and parental involvement. These theories were tested by surveys.

The following sections will explain the survey methods used in the research.

3.4.1. Identify Quantitative Survey Method

The following table summarises 4 common survey methods' and their advantages and disadvantages of each.

Table 3.6 Four common Survey Methods Summary Table		
Survey Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Mail Survey	• Cost saving (compared to telephone surveys and in-person interviews) • Easy to use • Enough time for both researcher and respondents • Professional impression • Respondents anonymity • Less chance of researcher bias • Able to use complex and multi-type questions	• Long period of data collection as it takes respondents time to reply and post the answer back • Reduced researcher involvement in the questionnaire competence • May have unfinished questionnaires • Interview selection bias
E-Survey	•Cost saving • Time saving •Easy to use • Shortened data collection process •Enough time for both researcher and respondents • Convenient to do follow-up work •Respondents anonymity •Able to use complex and multi-type questions • Able to set up focus groups	•Uncertain response rate •May have unfinished questionnaires •Self- selection bias
Telephone Survey	•Shortened data collection process •Lower cost (if compare to in-person interviews) •Respondent anonymity •Can guide respondents to follow all instructions •Can guide respondents to finish the survey	•Reduced researcher control in the survey process •Reduced visual aids •Unable to use complex and multi-type questions • Reduced credibility •Selection bias
In-depth Interview	• Flexibility and less structured compare to questionnaire, i.e. researcher is able to explain and give details about questions •Able to use complex and multi-type of questions to probe and explore Able to contact with difficult-to-reach population, i.e. patients in hospital and criminals •Can guide respondents to follow all instructions •Can guide respondents to finish the survey	•Expensive •Bias caused by researcher, such as selection bias •Stressful survey process • Reduced anonymity • Has possibility that respondents are less cooperative or refuse to cooperate

Source: Veal (2006)

After consideration all of these advantages and disadvantages, and considering the research question, web-based survey, or E-survey, was used. Also, the geographical distance of respondents made E-surveys more appropriate, *i.e.* the geographical distance between China and Ireland and the time difference in two different time zones, E-surveys were more convenient and easy to be use compared with mail surveys, telephone surveys and interviews. One of the disadvantages of E-surveys, in addition to those mentioned in the table, was the difficulty in obtaining respondents' email address.

In the E-survey category, there are four types of approaches (Veal, 2006). The first type of E-survey is called hybrid email/mail, which uses an attached file to send questionnaires to respondents, and asks respondents to answer the questions via hard copy and return it by mail (Veal, 2006). It requires respondents to print the questionnaire to finish and post it, which gives the respondents more work to do than traditional mail-out survey. It may cause a low response rate, as it is a complicated process. The second type is called the hybrid email. This method also sends respondents email with a questionnaire as an attached file, though hybrid email asks respondents to send an email with the finished questionnaire back to the researcher (Veal, 2006).

The third version of E-survey is a fully electronic E-survey. It involves sending a link to questionnaire via email to specific respondents (Veal, 2006). Similarly, the final type is a fully electronic survey, which asks respondents to complete a question via a hyperlink and submit it online (Veal, 2006).

In these four types of E-survey, the fourth type of survey method is the most suitable to this research. For instance, the problem of unfinished questionnaires, an online questionnaire submission system can ensure respondents finish all the questions and when it finds the respondent misses any questions, the system will remind the respondent that there are unanswered questions remaining. Factors which may reduce the response rate are reduced, as the fully electronic system does not need respondents to upload a file and send email.

Self-administered questionnaires (Buckingham and Saunders, 2004), of which the electronic survey is one type, suffers from low response rates. Buckingham and Saunders (2004) suggest several methods to deal with it. These methods were adopted in this thesis. First relates to letter design. The cover letter is the first impression of the questionnaire to respondents, it is crucial to let them know the survey's purpose and that their answers will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Moreover, assuring respondents that their information and questionnaire answers will be anonymous makes them more comfortable when they answer some sensitive questions. For that purpose, it is essential to add instructions to clarify some questions about personal privacy and information protection. Third is reducing the questionnaire's length. Long questionnaire can discourage completion. For this reason, question design and questionnaire layout are essential. In a later section, the design of the questionnaire and questions will be discussed.

3.4.2. Empirical Research Design

It was essential to decide how to draw a sample frame. A sample represents a proportion of the absolute target population, and an accurate and reasonable sample can help to make a good estimation of the target population (Buckingham and Saunders, 2004).

Initially, the thesis designs collected data from Chinese students who studied in Ireland and in China, and their parents through four sets of questionnaires. The purpose was to compare the difference in the foreign study decision-making process between the Chinese students who studied abroad and those who studied in their home country. Moreover, the data was also used to compare the difference on parents' perspective and opinions towards foreign study. Data was designed to be collected through online questionnaire. Four sets of questionnaires were all available on Survey Monkey (E-survey website). The questionnaires to Chinese students who studied in Ireland and their parents were sent to Chinese students in Economics Department, UCC by email. The questionnaire to Chinese students and their parents were sent to a Chinese university which had a partnership with the Economics Department, UCC. However, due to difficulties in obtaining permission to distribute questionnaires in the Chinese university, there was an

increased time delay, increased financial cost, for example the fee to host the questionnaire on Survey Monkey, and the very low response rate from China, it was not possible to compare the difference in the foreign study decision-making process between Chinese students studying in Ireland and studying in China.

Due to the failure to access Chinese students who were studying in China, it was impossible to compare and contrast the differences in the decision-making process between the Chinese students who studied in Ireland and those who did not study in Ireland. Therefore the research question and design were modified. The new research question broadened to explore the factors that influence the decision of international students to study abroad. Particularly, this research will focus on the effect of ex-ante earnings expectations, parental influence and push and pull factors on that decision. However, this created a selection bias. The new sample group design only included students who decided to study abroad so a comparison with students who did study abroad could not be made. Additionally, only testing the international students who have decided to study abroad may introduce bias as the factors that were explored to have impact on the foreign study decision may only be relevant to Ireland and/or Cork.

Moreover, as the research designs collected information by using questionnaires and interviews without providing any incentive, such as voucher or products, this meant the information that came from respondents who are confident about their decision to study in Ireland, hold a positive opinion of studying in Ireland, or had a positive experience of studying and living in Ireland. The respondents who may regret or unhappy with their foreign study decision, holding negative opinion of foreign study or had/having negative study and living experience in Ireland may not volunteer to answer the questionnaire and/or attend interview. In this case, it created another selection bias. The information collected in this research may not represent the whole group of international students and the factors that impact on the foreign study decision-making process may not be fully reviewed. The factors that are important to the international students who are unhappy with their foreign study decision may not be found in the research.

The sample design was changed from testing Chinese students studying in Ireland and studying in China and their parents, to the international students studying in UCC. Therefore the thesis will use one questionnaire (Appendix 1) and interview to collect quantitative and qualitative information from respondents respectively.

UCC was selected as a sample because it represents the proportion of international students in the university sector in Ireland. In the university sector, 10% of the students who were enrolled into full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses are international students (HEA, 2014a). 7% of them were from Non-EU countries. In the same academic year, 10% of UCC's students who were enrolled into full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses were international students. 9% of them were from Non-EU countries. Moreover, UCC has the third highest number of international students in all universities in Ireland (HEA, 2014a). UCC also has the highest number of Non-EU students in all 7 universities in Ireland. Compared to all HEA-funded institutions' percentage of international students in the total full-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses, UCC's percentage of international students in all full-students are representative of the overall level.

Moreover, selecting UCC as sample allowed convenient access and support from UCC offices. To ensure participant privacy and confidentiality, the questionnaire's link on Google Forms, cover letter and questionnaire instructions were sent to the International Education Office, UCC first and was then sent all the international students. By this means, the questionnaire reached 1,600 international students in UCC.

For the interviews, convenience sampling was used to reach respondents. The sample frame was also UCC. In addition to the representativeness of international students in the university section of Ireland, UCC was chosen as the sample frame because of its familiarity to the researcher, ease contacting potential respondents, convenient location. Firstly, in UCC different schools have their common areas for lectures. The researchers' familiarity with UCC meant that a wide range of respondents could be approached for

interviews to maximise respondent diversity. Moreover, the ability to bring interview questions sheets, information sheets and consent forms to recruit respondents on the UCC campus made it easier to explain the research's aim, and answering any questions that the respondents may have had before they agree to participate. Students would be more likely to trust and to help a researcher from the same university as them.

Recruiting respondents in UCC campus also allows convenient interview arrangements. Arranging the interview venue on-campus would save the respondent travel time. The UCC campus has group discussion rooms that are readily available. It ensures respondents' privacy can be protected and that environmental sound would not interfere with the interview recording. As these group discussion rooms and other meeting areas in UCC campus are free and easy to access, it saves time and research cost.

3.4.3. Survey Design and Questionnaire Rationale

There were three areas of the thesis are covered in the survey. First was push and pull factors, a group of factors that includes personal factors, parents' and peers' factors, destination country's factors, destination university's factors and future development factors. This theme was tested by a series of questions that asking respondents how important those factors are and their relative ranking.

Second was investment and return on education, and was based on students' and their parents' decision-making process of the investment and expected return on education. This was tested by variables such as tuition fees, living cost and expected monthly salary after graduation.

Last was parental involvement, the parents' influence and involvement in their children's study and career plan. This research tested this theme by asking students to evaluate the level of influence they have from their parents, and asking parents to evaluate the scale of impact they think they give to their children.

The three areas of this study mostly relate to respondents' (students' and parents') attitudes. Most people's attitudes are only observable through their speech and behaviour, which are hard to perceive (Oppenheim, 1992). As the author describes, attitude shows and can be strengthen by an individual's belief, but it also contains emotional factors which may cause a certain behaviour tendency (Oppenheim, 1992).

Attitude can be very emotional, without any rationality, reasonability, and logic and sometimes it can be a basic need or self-defence towards other attitudes from the other people (Oppenheim, 1992). The investment in children's education can be seen as an investment in the parents' life after retirement. It can also be understood as an input and contribution from parents following the Xiao Qin theory (Filial Piety), or a gentle type of parental involvement via financial support. Qualitative data suggests parents may see the financial support as an investment for their life after retirement. Two respondents reviewed that their parents would like them to go back to home country after graduation. Another respondent reviewed that parents' requirements would be included in their future career plans. The respondent would like to work in the country where her parents would be happy to live. The interview results will be discussed subsequentially in Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad. As the sample group didn't include the parents of international students studying in UCC, it is difficult to tell which interpretation of parents' investment on education would be the correct one without parents' answers on this question. Current data only explore these factors from international students' view. This is a limitation of the research.

It is difficult to isolate one attitude from another and explore the personal value and potential attitude from the superficial ones which require questions to be designed more specifically and accurately to probe the respondents' attitudes. There are several types of questions that appear in questionnaires that are commonly used to explore respondents' opinions (Patton, 2002).

First are questions about experience and behaviour. These types of questions can focus on respondents' daily routine, and/or give the answers to a suggested situation based on their experience and behaviour patterns (Patton, 2002). In the final version of the questionnaires, the questions in this category, such as Question 11, 18, 19, 20, and 24 in Appendix 1, explored international students' experience and behaviour in searching for information about their destination university and earnings expectations. An example is given here is question 11.

11. Please indicate which member(s) of your family that had contact with foreign study consultant agencies. (Please tick one):
    a. Self
    b. Father
    c. Mother
    d. Both of parents
    e. Both parents and you
    f. Didn't use a foreign study constancy agency.
    g. Other (Please Specify) _____

Opinion and value questions are based on respondents' values, opinions, and judgements on actions, theories, ideas, behaviours, and even some social activities, current events, and in assumed situations (Patton, 2002). This category asks attendants to answer what they think could be their direct or indirect, apparent or potential, targets, intentions, requirements and expectations (Patton, 2002). The answer is more subjective because of individuals' values and opinions. In the questionnaire in this thesis, questions that ask respondents to mark and rank the options and to tick the box based on their views were in this category such as the question 10 and 12 in Appendix 1 shown as below:

10. Please base on your experience/thought to tick the box of following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
My father believes the benefits of foreign study for my career outweigh the cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes the benefits of foreign study for my future education outweigh the cost	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes I should study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father will support me if I study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes my family will support me financially.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes the benefits of foreign study for my career outweigh the cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes the benefits of foreign study for my future education outweigh the cost	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes I should study abroad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother will support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

me if I study abroad. My mother believes my family will support me financially.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. What the extent that your father influences your decision of foreign study? (1: no influence, 2: little influence, 3: some influence, 4: influence a lot, 5: my father made the decision, 6: not applicable) Please tick one.

1	2	3	4	5	6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

The third category were feeling questions, which are often confused with opinion and value questions (Patton, 2002). However, unlike opinion and value questions, feeling questions reflect respondents' emotions, such as happy, angry, fear, and confidence (Patton, 2002). There were no questions in the questionnaire focusing on respondents' emotions and feeling, however, they were covered in the interviews in order to collect the qualitative information, such as students' levels of satisfaction with their foreign study experience and living experience.

Knowledge questions are very common in surveys. They require respondents to answer questions based on facts or knowledge they have. These are more objective compared to opinion and value questions, and feeling questions (Patton, 2002). For example, in this questionnaire, questions 27 and 28, about students' current tuition fees and living cost, ask respondents to answer based on their factual information.

27. How much is your current annual tuition fees in Ireland?

a) Under €12,000
b) €12,001 - €13,000
c) €13,001 - €14,000
d) Above €14,000

Sensory questions are about what respondents see, touch, taste, which is related to their senses (Patton, 2002). There were no questions in this category in the questionnaire. However, this type of questions was used in the interview. During the interview, if respondent talked about their impression or experience of UCC, Cork, and Ireland, then sensory questions may were used in this circumstance.

Background/Demographic questions are commonly used in questionnaires. They are normally in the beginning of the questionnaire, as it is easy for respondents to answer general questions about their age, gender, education background, career type, and family background (Patton, 2002). Respondents will complete these questions quickly and once they have started the questionnaire may be likely to complete it. Questions 1 and 2 focused on students' background and demographic information.

1. What gender are you?
    a) Female
    b) Male

2. Which country do you come from?

a) China

b) U.S.A.

c) Ethiopia

d) Mexico

e) Other (Please Specify) _____

Moreover, these categories of questions can be adjusted for multiple time frames: past, present and future. This make the questions suitable for surveys (Patton, 2002). An example is question 10 (Appendix 1), which focused on students' opinions and value about their parents' influences in their decision-making process in the past.

10. Please base on your experience/thought to tick the box of following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
My father believes the benefits of foreign study for my career outweigh the cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes the benefits of foreign study for my future education outweigh the cost	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes I should study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father will support me if I study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

My father believes my family will support me financially.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes the benefits of foreign study for my career outweigh the cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes the benefits of foreign study for my future education outweigh the cost	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes I should study abroad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother will support me if I study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes my family will support me financially.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 22 part E (future career and education plan) is an example of a question about opinions and values relating to future actions.

22. Please based on how much each of following factors in each category influence on your decision to study abroad to tick the box.

E. Future careers and education plans

		No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	Available job opportunities in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Opportunities for further study in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Immigration prospects in the destination country after graduation	☐	☐	☐	☐

The questionnaire was designed based on the literature survey in previous chapters. The following sections explain the rationale for the design of the questionnaires and the questions in the questionnaires. The final questionnaire is contained in Appendix 1.

There were 28 questions in the questionnaire. There were two sections; one related to general information on the respondents and one related to the foreign study decision-making process.

Questions 1 to 5 asked for respondent's demographic information, including gender, nationality, degree status, current level of education, degree major and title. The reason respondents were asked these questions was to explore whether there was a difference between students with different characteristics and their perception on the factors that influence foreign study decision and perceived influence from parents.

Question 6 and 7 asked about respondents' parents' careers. This firstly could indicate parents' income level. Secondly, it could also illustrate their parents' attitude towards their child's foreign study decision. Parents who earn more will have higher expectations for their children's educational achievement and future development compared with parents from relatively lower-paid occupations. Moreover, parents who are in academic area or professional position will be better able to influence their children to attain higher education achievement. However, from the collected questionnaire results, it was difficult to categorise parents' careers and also hard to indicate their income level. Some respondents stated their parents' careers as "manager" or "freelance". In the future research, the question will be changed to multiple choice questions for more usable answers.

Question 8 and 9 asked respondent's parent's education levels. In this case, the *a priori* expectation is that both parents' education levels influence their children's university education (Abada *et al.*, 2009). Fathers' education background has a stronger influence on students' aspiration than mothers' does. However, mother's educational attainment has a stronger influence on education attendance rates (Yang, 1981).

The second section's questions were concerned with education investment and return elements, the effect and extent of parental involvement. In this section, depends on the question's content, and choice of not applicable will be provided.

Question 10 focused on parental involvement in the decision-making process. This question asked the respondent about his or her parent's attitude towards foreign study. It also asked in what ways that fathers and mothers think their children could benefit from foreign study. It identifies two categories of benefits, benefits for future career and benefits for future education. These two benefits are very common to see in the research in push and pull factors of foreign study (McMahon, 1992; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Bodycott, 2009; Pan, 2010; Wilkins and Huisman, 2011; Wilkins et al., 2011). The benefits from foreign study on career and education have been discussed in Chapter 2. As

these questions focused on international students perception of parents' opinions on foreign study, two of the very common benefits of foreign study were selected. In the interviews, based on parents' involvement in foreign study decision, in-depth questions will be used to probe the reasons that parents believe their children should study abroad.

It also asked the respondent whether his or her parents believe the respondent should study abroad. In the other words, do the respondent's father and mother have a positive attitude toward foreign study even when they are not so sure what benefits foreign study could provide for their children. Additionally, it shows how much the parents' attitude influences the decision-making process and the final decision.

Moreover, it asks whether the respondent's parents will support the respondent financially if he or she studies abroad, and whether parents believe the extended family will provide financial support for this decision. These two sub-questions explore whether parents' affect the final decision through their ability to provide financial support and it may also explain the respondents' final decision. Pimpa (2003;2004) discussed that family financial support has strong impact on Thai students foreign study decision. Kusumawati (2013) also discussed that financial support is a common way that parents are involved in the decision-making process. As the question tries to explore parents' attitude and involvement on international students' decision to study in UCC, financial support was reasonable to include in the question to discover whether parents were willing to bear the cost of foreign study regardless of whether international students had a scholarship/fund/grant.

Question 11 asked who has been in contact with foreign study consultant agency (or agencies). This also shed light on the level of parental influence. Contact with foreign study consultancy agencies is an information collection process, it also shows who in the family is the information collector, and through this role it may be inferred who has a strong influence on the decision-making process. Bodycott (2009) discussed that most of the students interviewed revealed their parents contacted and negotiated with the agents

and institutions. In this process, parents focused on the questions and factors that they thought were important to their children's foreign study decision. Inspired by Bodycott (2009), this research asked who in the family was responsible for contacting foreign study agencies. It could reveal parental involvement in the foreign study decision process. It also could show the popularity of using foreign study agencies which would be helpful for university marketing promotions in international education in the future.

Questions 12 and 13 asked respondents to indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 the extent of his or her father's and mother's influence on the foreign study decision. A value of 1 suggests they have had no influence, while a value of 5 indicates that the respondent's father and/or mother made the decision. Previous literature shows that parental expectations and encouragement were linked to individual student attendance at tertiary educational institutions (Soper, 1971; Tillery, 1973; Gilmour Jr et al., 1978; Russell, 1980; Conklin and Dailey, 1981; Murphy, 1981; Ekstrom, 1985; Carpenter and Fleishman, 1987; Stage and Hossler, 1989). Inspired by these research, questions 12 and 13 ask how much international students' parents were involved in the foreign study decision. In the interviews, based on the respondent's answer, in-depth questions will be asked to explore how the parents involved in the foreign study decision-making process.

Question 14 asked the respondent his or her expected occupation after graduation. This question was included because expected career will indicate the expected returns to the decision to study abroad. Given the additional cost of foreign study, it is expected that those respondents that study abroad may have higher expectations for their future career. However, the questionnaire answer on this question has similar problem with the questions on parents' occupation. Respondents' answers were difficult to categorise, for example, some respondents only provided the field or area they were interested in working in the future. Question 17 asked the respondent's expected earnings in the future, which had the same purpose as question 14. In future research, question 14 would be removed from the questionnaire.

Questions 15 and 16 asked respondents to rate the extent of their parents' influences on their career decision. This indicated how much his or her parents were involved in future career plans, shedding light on the extent of parental involvement in the respondents' career choice. Inspired by the previous research on parental involvement in education, questions 15 and 16 were designed to ask parents' involvement on their future career. This was also a question to probe parents' involvement in international students' decision-making process. Further questions were asked in the interviews based on the respondents' answers in order to explore whether the parents' involvement in the career decision could explain the major/subject they are learning, future education and migration decision. Interviews' results showed that some respondents' career decision was made by their parents which explained why they were studying the current subject in UCC. Some respondents also revealed that their parents made the decision about after their graduation, they needed to return to their home countries. The interviews' results will be discussed in details in Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad.

Question 17 asked the respondents his or her expected monthly salary in the first job after graduation. This was inspired by previous research (Brown, 1989; Mincer, 1989; Blundell et al., 1998) (Polachek, 2008). Similar to Question 14, this question was expected to indicate the extent to which the decision to study abroad may be associated with higher expected return to that investment. Previous research indicated that there was a positive relationship between education and wage growth (Mincer, 1989; Polachek, 2008). The expectation here was that the higher the level of financial investment on education was, the higher level of return the respondent and/or the respondent's family expected. Question 17 also explored whether respondents expected higher than average income level in their home country as they expect a foreign degree would give them an advantage in the labour market. In the current research stage, this question's answer could only provide analysis of international students' investment and expected return on foreign education. Future research will include a follow-up survey to detect whether foreign qualifications and study experience bring international students advantages at work as they expected.

Question 18 tested whether the respondent did any research on earnings expectation, to shed light on the extent to which their expectations were evidence-based. Question 19 asked the respondent about their sources of information on salary expectations. Question 20 tests the factor /factors that influenced the respondent' earning expectations the most. The answer from this question can also test whether respondent's parents were involved in any stage of the future career plan.

Question 21 asked respondents to indicate the extent to which various 'pull factors' influenced his or her decision whether and where to study abroad. The factors identified in the question were selected based on the literature discussed in the previous chapter, which included the qualification being highly regarded by employers (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011), improved language skills (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011), better further education choice (McMahon, 1992; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002), more further education opportunities (McMahon, 1992; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002), more job opportunities(Pan, 2010; Wilkins and Huisman, 2011), better job opportunities (Pan, 2010; Wilkins and Huisman, 2011), and experience of living, studying and working with international students (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011). Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which he or she agrees (on a scale of 1 to 4) that each factor was important to their final foreign study decision.

Question 21 has covered the most common pull factors based on the previous literature. There was no "Other" option attached in this question. Even though providing an "Other" option in this question may get some other pull factors, it could cause confusion on the understanding and categorising factors. As push and pull factors could be the same factor, respondents may give the answer, "education opportunities" and without further explanation. It would be hard to tell whether the respondent meant foreign study as home country lack of education opportunities (push factor), or that destination country had more education opportunities (pull factor). Moreover, it would not be possible to determine why the "Other" option was important, at what stage of the decision-making process the factors worked and how they worked. By comparing the pros and cons,

excluding an “Other” option in Question 21 would reduce the burden of analysis without influencing the final results severely. To cover the push and pull factors in the research and exploring how the push and pull factors work in the decision-making process, the research also used interviews to collect qualitative information. It allowed for clarification of each factor’s role in the decision-making process and how they work differently in different respondents. It also could expose other new factors which may not have been included in the questionnaire.

Question 22 tested push and pull factors for five different categories which were inspired by previous literature discussed in Chapter 2. Question 22 used previous literature’s theories and framework to design each category’s factors to explore which factors would influence international students’ decision to study abroad the most and the least. The respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is no influence at all and 5 means influencing very much. Part A asks how much the language test and/or academic grade requirements influence on the respondent’s foreign study decision. The reason for these factors inclusion was that, before international students study abroad, they need to pass relevant language tests.

Part B includes the pull factors of destination universities. The subquestions were inspired and designed based on the previous literature, include destination universities’ advertisements (Mazzarol, 1998; Kusumawati, 2013), ranking (Wilkins et al., 2011; Kusumawati, 2013), scholarship/grant availability (McMahon, 1992; Spaulding and Olswang, 2005; O'Brien et al., 2007; Bodycott, 2009), majors/subjects availability (Lee and Tan, 1984; Mazzarol, 1998) (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011), societies and clubs, tuition fees’ (Mazzarol et al., 1997) (Shanka et al., 2006; O'Brien et al., 2007; Bodycott, 2009) (Zeeshan et al., 2013b), and their attitude towards international education (Bodycott, 2009).

Thomas and Webber (2009) states that peer group also has an effect on students’ education decision-making process. Therefore, Part C included questions to test parental

and peer's influence on students' foreign study decision. The subquestions included parental involvement's influence on the respondent's decision which were inspired and designed based on the literature discussed in Chapter 2, parents' recommendation (Mazzarol et al., 1996; Mazzarol et al., 1997; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Pimpa, 2003; Bodycott, 2009), parents' permission, parents' link (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Bodycott, 2009), parents' income affordability (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Pimpa, 2003) friends' link in the destination country (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Bodycott, 2009), and friends' recommendation (Mazzarol et al., 1996; Mazzarol et al., 1997; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; O'Brien et al., 2007; Bodycott, 2009).

Part D tested the destination country's pull factors. The subquestions here covered destination country's climate (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Bodycott, 2009), lifestyle (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Bodycott, 2009), crime rate (Bodycott, 2009), social safety (Bodycott, 2009), racial discrimination (Bodycott, 2009), environment (Mazzarol et al., 1997), tolerance in society, social life, geographical distance from home country (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Bodycott, 2009) (Kusumawati, 2013), culture (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Zeeshan et al., 2013b), and home country community existence (Zeeshan et al., 2013b).

Part E tested their future career and education plans. The three subquestions were pull factors in the destination country, which are about job opportunities (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Kusumawati, 2013), further education opportunities (Kusumawati, 2013), and immigration prospects (Mazzarol, 1998; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2001; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Bodycott, 2009). This section showed how much each of the pull factors about future career and education plan influenced respondent's foreign study decision.

Question 23 asked respondents to do an overall ranking on the five categories of push and pull factors mentioned before to see which category had the greatest impact in the decision-making process.

Question 24 tested the source of information on the destination university. Respondent's answer here also showed what information sources could influence them. This question was inspired by previous research (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Bodycott, 2009), that one of six pull factors influencing international students' decision of destination country was their knowledge of the destination country. Question 24 used the idea (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Bodycott, 2009) of the pull factor framework to explore how respondents obtained the information of the destination university which could be helpful in UCC's future marketing promotion in international market. In the interviews, this question was asked and based on respondents' answer, further questioning probed whether their knowledge of destination university/country would influence their destination.

Question 25 tested whether the respondent had a scholarship/grant to support their study which was inspired by pervious research (McMahon, 1992; Spaulding and Olswang, 2005; O'Brien et al., 2007; Bodycott, 2009). Question 25 aimed to explore whether respondents had financial support besides parents. If they did not have any scholarship/grant, parents' financial support may have played an important role in their foreign study decision-making process. If they did have a scholarship/grant, they may have had more control on the foreign study decision. Moreover, scholarships/grants could be a factor influencing on their choice of destination university. This question was also included in the interview.

Question 26 tested whether studying aboard influenced their future occupation plan. This question was designed to work with question 14. As a lack of information on international students' future career and difficulties in coding their expected occupation, this question's answers were not included in the quantitative data analysis. In the future research, questions 14 and 26 will be adjusted to be more convenient for respondents to answer and follow-up surveys will be necessary.

Questions 27 and 28 aimed to test the theory of investment and return on education (Mincer, 1974, 1989). Tuition fees and living cost were the basic financial costs of

foreign education (Mazzarol et al., 1996; Mazzarol et al., 1997; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Shanka et al., 2006). The answer here was compared to the answers of questions 14 and 17. The options were designed based on the information from Education In Ireland (, Education In Ireland (2012b) and University College Cork Fees Office (2016). Question 28's options were designed based on Education In Ireland (and Irish Council of International Students (2012).

Interview questions design will be discussed in the section of qualitative survey methodology.

3.4.4. Pilot Test Survey

A pilot test was carried out as the thesis intended to survey both Chinese students study in Ireland and study in China, and their parents. However, it proved it is too difficult to complete. Surveying students studying in China prior to travelling was attempted but there were instrumental issues regarding access. The issues became obvious during pilot-testing.

However, the pilot-testing process provided very useful feedback to improve the questionnaire and survey. Even though some of the pilot test's feedback could not be used for the final questionnaire, as it was designed for international students rather than only for Chinese students, there still some feedback which were helpful for improving the final questionnaire.

A version of the questionnaire was sent by an online electronic survey system which used the four sets of questionnaires designed based on the stages before. Moreover, as was mentioned in the previous sections, the online electronic survey system was anonymous and it reminded respondents if they any questions were unfinished. In the pre-test survey, the response rate of the questionnaire of Chinese students who studied in Ireland was 100%, the response rate of their parents was 40%, while the response rate of the questionnaire of the Chinese students who studied in China was 80%, and the response

rate of their parents was 40%. These data showed that the weakness of the questionnaire was low response rate and it was highlighted in the parents' questionnaires.

The variation in the response rate between Chinese students and their parents may be due to a few reasons. Firstly, it relied on students to give the survey to their parents. If there were any questions relevant to the survey, parents may have asked their children first rather than contact the researcher. Low response rate may have been caused by students not giving their parents the survey's link, or failing to explain and answer the questions. The low response rate may also have been caused by parents not being interested in the research and the questionnaire, or they might have been busy working. They would have a higher opportunity cost if they chose to answer the questionnaire rather than doing something else compared to the students. They also may have thought that the questionnaire was too long and would take too much time to complete. In the questionnaire, there was a question asks about family income. Parents may have been reluctant to answer this question compared to students.

The length of each questionnaire was less than 30 questions, except the questionnaire of the parents whose children study in Ireland, which contained 33 questions. Approximately 10 to 20 minutes were required to complete each survey based on the feedback from the respondents. Also in the feedback, there were a few problems that the respondents mentioned, which were guided the questionnaires improvement.

At a question about the influence on foreign study choice, one respondent suggested to clarify if the choice was about foreign study but not the choice of destination country. In the question about the impact of parents' and friends' link in the destination country, one respondent suggested to clarify the meaning of the two phrases.

Before pre-test survey, Question 23:

	C. Parents/Peer	No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	Parents' recommendations	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Parents' permission	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Parents' link in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Friends' link in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Friends' recommendations	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Parents' earnings	☐	☐	☐	☐

After pre-test survey, Question 22, Appendix 1

	C. Parents/Peer	No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	Parents' recommendations	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Parents' permission	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Parents' link in destination country (which includes parents' relations and acquaintance in the	☐	☐	☐	☐

	destination country, such as family members, friends, colleagues, etc.)				
4	Friends' link in destination country (has friends in the destination country)	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Friends' recommendations	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Parents' earnings	☐	☐	☐	☐

In the questionnaire for the parents of the students who studied in Ireland, the advice and feedback were of a similar nature. In the questionnaire for Chinese students who studied in China, nearly all respondents mentioned that the family income's lowest level should be set lower. One of the purposes of this question was to uncover the reasons that Chinese students chose to study in China rather than study abroad. The family income's lowest level was based on the annual tuition fees in Ireland converted to Chinese Yuan, based on public data (Education In Ireland, 2012b; Irish Council of International Students, 2012). Those families whose annual family income was lower than the lowest level sets in the questionnaire meant they were not capable of affording the foreign study's tuition fees. This gave indirect evidence of why the students did not study abroad. Respondents' feedback on the income level question showed that family income was a sensitive issue. This resulted in the question being removed from the final version of questionnaire.

One respondent mentioned that it was better to clarify and specify the meaning of the scale 1 to 5.

	Before Pilot Test	After Pilot Test
Question 13, Appendix 1	What is the extent that your father influenced your decision of foreign study? (1 is no influence, 5 is very much) Please tick one. 1 2 3 4 5 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	What is the extent that your father influenced your decision of foreign study? (1: no influence, 2: little influence, 3: some influence, 4: influence a lot, 5: my father made the decision) Please tick one. 1 2 3 4 5 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

This feedback was very important and helpful to the final questionnaire. The final version of the questionnaire can be seen in appendix 1 and is explained in the section of survey implementation.

3.4.5. **Survey Implementation**

The final version of the questionnaire was sent by email with a link to Google Forms to ensure respondent anonymity and privacy, and to make the reply process more convenient. Respondents received an email with a cover letter and a link to the online survey system.

The reason for using Google Forms was its functionality. Google Forms has many types of question formats. It was easy to use, free, and has no time limitation.

The design of the questionnaire was completed on 02 April 2015. It was sent by the International Education Office, UCC on 14 September 2015, and a follow-up was sent to

students again on 30 September 2015. The quantitative data collection stage was finished on 01 October 2015.

The final results were collected in Google Forms, analysed and displayed in the data analysis section.

3.5. Qualitative Research Methodology

Qualitative research collects detailed information of meanings, values, attitudes, emotions, beliefs, behaviour, relationships and other aspects of participants (Mack *et al.*, 2005; Veal, 2006). Mack *et al.* (2005) stated that, relative to quantitative research, qualitative research could help to better understand and interpret a situation than quantitative research results. It aims to describe the data's variation, individual participant's information (such as their experience and attitude) and/or a group of participants' information (such as values, beliefs and norms), and to explain the relationships between variables.

Mack *et al.* (2005) argued that qualitative research's methods are more flexible than quantitative methods. The questions in qualitative research are generally open-ended questions which could provide the researcher with large amounts of information. Participants do not simply answer "Yes" or "No", or select from given options, but could also give details such as what would they choose in certain situations, why they would make such a decision and how they would assess it. Moreover, qualitative research could reveal information that is unexpected, and find differences in answers of participants from different ethnic, culture and education background.

The method includes interviews, focus groups, and observation. Qualitative research methods could be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured based on the research purpose (Veal, 2006).

Among all of the choices of qualitative research methods, in-depth interviews were the most suitable choice for this research. Veal (2006) mentioned that in-depth interviews are conducted by one interviewer (researcher) and joined by one or a few of interviewees (the respondents). Based on respondents' answers, an interviewer could choose to probe with deeper questions, skip questions when the situation does not apply to the respondent, or ask for more details (Veal, 2006). Among the literature cited in the thesis which use mixed methods design, over half of them used interviews to collect qualitative data.

Using interviews as a method to collect qualitative data avoids the situation where a respondent is afraid that his/her answers are judged by the others, for example, in focus groups.

Interviews could avoid one person's answer leading or redirecting the answers. In this type of situation, other respondents may not want to disagree with the first respondent's answer, so that their answers may not reflect their real experiences.

Using interviews is also convenient for the interviewer and interviewee as only two people are involved. It is easier to arrange times and locations for one-to-one interviews which suit both sides, compared to the logistics of organising focus groups.

The interviews focused on two of the three categories of factors that influence foreign study decision; push and pull factors, and parental influence. Earnings expectations and education was easier and more practical to test using a questionnaire.

3.5.1. Sampling Method

As the target population was all the international students studying in UCC, and access to the student register was not possible, a convenience sampling method was most suitable. Veal (2006) explained that convenience sampling is a method that uses the people or organisations which are convenient to the researcher. In order to recruit participants, students are approached on campus to ascertain if they were international students and, if

so, if they would agree to participate in an interview. During August and September 2015, students were approached inside and outside UCC Boole Library, UCC Boole Basement, Brookfield Health Science Centre (BHSC), and Western Gateway Building (WGB). The reason for choosing different locations was to get a diverse range of students. Students who studied in BHSC were more likely from the College of Medicine and Health. Students who studied in WGB were more likely to be from the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science. UCC Boole Basement held an international students' welcome activity in the start of September. There was a higher possibility of meeting international students there and asking them to participate.

3.5.2. Interview Design and Question Rationale

In the interviews, the first questions related to participant's personal information, such as age, gender, nationality, major and subject, year of study, education level (undergraduate or postgraduate), and how long the participant had been in Ireland. The questions' aim to build up the participant's profile and facilitate analysis of the results across key characteristics.

The second question asked the participant why they decided to study in Ireland. This question could be separated into two categories, the reason the participant choose to leave her home country and the reason the participant choose to study in Ireland, Cork, or UCC. The former focused on push factors from the home country and the latter focused on the pull factors to the destination country. Based on participant's answer, it would be easier to understand the sequence of the decision, for example whether they chose the destination country first or they chose the university first.

The third question was about their parents' attitude to foreign study. Depending on the participant's answer, further sub-questions such as, whether parents' attitude of foreign study changed before and after the participant went abroad, could help to understand the difference in parents' attitudes and the reasons for the change. The other sub-question, how parents were involved in the decision-making process, could provide the information

on the different ways parents were involved in the participants' decision-making process. The types of involvement could be financial support, helping the participant to collect relevant information (such as information about destination country or destination university), or negotiating with foreign study agencies, or destination university with or without participants being present.

The fourth question asked how the participant chose the destination country and destination university. This question probed the pull factors specifically. In this question, the main focus was on the factors of the destination country or destination university that attracted the participant. Push and pull factors may be relative, such as the home university's lack of laboratory equipment being a push factor, destination university's high quality and sufficient laboratory equipment being a pull factor. In this question, the participant's answer may also shed light on the push factors involved in the decision-making process.

The fifth question asked participant's impression about Ireland, Cork, and UCC. The answers may have referred to climate, lifestyle, or any other factors. This question aimed to probe a participant's impression about the destination country and destination university to identify the destination country's pull factors. The sub-questions asked the participant's source of information about the destination country, destination university, and whether they felt the information that they received accurately represented what they experienced in Ireland and UCC. The sub-question explained the participant's channels to get information and how they felt about the information quality, and how they felt when they first got the information. Moreover, where they got the information and who provided the information may also provide information on parents and peer factors mentioned in the quantitative data section. This question could also help to provide strategic recommendations.

The next question asked about the participant's current study experience in UCC and experience living in Ireland. It aimed to understand which factors were important to the

participant's study in UCC and their life in Ireland. It helped to identify pull factors of the destination country and destination university. It also provides useful information for strategic recommendations. Respondents may have forgotten some details as they have been in Ireland and Cork for a long time, or have not found out the factors that are important to their foreign study and life as they had just arrived. In the interviews, there was a question asking respondents how long they had been in Ireland, to detect for the possibility of missing details and lack of time to build up experience. By using follow-up questions, the factors that influenced respondents' study and life experience could be discovered. Some factors and details may be missing. For respondents who had arrived in Ireland recently, this question may not explore the factors influencing their study and life experience fully.

The next two questions were about the participants' future plans. First, the participants were asked about their future plans after graduation, such as further study or work. Then the participants were asked where they would like to pursue further study or work, and why. By asking participants' future plans, it was possible to see whether the previous push and pull factors changed after graduation compared to when they decided to study abroad. It also helped to explore the new push and pull factors of further education and career. Next the participants were asked about factors they would consider when they decided their future careers. The factors could be salary, working environment, future promotion opportunities, and other factors. This question sought to discover the factors influencing the participants' career decisions. It also show participants' expectation of future earning levels (without the interviewer giving potential anchor earning level, such as was done in the questionnaire).

The last question asked whether the participant was aware of any factors that influenced their foreign study decision that were not mentioned in the interview. This question was a quick review of previous questions about their foreign study decision and also probed any new factors.

As the researcher had no experience in conducting interviews, it provided a limitation on this research. The first few interviews may not have explored as deeply compared to later interviews. The "burn in" process may have caused some factors to have little or no chance to be explored compared to others. Some respondents also may not have been followed up on their replies on certain factors due to lack of interview experience.

3.5.3. Qualitative Research Ethics

Mack *et al.* (2005) pointed out that research ethics is very important in qualitative research. It concerns the interaction and relationship between the researcher and participant. There are four principles that need to be followed during qualitative research. First is respecting the participant. The research is based on the participant's vulnerability. The participant is free at any stage to withdraw from the interview and erase any data about them. Second is minimising the risk, such as psychological risk, to the participant. All of the data gathering was conducted in accordance with UCC research ethnical guidelines (Research At UCC).

To ensure that the participant understood the purpose of the research, their role and rights in the research, an information sheet and consent form were used. The information sheet explained the purpose of the research. The information sheet gave a brief description of the reason the participant was being asked to join, the voluntary nature of participation, information confidentiality, usage of their data, disadvantages of participation, and the person/people who would have access to the data. At the end of the information sheet, the researcher provided contact details for participants to contact for queries. The consent form was for the participant to sign after she has read and understand the documentation. The information sheet and consent form were based on a UCC research information consent form template from the Department of Applied Psychology in UCC (School of Applied Psychology).

3.5.4. Interview Implementation

As mentioned, this research uses all UCC international students as the sample frame for qualitative data collection. In order to recruit participants, students were approached on campus to ascertain if they were international students and, if so, if they would agree participate in an interview. Between August and September 2015, students were approached inside and outside UCC Boole Library, UCC Boole Basement, Brookfield Health Science Centre (BHSC), and Western Gateway Building (WGB). The reason for choosing different locations was to get a diverse range of students. Students who studied in BHSC were more likely to be from the College of Medicine and Health. Students who studied in WGB were more like to be from the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science. UCC Boole Basement held international students' welcome activity at the start of September. There was a higher possibility of meeting international students there and asking them to participate.

All the interviews were conducted in a private area within these locations, such as discussion rooms and canteens in the locations above, or at places that the respondents felt comfortable, such as their office or laboratory. One respondent agreed to an interview using Skype from their home at a time suitable to them. This gave participants privacy when they answered the questions. Participants could feel free to speak in the interview. Once participants agreed to the interview, they were asked to read and sign the information sheet and consent form (Appendix 2). The interviews were audio-recorded and notes were also taken during the interviews. Participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time and could withdraw permission to use their data and information within two weeks of the interview.

During the interview, if the participant had a private phone call or friends visited, the interview record was paused and subsequently continued.

All interviews were transcribed and then analysed using NVIVO (version 11), a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software package.

3.6. Sample Size and Response Rate

The total number of international students to whom the survey was sent online survey was 1,600. The final number of responses received was 216. The response rate was 13.5%. Nearly three quarters (73.15%) of the respondents were female. University College Cork provided disaggregated data on the structure of the international student cohort for 2015/16 academic year. For commercial reasons this data could be reported. The data, however, provided a basis for comparing the sample structure with the composition of the population, to assess its representativeness. Based on the information from UCC, the highest proportion of students in the population were Asian followed by the EU. and then the US. The proportion of students in the study sample from these regions were very similar to the proportions in the population. On other parameters, compared to the UCC population data, the sample data is over-represented by the College of Business and Law (smaller proportion of international students in the population compared to the sample) and underrepresented by the College of Medicine and Health (larger proportion of international students in the population compared to the sample). The sample data also was over-representative of undergraduate students and underrepresented postgraduate students (including PhD students).

Most of the questions' response rate was over 90%. The question about respondents' degree status (study for degree or study as visiting student) had the lowest response rate (85.6%). The questions about gender and parents' highest education level had the highest response rate (100%).

The interview included 9 main questions. Sub-questions were asked based on participants' answers. Each interview lasted around 30 minutes. 26 participants out of 45 students studying in UCC participated in the interviews. The response rate is 57.8%. Some of students did not participate as they did not match the research requirements. The total number of interviews used for the thesis were 24. One participant asked to withdraw their information after the interview and the other participant was found to be not eligible during the interview.

8 of participants were male and the others were female. 16 of the participants came from Asia, 4 students came from Africa, 3 students were from the Americas and 1 student was from Oceania. Of these 26 students, 11 were undergraduates, 9 were masters students, and the rest of them were PhD students. 9 participants studied in the College of Medicine and Health (CMH); 6 participants studied in the College of Business and Law (CBL), 5 participants were from the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science (CSEFS) and the rest of them were from the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science (CACSSS). In comparison to UCC's data on the composition of the cohort of international students, the qualitative data notably underrepresented students from the *EU*, and notably over-represents students from *Africa and Oceania*.

As there was no data from UCC to show international students' gender distribution, it was impossible to tell whether the respondents were representative of the whole sample of international students in UCC. However, based on the response rate for quantitative and qualitative data, it is reasonable that the final results over-represent female international students in UCC. Based on the quantitative data results, 48.6% of all respondents were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*, of which 76.0% were female. 46% of all respondents were from College of Business and Law. In this group, 81.3% were female. 27% of all respondents were from College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science, of which 81.1% were female. Quantitative results over-represent the students in College of Business and Law and large portion of students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* may explain why questionnaire has more female respondents than male respondents.

It is difficult to tell in the questionnaires why students from College of Business and Law and students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were over-represented as all questionnaires were collected anonymously. In the interview process, students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* may be over-represented because of selection bias. Asian students may also have felt more comfortable being interviewed by a researcher from the same continent as them.

As the quantitative data and qualitative data underrepresented and over-represented certain group of students, it may influence the generalisability of the data analysis results to all international students and to all universities in Ireland. For example, on the questions related to parents' attitude on foreign education and expected return on education, results will be influenced by the groups are over-represented, and the perception of groups are under-represented may be overlooked.

All the transcripts were typed. In total, there are 283 pages and 88,517 words. Due to size of the transcripts, they were not included in the appendix. All transcripts are available if requested. An example of the transcription is provided at Appendix 19.

3.7. Limitations of Research Methodology

The first limitation of the research methodology was sampling. This thesis used UCC as a sampling frame to select respondents for quantitative and qualitative data. Other universities should be cautious in applying the results.

Compared to UCC's population data, quantitative results show that the data notably over-represented the College of Business and Law (CBL) and under-represented the College of Medicine and Health (CMH). Moreover, the quantitative data under-represented postgraduate students. Qualitative results also over-represented the College of Business and Law (CBL). It also notably under-represented students from the *EU* and over-represented the students from *Africa and Oceania*. It is reasonable to expect that the results will be influenced by the groups who are over-represented, and the perception of groups who are under-represented may be overlooked. Moreover, as there was no data from UCC to show international students' gender distribution, it was difficult to tell whether the respondents were representative of the whole sample of international students in UCC. The gender distribution may influence the final results of quantitative and qualitative research and influence the analysis.

The next limitation is that the research only surveyed the international students who were studying abroad. As it was not possible to get access to the Chinese students who were studying in China, there was no information from international students who were in their home countries, that are in the early stage of foreign study decision-making process. It means the thesis lacks the data to explore which factors weigh more in the early stage of decision-making process and which factors were more important when international students' decisions were made. There was also no data from the students who decided not to study abroad so it would be impossible to compare the two groups of international students.

Another limitation was that there was no information from parents. Literature suggests that parents can influence their children's education decision. The thesis did not include any questions for parents. The reason that the thesis did not design survey questions for parents was because respondents answered the questionnaires and/or interviews anonymously. This made it is difficult to reach the respondents' parents. All the information related to parental involvement and Filial Piety (Xiao Qin effect) is all from international students' perspective. Therefore, the parents' perspective of their role in their children's decision-making process could not be compared. It would also be difficult to tell whether it was the parents who decided for their children, or whether the children felt they had to follow their parents' advice.

Another limitation was that the thesis explored the effect of earnings expectation's influence on the decision, however there was no follow-up question to collect the international students' actual earnings after graduation. Even though the thesis explored how expected earnings influence their foreign study decision, not having actual earnings made it difficult to test the actual return on their education.

The research was designed to collect information by using questionnaires and interviews without providing any incentive, such as a voucher. Thus, the information may mostly come from respondents who were confident about their decision to study in Ireland,

holding a positive opinion of studying in Ireland, or a positive experience of studying and living in Ireland. The respondents who may regret or be unhappy with their foreign study decision, holding a negative opinion of foreign study or a negative study and living experience in Ireland may not volunteer to answer the questionnaire and/or participate in the interview. This creates a selection bias. The information collected in the research may not represent the whole group of international students and the factors that impact on the foreign study decision-making process. The factors that are important to the international students who are unhappy with their foreign study decision might not be found in the research.

The next limitation was the design of questions in the interview. In the interviews, questions were asked about the participants' current study experience in UCC and living experience in Ireland. It sought to understand which factors were important to the participants' study in UCC and their lives in Ireland. It helped to identify pull factors to the destination country and destination university. It also provided useful information for the strategic recommendation. However, respondents may have forgotten details as they have been in Ireland and Cork for a long time, or have not found out the factors that are important to their foreign study and life experience due to their recent arrival. In the interviews, there was a question asking respondents how long they have been in Ireland which may have been answered incorrectly because they missed details or lacked the time in Ireland to build up experience. By using follow-up questions, research could find out the factors that influence respondents' study and life experience. Some factors and details may be missing as time. Also for the respondents who arrived in Ireland recently, the question may not explore the factors influencing their study and life experience fully.

In the questionnaires, there was a question that asked respondents' expected return of their foreign study after graduation. However there was no question related to the investment and return on education directly in the interview. The reason was that asking respondents their expected salary after graduation could be a leading question if they were provided with any anchor salary value. Respondents may also that they were being

judged and may answer with a salary lower than their actual expectation to show they were not arrogant, or a salary higher than their actual expectation to show they were confident about their skills and knowledge.

Another limitation of this research was the lack of experience of the researcher. The first interviews may have explored less information compared to the later interviews. The "burn in" process may have caused some factors to have little or no chance to be explored compared to others. Some respondents may not get follow-up questions on certain factors due to lack of interview experience.

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter explains research methodology, including quantitative and qualitative survey design, sampling methods, and question rationale. The research used mixed methods which collects and analyses both quantitative and qualitative data. Both data types were used because the both data types could compensate and support each other. Quantitative data collected through questionnaires could help to find the relationship between different factors and respondents' characteristics. Moreover, through different types of questions in the questionnaires, the strength of different factors' influence on respondents' foreign study decision could be shown. Qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews could not only uncover the factors influencing respondents' foreign study decision, but also explore why the factors are important to the respondents and how the factors influence the decision-making process. Moreover, interviews can uncover new factors which may not have been included in the questionnaire. Even though open questions in the questionnaire may have uncovered the new factors, in-depth interviews would give respondents chance to explain the new factors and help to find out why the new factors were important.

The research uses one type of mixed methods research, triangulation design (also called concurrent triangulation design) which collects and analyses quantitative and qualitative data at the same time. Triangulation design combines the advantages of quantitative and

qualitative data which allows comparing and contrasting both types of data. Moreover, it gives no priority to either type of data which is important to the research. As explained above, both quantitative data and qualitative data are important to the research. Giving priority to any of them may result in missing important information from the other data type. Additionally, previous literature has built up good theoretical frameworks for questionnaire design. There are potential problems with using interviews to test which questions should be included in the questionnaire. Firstly it may not be able to describe as many factors as previous literature has done. Secondly it may waste a very good chance to explore respondents' foreign study decision-making process rather than only use it to help to design the questionnaire. Using questionnaires to detect which factors should be explored in the interview is not practical either. As the questionnaire is sent to respondents by email, respondents answer the questionnaire by using a web link and the whole process is anonymous. It is impossible to track any respondent's identity. The factors that are important to the questionnaire respondents may not be important to the interview respondents which may cause divergence and false surprise. Therefore, triangulation design is the most suitable mixed method design for the thesis.

UCC was selected as the sample for this thesis as UCC's percentage of international students in full-time students was representative of the overall level in Ireland. UCC has the third highest number of international students in the 7 universities in Ireland. UCC also has the highest number of Non-EU students among all universities in Ireland. Moreover, choosing UCC as sample would allow access and support from UCC.

In the quantitative data collection stage, so as to ensure participant privacy and confidentiality, the questionnaire's link on Google Forms, cover letter and questionnaire instructions were sent to the International Education Office, UCC first and was then sent to all international students. By this means, the questionnaire reached 1,600 international students in UCC. In the qualitative data collection, choosing UCC as a sample frame would allow the researcher to reach respondents easily and efficiently. In UCC, different schools have their common areas on campus. The researcher's knowledge was utilised

recruit respondents from different areas of the campus to ensure a wide range of diverse student participated. Respondents could easily select the area that they were comfortable to meet for interview.

There were 28 questions in the questionnaire. The questionnaire covered the general questions which asked for respondents' gender, major, nationality, year of study, degree status (whether study in UCC for degree or as visiting students) and their parents' education level. It also covered questions related to push and pull factors of international education, investment and return on education, and parental involvement. The questionnaire used closed questions, scale questions and ranking questions to explore respondents' attitudes towards different factors' influence in the foreign study decision-making process.

The in-depth interview covered 9 main questions which changed according to respondents' answers. The general questions asked respondents' personal information, such as their age, nationality, major, year of study, education level (undergraduate or postgraduate) and how long they have been in Ireland. The rest of questions explored the scale and strength of influence from push and pull factors and parental involvement on the foreign study decision-making process. The interview also explored why the factors were important to the respondents. Moreover, the interview also asked respondents to review their study and life experience in UCC, Cork and Ireland so that they could provide recommendations to UCC and other Irish universities. The interviews also asked questions about respondents' future plan on education, career and immigration. The aim was to explore whether previous push and pull factors changed after graduation.

Chapter 4 will show the result of the quantitative data analysis. In the next chapter, the general information of all respondents, the factors that influenced their decision-making process and their impact scales, their parents' role and earnings expectation's impact in the decision-making process will be shown.

Chapter 4 Quantitative Data Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad

4.1. Introduction to Data Analysis

Chapter 3 has explained the methods used to collect quantitative and qualitative data and question design rationale. The thesis used triangulation design, a mixed methods design which collects both quantitative and qualitative data at the same stage. It does not give any of the data priority during data collection and analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative data's target population was UCC's international students. Quantitative data was collected through online surveys and paper-based surveys with the help of the International Education Office and the School of Economics, UCC. Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews. Both data were collected using convenience sampling.

Chapter 4 explains the quantitative data that was collected from online questionnaires and paper questionnaires. The questionnaire included 27 questions. The first section of questions focused on the general information, for example, respondents' gender, nationality, degree status (whether respondent was studying in UCC for degree or as visiting student), year of study, major, parents' career and highest education level. The second section aims to explore the influence of push and pull factors, investment and return on education and parental involvement on respondents' decision to study abroad.

The following sections will display respondents' general information by showing the percentage of respondents with different characteristics. Chapter 4 will also analyse and discuss the results related to push and pull factors, investment and return on education and parental involvement that were found from the questionnaire. Bivariate analysis was performed to explore the relationship between different factors and respondents with different characteristics, such as with different gender, origins regions, year of study,

degree status and school they were from. This chapter will display the bivariate analysis results and discussion of these factors and respondents' characteristics.

As mentioned in Section 3.4.3 Survey Design and Questionnaire Rationale from Page106, from collected questionnaire results, it is difficult to categorise parents' occupation (Question 6 and 7) and respondents' expected future occupation (Question 14). The answers did not provide enough information, for example, some respondents answered their parents' occupation as "manager", and some respondents only provided the field or area they were interested in working in the future. In the following quantitative data analysis, these will be no analysis on these three questions as lack of information. Question 26 was also excluded in the following quantitative data analysis as there was a lack of information on international students' future occupation plan and it was difficult to code their expected occupation. In future research, these questions will be adjusted for to allow for easier answering and easier coding.

Of the respondents, 73.1% of them were female. The largest regional category of respondent was Asia (45.80%), 27.10% were from the European Union, 24.30% from the Americas, and the rest were from Africa (2.30%) and Oceania (0.50%). A breakdown of respondents' nationality distribution is provided in Appendix 7. 46% of respondents studied in the College of Business and Law (CBL); 27% of respondents were from the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science (CACSSS); 17.7% of them were from the College of Engineering and Food Science (CSEFS) and the rest of them were from the College of Medicine and Health (CMH).

55.7% of respondents studied in UCC as visiting students and the rest of them studied either undergraduate or postgraduate in UCC. Students who were registered in another university and applied to enrol in a programme UCC for one semester or one year were classified as visiting students. Visiting students will not receive any qualification from UCC (University College Cork, 2016a;b). 40.2% of respondents were at in second or third year when they answered the questionnaire; 34.2% of them were in their final year;

16.8% of them were doing a postgraduate degree and 8.4% of them were at first year of their undergraduate degree.

Table 4.1 shows the response rate of each question in the questionnaire. Most of the response rates were over 90%. The question about respondents' degree status (study for degree or study as visiting student) had the lowest response rate, 85.6%. That is because some Chinese students answered the paper questionnaire which didn't include this question. For the number of students who were asked this question, the response rate was 100%. The questions that have 100% response rate were the questions about gender and parents' highest education level.

Moreover, the table shows the mean value (standard deviation) of some variables and the mode of responses. The mean value is only available for numeric variables and scale variables. The mode of the responses are shown in each question. The finds from this table will be interpreted in the following sections. The summary of the results will be interpreted in Section 4.2.

Table 4.1 Item Description Mean (standard deviation) and mode is reported for ordinal variables, and mode (percentage outside modal category) for categorical variables				
Variable	Description	Response Rate (Percentage of Respondents (216) in Parentheses)	Mean (Standard Deviation)	Mode (Percentage outside modal category)
Gender	Respondents' gender	216 (100%)		Female (26.9%)
Global Region	Respondents' nationality	214 (99.1%)		Asia, Africa and Oceania (51.4%)
Degree Status	Respondent came to UCC to study for a degree or to study as a visiting student	185 (100%)		Visiting Student (44.3%)
Year of Study	The academic year that respondent is at	214 (99.1%)		Second and third year (not first or final) Year (59.8%)
College	The major the respondent is studying (categorised into the four colleges of UCC)	198 (91.7%)		College of Business and Law (54%)
Father's Highest Education	Respondent's father's highest education level	216 (100%)	2 (0.482)	Bachelor Degree, Masters Degree and PhD (36.1%)
Mother's Highest Education	Respondent's mother's highest education level	216 (100%)	2 (0.482)	Bachelor Degree, Masters Degree and PhD (36.3%)
Father: benefit to career	Respondent's father's attitude toward the benefit of foreign study	203 (94%)	2.53 (0.706)	Agree/Strongly Agree (35%)

	for career outweighing the cost			
Father: benefit to further education	Respondent's father's attitude toward the benefit of foreign study for future education outweighing the cost	202 (93.5%)	2.62 (0.637)	Agree/Strongly Agree (29.7)
Father: should study abroad	Respondent's father's belief that they should study abroad	204 (94.4%)	2.57 (0.687)	Agree/Strongly Agree (31.4%)
Father: support foreign study	Respondent's father will support him/her to study abroad	202 (93.5%)	2.80 (0.549)	Agree/Strongly Agree (13.4%)
Father: family support on foreign study	Respondent's father believes the family will provide financial support for their foreign study	202 (93.5%)	2.67 (0.656)	Agree/Strongly Agree (22.3%)
Mother: benefit to career	Respondent's mother's attitude toward the benefit of foreign study for career outweighing the cost	205 (94.9%)	2.73 (0.552)	Agree/Strongly Agree (21.5%)
Mother: benefit to further education	Respondent's mother's attitude toward the benefit of foreign study for future education outweigh the cost	205 (94.9%)	2.72 (0.584)	Agree/Strongly Agree (21.5%)
Mother: should study abroad	Respondent's mother's belief that they should study abroad	202 (93.5%)	2.68 (0.630)	Agree/Strongly Agree(22.8%)

Mother: support foreign study	Respondent's mother will support them to study abroad	202 (93.5%)	2.84 (0.507)	Agree/Strongly Agree (10.4%)
Mother: family support on foreign study	Respondent's mother believes the family will provide financial support for their foreign study	204 (94.4%)	2.72 (0.624)	Agree/Strongly Agree (18.6%)
Contact with Foreign Study Agency	The member(s) of the respondent's family who contacted the foreign study agency	208 (96.3%)		Self (60.6%)
Father's Influence on Foreign Study Decision	The extent the father influences the respondent's foreign study decision	202 (93.5%)	2.40 (1.147)	Some Influence (67.8%)
Mother's Influence on Foreign Study Decision	The extent the mother influences the respondent's foreign study decision	206 (95.4%)	2.58 (1.105)	Some Influence (65%)
Father's Influence on Expected Job	The extent the father influences the respondent's expected career decision	201 (93.1%)	2.40 (1.114)	Some Influence (68.2%)
Mother's Influence on Expected Job	The extent the mother influences the respondent's expected career decision	205 (94.9%)	2.45 (0.992)	Some Influence (67.4%)
Expected Monthly Salary of First Job After Graduation	Expected monthly salary of the respondent's first job they get after	202 (93.5%)	2.43 (1.175)	€1,501--€2,000 (65.3%)

	graduation			
Whether did Research on Salary	Whether respondent has done any research about salary	210 (97.2%)		No (34.8%)
Qualification	Foreign study's benefits: getting a foreign qualification will be highly regarded by employers	206 (95.4%)	2.72 (0.581)	Agree/Strongly Agree (20.9%)
Skills	Foreign study's benefits: getting skills will be highly regarded by employers	205 (94.9%)	2.73 (0.580)	Agree/Strongly Agree (20.5%)
Language	Foreign study's benefits: improving foreign language skills	205 (94.9%)	2.75 (0.581)	Agree/Strongly Agree (18.0%)
Better Education	Foreign study's benefits: can access to better further education	205 (94.9%)	2.67 (0.615)	Agree/Strongly Agree (24.9%)
More Education	Foreign study's benefits: can access to more further education opportunities	206 (95.4%)	2.70 (0.621)	Agree/Strongly Agree (20.9%)
More Job	Foreign study's benefits: can access more job opportunities	206 (95.4%)	2.66 (0.626)	Agree/Strongly Agree (25.7%)
Better Jobs	Foreign study's benefits: can access better job opportunities	207 (95.8%)	2.66 (0.617)	Agree/Strongly Agree (26.1%)
Experience	Foreign study's benefits:	205 (94.9%)	2.88 (0.403)	Agree/Strongly Agree

	can gain experience of living studying and working with international students			(8.8%)
Satisfying Language Requirements	Personal factors' influence on foreign study decision: satisfying language requirements	206 (95.4%)	1.67 (1.189)	Some Influence (67.5%)
Satisfying Academic Grade Requirements	Personal factors' influence on foreign study decision: satisfying academic requirements	207 (95.8%)	1.79 (1.000)	Some Influence (61.8%)
University Advertisement	Destination university factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination university's advertisements	205 (94.9%)	0.98 (0.982)	No Influence at all (60%)
University Ranking	Destination university factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination university's ranking (in general)	205(94.9%)	1.50 (1.092)	Some Influence (64.4%)
Scholarship Availability	Destination university factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination university's scholarship availability	203 (94%)	1.01 (1.078)	No Influence at all (55.2%)
Major Availability	Destination university	203 (94%)	2.11 (1.011)	Influence Very Much

	factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination university's major availability			(53.2%)
University Societies and Clubs	Destination university factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination university's societies and clubs	205 (94.9%)	0.92 (0.994)	No Influence at all (55.6%)
Tuition Fees	Destination university factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination university's tuition fees	205 (94.9%)	1.22 (1.075)	No Influence at all (66.8%)
University Attitude of International Education	Destination university factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination university's attitude towards international education	205 (94.9%)	1.73 (0.991)	Some Influence (61%)
Parents' Recommendations	Parental and peer factors' influence on foreign study decision: parents' recommendation's influence on the decision	204(94.4%)	1.05 (0.999)	No Influence at all (61.8%)
Parents' Permission	Parental and peer factors' influence on foreign study decision: parents' permission to study abroad	204 (94.4%)	1.55 (1.163)	Influence Very Much (71.6%)

Parents' Link	Parental and peer factors' influence on foreign study decision: parents have link in the destination country	204 (94.4%)	0.68 (0.959)	No Influence at all (39.2%)
Friends' Link	Parental and peer factors' influence on foreign study decision: have friends in the destination country	203 (94%)	0.60 (0.903)	No Influence at all (36%)
Friends' Recommendations	Parental and peer factors' influence on foreign study decision: friends' recommendation's influence	203 (94%)	0.94 (0.970)	No Influence at all (57.1%)
Parents' Earnings	Parental and peer factors' influence on foreign study decision: parents' earning level's influence	204 (94.4%)	1.41 (1.095)	Some Influence (66.2%)
Climate	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's climate's influence	204(94. 4%)	0.96 (0.898)	Little Influence (62.7%)
Lifestyle	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's lifestyle's influence	204 (94.4%)	1.63 (0.946)	Some Influence (60.3%)

Crime Rate	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's crime rate's influence	204 (94.4%)	1.34 (1.050)	Little Influence (70.1%)
Social Safety	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's social safety's influence	204 (94.4%)	1.65 (1.028)	Some Influence (64.7%)
Racial Discrimination	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's racial discrimination's influence	204 (94.4%)	1.04 (1.004)	No Influence at all (60.8%)
Environment	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's environment's influence	202 (93.5%)	1.81 (0.943)	Some Influence (59.4%)
Social Tolerance	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's social tolerance's influence	204 (94.4%)	1.41 (0.991)	Some Influence (61.8%)
Social Life	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's	203 (94%)	1.66 (0.911)	Some Influence (58.6%)

	social life's influence			
Geographical Distance	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: the influence of geographical distance between home country and destination country	204 (94.4%)	1.04 (1.040)	No Influence at all (59.3%)
Culture	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: destination country's culture's influence	202 (93.5%)	1.89 (0.908)	Some Influence (60.9%)
Presence of Local Communities of Own Nationality	Destination country factors' influence on foreign study decision: presence of local communities of respondent's nationality in the destination country	204 (94.4%)	0.80 (0.890)	No Influence at all (52.5%)
Job Opportunities	Future-plan factor's influence on foreign study decision: job opportunities availability in the destination country	205 (94.9%)	1.14 (1.017)	No Influence at all (64.9%)
Education Opportunities	Future-plan factor's influence on foreign study decision: further education opportunities	204(94.4%)	1.44 (1.079)	Some Influence (67.6%)

	availability in the destination country			
Post-graduate Immigration	Future-plan factor's influence on foreign study decision: immigration prospects in the destination country after graduation	204 (94.4%)	0.94 (0.966)	No Influence at all (58.8%)
Whether has Scholarship	Whether respondent had a scholarship/grant from home university, destination university or public agency	204 (94.4%)		Yes (47.5%)
Changed Expected Job	Whether respondent had changed their expected career since arriving in Ireland	203 (94%)		No (27.1%)
Annual Tuition Fees	Respondent's annual tuition fees	197 (91.2%)	2.16 (1.210)	Under €12,000 (58.4%)
Annual Living Costs	Respondent's annual living cost	199 (92.1%)	2.39 (1.613)	Under €8,000 (57.3%)

To explore and understand the geographical distribution of respondents, the responses are regionally categorised using two approaches. The first approach separates them into three regions: *Asia, Africa and Oceania*, *the Americas* and the *European Union* (*EU*) (the frequency of responses by regional category using this classification is shown in table 4.2). 94.2% of respondents in the category of *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were from Asia. The analysis results of this category discussed in the later sections would be determined by Asian respondents as they were the majority. The reason that category's respondents' nationality was grouped into geographical regions rather than cultural/ethnic groups was that there would be too many cultures and subculture groups, for example if Asia was categorised by the different cultures, then China and India would be distinct groups as culture differences exist even though both countries are in Asia. The number of respondents in each culture/subculture group might be too small to analyse. If national income was used to categorise the continents, the cultural variation among countries at same income level will be large. Therefore, using geographical region to categorise continents was the most neutral way. Africa and Oceania were categorised with Asia not because they were geographical closer to Asia, but because there were 4 respondents from Africa and 1 respondent from Oceania. If respondents from Africa and Oceania were included in the Asian category, the African and Oceanian respondents would be 4.8% of the respondents. If included in the Americas category, they would be 8.8%. If included in the EU category, the percentage would be 7.9%. Based on these percentages, including African and Oceanian students into the Asian category causes the smallest variation in data compared to the other categories.

The second approach distinguishes them into four regions as *East and South East Asia*, *the Americas* (region 2), *EU*, and *Other Asia, Africa and Oceania*

Table 4.2 Frequency of Response by Global Region (Percentage of total response in parentheses)	
	Frequency
Asia, Africa, and Oceania	104 (48.6%)
The Americas	52 (24.3%)
EU	58 (27.1%)
Total	214

The research analysis reported in the following sections uses the first global region. Similar analyses were conducted using the second categorisation, but the results were not attached. They were omitted because the second categorisation's distribution was not less even. One of the groups, *Other Asia, Africa and Oceania* only had 15 respondents. Using the second categorisation could produce biased results as the one group had a small size compared to the other groups.

Table 4.3 shows that a majority of female respondents were in CACSSS and CBL. Male students were more evenly distributed across the colleges. 27 of the 48 male respondents were in CACSSS and CBL and 21 were in the other two colleges. The distribution between the gender of respondents and their choice of college was statistically significant [Chi-square = 11.688, df = 3, p value = 0.009].

Table 4.3 Respondents' College of Study by Gender			
College	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Arts Humanities and Social Sciences (CACSSS)	43 (29%)	10 (21%)	53 (27%)
Business and Law (CBL)	74 (49.3%)	17 (35.4%)	91 (46.0%)
Medicine and Health (CMH)	9 (6.0%)	10 (20.8%)	19 (9.6%)
Science Engineering and Food Science (CSEFS)	24 (16.0%)	11 (22.9%)	35 (17.7%)
Total	150 (100.0%)	48 (100.0%)	198 (100.0%)

There was evidence of significant differences in respondents' regions across their degree status and college. Table 4.4 shows the distribution of respondents by College and by global region. Most of respondents who studied in CACSSS were from *the Americas* and the *EU* (41.5% and 45.3% respectively). 75.6% of respondents in CBL were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. The majority (66.7%) of respondents who studied in CMH were also from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. Compared to the other three colleges, the distribution of respondents was more evenly distributed by region in CSEFS. 34.3% were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*, 34.3% were from *the Americas* and 31.4% of them were from the *EU*. The difference in the proportion of respondents in each college from each region was statistically significant [Chi-square = 62.058, df = 6, p value = 0.000].

Table 4.4 Respondents' College of Study by Global Region					
Region	College				Total
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	
Asia Africa and Oceania	7 (13.2%)	68 (75.6%)	12 (66.7%)	12 (34.3%)	99 (50.5%)
Americas	22 (41.5%)	11 (12.2%)	6 (33.3%)	12 (34.3%)	51 (26.0%)
EU	24 (45.3%)	11 (12.2%)	0 (0.0%)	11 (31.4%)	46 (23.5%)
Total	53 (100.0%)	90 (100.0%)	18 (100.0%)	35 (100.0%)	196 (100.0%)

Table 4.5 shows that over half of respondents who were visiting students came from the EU and over half of respondents who studied for a third-level degree were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. The difference in respondents' degree status by region was statistically significant [Chi-square = 76.730, df = 2, p value = 0.000].

Table 4.5 Respondents' College of Study by Global Region		
	Visiting Student	Degree Student
Asia Africa and Oceania	14 (13.7%)	59 (72.8%)
Americas	33 (32.4%)	19 (23.5%)
EU	55 (53.9%)	3 (3.7%)
Total	102 (100.0%)	81 (100.0%)

52% of respondents had a scholarship. There was evidence of significant difference for respondents' scholarships across respondents' regions, degree status, year of study and college.[1] Bivariate analysis showed that 87.7% of *EU* students had a scholarship, which was substantially higher than the percentage of *Asia, Africa and Oceania* students (24.5%) and *the Americas* (62.7%). Moreover, visiting students (81.3%) were more likely to have scholarships compare to degree students (32.5%). Second and third year students had the highest percentage of scholarships (61.7%). CSEFS students were more likely to have scholarships (75.8%), followed by those from CACSSS (64.2%), CBL (35.3%) and CMH (27.8%).

4.2. Summary of Results

In chapter 4, the results of quantitative data analysis will be displayed. Respondents' perceptions of different push and pull factors, perceived parents' role in the decision-making process and their earnings expectations will be shown in the following sections.

In this chapter, some results are highlighted. Perceived foreign study benefits are qualifications highly regarded by employers, skills highly regarded by employers, improved language, better education opportunities and experience with international students. Moreover, in the factors that international students would consider in the decision-making process, personal factors was the most important category. Over 60% of respondents agreed that satisfying language and academic requirements had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision, especially to international students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*.

Over half of respondents agreed that destination university's ranking, major availability and attitude towards international education had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. Parents' permission and earnings were also important to international students, especially to students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. Their

[1] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 11.1a to Table 11.1d in Appendix 11

permission was more important in these regions' respondents' decision-making process compared with other regions' students. To international students, perceived social safety and lifestyle, environment, tolerance in society and culture had some or a lot of influence in their decision-making process.

Future plans was the second most important category in the foreign study decision-making process. Future plans included three questions which asked respondents how their future plans about further education, career and immigration influence their foreign study decision. This category aimed to explore whether students considered studying abroad, whether to study masters or PhD abroad, work abroad or live abroad. In this category, over 50% of respondents agreed that future education plans had some or a lot of influence on their decision. The results showed that compared to the other category of factors, students did not think the future plans factors played an important role in their foreign study decision-making process. The respondents may not have considered further education, career and immigration opportunities even though they may have chosen to study in Ireland as they could access to more and better further education and career opportunities. The most popular source of information about the destination university was the home universities' lecturers. The second main source of information was the internet.

With regards to parents' education background, over 60% of respondents' parents had a bachelors' degree or higher (masters or PhD). Regarding perceived influence from father/mother on their foreign study decision and career decision, over 60% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that their father/mother had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. 6.4% of them agreed that father made the decision for them. None of the respondents from *the Americas* or *EU* agreed their fathers or mothers made the career decision for them. However, 6.4% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed on their fathers made the decision for them and 2.1% of them agreed that their mothers made the decision. The difference in perceived parental involvement between respondents from different geographical regions could be because

of the different type, level and scale of parental involvement in those regions. It also could be a result of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* being more willing to admit the importance of parental involvement than respondents from *the EU* and *Americas*. This is one of the research limitations. Future research will conduct questionnaires and interviews with international students' parents so that a comparison of international students' perceived parental involvement and actual parental involvement could be studied. It could also reveal how parents view their role and their financial support on the foreign study decision.

39.4% of respondents had contacted a foreign study agency themselves, and 36.1% did not use a foreign study agency. Respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were more likely to contact a foreign study agency. They also had the highest percentage that parents contacted with an agency (father, mother or both of parents). Bodycott (2009) found that most of the students revealed that their parents contacted and negotiated with foreign study agencies and institutions. In the negotiation process, parents would ask questions which they thought were important to their child's study and that the students participated little. The results are evidence of parental involvement in dealing with foreign study agencies. This question was also asked in the interviews and could provide qualitative information regarding this question. It also highlights the popularity of using foreign study agencies before study abroad, and could be helpful for universities' future marketing promotion.

4.3. Push and Pull Factors Effects on International Students' Decision to Study Abroad

This section shows the push and pull factors influences in international students' foreign study decision-making process. A bivariate analysis is conducted for each push and pull factor.

Table 4.6 shows respondents' perception of perceived benefits of foreign study, such as qualification, skills, language improvement, quantity and quality of future education

opportunities and career opportunities and experience. Among all the perceived benefits of foreign study, most of respondents agreed that language (82%) and experience with international students (91.2%) were benefits of foreign study. Bivariate analysis indicated evidence of significant differences in language and educational opportunities across three characteristics.

Responses are broken down by respondent characteristics, i.e. gender, regions, degree status, year of study and college. These results are reported in Appendix 8. Table 4.6 shows an example of the bivariate analysis results.

As shown in the table, 5-item Likert scales were used and were subsequently which are re-categorised into 3-item scales in the table: strongly agree/agree, no opinion, and disagree/strongly disagree. Running bivariate analyses on qualification and global region the results showed that there were cells containing less than 5 items, which created a barrier to analysis. This barrier was overcome by collapsing strongly agree and agree in a single category, and strongly disagree and disagree into a single category.

Another reason for using 3-item scales in the data analysis was that it would allow the reporting of 'positive attitudes' toward the benefits of foreign study and 'negative attitudes' toward the selected foreign study's benefits. No opinion meant respondent was not aware of any benefit from foreign study. The question aimed to explore international students' attitudes towards the benefits of foreign study and to uncover the influence of push and pull factors. Respondents' answers were subjective and it can be difficult to distinguish between agree and strongly agree. Each respondent makes their own value judgement about the meaning of the terms. It would be clearer to show the international students' attitude towards the common benefits from foreign study and provide valuable information on push and pull factors' influence on the foreign study decision-making process.

Table 4.6 Question 21: Perceived Benefits from Foreign Study								
	Qualification[1]	**Skills[2]**	**Language[3]**	**Better Education[4]**	**More Education[5]**	**More Jobs[6]**	**Better Jobs[1]**	**Experience[7]**
Strongly Disagree/Disagree	14 (6.8%)	14 (6.8%)	15 (7.3%)	16 (7.8%)	18 (8.7%)	17 (8.3%)	16 (7.7%)	6 (2.9%)
No Opinion	29 (14.1%)	28 (13.7%)	22 (10.7%)	35 (17.1%)	25 (12.1%)	36 (17.5%)	38 (18.4%)	12 (5.9%)
Strongly Agree/Agree	163 (79.1%)	163 (79.5%)	168 (82%)	154 (75.1%)	163 (79.1%)	153 (74.3%)	153 (73.9%)	187 (91.2%)

1: No significant difference across all characteristics
2: Significant difference across only for year of study
3: Significant difference across gender, region, year of study, and college
4: Significant difference across region, and degree status
5: Significant difference across region, and degree status, and college
6: Significant difference across only for degree status
7: Significant difference across region, and year of study

Perceptions of perceived benefits of foreign study

Skills highly regarded by employers

There is evidence of significant differences in perception across year of study.[2] Table 4.6 indicates a difference in the perception of foreign study's benefit on skills among respondents who are in different year of study. All first year respondents believed foreign study would bring them skills that would be highly regarded by employers, compared with second and third year respondents (73.5%), final year respondents (76.8%), and postgraduate respondents (88.6%). The result was statistically significant. The reason that first year respondents may believe that foreign study is highly regarded by employers is that all the first year respondents have come to study in UCC for a degree. They were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*, or *the Americas*. The skills they have learnt in Ireland may bring them bigger career advantages than the respondents from the *EU*. In the interviews, one respondent from Asia revealed that employers in her home country prefer the students who have studied abroad, as they would have better equipment and get better training. This point will be discussed in Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad. It also could be because respondents who are at first year study are all study in UCC for degree. Some students in second and third year (69%), final year (86%) and postgraduate (14%) were visiting students. They may value the skills they learned in their home university more than skills gathered in Ireland.

Another reason could be that first year students may be influenced by university's advertisements more than other students. The university's advertisements may promote studying abroad as a means of giving international students' skills that would be highly regarded by employers. First year and postgraduate students would have been exposed to such advertising in the recent past. As the postgraduate respondents were masters students in UCC, they were in the first year of their postgraduate course. However,

[2] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 4.1 in Appendix 4

students in second and third year, and final year would have spent more time in Ireland and so would be less susceptible to such advertising.

Improved language skills

There was evidence of significant differences in the perception of language skills across the three characteristics.[3] Bivariate analysis showed that there was a difference in the perceived benefits of language skills between female and male respondents. More female respondents (84.6%) than male respondents (75%) believed that improved language skills were a benefit of foreign study. The reason that a higher percentage of female respondents agreed may be because 79% of female respondents were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania,* and the *EU*, regions where English is not a first language. In comparison, 60% of male respondents were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania,* and *the EU*. The percentages of respondents that came from countries that do not have English as a first language could be a reason that why a higher percentage of female respondents agreed that foreign study would improve their language skills.

100% of *EU* respondents believed that foreign study will improve their language skills, while the figures for *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (90.4%), and *the Americas* (46.2%) were less. The reason the respondents from *the Americas* have lowest percentage on thinking foreign study will improve their language skills may because most of the students from *the Americas* (90%) were from United States and Canada. These respondents were native English speakers. In this case, foreign study would not improve their language skills. The reason that 46.2% of respondents agreed that foreign study could improve the language skills even though 90% of the respondents were from the U.S.A. and Canada could be that the respondents did not consider it as a benefit to themselves, they considered it as a benefit to all international students in general.

[3] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 4.2a to Table 4.2d in Appendix 4

The results also showed a difference between students from different years. 91.4% of final year respondents thought that foreign study would improve their language skills, compared with respondents from first year (47.1%), second and third year (81.7%), and postgraduate students (80%). 88.3% of respondents from CBL thought that foreign study would benefit their language skills, compared to the respondents from CSEFS (79.4%), CSCSSS (79.3%) and CMH (55.5%). The reason that respondents from CBL had the highest percentage may be because 71.1% of respondents studying in CBL were from East Asia and South East Asia and 12.2% respondents from *EU* studied in this school. This means that CBL had the highest proportion of students from non-English speaking countries. In this case, these respondents may have perceived greater benefit from studying in Ireland to improve their language skills.

Access to better education opportunities

Table 4.6 shows there is evidence of significant differences across the three characteristics.[4] Bivariate analysis indicates that 90.5% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed or strongly agreed that foreign study could help them to get access to better further education, compared to the respondents from *the Americas* (67.3%), and *EU* (58.9%). The results also indicate that there was a higher percentage of degree students (84.6%) who agreed or strongly agreed that foreign study's benefits included accessing better further education, compared with visiting students (61.9%).

Access to more education opportunities

As shown in Table 4.6, there were significant differences between respondents' perceptions about having access to more education opportunities across the three of respondents' characteristics.[5] 9.4% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed or strongly agreed that foreign study could bring them more further education opportunities, compared with respondents from *the Americas* (78.9%), and the *EU*

[4] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 4.3a and Table 4.3b in Appendix 4

[5] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 4.4a to Table 4.4c in Appendix 4

(61.5%). The distribution was statistically significant. The results also show there was a significant difference degree students and visiting students. 88.5% of the respondents degree students agreed or strongly agreed that foreign study would bring them more further education opportunities, while 69.4% of respondents who were visiting students agreed or strongly agreed. Moreover, there was a significant difference between respondents' perceptions and the college they were studying in. 89.5% of respondents from CBL agreed or strongly agreed that foreign study would bring more further education opportunities. This was the highest percentage among all four colleges. 67.9% respondents from CACSSS agreed or strongly agreed, which was the lowest percentage. The reason that CACSSS's respondents had the lowest percentage could be that CACSSS had the lowest percentage of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*, while CBL had the highest percentage of respondents from these regions. Compared with respondents from *the Americas* and *the EU*, respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* may have perceived that they had less further education opportunities or less good quality further education opportunities available in their home countries. This point is also discussed in Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad

Access to more job opportunities

Bivariate analyses indicate there was significant difference on respondents' perceptions of gaining more job opportunities across their degree status.[6] 82.1% degree students agreed or strongly agreed, while 68.4% of visiting students thought the same. The reason may be because that 73% of respondents studying in UCC for a degree were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. 14% of respondents who were visiting students in UCC were from the same regions. It may be because respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* perceived that Ireland had more job opportunities or they could get access to more job opportunities worldwide in Ireland.

[6] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 4.5 in Appendix 4

Experience with international students

Bivariate analyses indicate that 98.1% of respondents from *the Americas*, agreed or strongly agreed that the experience of studying, living, and working with international students was one of foreign study's benefits, compared with respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (85.3%) and *European Union* (94.7%). Based on the previous questions, respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had the highest percentage of respondents who agreed/strongly agreed that getting access to better and more education opportunities was a benefit of foreign study. To these respondents, this may be more important to their future career and personal development. This may explain why respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* have the lowest percentage on agreeing/strongly agreeing this benefit.

The difference was statistically significant.[7] Moreover, there was also a significant difference between respondents in different years.[8] 97.1% of postgraduate respondents agreed or strongly agreed, compared with first year respondents (93.8%), second and third year respondents (91.5%), and final year respondents (87.1%). The reason that postgraduates and first year respondents had the highest and the second highest percentages respectively, may be because they were in the first year of their study (questionnaire results showed that all the postgraduate respondents were masters students). They may hold positive and optimistic opinions about the benefits of foreign study. It may also be because they were in the first year of their undergraduate or postgraduate study, so they were enjoying new experiences with students from different regions and background. Respondents in second and third year, and final may have become accustomed to interacting with international students. This may explain why final year respondents had the lowest percentage on agreeing/strongly agreeing this benefit.

[7] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 4.6a in Appendix 4

[8] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 4.6b in Appendix 4

With regards to the benefits of obtaining qualifications that would be highly regarded by employers, and access to better job opportunities, bivariate analysis showed no significant difference between respondents' perceptions of these variable across to all the characteristics.

Personal Factors

Table 4.7 shows perceived personal factors' influence on the foreign study decision. Over 60% of respondents agreed that both personal factors had some or a lot of influence on their decision. This category of factors was also ranked as the most important factor in the decision-making process which will be discussed in the section Ranking of Aggregate Five Factors. Satisfying language requirements and academic requirements are also discussed in section 5.4.1 Requirements of foreign study from page 289.

Table 4.7 Question 22A.Personal Factors		
	Satisfying Language Requirements[1]	**Satisfying Academic Requirements[2]**
No influence	58 (28.2%)	29 (14.0%)
Little influence	17 (8.3%)	42 (20.3%)
Some influence	67 (32.5%)	79 (38.2%)
A lot of Influence	64 (31.1%)	57 (27.5%)
Total	206 (100.0%)	207 (100.0%)
1: Significant differences across region, year of study and college. 2: Significant differences across region, degree status and college.		

Satisfying Language Requirements

Table 4.7 shows that 63.6% of respondents thought that satisfying language requirements could influence the decision to study abroad. The factor checked whether the ability to

meet the language requirement would encourage students to study abroad. If they met the language requirement, they would not want to waste the language qualification. If they failed to meet the language requirements, as per visa policy, they may not be able to get a visa to study abroad.

There was a significant difference between respondents' perceptions on this factor across the three characteristics.[9] Over 70% of students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* thought that satisfying language requirement had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. For *EU* respondents, the percentage was 87.7% which was even higher. For students from *the Americas* region, 75% thought that satisfying language requirements had no influence on their foreign study decision. The language used in different regions, suggests the result is understandable.

The reason that most of the respondents from *the Americas* did not consider satisfying language requirements as a factor strong influence on their foreign study decision was due to the countries they came from. 90.4% of respondents were from United States (82.7%) and Canada (7.7%); most of them were from English speaking countries. Studying in Ireland did not require them to learn a new language. As mentioned earlier, their nationality could also explain why most of respondents from the *Americas* did not consider improved language skills as one of foreign study's benefits.

The results also show that 77.2% of final year respondents thought that satisfying language requirements had a strong influence on their foreign study decision, compared with first year respondents (29.4%), second and third year respondents (65%), and postgraduate respondents (48.6%).

[9] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 5.1a to Table 5.1c in Appendix 5

The results indicate a significant difference on the perception of this factor's influence on foreign study decision among the respondents who were studying in different schools. 73.3% of CBL respondents thought this factor had a strong influence on their foreign study decision, compared with respondents who were in CSEFS (70.6%), CACSSS (49%), and CMH (38.9%).

The reason that respondents from different school had different opinions on the influence from this factor may have been because the proportion of students from different continents in each school. There were 41.5% of CACSSS respondents, compared to respondents studying in CSEFS (31.4%), CMH (33.3%), and CBL (12.2%). Also the result of percentage of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* in different schools shows that 75.6% of respondents were in CBL, compared with CMH (66.7%), CSEFS (34.3%) and CACSSS (13.2%).

Language skills might impact on the foreign study decision in two ways. Good language skills give respondents more destination country choices than students with weaker language skills. Also respondents can make the decision to study abroad first. After making the decision, respondent must to study to improve their language skills to satisfy language requirements. In the interviews, two respondents revealed that they needed to satisfy the language requirements to be able to study abroad. More information regarding satisfying language requirements is discussed in Chapter 5 Other Qualitative Findings.

Satisfying Academic Requirements

Table 4.7 shows 62.7% of respondents thought that satisfying academic grade requirements had a strong influence on the foreign study decision. Only 14% of respondents thought it had no influence at all. There was evidence of statistically significant differences between respondents' perceptions of satisfying academic

requirements' influence on foreign study decision across their region, degree status and college.[10]

80.2% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* thought that this factor had a strong influence on their foreign study decision, compared with the respondents from *the Americas* (50%) and *EU* (57.9%).

Moreover, a higher percentage of degree respondents (73.4%) thought satisfying academic grade requirement had a strong influence on their foreign study decision compared with visiting students (54%). The result was also statistically significant. The reason could be that universities have higher and/or stricter academic grade requirements for students who are pursuing a degree than visiting students.

Bivariate analysis indicated that for respondents who studied in different colleges in the university, there was a significant difference on the perception that satisfying academic requirements influences the foreign study decision. 88.8% of CMH respondents thought that this factor had a strong influence on their foreign study decision, compared with respondents from CACSSS (50.9%), CBL (72.4%), and CSEFS (64.7%). The reason for this difference could be that schools had different academic grade requirements for their students.

Similar with the factor of satisfying language skills, academic grades could also influence the foreign study decision in two ways. Firstly, respondents with good academic grades are able to make a choice between home universities and destination universities. Secondly, respondents can decide where to study first and then study to satisfy the destination university's academic grade requirements. Two respondents

[10] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 5.2a to Table 5.2c in Appendix 5

discussed the academic grade requirements and their perspective was more similar to the former. The details are explained in Chapter 5.

Destination University Factors

Table 4.8 is a summary of the destination university factor's influence on respondents' decision to study abroad. In the category of destination university factors, major availability, destination university's attitude towards international education, and ranking are the three most important factors to respondents' foreign study decision. Over 50% of respondents agreed that all three factors had some or a lot influence on their decisions. Destination university factors were also discussed in the interviews. Besides these three factors, interviewees also discussed the influence of tuition fees, scholarship availability and university advertisements. Details of respondents' perceptions of this category of factors are explained in Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad from page 235 and Studying in UCC from page 298.

Table 4.8 Question 22B Destination University Factors							
	Advertisement[1]	**Ranking[2]**	**Scholarship[3]**	**Major[2]**	**Society and club[1]**	**Tuition fee[4]**	**Attitude[5]**
No influence	82 (40.0%)	54 (26.3%)	91 (44.8%)	21 (10.3%)	91 (44.4%)	68 (33.2%)	30 (14.6%)
Little influence	65 (31.7%)	36 (17.6%)	43 (21.2%)	30 (14.8%)	59 (28.8%)	55 (26.8%)	45 (22.0%)
Some influence	39 (19.0%)	73 (35.6%)	44 (21.7%)	57 (28.1%)	36 (17.6%)	50 (24.4%)	80 (39.0%)
A lot of Influence	19 (9.3%)	42 (20.5%)	25 (12.3%)	95 (46.8%)	19 (9.3%)	32 (15.6%)	50 (24.4%)
Total	205 (100%)	205 (100%)	203 (100%)	203 (100%)	205 (100%)	205 (100%)	205 (100%)

1: No significant differences across all characteristics
2: Significant differences across region, degree status and college
3: Significant differences across region, and college
4: Significant differences across region, and degree status
5: Significant differences across gender, region and degree status

Destination University's Major/Subject Availablity

This factor represents destination university's major/subject availability's influence on respondents' foreign study decision. The result of this factor could show whether respondents made foreign study decision because the destination university had a desired major/subject. Table 4.8 shows that 74.9% of repondents thought that the major or subject's availablity in the destination university had a strong influence on their foreign study decision.

There was a significant difference across the three characteristics between respondents' perceptions of this variable's influence on the foreign study decision.[11] 83% of respondents who were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that subject/major availability had a strong influence on their foreign study decision, compared with respondents from *the Americas* (80%), and *EU* (59.7%).

A higher percentage of degree students (86.8%), compared with visiting students (62.9%), agreed this factor has a strong influence on their decision.

CSEFS respondents had the highest percentage (87.6%) agreeing that subject/major availability has a strong influence on their foreign study decision. Overall, more than half of the respondents from each of the four colleges (CACSSS: 69.2%, CBL: 80.2%, CMH: 76.5% and CSEFS: 87.6%) agreed that this factor had a strong influence on their decision to study abroad.

Destination University Attitude Toward International Education

The factor aimed to explore destiantion university's attitude toward international education, for example, whether destination unversity was welcoming to international students, or academic and/or administration staff's attitude toward international students. This factor is also discussed in Chapter 5 Destination University Pull Factors. 63.4% of

[11] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 6.3a to Table 6.3c in Appendix 6

respondents thought that the destination university's attitude to international education had a strong influence on their foreign study decision. Bivariate analysis indicated significant differences across respondents' gender, region and degree status.[12]

In relation to gender, 63.7% of male respondents thought that the university's attitude toward international education had a strong influence on their decision and 63.4% of female respondents agreed. Comparing respondents from the three regions, nearly three quarters (73.7%) of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that this variable had a strong influence on their foreign study decision. Around half of respondents from *the Americas* (52.9%) and *EU* (56.1%) agreed. 78% of degree students agreed that university's attitude towards international education had a strong influence on their decision.

Destination University Ranking

The factor of destination university's ranking represents ranking that respondent focuses on. In the other words, it could be a general ranking, or research ranking, or ranking in specific academic area which absolutely depends on respondent's perspective. This question aims to test whether destination university's ranking influence on the foreign study decision. The source that the respondents get ranking information, what type of ranking they prefer and other information related to destination university's ranking have been discussed in Chapter 5 Destination University Pull Factors.

As shown in Table 4.8, 53% of respondents thought that the destination university's ranking had a strong influence on their decision to study abroad.

There was a significant difference in the perception of destination university's ranking's influence on the foreign study decision across the regions.[13] Destination university's

[12] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 6.5a to Table 6.5c in Appendix 6

ranking had a stronger influence for respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (81%), compared with respondents from *the Americas* (49%) and *EU* (22.8%).

Bivariate analysis indicated that destination university's ranking had a stronger influence on degree students (71.5%) than visiting students (34.6%). The result was statistically significant.[14] The reason for this difference may have been that visiting students would receive their degree from their home universities, so destination universities' ranking would have less influence on their future compared with students who were pursuing degrees in Cork.

The results also indicated that the destination university's ranking had a stronger influence on CBL respondents (75.6%), compared with respondents studying in CMH (58.8%), CSEFS (47.1%), and CACSSS (33.9%). [15] As previously mentioned, respondents' regions of origin and colleges of study were correlated, which could explain why destination university's ranking had a higher influence on CBL and CMH, compared with the other two schools.

In the *Asia, Africa and Oceania* category, 94.2% of respondents were from Asia. To understand why 81% respondents from this category agreed that destination university's ranking had at least some influence on their foreign study decision, it is important to analyse it from an Asian students' perspective.

The reason that the ranking of destination universities was more important to Asian students could be their investment in education was higher than the other regions'

[13] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 6.1a in Appendix 6

[14] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 6.1b in Appendix 6

[15] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 6.1c in Appendix 6

students. Asian students would have travelled far away from their home countries, and tuition fees in Ireland would be higher than if they attended a local university. If taking currency exchange rates into account, then the tuition fees exchanged to their local currencies could make it more expensive. It is reasonable to make a cautious choice about destination universities and look for a higher return after deciding to make a big investment. Additionally, information asymmetry exists as the university knows more than potential students, so students would need to use an objective standard to measure universities' quality. Ranking could play this role in the decision-making process. It is an objective signal as to the quality of a university. Some rankings are more specific and specify rankings according to a destination university's majors or academic areas. This reason is also entwined with another reason, conspicuous consumption. Conspicuous consumption describes that consumers purchase products in order to signal their wealth and ego to other people or to the society (O'cass and McEwen, 2004). Universities with higher rankings may have higher tuition fees. Respondents might be more interested in expensive options as choosing the expensive option could raise their social position among their peers and signal their family wealth.

Another possible explanation relates to average ranking of home universities compared with destination universities' ranking. American and European students come from regions that have many universities with the same or higher ranking than UCC. To them, ranking might not be important as they have many resources in the home country. They choose to study abroad because of other factors. Asian, African and Oceanian students come from regions that lack universities that have the same or higher ranking than the destination universities. Ranking would make a difference to their choice as they would have a stronger motivation to search for higher ranking universities than students from other regions.

Destination University's Tuition Fees

Results show that 60% of respondents did not think that tuition fees had a strong influnce on their foreign study decision. Bivariate analysis indicated significant differences

between respondents' perceptions of tuition fees' influence across region and degree status.[16]

Compared with respondents from *the Americas* or *EU*, respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had a higher percentage (48.4%) agreeing that tuition fees had a strong influence on their foreign study decision. Overall, over half of the respondents from each of the three regions (*Asia Africa and Oceania*: 51.5%, *the Americas*: 58.8%, and *EU*: 73.7%) agreed that tuition fees had little or no influence on their foreign study decision. Moreover, most visiting students (69.4%) agreed that tuition fees had no or little influence on their decision of study abroad. The figure for degree students was 49.4 %.

Destination University's Scholarship/Grant Availability

Only 34% of respondents thought that scholarship/grant availability had a strong influence on their foreign study decision. Most respondents (66%) thought that this factor had little or no influence on their decision.

Bivariate analysis indicated that 44.6% of respondents from the *EU* thought that scholarship/grant availability had a strong influence on their foreign study decision, and a lower percentage (34.1%) from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* and *the Americas* (23.6%) agreed. The result was statistically significant.[17]

[16] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 6.4a and Table 6.4b in Appendix 6

[17] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 6.2a in Appendix 6

50% of CSEFS respondents thought that this factor had a strong influence on their foreign study decision. The proportions for the other colleges were lower; CMH (35.3%), CBL (32.9%) and CACSSS (21.1%). The result was also statistically significant.[18]

Destination University's Advertisements

Most respondents (67.8%) thought that university advertisements had no influence at all or had little influence on their foreign study decision. Only 8.8% of respondents thought that it had a lot of influence on their decision.

Bivariate analysis was conducted between university advertising and respondent characteristics (gender, global region, degree status, year of study and college), and the results were all statistical insignificant. There was no significant difference in the perceived importance of the influence of a university's advertising on their foreign study decision between different group categories.

The effectiveness of advertisement appeared low. The reason could be that advertising was not the best way to entice the market. It could also be because current forms of advertising are not appropriate. Another reason may be that the differences in what universities and students consider to be advertising. Respondents may regard advertisements as promotion through TV, brochures, newspapers and other traditional channels. Home university's lecturers' recommendations, visits by destination university's lecturers, and social media promotions could be regarded destination university's advertisements. These forms of advertisements may not have been considered by students.

The influence of different types of advertisements was also discussed in the interviews. Section 5.4.4, Source of information and social media's function (from page 294), discusses social media advertisements' role in the decision-making process.

[18] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 6.2b in Appendix 6

Destination University Societies and Clubs

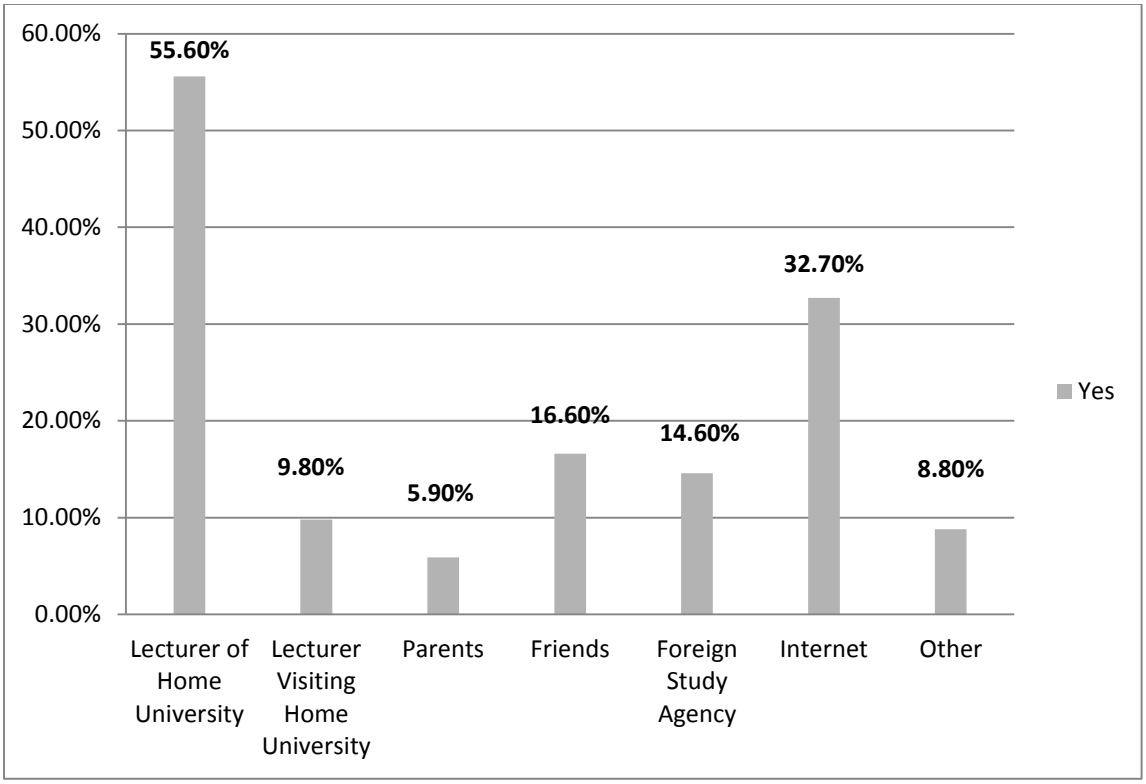
73.2% of respondents thought that the availability of societies and clubs in the destination unviersity had little or no influence on their decision to study abraod. Bivariate analysis showed that there was no significant difference in respondents' perceptions about this factor across gender, origin regions, degree status, year of study and college.

Source of Knowledge of Destination University

This variable explores where international students got information about their destination university. Figure 1 shows that lecturers from students' home university were the most common source of destination university's knowledge and information. 114 respondents selected home university's lecturers are their source of destination university's knowledge. 56 of them were from Asia and 40 of them were from *the EU*. It could be because Asian and European home universities' lecturers were more involved in the foreign study decision and willing to provide more information about destination universities. Also it could be because respondents from Asia and *the EU* are more likely to reveal their lecturers' role in the decision-making process than respondents from the *Americas*.

Some other sources of destination university's knowledge and information that respondents mentioned were government and international student groups. This question was also discussed in the interviews. Section 5.4.4 Source of information and social media's function (from page 294) describes interviewees' sources of information on destination universities and their perceptions of their influences.

Figure 1 Question 24 Sources of Knowledge of their Destination University



Parents and Peers Factors

Table 4.9 shows the distribution of respondents' perceptions about perceived parental and peer influence on their foreign study decision. Over half of respondents agreed that parents' permission (53.4%) and parents' earnings (51.9%) had some or a lot influence on their foreign study decision. With regard to parents' links to the destination country, friends' links to destination country, and friends' recommendations, around three quarters of respondents agreed that they had no or little influence on their decision. This category of factor was also discussed in the interviews. The section 5.3 Parental Involvement (from page 270) explains interviewees' perceived parental role and how they were involved in the decision-making process.

Table 4.9 Question 22C Parental and Peer Factors						
	Parents' Recommendations[1]	**Parents' Permission[2]**	**Parents' Link in Destination Country[3]**	**Friends' Link in Destination Country[4]**	**Friends' Recommendations[5]**	**Parents' Earnings[2]**
No influence	78 (38.2%)	54 (26.5%)	124 (60.8%)	130 (64.0%)	87 (42.9%)	60 (29.4%)
Little influence	55 (27.0%)	41 (20.1%)	35 (17.2%)	35 (17.2%)	57 (28.1%)	38 (18.6%)
Some influence	53 (26.0%)	51 (25.0%)	32 (15.7%)	28 (13.8%)	44 (21.7%)	69 (33.8%)
Influence very much	18 (8.8%)	58 (28.4%)	13 (6.4%)	10 (4.9%)	15 (7.4%)	37 (18.1%)
Total	204 (100%)	204 (100%)	204 (100%)	203 (100%)	203 (100%)	204 (100%)

1: Significant differences across region, year of study, and college
2: Significant differences across region, degree status, year of study, and college
3: Significant differences across college
4: Significant differences across gender, region, degree status, and college
5: Significant differences across region and college

Parents' Permission

There was evidence of significant differences in the importance of parents' permission perceptions across global region, degree status, year of study, and college. [19]

Most respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (73.6%) agreed that parents' permission had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision, while less than half of respondents from *the Americas* and *EU* agreed. Based on these results, parents' permission was more important to respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* compared to other regions. The interviews showed similar differences in respondents' perceived parents' permission across regions. The results are discussed in section 5.3 Parental Involvement (from page 270)

59.8% of degree students thought that parents' permission was important to their foreign study decision, compared with 38.1% of visiting students. The reason that degree students and visiting students had different perspective on parents' permission could be that in general visiting students stayed in the destination university for 6 months to 1 year. It is a short period of time compared to the degree students who generally stay in the destination university for 4 years. As the length of time studying abroad and the amount of tuition fees are higher, degree students' parents may be more involved in the decision more than the visiting students' parents. Moreover, 67.5% of degree students did not have a scholarship/grant which meant that they relied on their parents' financial support. In contrast, 81.3% of visiting students had a scholarship so that they could rely on parents' financial support less or not at all. This would give them more freedom on the foreign study decision. As the financial cost can be significant, degree students' parents may tend to become involved in the foreign study decision as it can influence their own financial situation more than visiting students' families.

[19] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 7.2a to Table 7.2d in Appendix 7

58.8% of postgraduates agreed that parents' permission had no or little influence on their decision. 60% final year students agreed that parents' permission had some or a lot of influence on their decision, which was slightly higher than the percentage of respondents in first year, and second and third year. The reason that over half of postgraduates did not consider parents' permission as an important factor to their foreign study decision could be that they wanted to show that they were independent and able to decide for themselves rather than consult their parents and ask for permission. Also as previously mentioned, all postgraduate respondents were studying for masters degree in UCC. This is a one year course, so parents may tend to be less involved compared with other respondents' parents.

74.4% of CBL students agreed parents' permission had some or a lot of influence on their decision. Over half of respondents from CACSSS (67.4%) agreed that this factor had little or no influence on their decision. The reason may be similar to that mentioned in the parents' recommendations section.

Parents' Earnings

Across the respondents' characteristics, most of the bivariate tests produced statistically significant differences in the importance of parents' earnings' on foreign study decision. Parents' earnings' influence on foreign study decision was strongest in *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (69.5%), degree students (57.2%), final year students (60%), and CBL students (66.3%) and CMH students (58.8%) respectively.[20] A possible explanation for the result from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* may be that parents' earnings was an important influence on their decision as these areas have a smaller proportion of students who study abroad. Foreign study may be a more realistic and financially feasible option for students from *the Americas* and *EU*.

[20] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 7.6a to Table 7.6d in Appendix 7

Equally, it is not hard to understand why respondents from CBL and CMH had a higher percentage for this question. Respondents who were studying for a degree lived in Ireland longer than the respondents who were visiting students, so that degree students would consider their parents' earnings as an important factor when they made the decision. In other words, parents' earnings decides whether degree students' foreign study decision was affordable.

Parents' Recommendations

There was evidence of significant differences in the perceptions of the importance of parents' recommendations across global region, year of study, and college.[21]

Bivariate analysis indicated that more respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that parents' recommendations had some or a lot of influence on their decision to study abroad, compared with respondents *from the Americas* and *EU.* Over half of respondents from *The Americas* (74.5%) and *EU* (84%) agreed that this factor had no or little influence on their decision. In other words, parents' recommendations were more important to respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* compared to respondents from other regions.

There was a significant difference in respondents' perceptions across year of study. More postgraduate respondents (88.2%) agreed that parents' recommendations had no or little influence on their decision, compared with respondents who were in first year, second and third year, and final year.

CBL respondents had the highest percentage (54.7%) agreeing that parents' recommendations had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision, and most respondents from CACSSS (90.4%) agreed that it had no or little influence on their decision. As mentioned in Table 4.4, around three quarters of CBL respondents were

[21] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 7.1a to Table 7.1c in Appendix 7

from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. CACSSS had the lowest percentage of respondents (13.2%). The respondents' regions in different colleges could explain the differences in perceptions of parents' recommendations.

Friends' Recommendations

Bivariate analysis indicated significant differences between respondents' perception on this factor across their region and college.[22] Respondents from *the Americas* (39.3%) had the highest percentage agreeing that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. CMH students (37.6%) and CSEFS students (38.3%) had a relatively high percentage of agreement. The results showed a divergence in the perception between respondents' region and college.

Based on the results, friends' recommendations were more important to American students compared to students from other regions. Higher proportions of CMH and CSEFS students perceived some or a lot of influence from friends' recommendation compared to other schools' students. These students may be more interested in previous students' experience and recommendations. Through speaking with them, they could get a more accurate image of UCC. Moreover, friends' recommendations could be more focused on what these students were interested in and what they desired to get, compared to university's advertisements and lecturers' recommendations.

Parents' Links to Destination Country

Bivariate analysis indicated that there was a significant difference in the perceptions of parents' links to destination country's influence on foreign study decision across different colleges.[23] Overall more than half of respondents in all four colleges agreed that this factor had no or little influence on their decision to study abroad. 41.1% of respondents

[22] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 7.5a and Table 7.5b in Appendix 7

[23] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 7.3 in Appendix 7

from CMH agreed that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their decision and respondents from CACSSS had the lowest percentage (11.6%).

Friends' Links to Destination Country

On this question, most of respondents agreed that this factor had no or little influence on their foreign study decision.

Bivariate analysis of the relationship between this factor and respondents' characteristics (gender, region, degree status, year of study, and college) were conducted. Except for year of study, all the other factors indicated statistically significant differences.[24] To summarise the results, more male respondents (27.2%) agreed this factor had some or little influence on their decision compared with female respondents (15.6%). 24% of respondents from Americas, which had the highest percentage of the three regions, agreed that this factor had an influence on their decision. Results also showed that most visiting students (87.5%), and CACSSS students (92.1%) agreed that this factor has no or little influence on their decision.

The reason that friends' link in the destination country had a weak influence on respondents' foreign study decision may be because it was a source of information rather than a trigger to persuade respondents to study abroad. In other words, if respondents had friends in the destination country, it would be easier for respondents to collect information about the destination country or destination university. Moreover, respondents may not choose to study abroad as they had friends in the destination country and they would like to enjoy different experiences from their friends, or because their friends gave them negative feedback about some destination countries. The interviews' results also showed that the recommendations of friends who are in the destination country about that destination country may influence respondents' choice of destination

[24] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 7.4a to Table 7.4d in Appendix 7

country or destination university. The interviews' results are discussed in Chapter 5 Family and Peers Recommendations.

Destination Country Factors

Table 4.10 shows respondents' perceptions of destination country factors' influences on their foreign study decision. Among all eleven factors, there were six factors in which over half of respondents agreed that they had some or a lot of influence on their decision. Perceptions of the destination country's culture (67.8%) had the highest percentage of respondents agreeing it had some or a lot of influence on their decision. The next highest factors were destination country's environment (66.3%), social life (59.6%), perceived social safety (58.8%), perceived life style (58.3%) and perceived tolerance in society (51.4%). Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad (from page 235) and section 5.4.5 Life in Cork and Ireland (from page 296) discuss interviewees perceived influence from destination country factors, and what factors would influence their life after they arrived in destination country.

Table 4.10 Question 22D Destination Country Factors						
	Climate[1]	**Perceived Life Style[1]**	**Perceived Crime Rate[2]**	**Perceived Social Safety[2]**	**Perceived Racial Discrimination[2]**	**Environment[1]**
No influence	74 (36.3%)	29 (14.2%)	54 (26.5%)	36 (17.6%)	80 (39.2%)	22 (10.9%)
Little influence	76 (37.3%)	56 (27.5%)	61 (29.9%)	48 (23.5%)	53 (26.0%)	46 (22.8%)
Some influence	42 (20.6%)	81 (39.7%)	54 (26.5%)	72 (35.3%)	53 (26.0%)	82 (40.6%)
Influence very much	12 (5.9%)	38 (18.6%)	35 (17.2%)	48 (23.5%)	18 (8.8%)	52 (25.7%)
Total	204 (100.0%)	204 (100.0%)	204 (100.0%)	204 (100.0%)	204 (100.0%)	202 (100.0%)
	Tolerance in Society[3]	**Social Life[4]**	**Geographical Distance[1]**	**Culture[2]**	**Presence of Local Communities of Own Nationality[5]**	
No influence	48 (23.5%)	24 (11.8%)	83 (40.7%)	15 (7.4%)	97 (47.5%)	
Little influence	51 (25.0%)	58 (28.6%)	53 (26.0%)	50 (24.8%)	59 (28.9%)	
Some influence	78 (38.2%)	84 (41.4%)	45 (22.1%)	79 (39.1%)	40 (19.6%)	
Influence very much	27 (13.2%)	37 (18.2%)	23 (11.3%)	58 (28.7%)	8 (3.9%)	
Total	204 (100.0%)	203 (100.0%)	204 (100.0%)	202 (100.0%)	204 (100.0%)	

1: Significant difference across region
2: Significant differences across region, degree status and college
3: Significant differences across region and degree status
4: No significant differences across all characteristics
5: Significant differences across region and college

Climate

This factor represents destination country's climate's impact on the foreign study decision. The question aimed to test if this factor influenced international students' foreign study decision. Bivariate analysis showed that there was a significant difference between respondents' perception of climate's influence and their regions.[25] The result showed that 37.3% of *the Americas* respondents agreed destination country's climate had some or a lot of influence on their decision, compared with the *Asia, Africa and Oceania* respondents (27.6%) and the *EU* respondents (14%). The answers show that most of respondents did not consider this factor when they were making their foreign study decision. In the interviews, a few respondents revealed that destination country's weather and natural environment did not influence their foreign study decision or their choice of destination country/city. This is discussed in Chapter 5 Destination Country Pull Factors.

Perceived Lifestyle

There was evidence of significant difference between perceived life style and respondents' regions.[26] More respondents from *the Americas* (76.5%) agreed this factor's had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision, compared with respondents from the other regions (*Asia, Africa and Oceania*: 48.9%; *the EU*: 59.7%). The reason could be that *the Americas* and *the EU* have a similar lifestyle with Ireland, and these regions' students were more familiar with Ireland's lifestyle. Perhaps they chose a country with a lifestyle they were more familiar with. Therefore, lifestyle in Ireland could influence their decision more than students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. Another reason could be that respondents were interested in experiencing different life style. Lifestyle was also revealed in the interviews to be entwined with culture. Respondents revealed that they would like to study abroad to experience different a culture and life experience.

[25] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 8.1 in Appendix 8

[26] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 8.2 in Appendix 8

Perceived Crime Rate

This question aimed to show whether perceived crime rate of destination country influenced international students' decision to study abroad. Bivariate analysis showed statistically significant differences between perceived crime rate in destination country across respondents' three characteristics.[27] This was a more important factor for students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. Results also showed that perceived crime rate was more important to degree students (53.3%) than visiting students (24.7%). 65.1% of respondents who were studying for degree were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania,* and over half of respondents who were visiting students were from *the EU*. This may be the reason why degree students showed more interest in this factor. Moreover degree students would be in the destination country longer than visiting students. It could be another reason that degree students are more concerned about crime rate.

CBL (58.8%) and CMH (64.7%) respondents agreed that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their decision. It was a more important factor for students from CBL and CMH. Respondents' regions could explain why there was a significant difference on respondents' perception of this factor across different colleges. This factor is related to perceived social safety in the destination country which is discussed below. Even though this factor was not discussed in the interview, the results showed that respondents would pay attention to the destination country's crime rate as it would show whether the destination country was a safe place to stay.

Perceived Social Safety

There was evidence of a significant difference between perceived social safety across respondents' three characteristics.[28] It showed respondents' concerns about destination country's social safety during decision-making process. 79.8% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that perceived social safety had some or a lot of influence on

[27] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 8.3a to Table 8.3c in Appendix 8

[28] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 8.4a to Table 8.4c in Appendix 8

their foreign study decision. Almost 70% of degree students agreed the same. This factor was more important to CBL respondents (71.7%) and CMH respondents (76.5%). During the interviews, three respondents revealed their concern about their destination country's social safety, *i.e.* they would like to choose a safe place to study. The detailed information is provided in Chapter 5 Destination Country Pull Factors.

Perceived Racial Discrimination

The answer showed that over half of respondents (65.2%) agreed that perceived destination country's racial discrimination had little or no influence on their decision to study abroad. Bivariate analysis showed a significant difference between respondents' perceived racial discrimination and respondents' three characteristics.[29] Perceived racial discrimination was more important to respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (58.5%) than respondents from the other regions. It could be because respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were more concerned about this factor. Also it could be because respondents from these regions were more willing to reveal this factor's influence on their decision. This factor was more important to degree students, and CBL and CMH's students. 41.9% of degree respondents, 45.9% of respondents study in CBL, and 58.8% of CMH agreed that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. This may be because CBL and CMH had the highest and second highest percentage of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*.

In the interviews, no respondents discussed perceived destination country's racial discrimination as a factor influencing their foreign study decision, however, there were five respondents who revealed destination country's local people's friendliness influenced their choice of destination country. In other words, this factor may not attract international students to study abroad, but it may influence their choice of destination. The analysis is given in the Chapter 5 Destination Country Pull Factors.

[29] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 8.5a to Table 8.5c in Appendix 8

Environment

There was significant difference in respondents' perception of destination country's environment across their regions.[30] A higher percentage of *the EU* students (75%) agreed that environment had some or a lot of influence on their decision, compared with *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (69.1%), and *the Americas* (52%).

The reason could be that 94.8% of *the EU* students were visiting students. They came to destination country for a short period of time and environment to them was less important. Their main purpose was to enjoy new study and life experiences. In the interviews, 13 respondents revealed that this factor influenced their foreign study decision. This factor works at the stage of selecting a destination country/city, after the decision to study abroad has been made. In the other words, this factor does not impact international students' decision to study abroad, but influences their choice of destinations. The interview results are analysed in Chapter 5 Destination Country Pull Factors.

Tolerance in Society

The question revealed that destination country' social tolerance's impacted on international students' foreign study decision. Perceived tolerance in the destination country's society was more important to respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (63.8%), compared with respondents from *the Americas* (43.1%) and *the EU* (38.6%). More degree students (59.8%) agreed that societal tolerance had some or a lot of influence on their decision than visiting students (41.2%). Both results were statistically significant.[31]

[30] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 8.6 in Appendix 8

[31] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 8.5a and Table 8.7b in Appendix 8

The reason could be relative positions of the home countries. *Asia, Africa and Oceania* have more cultural differences with Ireland than other regions. To students from these regions, they will face to a bigger challenge to assimilate to Irish culture compared with students from *the Americas* and *the EU*. Moreover students from *the Americas* and *the EU* may be more familiar with Ireland, so they may have fewer concerns about social tolerance. In the interviews, one respondent from Asia revealed that this factor influenced their foreign study decision. The social tolerance factor is discussed in Chapter 5 Destination Country Pull Factors.

Social Life

59.6% of respondents agreed that destination country's social life had some or a lot of influence on the foreign study decision. There was no significant difference for the distribution of respondents' perceptions of destination country's social life across their gender, region, degree status, year of study and college. This factor was not mentioned in the interviews either, however, destination country's social life could be seen as part of the destination country's culture. It may explain why over half of respondents agreed it influenced their decision to study abroad.

Geographical Distance between Destination Country and Home Country

The question showed whether the geographical distance between destination country and home country influenced international students' decision to study abroad. Less than half of respondents agreed that geographical distance between home country and destination country had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. Bivariate analysis showed that more than half respondents from *the EU* (52.6%) considered it as an important factor compared with respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (27.6%) and from *the Americas* (23.5%). The result was statistically significant.[32] Respondents showed different perspectives on this factor. Respondents from *the EU* preferred options that were near to their home countries. The factor did not influence respondents from

[32] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 8.8 in Appendix 8

Asia, Africa and Oceania, and *the Americas*. The respondents from these regions did not mind long geographical distances between home country and destination country. 53.9% of visiting students were from *the EU*. Considering their relatively short length of time abroad, choosing a country close to their home country, especially a country within EU area, may save time when travelling to and from their home country. EU students may also have considered the financial cost. They pay the same tuition fees as Irish students, and not the higher level fees of international students' that they would if they travelled outside of the EU. Most respondents from other regions were degree students. As they would be away from home for a long time, geographical distance would be less important.

Culture

This question aimed to test the experience destination country's culture's influence on the foreign study decision. Statistically significant differences were evident between respondents' perceptions of this factor across their regions, degree status and college.[33] Most of respondents from *the Americas* (84.3%) agreed that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their decision, compared with respondents from *the EU* (69.6%) and from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (58.5%). Moreover, this factor was more important to visiting students (73.9%) than to degree students (60.5%). 77.7% of CACSSS respondents agreed that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their decision. This percentage was higher than the percentage of respondents in CSEFS, CBL and CMH. As shown in table 4.4 and 4.5, 53.9% of respondents who were visiting students from *the EU* and 32.4% of were from *the Americas*. Moreover, 41.5% of respondents in CACSSS were from *the Americas* and 45.3% of them were from *the EU*. The distribution of respondents from different regions under different degree status and study in different colleges could explain why there was significant difference on respondents' perceptions of this factor.

[33] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 8.9a to Table 8.9c in Appendix 8

The reason could be *the Americas* students were better placed to know more about Ireland's culture. Also they are culturally more similar, there would less cultural acclimatisation. In the qualitative data analysis section (Chapter 5), culture's influence on decision-making process is also discussed.

Interview results also showed that 13 out of 24 respondents revealed that experiencing different culture as a reason that they would like to study abroad. Respondents revealed that they would like to experience different things and explore the differences between Ireland and their home country through foreign study. This factor could work as a pull factor to attract international students to study abroad. This is discussed in the Chapter 5 Destination Country Pull Factors.

Presence of Local Communities of Own Nationality

The question aimed to test whether the presence of local communities of respondents' own nationality would influence their foreign study decision. As shown in table 4.10, around three-quarters of respondents (76.4%) agreed this factor had little or no influence on their foreign study decision. The result showed that this factor has a very weak influence on the foreign study decision. The reason could be that local communities from the respondents' home country may be important to their life experience in the destination country, however, it may not attract respondents to study abroad or influence their choice of destination country/city. Moreover, according to the interview results (Section 5.2 Push Factors on Page 238) it is possible that respondents would like to avoid competition with other people from the same country, so that they select destination countries with a smaller size ethnic community.

Bivariate analysis showed there was significant difference between the perception of this factor across their regions, degree status and college.[34] Result shows that *Asia, Africa and Oceania* respondents (29.8%) had a higher percentage of agreement on this factor's

[34] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 8.10a to Table 8.10c in Appendix 8

important influence on their decision. More degree students (28.6%), and CBL (30.6%) and CMH (29.4%) students agreed that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their decision compared with respondents who were at different degree status and college.

Future Plan Factors

The questions in the category of future plan factors aimed to test respondents' perceived influence from future job opportunities, future education opportunities and post-graduate immigration on their foreign study decision. In other words, this category' questioned explore whether respondents considered their future career, education and immigration when they were making their decision to study abroad. Table 4.11 shows that among all the three factors of future plan, only future education opportunities in the destination country had over half of respondents (51.5%) agreeing that it had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. The other two factors had more respondents agree that they had little or no influence on their decision. In Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad, section 5.4.2 Respondents' Future Plan (from page 290) also discussed interviewees' future plan and the reasons behind their decisions.

Table 4.11 Question 22 E Future Plan Factors

	Job Opportunities[1]	Future Education[1]	Post-graduate Immigration
No influence at all	72 (35.1%)	54 (26.5%)	84 (41.2%)
Little influence	53 (25.9%)	45 (22.1%)	65 (31.9%)
Some influence	59 (28.8%)	66 (32.4%)	38 (18.6%)
Influenced very much	21 (10.2%)	39 (19.1%)	17 (8.3%)
Total	205 (100%)	204 (100%)	204 (100%)

1: Significant differences across region, degree status, and college
2: Significant differences across region, and degree status

Availability of Job Opportunities in Destination Country

Bivariate analysis of relationship was conducted between the variable and respondents' characteristics. There was a statistically significant relationship between job opportunities across respondents' three characteristics.[35]

Results show that more *Asia, Africa and Oceania* respondents (55.4%) agreed that this variable had some or a lot of influence on their decision of studying abroad compared with respondents from other regions. Degree students had higher percentage (53.9%) agreement with the statement than visiting students (21.6%). Moreover, 61.1% of CMH respondents agreed that job opportunities in the destination country had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision.

Opportunities for Future Education in Destination Country

There was evidence of significant differences in the perception of this factor's influence across the same three characteristics.[36] Bivariate analysis showed that approximately three-quarters (74.2%) of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that this factor had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. This was the highest percentage among all three regions. More degree students (61.1%) agreed with the statement than visiting students (36.1%). CBL students (65.5%) had the highest percentage of agreement that future education in destination country had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. It was slightly higher than CMH (61.1%) students.

[35] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 9.1a to Table 9.1c in Appendix 9

[36] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 9.2a to Table 9.2c in Appendix 9

Postgraduate Immigration Prospects

Bivariate analysis showed that the tests between postgraduate immigration prospects and respondents' regions, and their degree status had a statistically significant relationship.[37] 34.4% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that immigration prospects had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision, and respondents from *the EU* agreed with the statement the least. It may be because respondents from *the EU* are free to travel and work in European Union areas without visas unlike respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. To respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*, this factor may influence their future path. Moreover, this factor was more important for degree students than visiting students. As shown in table 4.6, over half of degree students were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. This may explain why more degree students considered postgraduate immigration prospects as having some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision.

This suggests that respondents had not considered their future immigration plans, or they had decided to return back to their home country. Also there is the possibility that respondents' future immigration country may not be Ireland. This could be an explanation for why future immigration prospects would not influence their decision to study in Ireland.

Postgraduate immigration prospects are also discussed in qualitative data analysis section (Chapter 5). In that section, it would be clear to see different respondents' immigration plan after graduation.

Ranking of Aggregate Five Factors

Table 4.12 shows that the most important factor to respondents were personal factors, which include satisfying language and academic requirements (as shown in table 4.7).

[37] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 9.2a and Table 9.2b in Appendix 9

The factors that had the least overall influence to their foreign study decision were parental and peer factors (table 4.9). The reason personal factors ranked as the most important factor may be because students' language levels and academic scores decided whether they were accepted by the destination university.

Respondents ranked the most important factor as "1", and the least important factor as "5", so the factor with the highest score would be the least important factor and the factor with the lowest score the most important factor to the respondents. Overall importance was calculated by adding all respondents' rankings on each factor. The factor with the lowest total score, personal factors, was the most important factor in the decision-making process. Parental and peer factors had the highest total score, corresponding to the least important factor for respondents.

Table 4.12 Question 23 Aggregate Five Factor Ranking

	All Regions Mean (Standard Deviation)	Asia, Africa, Oceania Mean (Standard Deviation)	Americas Mean (Standard Deviation)	EU Mean (Standard Deviation)
Personal Factors	2.22 (1.33)	2.69 (1.49)	1.98 (1.29)	2.06 (1.14)
Future Plan Factors	2.68 (1.49)	2.20 (1.30)	3.08 (1.53)	2.88 (1.49)
Destination University Factors	2.85 (1.27)	2.71 (1.15)	2.92 (1.30)	2.91 (1.23)
Destination Country Factors	3.32 (1.25)	3.82 (1.22)	3.29 (1.19)	2.90 (1.24)
Parental and Peer Factors	3.87 (1.22)	3.48 (1.34)	3.63 (1.27)	4.24 (1.06)

Figures 2 to 5 show the rankings across the 3 different regions. Based on these results, respondents ranked personal factors as the most important factors in the foreign study decision-making process, and they ranked parental and peer factors as the least important factor. The parental and peer factors had the least importance in the decision-making

process. The regions have similar results. Respondents from *the Americas* and *the EU* also ranked personal factors as the most important factors in their foreign study decision-making process and parental and peer factors as the least important factors. The respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* ranked future plan factors as the most important factors, and personal factors as the second important factor. Destination country factors are ranked as the least important factors in the decision-making process. The reason that future factors would be ranked as the most important factors for the respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* may because the foreign study decision could influence their future path more respondents from other regions. The high financial cost, such as tuition fees and living cost, and non-financial costs, such as time cost and opportunity cost would encourage them to look for a higher future return. Moreover, based on the interview results, respondents from *Asia and Africa* have revealed education opportunities and job opportunities as push and pull factors in their foreign study decision. For example, home country's lack of education and job opportunities was a push factor, and destination country's number of education and job opportunities was a pull factor. This could also explain why respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* ranked future plan factors as the most important factors in their foreign study decision-making process.

Based on the quantitative analysis of Push and Pull Factors Effects on International Students' Decision to Study Abroad (from Page 174 and from Page 181), a higher percentage of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* perceived significant influence from parents and peers, especially from parents. This may explain why respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* did not ranked parental and peer factors as the least important factors.

Figure 2 Five Factor Aggregate Ranking *(Asia, Africa and Oceania)*

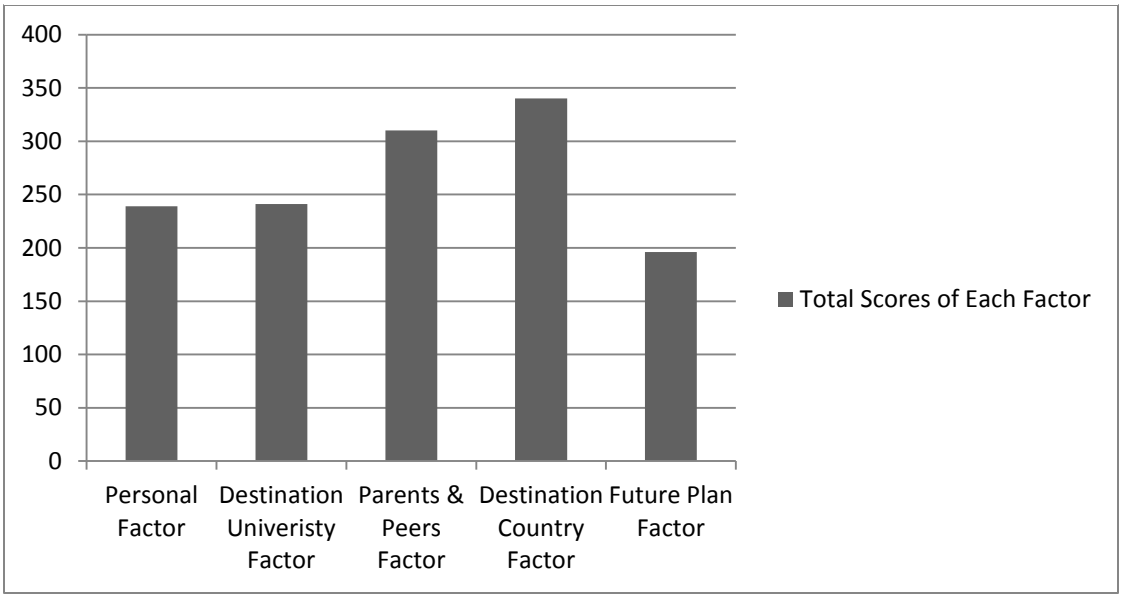


Figure 3 Five Factor Aggregate Ranking *(The Americas)*

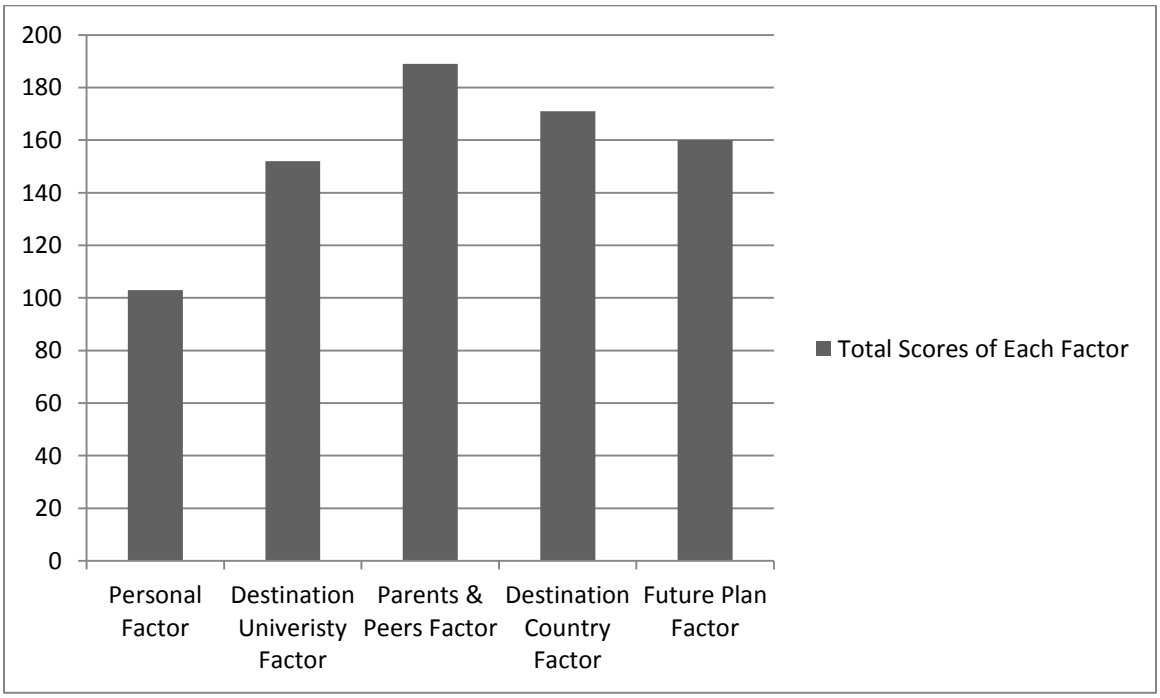


Figure 4 Five Factor Aggregate Ranking (*EU*)

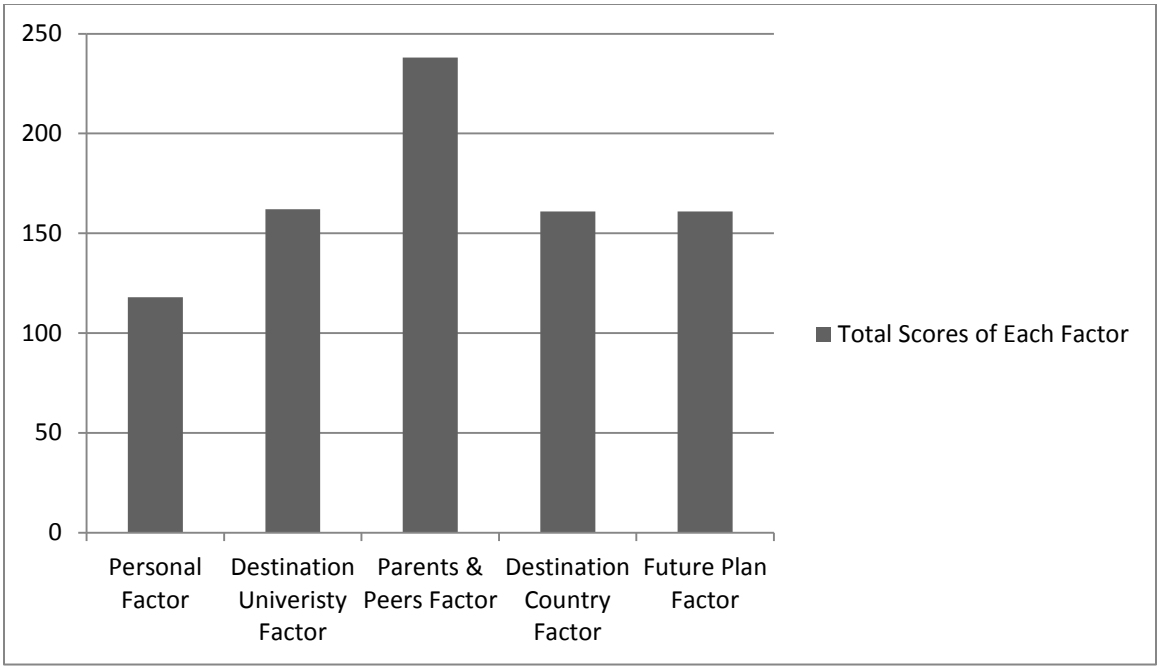
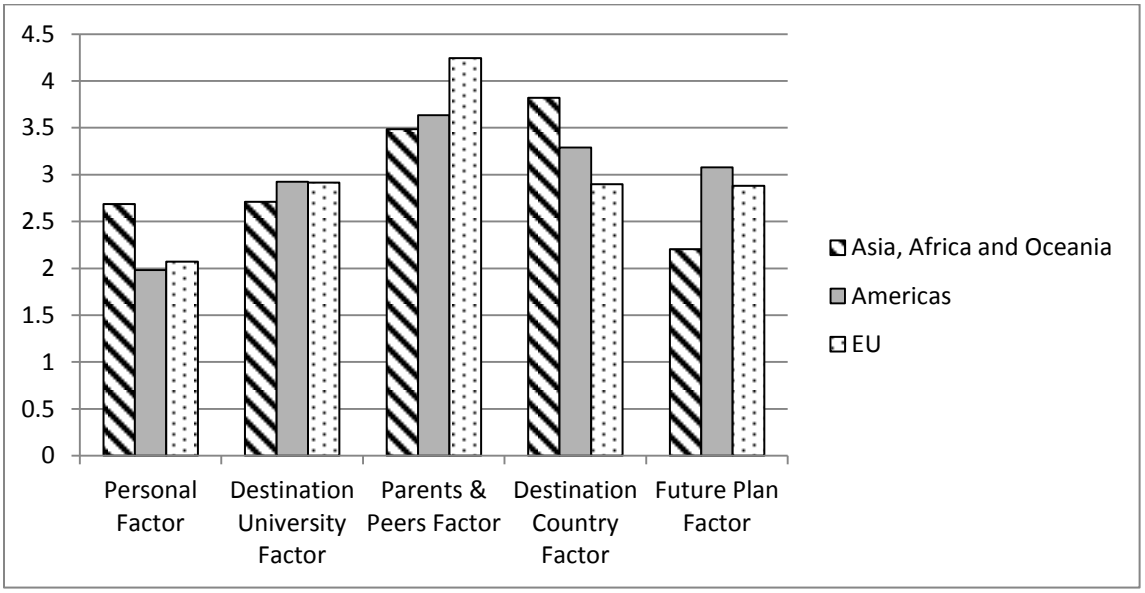


Figure 5 Five Factor Aggregate Ranking (all continents' mean average value comparison)



4.4. Education Investment and Return

The following sections will discuss respondents' education investment, tuition fees and living costs.

Tuition Fees

Table 4.13 shows that 66.5% of respondents paid tuition fees of less than €13,000 a year.

Table 4.13 Annual Tuition Fees	
Under €12,000	82 (41.6%)
€12,001 - €13,000	49 (24.9%)
€13,001 - €14,000	18 (9.1%)
Above €14,000	48 (24.4%)
Total	197 (100%)
Significant difference across all characteristics	

Bivariate analysis indicated significant difference between tuition fees and respondents' characteristics. All tests demonstrated a statistically significant relationship.[38]

Bivariate analysis showed that 70.8% of female respondents were paying less than or equal to €13,000 a year, compared with male respondents (54.7%). 19.4% of female respondents were paying more than €14,000 a year and 37.7% of male respondents paid tuition fees at the same level. Over half of *the Americas* students (52%) were paying more than €13,000 a year. 57.6% the respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* and

[38] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 12.1a to Table 12.e in Appendix 12

98.1% of respondents from *the EU* were paying tuition fees less than or equals to €13,000 a year.

The difference on paid tuition fees level could be explained by another respondents' characteristic, college. CMH students were more likely to pay higher tuition fees. 77.8% of them were paying more than €14,000 per year. 60.8% of CACSSS students were paying less than €12,000 per year. The reason could be that different college charge different tuition fees to their students.

Compared to the respondents under different degree status, most of visiting students (82.4%) are paying tuition fees less than or equals to €13,000 a year. The distributions of tuition fee level of degree students are more even. The reason might be university charges different levels of tuition fee to visiting students and degree students.

Living Costs

Table 4.14 shows that 63.3% of respondents spent less than or equal to €9,000 year on living costs.

Table 4.14 Annual Living Cost	
Under €8,000	85 (42.7%)
€8,001 - €9,000	41 (20.6%)
€9,001 - €10,000	25 (12.6%)
€10,001 - €11,000	23 (11.6%)
€11,001 - €12,000	8 (4.0%)
Above €12,000	17 (8.5%)
Total	199 (100.0%)
Significant differences across region and year of study	

There was evidence of significant difference in respondents' annual living costs across two characteristics as shown in Table 4.15.[39] Over half of respondents from all three regions were paying less than or equal to €9,000 a year. Two-thirds of students from *the Americas* and *the EU* had living costs less than €9,000, which was slightly higher than students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (58.7%). 19.2% of students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were paying more than €11,000 on living costs per year, which was higher than the percentage of respondents from the other two regions.

Over half of first year students (62.6%), second and third year students (67.9%) and final year students (68.7%) spent less than or equal to €9,000 a year on living costs. 23.5% of postgraduates students spent more than €11,000 a year on living costs, which was the highest percentage among all four categories of year of study.

Respondents' Expectation of Their First Job Monthly Salary

Table 4.15 Respondents' expectation of their first job monthly salary	
	Frequency
Under €1,500	49 (24.3%)
€1,501 - €2,000	70 (34.7%)
€2,001 - €3,000	44 (21.8%)
€3,001 - €4,000	26 (12.9%)
Above €4,000	13 (6.4%)
Total	202 (100.0%)
Significant differences across gender, region, year of study and college	

[39] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 13.1a and Table 13.1b in Appendix 13

Table 4.15 shows that 59% of respondents expected the salary in their first job after graduation to be less than or equal to €2,000 per month and only 6.4% of the respondents thought that their first job's monthly salary would be over €4,000. In section 5.4.3 Factors influencing career choice (from page 291), interviewees discussed perceived salary's influence on their career choices and other important factors to their future career.

Bivariate analysis indicated statistically significant difference between perceptions of expected salary across four characteristics.[40]

Almost two-thirds (63.5%) of female respondents thought that their first job's monthly salary would be less than or equal to €2,000, compared with under half (46.3%) of male respondents. A greater percentage of male respondents reported higher salary expectations for their first job. 13% of male respondents expected their first job's monthly salary would be over €4,000, compared to 4.1% for female respondents.

For global regions, almost three-quarters (72%) of respondents from *the Americas* expected their first monthly salary to be more than €2,000, compared to 34.8% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. Most the respondents from *the EU* (76.4%) expected their first monthly salary to be less than or equal to €2,000. These regional differences may be explained by the difference in the range of domestic salaries, costs of living, and exchange rates between Euro currency and domestic currency.

There was a significant difference in respondents' expectations of their first monthly salary across different colleges. A greater percentage of CMH respondents (76.4%) expected their first monthly salary to be more than €2,000, compared with CACSSS (40.4%), CBL (31.5%) and CSEFS (51.5%). Moreover, 17.6% of respondents from CMH

[40] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 10.1a to Table 10.1d in Appendix 10

thought that their first salary would be more than €4,000 per month, and 12.1% of respondents from CSEFS had the same expectation. It may be because students from CMH expect higher salary as they spend longer in university to qualify. They may expect higher returns after a longer-term investment.

The results also indicated that first year students have higher expectations of their first monthly salary, with 70.6% expecting their first salary to be more than €2,000 per month, compared to 63.9% for postgraduates, 36.3% for second and third year students, and 29% for final year students.

The results showed that respondents who paid higher tuition fees, who invest more in their education, did not expect to earn more in their first job after graduation. The reason could be that firstly, the question did not ask respondents where they would like to work in the future. Respondents may have given an answer based on their home country's or other country's currency. It is difficult to see whether their expectations would be higher without knowing which currency the respondents meant. Secondly, it could be because respondents understood that the starting salary would not be high but would receive a high growth rate of salary and more promotion opportunities from foreign study. The reason could also because most of respondents did not do any research about starting salaries. They may have had little understanding about the salary level in the labour market. The questionnaire also asked respondents to indicate whether and how they did any research to inform their salary expectations. The results show that two-thirds of the respondents (65.2%) did no research on salary.

Bivariate analysis showed a significant difference between salary expectations and starting salary research.[41] Results showed that among the respondents who did conduct research, slightly more of respondents (50.7%) expected to earn over €2,000 per month. Among the respondents who did not research starting salaries, more of them (64.3%)

[41] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics is shown in Table 10.1e in Appendix 10

expected to earn less than or equal to €2,000 per month. The reason could be that when a respondent did not do any salary research, their guess tended to be cautious. Respondents who did do salary research may have compared their qualifications, skills and working experience with the salary scale on the market. It may explain why the salary expectations were higher for respondents who did research.

Bivariate analysis of the relationship between salary research and respondent characteristics were conducted. Most tests demonstrated statistically insignificant relationships.

A greater percentage of CMH students (76.4%) expected their first monthly salary would be more than €2,000, which was higher than the percentages in other colleges. However, a smaller percentage of CMH students (38.9%) reported that that they did research on likely salary levels. Compared to this question's answer, a greater percentage of CSEFS students (58.8%) did salary research.[42]

[42] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics is shown in Table 10.2 in Appendix 10

Figure 6 Sources of Salary Information

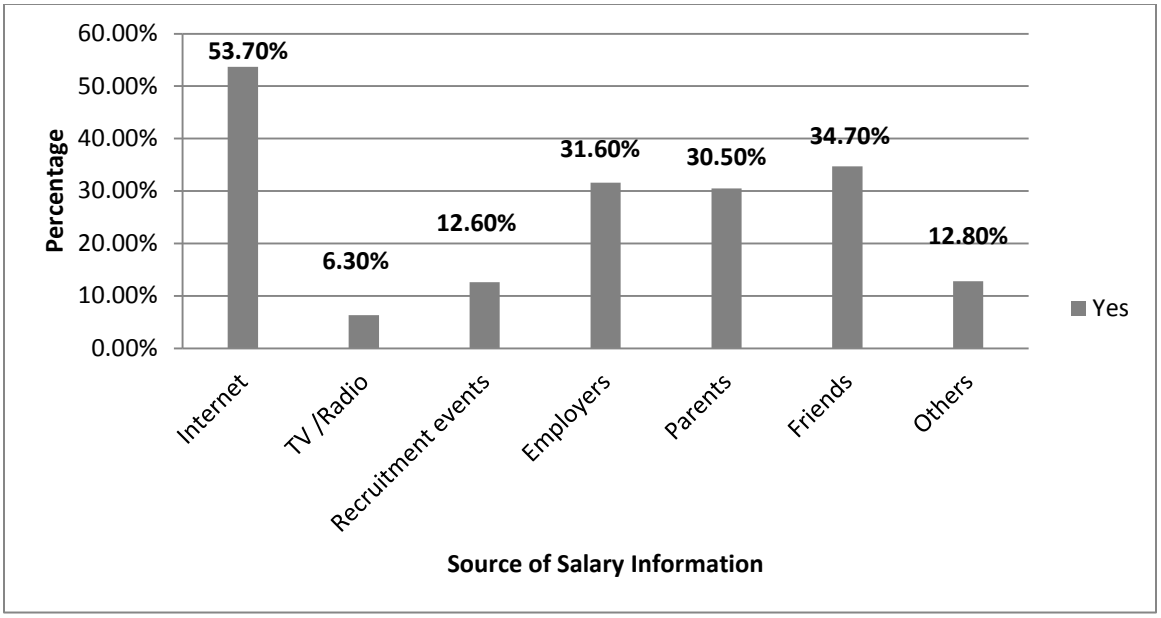


Figure 6 shows where the respondents sourced information for their salary expectations. As respondents could choose multiple answers, "Yes" indicates that the respondent selected the source as one of their sources of salary information.

The internet was the most common source of salary information. Friends, employers and parents were also sources. Some other sources of information that respondents indicated were siblings, book, former students, and college guidance counsellors.

Figure 7 Factors Considered Into Salary Expectation

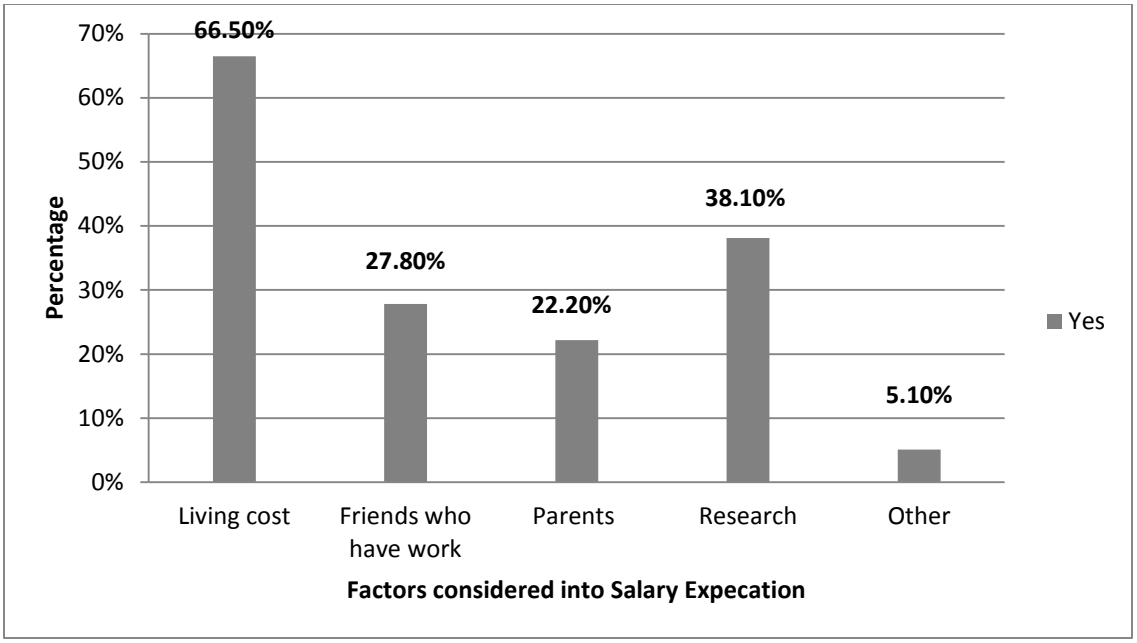


Figure 7 shows the factors that influence respondents' salary expectations. The results indicate that over half (66.5%) of respondents agreed that living cost perceptions influence their salary expectation. Some other factors that respondents (5.1%) indicated were the country in which they will work, occupation and work responsibilities.

4.5. Parents' characteristics and perceived views of parental involvement

This section presents results on the extent of parental involvement in respondents' foreign study decision. The factors include parents' highest education level, attitude towards foreign study's benefits, involvement with foreign study agency, and perceived influence on foreign study and career choice.

Table 4.16 Parents' Highest Education Level		
	Father	Mother
Primary School and Secondary School	56 (36.1%)	57 (36.3%)
Bachelor, Masters, PhD	99 (63.9%)	100 (63.7%)
Total	155 (100%)	157 (100%)

Table 4.16 shows that most respondents' fathers (63.9%) had third level education, which was same percentage of respondents' mothers with a third level degree (63.7%). The results could be caused by selection bias. As the questionnaire was directed at respondents enrolled in tertiary level education abroad, the respondents' parents' highest education level could be much higher than the population's education level in general. In 2013, the gross enrolment ratio of tertiary education of both sexes was 32.883% (The World Bank, 2016) which was much lower than the enrolment ratio of tertiary education of both parents in this survey.

Moreover, respondents' parents would be able to afford children's foreign study decision which means they had a relatively higher income level. Rubinstein and Weiss (2006) discussed that a high level of education has a positive effect on the workers' wages. Mincer (1991) also suggests that higher wages are always coupled with a higher level of education. This could also explain why the survey's respondents' parents have a relatively higher education level. Parents with a high education level could act as a role

model to encourage respondents to enrol in tertiary education. Pearson Correlation test result showed 44% of respondents' fathers' education was correlated with respondents' mothers' education.

Perceived Parents' Attitude towards Foreign Study's Benefits

Table 4.17 Father Attitude towards Foreign Study's Benefits of Children					
	Benefit of Job	Benefit of Education	Father Believes Should Study Abroad	Father Supports Foreign Study	Father Believes Family should Financially Support
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	25 (12.3%)	17 (8.4%)	23 (11.3%)	14 (6.9%)	21 (10.4%)
No Opinion	46 (22.7%)	43 (21.3%)	41 (20.1%)	13 (6.4%)	24 (11.9%)
Agree or Strongly Agree	132 (65%)	142 (70.3%)	140 (68.6%)	175 (86.6%)	157 (77.7%)
Total	203	202	204	202	202

The following analysis shows the respondents' perceived their fathers' attitude towards foreign study's benefits. As shown in the table, agree/strongly agree represents respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing that they perceived their fathers' positive attitude towards foreign study's benefits. No opinion could mean respondents did not perceive any attitude from their fathers towards foreign study's benefits. It could also mean that respondents' fathers do not care about the foreign study or the fathers held a neutral position in their children's decision to study abroad. In Table 4.18, almost two-thirds (65%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their father thought that foreign study would benefit the respondent's career. A higher percentage (70.3%) perceived that their father believed that foreign study would benefit their children's future education compared to the previous question. 68.6% of fathers agreed that their children should study abroad. A substantial majority of respondents (86.6%) stated that their father would support their study abroad. This could be because the connection in the family that parents would support children's decision. It also could because the foreign study decision was an investment on children. For example, in China, under the One Child

Policy which has introduced in 1973 and changed recently (The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 2005; National Health and Family Planning Commission of the PRC, 2015), and the lack of a social welfare system, each family may only have one child (with some exemptions) and combined with the lack of pension, retirement insurance and unemployment insurance, Chinese parents 'invest' in their child's education to help support the family and also to ensure they could live well after retirement (Qu, 2014). Over three-quarters (77.7%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their fathers believed that the family would provide financial support for their foreign study.

There was evidence of significant differences between respondents' perceptions of their fathers' attitude to the benefit of foreign study to children's career and future education, and their perception of fathers' support on their foreign study across fathers' education. [43] Results show that fathers with higher education (bachelor degree or higher) had a higher percentage agreeing or strongly agreeing that foreign study would benefit their children's career and future education. Also fathers with higher education were more likely to support their child's foreign study decision.

[43] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 14.1a to Table 14.1c in Appendix 14

Perceived Mothers' Attitude towards Foreign Study's Benefits

Table 4.18 Mother Attitude towards Foreign Study's Benefits					
	Benefit of Job	Benefit of Education	Mother Believes Should Study Abroad	Father Supports Foreign Study	Mother Believe should Family's Financial Support
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	11 (5.4%)	14 (6.8%)	18 (8.9%)	12 (5.9%)	19 (9.3%)
No Opinion	33 (16.1%)	30 (14.6%)	28 (13.9%)	9 (4.5%)	19 (9.3%)
Agree, Strongly Agree	161 (78.5%)	161 (78.5%)	156 (77.2%)	181 (89.6%)	166 (81.4%)
Total	205	205	202	202	204

The following analysis shows the respondents' perceived their mothers' attitude towards foreign study's benefits. Table 4.18 shows that on the same question, respondents perceived that their mothers were more likely to have a positive attitude (agree/strongly agree) on the foreign study's benefits on children's career (78.5%) and future education (78.5%), than their fathers' attitude on the same question (65% and 70.3%) respectively. Moreover, on the questions about mother's attitude on believing that their child should study abroad, support their child's foreign study, and belief that family would support their child's foreign study financially, there was a higher percentage with a positive attitude from respondents' mothers about foreign study (77.2%), personal support (89.6%), and family financial support (81.4%), compared with father's attitude.

Bivariate analysis showed similar results with the questions for fathers.[44] The only difference was there is no significant difference between mother's education and perceived mother's support on foreign study decision.

The reason that for testing respondents perceived both parents' attitude towards foreign study decision was, firstly, the research cannot rule out that the father and mother may have different attitudes towards different foreign study's benefits. So it was important to test respondents' perception of both parents' attitudes. If parents' attitudes were significantly different, it may show that one of the parents had a stronger influence on the foreign study decision. There was also chance that respondents may from single parent family. Only testing respondents' perceived father's or mother's attitudes toward foreign study decision may result in losing potential valuable responses. The results showed that there was no difference on the respondents perception of both parents' attitude towards foreign study's benefits. Moreover, the research used Pearson Correlation to test the correlation between the perceived attitudes of fathers and mothers towards the child's foreign study decision. Results showed that respondents' perceived both parents' attitude towards foreign study was correlated. Father's and mother's perceived attitudes towards foreign study's benefit on respondent's future job were 56.8% correlated. Both parents' perceived attitudes toward foreign study's benefit on respondents' future education was 68.9% correlated. Both parents' perceived attitude to foreign study was 51.7% correlated. Parents' perceived attitude to supporting foreign study was 76.2% correlated. Both parents' perceived attitude towards family's financial support on the foreign study decision was 79.7% correlated.

[44] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 15.1a and 15.1 b in Appendix 15

Perceived Parents' influences on foreign study decision

Table 4.19 Perceived Parental Influences on Foreign Study Decision		
	Father	Mother
No Influence	61 (30.2%)	47 (22.8%)
Little influence	41 (20.3%)	42 (20.4 %)
Some influence	65 (32.2%)	72 (35.0 %)
Influence a lot	29 (14.4%)	41 (19.9 %)
My father/mother made the decision	6 (3.0%)	4 (1.9%)
Total	202 (100.0%)	206 (100.0%)
Significant differences across region, degree status and college		

Table 4.19 shows respondents' perceived parental influence on the foreign study decision. Results showed that approximately half of the respondents' fathers had little or no influence on their foreign study decision (50.5%), and 3% of respondents' fathers made the decision for them. Compared to the result of mothers' influence on foreign study decision, 43.2% of respondents thought that their mothers had little or no influence on the foreign study decision, and only 1.9% of respondents believed that their mother made the decision.

There was a significant difference in father's influence on foreign study decision across regions.[45] *The EU* students had the highest percentage (74.1%) agreeing that their father had little or no influence on the foreign study decision and students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had the highest percentage (68.1%) agreeing that their father had some or a lot of influence on the foreign study decision. Notably, 6.4% of student from *Asia, Africa*

[45] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 16.1a in Appendix 16

and Oceania agreed that their father made the foreign study decision for them. No respondents from *the Americas* or *the EU* chose this option. Bivariate analysis on mother's influence on foreign study decision indicated similar results.[46]

Bivariate analysis showed a difference for visiting and degree students in the perception of fathers' influence on their foreign study decision. [47] 64.6% of visiting students agreed that their father had little or no influence. 55.2% of the degree students believed that their father at some level influenced the decision to study abroad. 5.3% of degree students believed that their father made the decision for them, and none of the visiting students thought that their father made the decision. The result was statistically significant.

Bivariate analysis between perceived mother's influence on foreign study decision and students' degree status indicated similar results.[48]

The perceived influence of fathers and mothers on the foreign study decision across respondents' colleges was statistically significant.[49] CSEFS respondents have highest percentage (60%) agreeing that their father have some or a lot of influence on the decision. CMH respondents had highest percentage (76.4%) agreeing that their mother had some or a lot of influence on the decision. CACSSS students had the lowest percentage agreeing their father or mother had some or a lot of influence on their decision.

[46] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 16.2a in Appendix 16

[47] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 16.1b in Appendix 16

[48] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 16.2b in Appendix 16

[49] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 16.1c and 16.2c in Appendix 16

The section 5.3 Parental Involvement (from page 270) also discussed interviewees' perceptions of their parents' role in the decision-making process. It highlighted different types of parental involvement and interviewees' perceptions of them.

Perceived Parental influences on expected job

Table 4.20 Parental influences on expected job		
	Father	Mother
No influence	55 (27.4%)	43 (21.0%)
Little influence	49 (24.4%)	57 (27.8%)
Some influence	64 (31.8%)	77 (37.6%)
Influence a lot	27 (13.4%)	26 (12.7%)
My father/mother made the decision	6 (3.0%)	2 (1.0%)
Total	201 (100.0%)	205 (100.0%)
Significant differences across region, degree status and college		

Table 4.20 shows that 51.8% of respondents thought that their fathers had little or no influence on their expected jobs. Slightly lower percentage of respondents (45.2%) thought that their father had some or a lot of influence on their career decision, and 3% thought that their father made the career decision. 48.8% of respondents thought that their mother had little or no influence on their career decision, and 50.3% of them agreed that their mother had some or a lot of influence on their expected job, and 1% of respondents thought that their mother made the decision.

In a regional comparison, it can be seen that 39.3% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had the lowest percentage (39.3%) agreeing that their father had little or no influence on career decision, which most of *the EU* students agree on these two options (69.9%). Students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had the highest percentage (54.2%)

agreeing that their father had some or a lot of influence on their career decision. 6.4% of them believed their father made the decision on their expected jobs. None of the respondents from *the Americas* or *the EU* agreed with this option. The result was statistically significant.[50]

Bivariate analysis showed that significantly different distribution between perceived father's influence on their expected job and respondents' degree status.[51] Higher percentages of visiting students (63.2%) perceived that their father had little or no influence on their expected job than degree students (43.4%). 5.3% of respondents thought that their father made the career decision for them.

Bivariate analysis results between the same variables for father and the college was statistically significant respectively.[52] As previously mentioned, the reason could be due to the composition of students' origins in different colleges. CACSSS students had the highest percentage (80%) of respondents who perceived that their father had little or no influence on their expected job. CSEFS students had the highest percentage (61.8%) who believed that their father had some or a lot of influence on their expected job. Moreover, CMH had the highest percentage of respondents who chose the 'agree' option (5.6%).

Bivariate analysis of perceived influence of their mother on their expected job choice across regions, degree status and college was also statistically significant.[53]

[50] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics is shown in Table 17.1a in Appendix 17

[51] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics is shown in Table 17.1b in Appendix 17

[52] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics is shown in Table 17.1c in Appendix 17

[53] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 17.2a to 17.2 c in Appendix 17

Contact with Foreign Study Agency

In relation to foreign study agencies, 39.4% of respondents had contact with a foreign study agency themselves, and 36.1% did not use a foreign study agency.

Students from *the EU* (47.4%) and *the Americas* (51.9%) were less likely to use a foreign study consultancy agency, compared to students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (21.4%). Students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* reported the highest percentage of parental contact with an agency (father, mother or both of parents) (35.7%), compared with *the Americas* (11.5%) and *the EU* (8.5%). This result was statistically significant.[54] In the other words, parents of students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had more involvement in the negotiations and consultations with foreign study agencies.

This may reflect the prevalence of agencies in *Asia, Africa and Oceania* compared to *the EU* and *the Americas.* The decision to study abroad may involve greater degrees of asymmetric information for *Asia, Africa and Oceania* students, suggesting a greater benefit from consulting with agencies.

The high parental involvement in Asia could be because of Filial Piety. Parental involvement would be respected, as it would embody an unquestioning attitude towards parents' plans for future education and career (Bodycott, 2009). In the interviews, three Asian respondents revealed that their parents made the foreign study decision for them. Two Asian respondents revealed that they looked for advice from their parents during foreign study decision-making process and followed it. Another Asian respondent revealed that her parents set academic achievement targets for her to reach. The interview results showed the high parental involvement in Asia and Asian students' attitude

[54] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristic is shown in Table 18.1a in Appendix 18

towards parental involvement. The interview results related to parental involvement will be discussed in Chapter 5 Section 5.4 Parental Involvement from Page 270.

The high parental involvement in Asia could also be analysed from the view of investment and return on education. Based on the questionnaire results, 66.7% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were studying for a degree in UCC. The foreign study decision would bring them higher financial and non-financial costs compared to students from *the EU* and visiting students. Parents may want to be more involved in the decision-making process to ensure the investment choice would be wise. Also the foreign study decision could influence respondents' and their families' futures. Using China as an example, under the One Child Policy which was introduced in 1973 (The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 2005), each family may only have one child (with some exemptions). Chinese parents "invest" in their child's education to ensure they can live well after retirement (Qu, 2014).

Moreover, there was a higher percentage of visiting students (41.8%) who contacted the foreign study agency themselves compared with degree students (27.5%). Degree students were more likely to contact a foreign study agency with their parents (22.5%), or let one or both parents do it (8.8%), compared with visiting students (8.2% and 4.1% respectively). The result was statistically significant.[55]

Bivariate results also indicated that there was a significant difference between the person who contacted with foreign study agency across respondents' year of study and college.[56]

[55] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics is shown in Table 18.1b in Appendix 18

[56] The statistically significant bivariate analyses for this factor across relevant characteristics are shown in Table 18.1c and Table 18.1d in Appendix 18

4.6. Recommendations and Policy Implications

Based on the quantitative results, there are some recommendations which could be helpful for destination universities in Ireland. Some of the advice is tailor-made to specific groups of students.

Firstly, quantitative results showed that most of international students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* (80.8%) were studying for a degree in UCC and 92.8% of respondents from *the EU* were visiting students in UCC. This could provide a guide for destination universities in Ireland. Factoring in geographical distance, tuition fees, grant availability and relevant programmes between the EU respondents' home countries and Ireland, it may be easier to promote visiting study programmes to international students from the EU. Moreover, as 40.4% of respondents from *the EU* were at their second and third year, and 52.6% of them were at the final year of study. Destination universities could promote postgraduate programmes to EU students and emphasis the benefits, such as a qualification highly regarded by employers, improved language skills, access to better and more education opportunities, and experience with international students. Moreover, destination universities could also explain that these benefits could bring competitive advantages in the labour market. Also destination universities could introduce scholarships/funds for EU students which could attract them.

Most of the international students from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were studying in UCC for a degree. 82.5% of them were undergraduates. In comparison with respondents from *the EU*, they must pay higher level of tuition fees which made their foreign study decision more serious and important to them and their family. From the previous quantitative data analysis on parental involvement factors, it was clear to see that Asian respondents perceived stronger parental involvement in the decision-making process. One sign of it was the higher percentage of Asian parents that would contact foreign study agencies with their children compared to the parents from other regions. In order to recruit Asian students, it would be helpful if destination universities could reach out to students' parents and advertise the programme to the parents directly. However, it would entail a large cost and effort as these parents may not be able to understand all the

information in English. It could be helpful if more pictures and previous students' experiences were included in the brochure in the local language.

Additionally, according to quantitative data analysis, Asian respondents agreed/strongly agreed that foreign study would benefit them with a qualification, language skills, and access to more and better education opportunities. In the process of recruiting Asian students, it would be better to emphasise these benefits.

In the results from the interviews in 5.3.1 Destination University Pull Factors in Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad, respondents were interested in whether their qualification would be accepted and recognised by their home country and other countries' governments and education authorities. A qualification that is not widely recognised may create a barrier, if they choose to go back to their home country or other destination countries to complete further education or work in their future. Therefore, it is important to emphasis the value of destination university's qualification and whether it is widely accepted and recognised by many countries.

Satisfying language and academic requirements were important to the respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* and *the EU*. Destination universities could provide advice on preparing for relevant exams or interviews for these two regions' students.

Moreover, 74.9% of respondents thought that major/subject availability had a strong influence on their foreign study decision. Destination universities could provide details on the available majors/subjects to students. If possible, destination universities' staff could provide advice on major/subject selection to make sure students' requirements are satisfied. To Asian students, destination university's ranking is very important. Destination universities could include their overall ranking and ranking in a specific field, lecturing and research in marketing promotions, such as brochures to attract Asian students.

Home university's lecturers could be a good channel to promote a destination university. 55.6% of respondents revealed that they got their destination university's information from their home university's lecturers and most of them were from *the EU* and *Asia*,

Africa and Oceania. However, this source of promotion may be reliant on cooperation programmes between Irish universities and other universities. Through cooperation programmes, Irish universities could increase awareness of programmes and universities to international students.

Quantitative data also showed that the respondents from *the Americas* agreed that perceived destination country's lifestyle had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. Advertisements directed at students from the Americas (as the respondents' distribution, most of the respondents are from North Americas) could emphasis the multi-cultural environment, different lifestyles and experiences with international students and local students in Ireland.

Asian respondents thought the perceived crime rate, social tolerance and culture in the destination country had some or a lot of influence on the decision. As Asian students' parents had a stronger involvement in the decision-making process, it is reasonable to think that the perceived crime rate and social tolerance in the destination country is important to both students and their parents. In the recruiting process, destination universities could also focus on Ireland's social safety and tolerance to ensure that parents are happy to send their children to study in Ireland. Also in the advertisement, destination universities could describe Ireland's culture to allow students to familiarise themselves with Ireland before they arrive. From the results of the interviews, in Section 5.3.3, destination universities could use an alumni network to provide information to students as they are more likely to trust peers or students who studied or are studying in Irish universities and who are from the same country with them.

Factors such as future education, career and immigration plans did not have much influence on respondents' foreign study decision. This signifies that respondents have not decided their future. Irish universities could introduce postgraduate programmes and research programmes to international students to attract them to pursue further study in Ireland.

4.7. Conclusions

This chapter featured quantitative results collected through online questionnaires, and paper questionnaires with help of International Education Office and School of Economics, UCC. The quantitative data was collected using convenience sampling. 216 respondents answered the questionnaire. 73.1% of them were female. 45.79% of respondents were from Asia, 27.10% were from the EU, 24.30% were from the Americas. The rest of them were from Africa (2.34%) and Oceania (0.47%). 46% of respondents were studying in College of Business and Law (CBL), and 27% of them were from the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science (CACSSS). The rest of respondents were from College of Engineering and Food Science (17.7%) (CSEFS) and College of Medicine and Health (9.3%) (CMH). Data showed that 75.6% of respondents who were studying in CBL were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. 66.7% of respondents who were studying in CMH were from the same region, and 33.3% of them were from *the Americas*.

55.7% of respondents were studying in UCC as visiting students. The rest of them were studying for a degree. 72.8% of respondents studying for a degree were from *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. 53.9% of respondents who were visiting students were from *the EU*. 40.2% of respondents were in their second and third year (not first or final year), 34.2% of them were in their final year. 16.8% of them were postgraduates and the rest of them were in first year.

In the section of push and pull factors, all eight perceived benefits from foreign study got over 70% of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing that they could get these benefits from foreign study. Among these eight perceived benefits, qualifications that were highly regarded by employers and access to better job opportunities got 79.1% and 73.9% of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing. The bivariate analysis showed that there were no significant differences between respondents' perception across to all their characteristics.

Quantitative results also showed that respondents from *the EU* (100%) and *Asia, Africa, and Oceania* (90.4%) agreed/strongly agreed that foreign study could improve their foreign language. Moreover, there was a higher percentage of respondents from *Asia,*

Africa, and Oceania agreeing/strongly agreeing that foreign study could bring them benefits such as access to better and more education opportunities. 98% of respondents from *the Americas* agreed/strongly agreed that foreign study could bring them the benefits of experience of living, studying and working with international students. According to the answers that were collected from interviews and discussed in Chapter 5, respondents regarded these experiences as a competitive advantage in the labour market, as it shows they had no problem to work with colleagues from a different background.

In the section of personal factors, over half of respondents perceived some or a lot of influence from the need to satisfy language and academic requirements on their foreign study decision. Compared to the respondents from different regions, a higher percentage of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* perceived significant influence from these two factors compared with other respondents. The main reason could be that the respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* needed to pass language and academic requirements not only for applying for the universities, but also for the national visa policy requirements.

Among the factors that relating to the destination university, destination university's ranking, major/subject availability, and attitude towards international education had over half of respondents agreeing that they perceived some/a lot of influence from these factors on their foreign study decision. Major/subject availability had the highest percentage of respondents agreeing that it has significant influence. This was also evidenced in interview results, shown in Section 5.2,Destination University Pull Factors. 81% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* perceived university's ranking's influence on their foreign study decision. Most of the respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were studying in UCC for a degree which takes a longer time than a visiting student programme. A degree programme represents a large investment in time and money. It would be reasonable and strategic for them to use ranking as an indicator of a university's quality. Conspicuous consumption may also be a factor. Higher ranking universities has higher tuition fees, and it may encourage respondents to apply. Around three-quarters of respondents from the same region agreed that the destination

university's attitude towards international education was important to their decision. Based on the interview results in Section 5.3.1, respondents would regard a destination university's academic and administration staff's attitudes as a signal and their attitudes would influence the respondents' decision to study abroad and their choice of destination university.

Questionnaire results also showed that 55.60% of respondents got their information about their destination university from their home university's lecturers. This highlights a potential channel to promote Irish universities.

Over half of the respondents perceived that parents' permission and parents' earnings influenced their foreign study decision. A higher percentage of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* perceived this as a strong influence. The answer shows a difference on perceived parents' influence on their foreign study decision among different regions. Chapter 5 will also discuss different regions' respondents' perspectives on parental involvement.

Respondents' answers about destination country's factors showed that perceived lifestyle, social safety, social tolerance, social life and culture were important to respondents' foreign study decision. More respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* perceived that social safety and social tolerance in the destination country were important to their foreign study decision. A higher percentage of respondents from *the Americas* thought that perceived lifestyle and culture had an important influence on their decision to study abroad.

Overall respondents perceived less influence from their future plans on the foreign study decision. Around half of respondents perceived that future education opportunities in the destination country was an important influence. Nearly three-quarters of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that future education opportunities had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision.

The section on investment and return on education showed that 66.5% of respondents paid tuition fees less than €13,000 per year. 77.8% of respondents from CMH paid tuition

fees less than €14,000 per year. 76.4% of CMH respondents expected to earn more than €2,000 per month after graduation. 60.8% of CACSSS respondents paid tuition fees less than €12,000 a year. 59.7% of them expected to earn less than €2,000 per month after graduation. The answers showed that the higher the investment (tuition fees) that respondents invest on education, the higher salary they expect to have.

The section on parental involvement showed differences in the level of parental involvement in their foreign study decision and career decision. Respondents' answers showed that there is no difference between father's and mother's education level distribution. There were same percentage of fathers and mothers who had a bachelors degree, masters degree and PhD degree. Over half of the student perceived that their parents agreed or strongly agreed with the benefits of studying abroad. There was no significant difference between fathers' and mothers' perceived attitudes.

On the question of perceived parents' influence on foreign study decision and career decision, respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* revealed that they perceived stronger influence from parents on both foreign study decision and future career decision. Qualitative data in Chapter 5 showed the same results. Moreover, quantitative data reflected the prevalence of using foreign study agencies in *Asia, Africa and Oceania*. A higher percentage of parents of the respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were involved in the contacting foreign study agencies compared to the parents of respondents from other regions.

Chapter 4 showed the quantitative data on push and pull factors across different respondent characteristics. The characteristics included gender, year of study, region, degree status and school of study. This research fills a gap in previous literature which only surveyed international students from one country or one continent. Moreover, previous literature on investment and return on education focused on the return on education. This thesis also explored international students, a special group of immigrants, and their expected return on foreign study.

The next chapter will explain and discuss push and pull factors, and parental involvement from a qualitative perspective. It also will discuss the factors that are essential to respondents' study and life in the destination university and country. There will be recommendations for Irish universities, education authorities and policy makers at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad

5.1. Introduction to Qualitative Data Analysis

The previous chapter discussed the quantitative results of push and pull factors, investment and return on education and parental involvement. Quantitative data indicated that personal factors were the most important category of push and pull factors. Satisfying language and academic requirements, destination university's ranking, major availability and attitude towards international education, parents' permission and earnings, and destination country's social safety, environment, social life and culture were the push and pull factors that over half of respondents agreed that they had some or a lot of influences on their foreign study decision.

The section on investment and return on education compared respondents' tuition fees and living cost to their expected monthly salary after graduation. Results showed that respondents from CMH and *the Americas* had a relative higher expectation on their salary.

The section on parental involvement showed that respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had the highest percentage agreeing that their father/mother influenced their foreign study decision and future career choices.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Interview methods, question rationale and implementation were discussed in Chapter 3 section 3.4 Quantitative Survey Methodology (from page 100). Interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. 26 respondents out of 45 international students studying in UCC decided to attend the interview. One respondent decided to withdraw their data after the interview and another respondent did not finish the interview for personal reasons. Based on information from UCC, the interviewees are under-representative of students from the EU, and over-representative of students from Africa and Oceania.

24 interviews were performed, 8 of the interviewees were male and the remainder were female. The following figures (Figures 8 - 10) show the distribution of participants by region, colleges and education level:

Figure 8 Respondents' Region Distribution

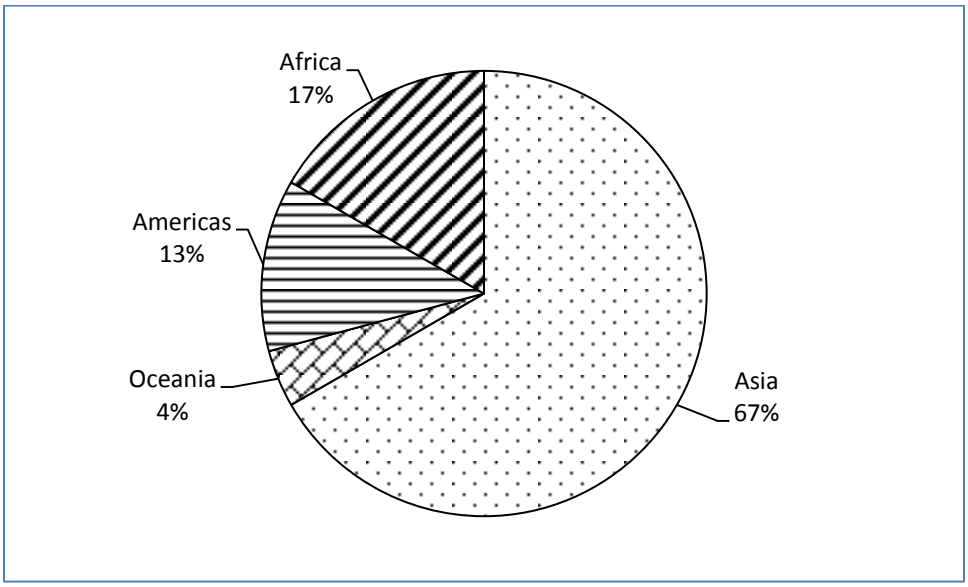


Figure 9 Respondents' College Distribution

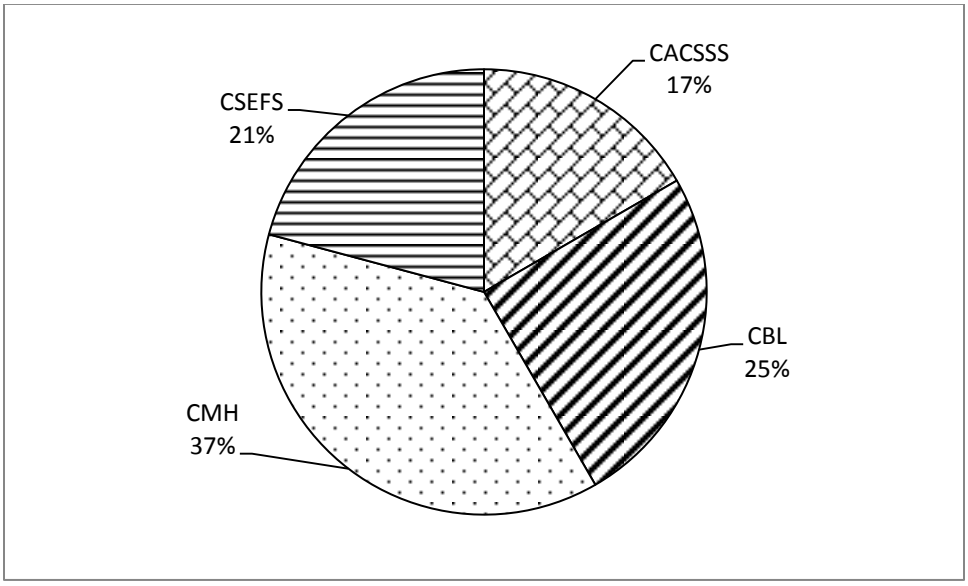
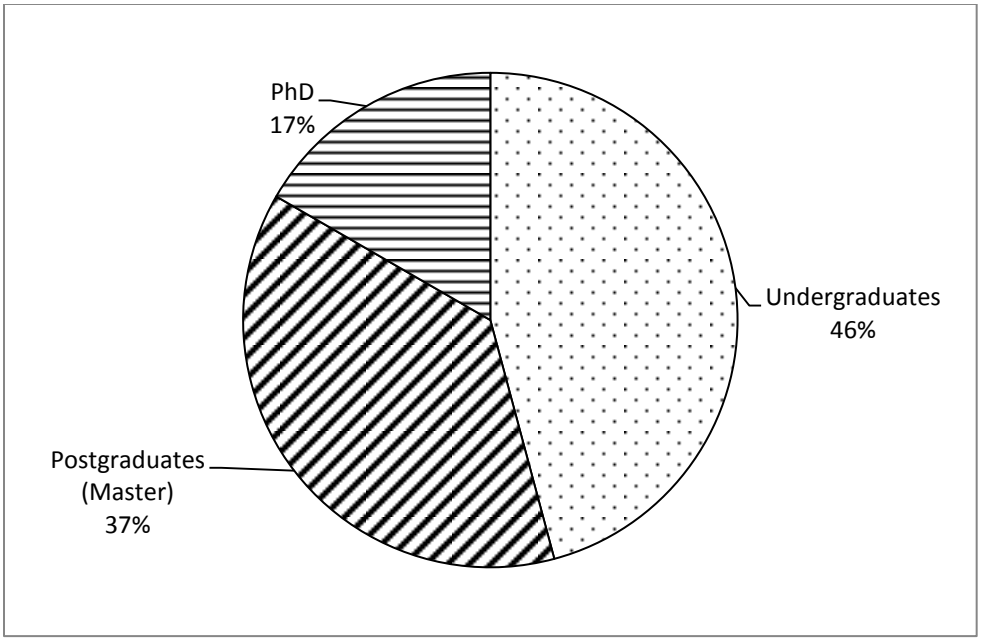


Figure 10 Respondents' Education Level Distribution



Based on the interview results, course/programmes were limited or unavailable in the home country, course/programmes took longer time in the home country, and competition to be admitted to their home country's university and the competition among students from the same country in the future were the most frequently discussed push factors. Pull factors related to destination university and destination country were discussed the most during the interviews. Interviews results showed that some respondents may have chosen to study abroad to avoid competition in their home country. However, some respondents chose to study abroad as they had greater academic abilities, *e.g.* excelled academically or linguistically. They had greater choices available and choosing to study abroad was a decision made to maximise their benefits. Based on the respondents' choices, it was clear that international students thought strategically to maximise their benefits.

For questions about parental involvement, interviewees from Asia, especially East Asia, indicated a difference on perceived influence of their parents on the decision-making process, compared with other interviewees.

The following sections discuss respondents' views on the push and pull factors, and parental involvement in the decision to study abroad. Statements in italics are quotes from interview transcripts. The words in square brackets are clarifications to aid reader comprehension. As interviewees' mother language was not English, grammar or phrasing mistakes may have been made during the interviews. Based on the context of their talking, the clarifications were made. The order of listed factors is based on the frequency of appearance in interview transcripts.

As noted in Section 2.2 Perspectives of the Impact of Push and Pull Factors in Decision to Study Abroad on Page 17, push and pull factors are difficult to define since they are relative concepts. The interviewees discussed these factors in relative terms.

5.2. Push Factors Analysis

The availability of specific course/major/programme was important for the decision to study abroad. One of the respondents mentioned this factor as "*the first of all reasons*". The lack of certain course/subject/programme in the home country was the most frequently mentioned push factor in the interviews.

> "*First of all reasons, but I wanted to not, it wasn't for academic reason, because I felt the university I did for my undergraduate was very good. But first they didn't offer me a topic that was closely related to industry.*" (Respondent 101)

> "*I intend to work on health economics, and there weren't many options of work there.*"(Respondent 104)

> "*I was, I was applying for medicine, there is only one undergraduate course in Singapore, the national university of Singapore and there was pretty limited number of slots per year, so it's pretty tough to get in.*" (Respondent 107)

"*The training programme, they just gave you a range of universities to choose from to go further your course of medicine. Because we have a 3 year health science degree, and then we graduate from that and then we continue on for medicine… the university doesn't actually give the full medicine course. That's why, that's why we have the training programme to continue our medicine. You must choose. … They just do the 3 years basic. They don't provide the further 3 years, the clinical part.* " (Respondent 114)

"*Well, I really love languages, and I felt the programmes in the US were pretty limited. They weren't giving me that opportunity to study abroad for as long as I wanted. Normally when your major is language in US, study abroad is not mandatory. You can if you want to, but if you don't want to, that's fine. And I want to study abroad for at least a semester, or a year in more than one country, and their most popular programmes in the US study abroad is 10-day tourist trips in the summer. And it wasn't really my ideal while I'm looking for and I talked to quite a few colleges in US about send abroad at least France, Spain on, for a semester each, they weren't really please with that because they want me to stay to take credits there, in that, I just kept hanging up along road blocks like that and eventually I was like I will be miserable if I just settle for their programme…Their study abroad, capacity of their offices for study abroad, they just they were very limited and restricting on what you allow to do within your programme… and if you want to do something outside of those limitations, then they weren't really interested in working with you.*" (Respondent 116)

"*It was because they only have one master in mathematics and this is the thing in teaching mathematics… so I wanted to have my major in the specialisation, another part of mathematics, for example that part of programme, we don't have developed here.*" (Respondent 117)

One respondent (Respondent 113) mentioned similar but slightly different ideas towards course/major/programme availability. One of the two reasons she gave that respondents were pushed away from the original education institution was that it was not a university. When asked why she did not remain in the education institution where respondent had done her undergraduate study, the respondent answered that she "*wanted to get into a university*", and "*didn't want to do it in a technology field again*".

The length of time to complete programmes in the home country was another push factor mentioned in the interviews. In home country/university or other destination countries/universities, courses or programmes took longer than the other universities/ countries' option. In addition, sometimes students were asked to take a course that they had done or they would not have liked to take. In these situations, the students preferred to go for other choices with shorter time durations or without extra conditions. Compared with other options, the quality of education in Ireland (UCC) was perceived the same by the respondents, *e.g.* by comparing the university's ranking and whether qualifications were recognised by home country's government and education authority. Respondents preferred shorter courses if they perceived the quality of education was the same or similar. The reasons that they preferred shorter courses were lower financial cost and time cost. Shorter courses meant that they could pay less tuition fees and living costs with other longer courses. Also, shorter courses meant respondents could begin working earlier. Thus, they would receive a financial return from their education earlier.

> "*Because if I do PhD in China, it's like I have to do the masters first. But in Ireland like, so I can go to PhD from the bachelor degree without a master degree here, it's kind of save time and save energy like.*" (Respondent 102)

> "*In Galway you have to do 1 year pre-med, and I don't want to do that, so then UCC ended up being the other one*." (Respondent 110)

> "*One reason is [in Ireland] the master is only for one year. In India you need to*

do it for two years, I don't want to waste my one year for that." (Respondent 119)

"*Maybe, eh, maybe because China has to, eh, if, in China you have to spend three years in your master, master degree, and in Cork, you just need one year, or [more than one year]. It's much time saver.*"

"*Actually I was plan to go to Spain, Spain to further my study, but I, I go to Ireland. Because of the language, you have to, I mean I have to spend a long time to study Spanish, to learn Spanish and it's very time waste, yeah so I choose Ireland.*" (Respondent 122)

An unanticipated factor arose as a push factor in the interviews, where respondents referred to the extent of competition for places at home universities and other potential destinations. Competition in applying for certain courses in home countries pushed students to study abroad. Two respondents were studying medicine. One mentioned that his home country only had one undergraduate medicine course, the other mentioned that 3,000 candidates competed for 150 places which meant the acceptance rate was only 5%. Both of them described it as "*very difficult*", and "*very tough*".

Another respondent mentioned that his situation and subsequent opportunities may be better in a lower ranking university compared to a higher ranking university, as he would be in the top 10 academically in the lower ranking university, while he would only be in the top 20 or top 30 in the higher ranking university. In all three of their situations, their foreign study decision was influenced partly by the desire to avoid academic competition.

"*I was, I was applying for medicine, there is only one undergraduate course in Singapore, the national university of Singapore and there was pretty limited number of slots per year, so it's pretty tough to get in.*" (Respondent 107)

"*That's 3,000 people and there for 150 places in medicine so. That's very difficult. To be honest, if I stayed in New Zealand, I would've been ok. It would probably worked out. Emm, but I have no, no regrets, I just, I was scared, so I thought I would leave.*" (Respondent 110)[57]

"*Because I had to think a little bit logically, I got, I got to see into UCD and into UCC, but the thing is UCD was in the top list and actually local priority, UCD is the top university, and second is UCC according to the ranking, so if I go in [UCD], I will be in somewhere in the 20, or 30 in the rank academically, but this is the second university when I choose [UCC], I will be the top 10 list from the university. So the approach of the other students and the professors might be great when compared to UCD.*" (Respondent 126)[58]

The same respondent, who mentioned the difference in academic competition between a lower ranking university and a higher ranking university, also brought up the point of avoiding competition in employment. The reason that he did not choose the United States was the competition with people with the same nationality (Indian people) and local people (American people). As there were "*hundreds of Indians*" that go to America, he may not have any competitive advantage over people from the same country as him, as well as facing competition with local Americans. Compared with that, he considered "*getting a job and settling here*" in Ireland was an easier opinion as he only needed to compete Irish people.

It clearly emerged that respondents perceived themselves as competing with their classmates and people from the same country in the their home country and in the

[57] Respondent meant that she was worried the competition as 3,000 people were competing for 150 places in medicine in New Zealand. If she stayed in New Zealand, there was no promise that she could get the place.

[58] Respondent meant that he might be highly regarded by peers and professors in UCC than in UCD, as he would be ranked around 20 to 30 in UCD, but he would be ranked top 10 in UCC.

destination country. This competition was not only academically but also in the labour market afterwards. Like the respondent's quotes below, the respondent perceived competition between himself, his country people and local people in the labour market. He considered that there would be less competition in Ireland which made him decide to study in Ireland.

> "*Once I go to USA, there will be competition among ourselves because hundreds of Indians goes, so we have to compete with Indians, and then with the foreigners. But here [Ireland] comparatively the local people are the only ones to compete with. So getting a job and settling here [in Ireland] is easy.*" (Respondent 126)

One respondent brought up two push factors, not wanting to be a burden to her family, and not being independent (financially) in her home country, to explain why she chose to study abroad. The respondent chose to study at postgraduate level. She mentioned that her father had retired so that the family income had fallen. If she stayed in her home country to pursue her postgraduate degree, all the costs would be paid by her parents. Her home country's masters programmes are 2 years full-time with compulsory attendance, which meant the respondent cannot work part-time. The respondent desired to be independent from her family.

> "*Because in India, we can't go for work when you are going for study. It's like Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm class. We won't get any time. And compulsory we need to go for 2 years' classes. And I need to depend on my parents for money…I learn to be independent…Otherwise in India I need to be dependent on my father for everything, but I don't want that, I don't want to give more burden to him because he already retired, he don't have much money you know, so I thought why to disturb them.*" (Respondent 119)

The desire to be independent in the home country was another push factor mentioned in the interviews. As described by one interviewee, he wanted to leave his comfort zone, to

"*survive yourself*", "*be independent with yourself*", to reach "*better exposure for me*". The respondent looked for self-growth from study abroad. As the respondent described below, they wanted to learn outside the classroom and benefit from studying abroad. Studying abroad without parents and family would encourage them to adapt to a new environment. They would need to solve any problems by themselves and be independent to improve themselves, which they could not do in their home country.

> "*Because when you are in Malaysia, you are in your comfort zone, you wouldn't grow as much as when you are outside. As individual, as an individual, you survive yourself; you will be independent with yourself. So that is an even better exposure for me.*"(Respondent 111)

Differences in the regard of qualifications from the home country and foreign country was another push factor. According to one respondent, a foreign qualification was more preferable in Uganda's labour market. Students with qualifications "*from outside of Uganda"*, or "*any European or Western qualification"* would be considered first in the labour market. The reason here was that domestic qualifications were not considered to be "*genuine*", compared with other countries (such as European and Western countries) where there is "*more exposure; technology is more advanced; assessment was fair*". It was also stated that there were many forged domestic education qualifications. The respondent noted that possessing a foreign qualification brought an advantage when seeking employment. It matched with Hedges *et al.* (2014)'s theory of extrinsic motivation that respondent choose to study abroad based on the expectation of foreign study's benefits in employment.

> *"Well because the, any qualification that is outside of, of Uganda, any European or Western qualification carries more weight than the qualification in Uganda, And when it comes to employment, you are considered first, you know, compared to people who are qualified within the country. because some, some of the qualification you find in Uganda, they might not be genuine. You know there are a*

> *lot of forgery and things like that, so someone has a qualification from outside would be considered first, they would consider well this is a genuine qualification and after you went to school and the assessment was fair.* (Respondent 108)

Another respondent also mentioned that domestic qualifications were treated differently in the domestic labour market compared to foreign qualifications. In this respondent's description, the reason foreign qualifications were better than domestic ones were that foreign universities had better equipment so that they could provide better training for doctors, and finally "*producing better doctors*".

> "*Well, the hospital in Malaysia that will do more appreciate the master degree from overseas, because overseas have a better equipment as compared to Malaysia. So it gives a better training for doctors. This producing a better doctors, hopefully, from Malaysia, so they do take more overseas doctors, compare to those who study locally in Malaysia.*"(Respondent 111)

Social tolerance in the destination country was also a push factor. In one case, social tolerance was not the only factor influencing the student's foreign study decision, but clearly we can see, it influenced the respondent's opinion and choice.

> "*You know being Muslim might have some problems in other countries. Compare to Ireland, yeah, well in certain country, they might not accept Muslim in the countries, they might be, they might be discriminating the Muslims and take them as foreigners… even in Malaysia, you can sometime be discriminated because being who we are*" (Respondent 111)

Academic requirement was another push factor that caused students to leave. Two respondents mentioned that that applying for a masters programmes in China requires examinations first. Even though they did not say their foreign study decision was intended to avoid these exams, it was one of the reasons that they chose to study abroad.

When they were asked about why they did not choose to continue their further study in China, their answers are:

> "*If you study at China, you have to choose study; have to take exam for master...So I choose to study abroad and I can avoid to take exams*"(Respondent 103)[59]

> "*Yeah you know, the exam, the exam is very difficult… I have some, I have some friends, yeah, they work hard to, to prepare for the exam but just two of them, succeed.*"(Respondent 123)

This desire to experience new things was also mentioned by others. A respondent (Respondent 118) mentioned that "*it would be good for me to experience new things"*, "*was in Malaysia for 20 years and it's time for me to go out*".

One of the respondents chose to study abroad due to a perception of a lack of good employment opportunities at home.

> "*So I get IELTS, I can work here as a nurse in Ireland, so I get more salary compare with Indian salary. So I can have a good life. So I came here.… There's no option because I couldn't make, make good career in India, so it's better I go somewhere still I get a master degree, I can start on my own food.*"(Respondent 119)[60]

[59] Respondent meant that if he applied for a masters programme in China, he would be required to take a specific master exams and satisfy academic requirements. However, if he applied for a masters programme abroad, he would not need to take exams.

[60] Respondents meant if she stayed in the home country, she could not have a decent job. With her masters degree, she could start to work in Ireland and get a better salary. This meant she could earn her own money to cover her food and other living costs, and thus be independent from her family.

The language spoken in the destination country turned into a push factor which pushed the respondent to choose other destination countries. Another respondent mentioned the role of language in the decision-making process. Some respondents thought that living in an English speaking country could help to improve English language skills.

> "*One thing is that I need to improve my language. If I live in an English speaking country, I get a good score in IELTS. I tried IELTS in India. I didn't get, I didn't get. Every time I'm losing point 5 marks, point 10 marks so I think my English is not good so I go to an English speaking country, I can improve it a little bit.*" (Respondent 119).

Of the 24 respondents, 18 respondents talked about push factors' influence on their foreign study decision. One of these 18 respondents did not consider their home university at all. In some students' decisions to study aboard, push factors did not play any role in the process. To the contrary, pull factors influenced the decision-making process. In the following sections, the research will display the result of pull factors' influence on foreign study decision.

In conclusion, the following push factors were revealed by respondents in the interviews. The factors are listed based on the descending order of revealing frequency.

- Certain courses/subjects/programmes were unavailable or limited in the home country
- Certain courses/subjects/programmes took longer in the home country
- Avoidance of competition in the academic area (university application) and competition with people from the same country
- Respondents perceived that they could not be independent in their home country
- Home country's qualification was less valuable in the labour market
- The level of social intolerance in their home country
- Home country's academic requirements were difficult to satisfy

- Respondents thought that they had been in home country long enough
- Home country lacked employment opportunities
- Respondents thought that staying in their home country impeded their ability to develop English language skills; other destination countries required respondents to learn other foreign language other than English
- Respondents did not want to burden their family

5.3. Pull Factors Analysis

5.3.1. Destination University Pull Factors

This section will examine destination university's course/major/programme availability, qualification, ranking, supervisor, course/programme duration, facilities, administration staff, and other factors. Their influence on the respondents' decision-making process will also be examined.

The first one was destination university's quality and reputation. 8 respondents mentioned this factor in explaining their decisions. From the interviews, it was important to the respondents that the university was recognised internationally. This meant the university must be accepted and recognised by international students' home country's government and relevant education authority. If the destination university was not recognised, the value of both the years of study and the qualification would be influenced. Employers in their home countries or other destination countries might not consider the students as the qualification's value is not recognised or because the country's education system needs the students to take extra courses to be accepted. It may also influence A university that is recognised in the academic arena and by certain institutions was important to respondents' decisions. There was another pull factor related to this, destination university's qualification.

> "*The second thing is that the university that offers the PhD is a good institution, like a recognised institution. You don't want to spend 4 or 5 years studying in a*

place that not very good, you know…UCC is a recognised institution" (Respondent 101)

"And then was UCC, it has a brand name." (Respondent 104)

"*Oh probably because Ireland is recognised by the Singapore government, so if I study in Ireland I can actually go back to Singapore to work…because we have our own medical council, so in order for us to work in Singapore, we have to study in a university that recognised by the medical council. So Ireland is recognised by the medical council*." (Respondent 107)

"*Based on, you know, based on that, the fact that, UCC among the universities was the best.*" (Respondent 125)

Destination university's qualification could explain a step further why respondents were concerned about whether their destination university was a recognised education institution, or "*international valued*" (Respondent 119). As previously mentioned in the push factor section, qualification was also a push factor. If home country/university's qualification had less value compared to destination university's qualification, it would be a push factor that pushes students to study abroad. If a destination university's qualification was recognised internationally, and could be transferred and accepted by the home country, it could attract respondents to study in Ireland.

In the push factor section, respondent 108 mentioned that home country employer values foreign qualifications more than domestic ones because domestic forgery, and foreign country's technology advancement. Respondent 111, in previous push factor section, also showed that home country's employers "*do more appreciate the master degree from overseas"*, as they have "*better equipment*" and "*gives a better training*". Moreover, respondent 124 mentioned that the reason employers preferred candidates who have studied abroad was slightly different from the other candidates. They stated that

employers prefer staff to have "*proper English*". Based on this, a foreign qualification was not only an academic proof of knowledge, but also of language skills. A foreign qualification would give the respondent an advantage.

Another respondent (Respondent 110) mentioned that their home country accepted Irish degrees and would not require an extra exam if they returned to their home country. Respondent 113 mentioned that the reason they studied in UCC was that UCC provided university-level degrees compared with Institution of Technology qualifications they had obtained previously.

The destination university's ranking was also a pull factor. Five respondents indicated that they checked the destination university and other destination countries' universities' ranking before making their decision. The ranking could be overall ranking, or ranking in a specific academic area. As seen below, one respondent used university ranking as a measurement for American universities.

In the interviews, five respondents mentioned that they used ranking system to decide the list of destination universities they were interested in. It was not a rigid selection. If a destination university's ranking was high, the exact ranking was not important. As a respondents said, there was little difference between number one and number 230. This choice was made based on satisfying, rather than maximising benefits (Simon, 1959). The process of searching and choosing destination universities finished when the respondents were satisfied with their choice, not when they found the best destination university in their academic area.

> "*I always look at world ranking of universities, now I was looking into getting a university that is recognised, you know, that has, that is, at least in the top 500 universities.*" (Respondent 101)

"*For the United State universities, like the, that how we do the, we use the ranking system.*" (Respondent 102)

"*I have do the research from the website and saw the UCC's [ranking] is nearly three hundred in the world, I think it is good. It's better than my home university.*"(Respondent 103)

"*If you look at the Times rankings you know, it gives you the ranking of the top universities in the world. If you go into the top universities, my area was health economics, so I look into like what are the universities like, the top 200, top 300 work on health economics. So UCC was probably just one out in 10 you know. There aren't many universities in the entire world not just India who work on health economics…oh, yeah, UCC, I probably to say UCC ranks at [230], so it's, we are almost like top 200 universities in the world. And I don't find any different personally, somebody who ranks the first, somebody who ranks [230] like, obviously there's a difference, but there isn't huge difference like.*" (Respondent 104)

"*The universities are really well developed as well, UCD and UCC are leading the way to the ranks.*"(Respondent 126)

Another pull factor that emerged in the interviews was the destination university's course/programme duration. Seven respondents mentioned choosing to study in Ireland because the programmes were shorter.

One respondent chose to study a PhD in Ireland as they could begin "*from bachelor degree without a master degree*" which saved time as respondent did not need to spend time to studying for a masters degree first and then to applying for a PhD. Another respondent chose to study in Ireland, as a PhD lasts five years, including a masters degree, in the US. The respondent had previously completed a masters degree. Four

respondents chose to study in UCC for a masters degree as it takes one year, shorter than the options in home country or other destination universities. One respondent finally chose to study in UCC as another university in Ireland asked them to complete a one year pre-course first before admission into the undergraduate course.

Course/programme duration was important, as respondents wanted to avoid additional unnecessary courses. It also could be that respondents wanted to save time and financial cost. One respondent mentioned that the shorter length of master programme meant they could begin working earlier. Respondents mentioned that they would go for the choice that has shorter duration rather than a longer one.

Whether a respondent's home university had a co-operation agreement with foreign universities was also a factor in the decision to study abroad and where to study. Six respondents mentioned their home university had co-operation with UCC and that was part of the reason they studied abroad and came to UCC. Some of the respondents can choose from the countries/universities that their home university provides on a list, while some of them were sent to UCC based on home university decision. The reasons the respondents chose the co-operation programme were different. One reason was it saved time and effort on paperwork as the home university had optimised the process so dealing with a foreign study agency was not necessary. Another reason was that the home university may have provided a scholarship as part of the co-operation programme. Moreover, the home university may not provide the full programme, and attendance in a foreign university was required to a complete course, such as medicine. In this case, respondents, once they apply for the course in home university, have made the decision that they would study abroad to complete the course.

The co-operation programme could also be between the home country's government and destination country's universities.

> "*Well actually the government has a relationship with all the universities in Ireland, so they distribute the Malaysian students equally to all the universities.*" (Respondent 111)

Another pull factor was course/major/programme availability in the destination university. Due to the poor choice or unavailability of these course/programme in the home country/university, students were pushed to look for more options in foreign countries/universities. To the destination university, this was pull factor to attract students. Eight respondents mentioned that UCC had the major they wanted to study, or had courses matching their interest or background.

Other factors identified by respondents related to destination university's staff. The first was about respondents' supervisors. Three respondents, for masters or PhD study, thought that their supervisor was important to their study. A supervisor with the same research interest or from the same academic area would be more able to help and guide their study. This was an intrinsic motivation that respondents made the decision based on their interest and enthusiasm (Hedges et al., 2014).

> "*My supervisor, the first reason is my supervisor, because the research interests are matched very well… primarily it is my supervisor, it is the department that I came for. I was accepted in to many universities, like in US, in a couple of Europe but, finally it was here. So because you know PhD is a long term thing like, so if, if you, if you and your supervisor they don't connect to each other, like that's the most important thing so.*" (Respondent 104)

> "*So the reason because of, first, it's supervisor, because she did research, her areas, is basically similar to my interest.*" (Respondent 124)

"*The professor's curriculum here interested me a lot. They wrote a lot of letters to my field, rather than UCD which only concentrate on technological advancement than the pure science…they are into my side of interest.*" (Respondent 126)

Another factor related to destination university's staff was the administration and academic staff. One of the respondents said that a friend mentioned that UCC's staff were "*very helpful*". For this respondent, helpful staff was "*the most important thing*" to international students as they would come to a new country and would need people's help to adapt to the new environment and become familiar with the university. In this adaptation process, the destination university's staff would be important.

"*She [Respondent's friend] said that they [UCC] are very helpful, I think that's, that's the most important things for the students especially, especially international students, we need helpful staff because this is a new country for us, so we need adapt to the environment and so on. So I think that's make me, that's make, that's make me make the decision to come here because actually I already receive another offer from Australian university, but based on my friend's recommendation, I decided last minute to come here.*" (Respondent 121)

The academic and language requirements of the destination university were also important to respondents. Respondents indicated that they preferred Irish universities' academic and language tests and requirements. It may have been because there was less preparation and thus less pressure.

"*Irish is same like British, British educational system. So just take IELTS exam, so I can came here.*" (Respondent 103)

"*In Ireland doesn't have to take the exams, mainly just the interviews, we have 2 interviews, 1 by the school and the other by the agency.*" (Respondent 107)

> "*You know this exam called GRE [It is an exam for entering postgraduate programmes in American universities] yeah, the exams, woo, I tried, yeah, it can be done, but I don't like it.* " (Respondent 123)

In one interview, a respondent mentioned that the destination university's advertisements and online information influenced her decision. Rather than deem it an advertisement, it was a course description which gave respondent the information they needed.

> "*I did some research and I fell upon UCC. Actually I saw a 2-minute YouTube video on their YouTube channel, Professor of Irish Department, he's talking about international students taking an Irish language course, and I fell in love with the school. Just through that video and I decided to apply.*" (Respondent 116)

Two respondents mentioned they were attracted by UCC's scenery.

> "*He [Respondent's friend] just post me the pictures, of the main buildings in UCC. I was just suddenly attracted by that building, because I realise [Respondent means it reminds] Harry Potter, it's like Hogwarts, you know. In the beginning I don't want to go abroad actually, I don't want to go abroad, but, but I just want to go to Ireland 1 year and just enjoy the life and then go back…I just I don't why suddenly attracted by, by, by the UCC.*" (Respondent 109)

> "*I think the college is quite nice you know the environment for me to stay here for 5 or 6 years so. I think I need to choose a really good place, like, to study.*" (Respondent 118)

Another respondent was attracted by the destination university's facilities. To the respondent who performed practical or laboratory based work, facilities were an important factor.

> "*There's, there's new teaching facilities in UCC which also brought me, the building, the current building in Brookfield still so but, by the time I get to clinical years, it will be done. There's new, yeah, there's new stuff coming in which was another thing that drew me into UCC.*" (Respondent 110)

One respondent mentioned the destination university's size was the reason that she ruled out another destination university in Ireland. In the respondent's mind, a bigger university allowed a bigger "*interaction and experience*". The idea of interaction and experience was similar to the idea of self-growth discussed in Section 5.2 Push Factors (starts from Page 238). The respondent desired to study and live with other international students and local students. As UCC was bigger than NUI Maynooth, the respondent thought that he would have had more chances to meet international and local students, and have more chance to learn from them.

> "*There were 2 institutions that had in Ireland, social policy, it was Maynooth and this university [UCC], so when I looked at Maynooth, and looked at here, I thought because this university is bigger than Maynooth, I thought may I will get more interaction, yeah, than I would in Maynooth. It's a very good university, Maynooth too, but I thought maybe it was small and I wanted to get a broader and, sort of, you know interaction and experience.*" (Respondent 122)

This suggests there was a limited choice for this student as there were only two universities that provided a social policy course in Ireland. Within that choice. the bigger university would be an advantage.

5.3.2. **Destination Country Pull Factors**

The pull factor mentioned most frequently in interviews was the opportunity to experience a different culture and stay with foreign students. Of the 24 respondents, 13 mentioned this as one of the reasons they studied aboard. Other cultures and the opportunity to meet foreign students attracted these respondents to study abroad, and their home country might not have been able to provide this to respondents. In their words, they wanted to experience different cultures, to travel, to meet students from other countries to expose themselves to new experiences and to better cope with future competition. From their descriptions, experiencing foreign cultures and studying with foreign students were not only for pleasure, but also to broaden their minds, and so help them to cooperate and compete better globally. This view has not been a significant factor in previous literature. In previous studies, this factor was simply a desire for different life experiences from their home country. This is first time respondents linked experience of foreign cultures with future competitive advantage.

> "*Travel around and you know to, to, to broaden my life experiences. I didn't want to live in the same city all my life, or even the same country." (Respondent 101)*

> *"Finally I can experience different things.*" (Respondent 105)

> "*It's a good chance for me just like, have a view of the outside world, just apply for the programme…just want to go out of China to see the world a little bit, like, but I actually I want to continue study in China. And then I will live in China may be. But I actually want to travel around the world, like when I get older.* " (Respondent 109)

> "*Well I suppose coming to Ireland is just because I want to have a feel of what the other world shows compare to my country. Obviously it's different in the European world compare to Asia, Malaysia…well I suppose the answer is quite the same by which I have; I just want to experience something different. Because*

when you are in Malaysia, you are in your comfort zone, you wouldn't grow as much as when you are outside. As individual, as an individual, you survive yourself; you will be independent with yourself. So that is an even better exposure for me." (Respondent 111)

"*And I want to study abroad for at least a semester or a year in more than one country…I really want to be global…so I'm hoping if I know more than one, and explore the world and travel while I'm still at school.*" (Respondent 116)

"*It's because I wanted an international education, [combined] with people from different nations, different culture, mixing up with them, and coping up with the international competition, because nowhere now is a local part, now all is a global village, you have to go international, and talk to different minds, even if you are doing it back in your country. But when you do your masters, you are already accustomed to all these conditions and things, so it will be easier when you go into the corporate role and you have the international people all around you, yeah.*" (Respondent 126)

Another factor mentioned frequently was destination country/city's natural environment. Respondents mentioned that they preferred beautiful scenery, and quiet and calm places to live and study. Some of them mentioned that they preferred small towns to a big city. 13 respondents mentioned this factor when they were asked about their choice of destination country/city. When they decided between destination countries/cities, this factor influenced their decision. A few respondents used this factor to rule out a "*big city*", during their decision-making process.

"*You know like I, I don't quite like you know hot cities so I don't choose any universities in London. That's the reason like. Something similar like that. I don't like too cold, so no Scotland. Universities, like, like that. It's more weather, basically.*" (Respondent 102)

"*Then well I suppose this is just a peaceful country compared to the other countries which might have some problems.*" (Respondent 111)

"*It's actually in our part of um partner medical school, there's like a list of schools in UK and Ireland and I find Ireland more, I don't know, I think it must be it is , more calm, peace, quiet as compared to like London which is really busy, in the city.*" (Respondent 115)

"*Because I prefer in the country side, so my choice will be in Galway or Cork. But I think Cork is more convenient, because has its own airport.*"(Respondent 118)

"*Because like I think Cork is the better place to live in. It's like quiet, but good for study it's not like a big city and like, too much hassle.*" (Respondent 124)

Even though destination country/city's natural environment was important to some respondents, however, to a few of respondents, location was not important. The reason was that location was a secondary consideration in the foreign study decision. To these respondents, studying was their priority. Lifestyle, natural environment, weather, and others were much less important than academic considerations.

"*Yeah, yeah, yeah, I mean for learning, everything else is just secondary, because, yeah, you know if I want, if moving to a nice country, to a city I like was my primary goal, I probably search for a job, in that, in that city, you know. But now my goal is to do the PhD you know, that's what matters. After that, you know if people are nice, it really helps, because people are really nice in Ireland, but that's secondary you know. If the food is nice, food here is terrible, but you know, I am still here, I didn't came here for the food or. I came here to do my PhD.*" (Respondent 101)

"*Life (Respondent means the life in Ireland) is so boring, so boring. Weekday, from Monday to Friday, you maybe study in library or go to the, go to the lecture, weekday maybe invite your friends to eat dinner or to play the ball, so, different from China, you can go to KTV, or go to what kind of you want, here is very small, you only have the 2 choices, study of, study or go to dinner, so, so boring…I don't mind it is boring; because after all you came here to study. You are not for travelling. So maybe if you work, maybe work I will hate this kind of lifestyle. But I continue to study, so I don't mind.*" (Respondent 103)

"*Yeah, but as what I said, you know, it's not the place that matters to, that matters to me like, it was the least concern like, it was mainly that was work on that I plan to do, that the work should be done you know. Because mainly if I intended to work on health economics I should be able to. This was like you know, like to be honest, it was like the least thing, of things that I had to think before coming here.*" (Respondent 104)

"*I wasn't very interested in these kind of thing. About the weather, the temperature, and the living, I think I can like, get used to any environment.*" (Respondent 105)

Another popular pull factor was the lower perceived cost of studying in Ireland. This cost covered tuition fees and living costs. This factor also included exchange rate between respondents' domestic currency and destination country's currency. This was another factor respondents used to eliminate other destination country/university choices during the decision-making process. In one respondent's description, even though the UK provided better medicine courses, the respondent selected Ireland as the "*currency is lower*" providing an exchange rate advantage. As shown below in the quotes, the relatively lower living cost in Ireland was a pull factor to attract students.

"*Start looking at what masters programme they had and all of that, and so you know you also have to balance cost, because you know there were some really nice programmes in University College London but the fees were insanely high. The cost of living in London is also very high.*" (Respondent 101)

"*Finally the fee is lower… Both, including my education fee and the [daily living cost here] I think.*"(Respondent 103)

"*And then because of the, well the currency is not too high if it compares in UK, which is pound [Respondent means British Pound], which is quite high, compare with Malaysian Ringgit…. compare to New Zealand, Canada and something, I think the course, the medicine course, here is much better compare to those countries. Even though in UK, they are much better than Ireland, but as I said earlier, currency here is lower than UK.*" (Respondent 111)

"*I'm a self-funded student, so UK was a very expensive country, so Ireland was more affordable, that's why I came here.*" (Respondent 114)

"*Tuition fees, as compare to, like in UK where they use pounds, Ireland use euro, so it's cheaper for us to afford, yeah.*" (Respondent 115)

"*I think like Ireland compare like for example, to the UK, it's like cheaper than UK so, may be that's like a very good reason being, like studying here in Ireland, rather than like in UK or any other place.*" (Respondent 124)

Language was another pull factor influencing respondents' foreign study decision. It worked in two ways. Firstly, respondents chose Ireland as a destination country because it is English speaking and studying there could improve their English language skills. The other way was that Ireland was an English speaking country which saved respondents'

time and energy learning a new language. Respondents did not have any language barrier to study in Ireland, as they spoke English or had already studied English in their home country.

- To Improve English

  "*First of all, I, first of all English is very important, so I think I can improve my English by studying in a, in an English speaking country.*" (Respondent 105)

  "*So the options I had were like whether to study in Spain, Portugal or Ireland, so I said OK, I am not going to study in Spain because they speak Spanish and I want to practice English.*" (Respondent 117)

- No language barrier

  "*I, I already spoke English before coming here, so I knew that I wasn't gonna have a language barrier.*" (Respondent 101)

  "*So you know, Germany and France as the language problem. So I [chose] English speaking country.*" (Respondent 123)

  "*Actually I was plan to go to Spain, Spain, to further my study, but I, I go to Ireland, because of the language… You have to, I mean I have to spend a long time to study Spanish. To learn Spanish and it's very time waste, yeah so I choose Ireland.*" (Respondent 122)

The perceived friendliness and safety in the destination country also influenced respondents' decision of destination countries. During interviews, respondents mentioned

that "*Irish people are friendly*", "*People are nice*". Respondents were quoting friends who had been to Ireland previously.

> "*Because Ireland and England and I didn't want to go to England. I came here yeah…I don't know, it was more, plus it was more expensive but they said Ireland is more like New Zealand and people are friendly.*" (Respondent 110)

> "*People mention that Ireland, Irish people are friendly. So I guess that's why I came here.*" (Respondent 114)

A few respondents mentioned safety concerns. It related not only to Ireland, but also to Europe.

> "*Most of Europe you don't like really big violence problem, or stuff like that, so I wasn't too worried about where I was going to study.*" (Respondent 101)

> "*I started learning and reading, and looking at the news, is that a safe place, yeah, very safe…Because right here we have, I mean is dangerous, my country is dangerous, so we started looking at, OK you can go out but you have to watch out because you know our place is dangerous. But your country [Respondent means Ireland] is not going to be dangerous…Ireland is very safe.*" (Respondent 117)

> "*Ireland was one of the finest destinations for study…and it's pretty safe for students.*" (Respondent 126)

One respondent mentioned the destination country's social tolerance. As mentioned in the push factor section, this is a push factor and pull factor. It was important that a destination country and society accepted students from different countries, cultures and backgrounds. For a country to "*accept you as who you are*", and have a "*sense of*

belonging to this place" was important to convince respondents to stay in the current destination country to pursue further study and attracted more students to come in the future through the recommendations from students who studied here before.

Immigration policy was another pull factor that attracted the respondents to study in Ireland. This factor was more common in studies of push and pull factors of immigration rather than in the area of foreign study. As mentioned in the literature review, Push and Pull Factors in International Migration on page 20, students belong to a particular immigration group. Their final decision on where they will eventually live is not made when they decide to study abroad. While in their current destination country, they may move to another country for further education or work, or they may choose to go back to their home country. This was the first time respondents mentioned that immigration policy actually influenced their foreign study decision.

One of the respondents mentioned that Ireland's visa policy for students working in Ireland after graduation. As quoted below, the respondent desired to return home in the future, but was willing to work in Ireland for 2 years. Another respondent ruled out working in the UK because of its visa policy and tuition fees.

> "*Maybe because of the visa policy and the fund, fund, the fee of, the fee of this, of this country is not very high, I mean not as, not as high as UK or Australia. I, I heard about that, eh, Ireland can give foreign, foreign students a, a 2 years visa, visa date and maybe when I graduated from my master, I can find a temporary job in this country and then come back [Respondent means back to China]… actually the first country is UK, but maybe because of the visa policy and fund [Respondent means tuition fees] in Ireland, so we choose Ireland.* " (Respondent 122)

> "*Then the population is growing on in UK and immigration facilities are not so favourable. Ireland seems really a reasonably good for students and immigration*

facilities so. So Ireland was the best option available in Europe." (Respondent 126)

5.3.3. Family and Peers Recommendations

The next section is pull factor of family/friends/peers' recommendations/reasons. In the previous description and discussion of push and pull factors, it was clear that though respondents made the decision to study in Ireland or in UCC based on their preferences for certain factors or characteristics of a destination country/university, some of the information that helped them to make the decision was from family, friends or peers. During the interview, some respondents chose to study in Ireland because their family members or friends had good experiences there.

The recommendations of people who studied in Ireland before was important to the respondents, as it was based on experience, feelings, and feedback rather than brochures, booklets, and online information. Respondents may have been more likely to believe and rely on family members, friends and peers' words rather than words on paper. It matches Thomas and Webber (2009)'s theory on parental and peer group's effect on students education decision-making processes. It may be because peers, family members and friends did not get benefits from giving positive feedback about their destination country/university. Another reason probably was that these peers, family members and friends had the same or similar background and culture as the respondent. When they provided recommendations to the respondents, it would have been easier to focus on respondents' personal concerns, such as academic life, living, or study, and give relevant information. This is related to information asymmetry and the cost of reducing respondents' potential loss due to lack of knowledge.

"*Because most, the majority of my friends, mentor they choose to study in UCC and UCD, so I followed them.*" (Respondent 103)

"*I can see their English has improved and they actually get a very good job, in my point of view, in my perspective. So I decided to follow them.*" (Respondent 105)

"*Well, I have a friend study here and they had a great experience… I consulted my friends, so it's kind of like two way, did research when I talked to them, they shared the experience here which was quite very good.*" (Respondent 108)

"*Because I have friends in, em, in Ireland, and he said Ireland is very peaceful country, he thinks living in Ireland is such a, is very, you can enjoy the life." (Respondent 109)*

"Basically he did a lot of research about Ireland. He forwards that to me, share his information and his research about Ireland and how does study is going on here, because when he went to, he also has a friend in Ireland so it's like I, he got the information from his friend, relay to me." (Respondent 118)

"*Some from my family also, like, were studying here [UCC] so that's why I choose Ireland… at the beginning it was to go to Ireland it's because all my family, like I have some of my siblings, my sister and like two of my cousins are studying here, were studying here.*" (Respondent 124)

5.3.4. Agency Pull Factors, Self-development Pull Factors and Other Pull Factors

The influence of agencies on the foreign study decision was similar with the co-operative programmes. These foreign study agencies sometimes provided options to study abroad, so they acted as a bridge between respondents and destination universities. The foreign study agency could be a private or public entity.

"*It's we have agency in Singapore which promotes Ireland, so it has sent students over here for medicine and dentistry basically. So medicine student, for example,*

I'm here for that…it's only for Ireland. So they have branches in Singapore, and Malaysia then their purpose is to bring students over here to study medicine and dentistry." (Respondent 107)

"*To be honest, it wasn't my choice really, I had agents and they chose Ireland and I'm not sure, no, I, well, I'm not sure, I'm not sure why did he choose Ireland, I'm not sure what's determine the choice…so at the end of day when it became time, I knew I was going to go outside, and my agent at the end of the day, choose the, Ireland was possibly the best option at that point… he just brought it up, and then I was like, OK…he was like a government programme so.*" (Respondent 125)

Respondents indicated the importance of self-development as a factor in their foreign study decision. Respondents thought that foreign study experience would help them to be independent from their family, and give them advantages in the labour market and future competition. Through foreign study, they wanted to distinguish themselves from others, learn from students from other countries, absorb different opinions, ideas and thoughts, and learn to work with people from different backgrounds to gain a competitive advantage in the future. This factor could be categorised as intrinsic motivation (Hedges et al., 2014) as respondents chose to study abroad for self-development.

Other factors that did not clearly fit within the five categories, destination country, destination university, family, friends and peers, agency, and self-development are considered below.

Scholarship or funding availability influenced respondents' foreign study decision. Thirteen respondents received a scholarship, funding or sponsorship which either partly or fully covered the cost of their study. Home universities scholarships, government scholarships or funding, and other institutions' funding, such as funding from Science Foundation Ireland, influenced respondents' decision.

"*And third is that you have the funding. So whenever you get those 3 elements together, you don't really ask where is it, you just go. So, you know, I found a topic which I really, really, really like. I found a university that is very good, and also they also offered me funding. I didn't ask where is it and I just bought my plane ticker and landed in Cork.*" (Respondent 101)

"*For the UK and Ireland, that is different. Because it's kind of more scholarship based. So the Irish website, I think like quite long ago like. It's call jobsac.uk like, it gives, it gives a list of scholarship we can apply for. So here is more about scholarship instead of you know, the ranking.*" (Respondent 102)

"*Also our school offering the scholarship, and it's a good chance for me just like, have a view of the outside world, just apply for the programme.*" (Respondent 109)

"*So the institution that I found interesting, like in Manchester it was one year, but I didn't get scholarship for that. Yeah. And here is 1 year and I got scholarship and then Australia I got scholarship, but also it's 2 years. So I opted to come here and also my focus is social policy so.*" (Respondent 112)

The order in which offers from destination universities were made affected their choice of university. Three respondents mentioned in the interviews that they accepted an offer when it came, even though they had applied to other universities. Similarly respondents may have been refused by other destination universities, or their offers were not successful. Three respondents mentioned that they were refused by other universities and thus had fewer choices than expected.

There were two other pull factors discussed during the interviews. One was that respondents selected the best destination choices. The other was that respondents attempted to avoid popular destination choices. One respondent mentioned that their

reason for choosing Ireland was it was the "*finest destinations of study* (Respondent 126)", "*Europe, Australia and USA, are the best destinations for doing a masters*", and "*Ireland was the best option available in Europe*".

It is not hard to understand why some respondents chose to not go to the popular destination choices. Part of it was because more popular destination universities have more applicants competing for limited places which meant greater competition compared with less popular options. In addition, popular destination countries could mean greater competition in the destination country's labour market. This factor is also discussed in push factor section that competition influenced students to look for less competitive choices. One of the respondents mentioned the reason was simply to choose somewhere "*not much people wanted to*".

To summarise, the pull factors that collected from interviews can be categorised in descending order of revealing frequency as follows:

- Destination university's pull factors, such as recognition, qualification, ranking, course/programmes length, co-operation between destination university and home country's government or home university, course/programme availability, academic staff and administration staff, academic and language requirements, scenery, advertisements, facilities and size
- Destination country's pull factors, such as culture, difference life experience, natural environment, living cost and tuition fees (in general), language, friendliness, safety, immigration policy (such as visa policy)
- Family and peer pull factors including their recommendations and family members moving to destination country
- Respondents desired to improve themselves through foreign study experience and gain competitive advantage from it
- Agency recommended the destination country

- Other factors, such as scholarship availability, destination university's offer arrived first, choose or avoid most popular destination country, academic year starting time, home country's norms related to foreign study

5.4. Parental Involvement Factors Analysis

Parental involvement is hard to measure in qualitative face-to-face interviews. It is difficult to define clearly what parental involvement is, and how parents' support their child's decision. To help to answer this question better, I separated respondents' answers into the following categories (in this section, parental involvement refers to maternal or paternal involvement):

- Parental involvement in foreign study decision
- Parental involvement in career decision
- Parental involvement in future plan (where the respondent is going to stay)
- Parental attitude to foreign study decision
- Parental support for respondent (include financial support and non-financial support)
- Parental requirements or concerns for respondent's study
- Parental concerns about respondents' life and/or safety

Parents' involvement in foreign study decision is categorised as active parental involvement and passive parental involvement. Active parental involvement means parents involved in the foreign study decision-making process and their involvement influenced /changed the respondents' decision to study abroad, choice of destination country/city/university, major/programme. Passive parental involvement means parents accepted respondents' decision to foreign study and other choices, such as choice of destination university. Passive parental involvement is more subtle and gentle compared to active parental involvement. Parents were looking after their children and concerned about their future life and safety rather than being the decision-makers. The factors listed under both active parental involvement and passive parental involvement are in

descending order. The first factor is the strongest parental involvement and the last factor is the weakest parental involvement. For example, in the active parental involvement category, parents made the decision was the strongest type of parental involvement in this category as parents did not give respondents any choice on the decision. In the passive parental involvement category, the last factor, that parents did nothing in the process or respondent made the decision, shows parents were not involved in the decision-making process. This could have been because parents desired their children to be independent and make the decisions, or perhaps parents may have felt that they were not the experts and could not make knowledgeable contributions, and so chose not to be involved.

Table 5.1 Active and Passive Parental Involvement (in descending order)	
Active Parental Involvement	Passive Parental Involvement
• Parents made the decision	• Parents contacted foreign study agency or university or relevant institution
• Parents proposed the idea	• Parents collected information about the destination country/city/university
• Parents provided recommendations or advice on foreign study choices	• Parents helped in the process (such as prepare paper work; pack bags)
	• Parents did nothing in the process or Respondent made the decision completely

Only two respondents mentioned that their parents had studied abroad. Hossler and Stage (1992) and Thomas and Webber (2009) found that parents' level of education had a positive relationship with the likelihood that their children progressed to higher levels of education. Moreover, Corak (2001) and Portes et al. (2005) indicated that parents who attained a high level of education could provide monetary and non-monetary support to their children's education, were involved in the decision-making process, and were also more capable of persuading their children to reach a higher level of education.

Two respondents' indicated that their parents, who had studied abroad, could provide support to the respondent's decision to study abroad, and get involve in the decision-making process, to the extent of influencing the decision. Their foreign study experience may have inspired the respondents' decision to study abroad. Their parents also tended to have a positive attitude towards foreign study. Moreover, respondent 118's indicated that their father's ability to provide recommendations based on his foreign study experience influenced the final decision.

"*I think they are ok, because they studied overseas as well.*" (Respondent 107)

"*My father before he was in, he did his degree in University of Birmingham in United Kingdom. So he travelled quite a lot as well so he knows, he have been to Ireland, but he's not specifically in Cork. Yeah, he did have to know view about Ireland yeah… He did his master in US so, in the Sates…he explains that in Ireland, the people are more friendly and that's why it's one of reasons he let me study in Ireland, and then he thinks Irish people is quite helpful and yeah. He did his master in US so, in the Sates, he, he is 100% suggests British country instead of the States so.* " (Respondent 118)

5.4.1. **Parents Involvement in Foreign Study Decision**

During the interviews, three respondents reviewed their foreign study decision-making process and mentioned the decision was made by their parents. These three respondents were from East Asia, and two of them were from China. East Asian culture shares the concept of filial piety with China. Filial piety is a cultural phenomenon that influences behaviour through unspoken and unwritten rules, and social expectations so that children respect and are loyal to, and fulfil their obligations to their parents or their whole family (Ikels, 2004).

Under filial piety's influence, parents make the decision which they think is most appropriate for their children and the children will accept their parents' decision. From the following responses, decisions were made by parents and respondents accepted those decisions.

Respondent 105's response when he was asked how his father convinced him showed the meaning of Filial Piety (Xiao Qin Effect). The respondent used the words, "*submissive*", and "*command*" when he described the decision-making process. It reflects authoritarian Filial Piety in his case which emphasises obedience and indebtedness to parents (Yeh and Bedford, 2003; Hsu and Wang, 2011). Parents provide the option which they believe is best for their child, and the child follows their parents' option thus showing one of the three levels of filial piety, following their wishes (Chow, 2006).

The other two respondents also faced a situation in their foreign study decision-making process. This shows under Filial Piety, the Asian children have unquestioning attitude towards his or her parents' plan for future study and career, even if that plan is not what they want (Bodycott, 2009).

Pimpa (2003;2004) reviewed Thai students' foreign study decision-making processes. Thai students revealed that their parents would inculcate their belief in the pursuit of educational achievement. Parents also told the students of their preference for foreign study from a young age. Even though respondent 111 was not from Thailand, the answer still shared characteristics with those found in Pimpa (2003;2004)'s research. Her parents decided an educational goals for her to reach and also regularly told her that they wanted her to study abroad. This aligns with Filial Piety, where the respondents accepted and strived to reach their parents' educational goals. Additionally, respondent 111's answer agreed with the research on Filial Piety, that students would behave well and study hard to achieve good education to satisfying parents' wants and following wishes (Chow, 2006).

"*Actually I didn't plan to study abroad in the beginning. It is my father forced me to study abroad. Because he thinks, he thinks English is very important and … in his point of view, study abroad will bring benefits to my future career…actually this kind of thing, like my career, is decided by my father, because my father is more successful in his career. So my family member think, my father's decision would be better… Actually, I think I am, I am submissive to my father. So I think he has the better, better, he can do the better decision than me. So I just follow his command.*" (Respondent 105)

"*Well I suppose they just encourage me to excel in my study they just want me, they were just keep on top for me and make me do my best and make me excel in my class in the school and tell me you need to go to oversea, I want you to go to overseas something like that, all the time… They didn't really give me a definitely decision going to Ireland. They just like you need to go to overseas, and then they let me choose which country I want to go. So the initial decision was theirs*." (Respondent 111)

"*Actually it's my mum who wanted me to, to study abroad and in Ireland. And my father is eh, is mi, middle, middle [Respondent means neutral]…because she wanted me to, eh, to have a good English skills, English communication skills, and have a, have a European life experience, yes, and also because of my degree.*" (Respondent 122)

Home country's norm was mentioned in the interviews. It is a new factor in the research on foreign study decision-making process. Based on the respondent's description, studying abroad strengthened the family's reputation. It was a sign that the family had a smart child. Under Filial Piety, children study hard not only for their personal academic achievement, but also to repay their parents, and bring honour to the family (Chow and Chu, 2007). Filial Piety could be seen as a motivation for East Asian students' education achievement (Salili, 1994; Abada et al., 2009). According to the respondent's answer,

foreign study meant the child was smart, improved the family's reputation and was a societal norm in Malaysia. It may explain why the Malaysian students preferred to study abroad.

> "*I think is the one thing I forgot to add is that the norm, I mean the Malaysian norm. If you are smart, you go to overseas. Yeah, so it became, it became a culture. In Malaysia, you accidentally adhere to…Yeah, it gives somehow a reputation of the family. You have a daughter or son studying in overseas, yeah.*" (Respondent 111)

In a link with the Push Factors section in Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of the Decision to Study Abroad, some respondents revealed that they chose to study abroad due to the competition to enrol in the universities in their home country. These respondents chose to study abroad to avoid the competition indicating their strategic thinking to maximise their benefits. Another category of respondents, as seen on Page 238, were more academically successful and thus had more choices. Having the choice to study in their home country or in a destination country, they chose to study abroad. For both types of respondents, they made the same decision to maximise their benefits, but for different reasons, to avoid competition and ensure their place in a university, or to choose the best and most suitable option of university/major/programme for themselves respectively.

Two respondents mentioned that their parents proposed the idea of foreign study first. In respondent 110's situation, her mother was afraid that she would be unable to secure a university place in her home country, so suggested studying abroad. Respondent 116's situation was slightly different. Her mother observed that she sought a university which provided a foreign study experience. However, no university provided the programme that she was interested in. Her mother, in this situation, suggested universities outside of her home country.

Compared to the Asian respondents' answers quoted previously, these two respondents'

mothers behaviour was closer to parental involvement. They were involved in the decision-making process when they saw the children were struggling to get a university place or to find the suitable programme in their home country. From the respondents' answers, their mothers did not force them to take the decision.

> "*It's actually my mum that brought up the idea. It wasn't, yeah, I was willing to try in New Zealand and my mum was like, there's no guarantee so, like try go overseas, I was like ok, that's fine. I didn't object to anything. Because I was, I was ok with it…so I did like first half semester, and then my mum brought this idea up, until I went back I did all the applications and everything.*" (Respondent 110)

> "*Well my mum, um it's actually her idea for me to become an international student. She saw how miserable I was going from college to college in the States and getting the same answer. And she said you know what, how about you just become an international student and I thought you know it wasn't possible because it's so expensive. But it took a lot of work, but together my mum and I, we decided UCC was best for me. My dad, he's more laid back about it, he's like yeah, sure, whatever you want. So, yeah he just kind of goes with the flow, my mum is instrumental and helping me get here and everything really.*" (Respondent 116)

Some respondents mentioned that their parents gave recommendations or advice on their foreign study decision. Among these respondents, some approached their parents for advice, while others did not seek out advice but received recommendations from their parents. Respondent 102 asked their parents' advice when they were faced with difficult decisions. One example given during the interviews was about uncertainty over the masters exam in China. Respondent 102 sought his parents' advice and finally followed it. Respondent 102's preference was to study abroad, eliminating requirement for him to take the Chinese masters exam. He still chose to follow his parents' advice and sit the

exams. Parents limiting to involvement to providing advice is a more subtle and gentler type of involvement. However, Asian respondents reaction to their parents' advice showed that their parents' opinion was still important to Asian students' foreign study decision (Lawley, 1997; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002).

Moreover, parents could also influence their child's choice of course/major in the destination university (Pimpa, 2003, 2004). Respondent 109 is an example. The respondent followed their parents' advice on the choice major because they thought it would be best for her future. This shows children's unquestioning attitude towards their parents' advice and also respect, obey and please their parents (Ikels, 2004; Bodycott, 2009).

> "*I consult a lot from my father. So like I ask him, like what college should I take, how should I apply for it. How should I prepare for, you know the documents stuff like…Just ask them for advice. When I came to like a difficult choice there, so ask them how should I make the decision… difficult choices, all right. So first like it's about, like you know the master entry exam, should I take or not in China? Something like, because I, I was want to go abroad, studying here, like so, I ask them like, you know it's time to, for the exam, should I take or not, they said you should take it, just in case you didn't, can't, you don't get an offer here…I took it. I took it. I actually passed it. I passed it so, this is one choice here. Some choices are like, say because there was a funding like opportunity in China, it's about China, I think is China Scholarship Council, called like. It's offer people to study abroad, so how should I apply for it like. What story should I make. How should I apply for it in the, it's give me a advice there like.*" (Respondent 102)

> "*The, my major in China actually is auditing, but my major in here is accounting. Because [UCC] have no auditing here. Yeah, because [parents] think auditing is one of the good major. Yeah, yeah, it's like, it's good for my future.*" (Respondent 109)

When respondent 109 was asked how her major in China was decided, her answer was:

> "*They [parents] gave me suggestions, and family, they and my teacher of high school, negotiate.*" (Respondent 109)

Moreover respondent 103 mentioned that his mother recommended foreign study to him.

> "*My mum advised me you have to see, you should go outside because it can open your horizon. So I choose to study abroad and I can avoid to take exams.*" (Respondent 103)

Initially, he was uncertain about the advice. He was concerned about his parents, but he finally decided to follow his mother's recommendation to study abroad.

> "*I don't, because I am not sure, the reason is you know, you have not work, the money, the whole money is from my parents, so I think it's a burden for them. Yeah, so maybe I think it will influence their lifestyle.*" (Respondent 103)

However, not all the respondents chose to follow their parents' advice.

> "*My mum really wanted to me go to TCD…but I hate big cities. So I choose [UCC]*." (Respondent 110)

> "*They [her parents] kind of resisted at first cos they think medicine is very hard to study, and you have to study like, for like your whole life actually. So they actually want me to choose other courses, like pharmacy. Then I insisted on medicine, so they still have to go with it.*" (Respondent 115)

Passive parental involvement is where parents had little or no involvement in the

decision-making process. Their attitude is to accept their child's decision to study abroad and provide support. Another type of parental involvement is supporting respondents in the planning stage. It includes contact with foreign study agencies, the destination university and home university, collecting information on the destination country, city and/or university, and preparation of paperwork (such as visa applications).

Respondents mentioned that their parents' contacted the university or other institutions, such as the foreign study agency with questions about visa preparation, communicated with UCC or their home university about courses their children should select, and contacted the destination country's embassy about emergency issues (as shown below).

> "*Yeah, it's more like, we have our own Mara, you know, how should I say, an ambassador in Ireland. He's located in Dublin and also he's also Malays so they talk to him. Basically he's the person who, who, who take care of us here, about if, one of us is sick or we need, you know like more financial for health matters, so we would can contacting him first and then who direct to our, my parents…like because he's in Dublin, so they asked him if anything happens, like, I have to be immediate in hospital at the moment, what would he do, something like that. He said he will ask, you know that there's a Malaysian society here in Cork called BBMC, it's like, Malaysian students association, Malay students association. Yeah. It's BBMC, it's Malay so. Yeah, they will ask someone first and he will come to Cork. Yeah that, if, he will need to be here.*" (Respondent 118)

Some of respondents' parents searched information about Ireland, Cork and UCC, while some of them also gathered information about alternative destination options.

> "*My mum did most of it. She did, because I was in university when she was doing all of this. She collected all the information, got like what the requirements, were for all of the universities, like in terms of applications.*" (Respondent 110)

"*They [her parents] did a lot background check, even more than me...yeah, like Ireland in general how this country like. Is it safe, things like that… because we have universities of Galway and Dublin too in our medical school so they check those universities too.* " (Respondent 115)

A few respondents mentioned that their parents helped to complete the paperwork, pack their bag and send them to the airport. These were the actions of a parent supporting their child rather than parental involvement in the foreign study decision. 12 respondents mentioned that their parents provided financial support with tuition fees and/or living costs. 2 respondents mentioned that they did not need parents' financial support at the time, but if required, their parents would provide it to them.

Some respondents mentioned that their parents did not get involved in the decision-making process or hold neutral opinions on foreign study. Eight respondents mentioned in the interviews that they made the foreign study decision. Parents let them make the decision and support their decision.

"*So I said like that even like my dad, he was like OK you, if I'm able to manage, he was fine with that.*" (Respondent 119)

"*so they just, I think because I'm a bit independent from the beginning of my life I think, so most of these decisions is based on my own, my own, my own choice.*" (Respondent 121)

"*At the end of the day they still let me decide, they gave me responsibility, because they trust me that much, yeah they let me decide whatever is going on, they were fully aware.*" (Respondent 125)

5.4.2. Parents Involvement in Career Decision

In the next section, the research will show the respondents' answers about parental involvement on their career decision and their future plan, especially where they will live after graduation. Filial piety was also present in the respondents' answers. In respondent 105's answer, his future career was not only based on his father's advice, but also was approved by all family members. Respondent 114 mentioned that her father thought that it was a "*good occupation*", and her father had the same job. Under filial piety's influence, children tended to follow their parents' decision or advice, as the opposite would be regarded as disrespectful or failing to observe filial piety.

Two respondents mentioned their parents' influence on their future career choice, and they followed parents' wish. Respondent 105's answer also showed his obligations not only to his parents, but also to his family (Ikels, 2004). It also shows the respondent's unquestioning attitude toward his parents' plan for his future career (Bodycott, 2009). His answer is similar to the description of Filial Piety, where parents tend to be involve in the decision-making process a lot, even make the final decision. Parents make the decision that they believe will maximise their children's benefits and children tend to follow their wishes (Chow, 2006). Moreover, children regard their parents' needs and wants as part of their achievement and become the type of person their parents would like them to be (Boey, 1976; Ho, 1987; Yau-Fai Ho, 1994).In this case, respondent 105 had no control on the final decision and chose what their parents considered "*what is the right thing*". Respondent 114 and respondent 109's answers also showed that parents' made the career decision for them and they followed parents' decision.

> "*Yes, all my family members are accountants…but they are pretty, they have a, they are pretty clear that how can, how my career will develop and what is the right thing for me to do. So actually applying for jobs in Big Four auditing companies was also my father's advice, advice.*" (Respondent 105)

> "*They [her parents] encouraged me to study medicine…because I am interested in science as well, and my Dad is a doctor as well. That's why. So he said being a doctor is a good occupation.*" (Respondent 114)

When the respondent was asked why her father thought medicine was a good occupation, her answer was:

> "*As in it's a stable lifestyle, and you also get to help a lot of people. So yeah. It's a self-fulfilling sense.*" (Respondent 114)

When the respondent was asked how her mother thought about being a doctor, her answer was:

> "*She, she encourages as well, because she finds it is a good occupation, too.*" (Respondent 114)

Another respondent mentioned that her family relative's influence on her future career choice.

> "*Actually I want to be in big 4, especially like I have always been planning to be maybe in the KPMG. You know that.*" (Respondent 109)

When asked why KPMG might be a good choice for future career, her answer was:

> "*That's because I like this company for my future. Yeah… I think maybe one of my relatives. She works in KPMG. Yeah…Like I [my aunt]...oh yeah, she's aunt or something, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. I think she's very professional looks like. She just gave me the [impression], she thinks KPMG is the best choice for me.*" (Respondent 109)

The decision to study in current destination country, or move to another destination country, or move back to home country after graduation, was also influenced by parents, or their future plan took their parents into consideration. Respondent 115 referred to this as her wish to "*bring them with me*". Therefore for Respondent 115, if she moved to another destination country in the future, whether parents could adapt to the new country's culture would be a factor influencing her choice. Respondent 115's answer demonstrated one of the three levels of filial piety, satisfying parents' physical needs, wants and comforts (Chow, 2006) and providing long term respect and care to parents (Bodycott, 2009) . Compared with Respondent 115, Respondent 107 and Respondent 109's answers demonstrated another level of filial piety, following parents' wishes (Chow, 2006). Their answers showed the unquestioning attitude towards parents' plan of future under Filial Piety (Bodycott, 2009). It also showed authoritarian filial piety, which focuses on obedience and indebtedness to parents (Yeh and Bedford, 2003; Hsu and Wang, 2011). At this question, three East Asian interviewees talked about their future plans and these plans had included their parents' will or consideration about their parents.

> "*My family actually wants me to go back, but I don't really want to go back to Singapore…They just told me oh I don't send you overseas to stay overseas.*" (Respondent 107)

> "*I will, I think I will study, do my master in China, because my parents don't want me to stay more than 1 year abroad.*" (Respondent 109)

> "*I guess the working environment is really important. Living expenses, guess like the culture there as well, whether it is closer to my family or not. Because if I were to bring them there with me, to live with me, then I would consider the culture as well, whether they can adapt well to that place…because they are kind of very traditional kind of parents, so I guess the older Asian community will be good for them. So hopefully like Asian countries, maybe like Singapore, but if*

were consider the western countries, maybe Canada, because there are a lot of like, immigrants, like Chinese, Cantonese there." (Respondent 115)

Respondents also mentioned their parents' requirements for education. Yeh and Bedford (2004) explain that educational achievement is strongly influenced by filial piety as poor examination results will make parents lose face, which violates filial piety. Respondent 111's answer demonstrated her parents expectations for her education achievement, meanwhile, her effort was spent on fulfilling her parents' expectations. Respondent 118's answer also highlights parents' concern for education achievement. Bodycott (2009) suggests that parents will ensure their children can receive the best education. Children will work hard to repay their parents and bring them honour (Chow and Chu, 2007). Respondent 118's answer showed that their parents spent much effort to monitor their child' educational progress. This was rare to see in the interviews, and this situation didn't happen in the other region groups.

"*They [her parents] have been encouraging me to go to overseas since I was in school… well, I suppose they just encourage me to excel in my study they just want me, they were just keep on top for me and make me do my best and make me excel in my class in the school and tell me you need to go to oversea, I want you to go to overseas something like that, all the time…well, they did set me a target something but something achievable, not… not too high… yeah, maybe each subject you need to score this much, may be 90%, in the subject, in all subject. So something like that. Yeah, they set me a target like that. I just try to get them to approve the dream me go overseas.*" (Respondent 111)

"*They [her parents] didn't talk [with UCC academic staff in her department] directly, but they did send them email, because I am repeating my first year so, they asking if, they are asking how's the first year's modules, is it rare for people to repeat? Yeah something like that.*" (Respondent 118)

Respondent 103's answer also demonstrated educational achievement's relation with filial piety. He mentioned that his parents were happy that their child had the highest education background in the family. This shows under Filial Piety, children study hard not only for personal education achievement, but also to repay their parents and bring honour to the family (Chow and Chu, 2007). Also under Filial Piety, children should behave well and study hard as they learnt from family and teachers that poor academic results will embarrass their parents, a violation of Filial Piety (Yeh and Bedford, 2004).

> "*So but anyway they glad to see that their son can study go further, because after all, the top [degree], sorry, after all it's the top education in my family…the top education in my family…education background, yeah.*" (Respondent 103)

One respondent mentioned that her parents did not want her to study abroad, which was the reason she chose to do postgraduate study in home country even though she would like to do it in Ireland. Again this showed the authoritarian filial piety which focuses on obedience and indebtedness to parents (Yeh and Bedford, 2003; Hsu and Wang, 2011). The respondent's answer showed the unquestioning attitude towards their parents' decision. Even though she preferred to study for a masters degree in Ireland, she chose to follow her parents' wishes and returned to China after undergraduate study was finished.

> "*My parents don't want to me to go abroad, actually…so that's why I will never like do my master, do anything like abroad. But maybe, but my parents don't want me to like, stay abroad. Because they thinking they want me to keep company… I never want to do a master abroad. Yeah, I want to do that in China…I, sometimes, just consider about maybe I can do a master in Ireland, but I don't want my parents to be very sad.*" (Respondent 109)

Parents felt sad about the decision mainly because their child was leaving, however, they were also happy for them.

"*They were very happy, I mean they are very happy, very excited, and when I came here 1 week ago, they were sad, crying.*" (Respondent 117)

"*They are very sad, because I'm the only 1 child for them… They were sad because they were leaving me, they were happy of my decision actually.*" (Respondent 119)

"*When I got admission, they are very happy that the university is highly ranked and there was second sort of feeling that I am leaving them for a year.*" (Respondent 126)

Some of the parents accepted the decision and/or didn't show their unhappiness with the decision, or they did not discourage their child.

"*I think from the beginning of my secondary school I already study in boarding school, so I think it's easier for them to release me, because of I made my own decision, so they are OK with that.*" (Respondent 121)

"*They were like OK with it, because my older, like, siblings are studying abroad, so they can OK, it's like, it's kind of normal thing in my family*." (Respondent 124)

"*They were OK because I was away from them since secondary school… yeah they are used to it because they, I, I, my secondary education was all boarding school*." (Respondent 125)

Moreover, some of the parents were worried about their children's life in the new country.

"*They care much about my safety problems. Because in the beginning I am not very dependent, you know that and not very independent, they think if I go abroad, I may have lots of problems, I may die outside*." (Respondent 109)[61]

"*Because this is the first time I've been so far away from them, they were kind of worried. I keep in contact with them every day so.*" (Respondent 115)

"*They were asking, once I made the decision, is it good for job opportunities, ah, or is the pay scale high, what about the immigration, if you want to come back immediately after or if you want to stay back for a couple of time and then come back.*" (Respondent 126)

The factors that respondents' parents were most concerned about were their children's life and safety in the new country.

"*They care much about my safety problems…yeah and sometimes, just asking about what's happening in Ireland. And if there's some news about Ireland, they will instant tell me…they just keep checking what's happening in Ireland, even something not even happen in Cork, they will think, oh it happens to you, to my daughter.*" (Respondent 109)

"*Because they didn't like, before I decide to come to Ireland, they think Ireland is only like Ireland, but it's actually divided into north and you know, Republic of Ireland, and there's some struggles going on in Northern Ireland when I decided to come to Ireland, so they kind of worry, like are there protest going on there, as the safety concern.*" (Respondent 115)

[61] Respondent meant that her parents worried about her own safety a lot. As was not an independent person prior to travelling abroad, her parents worried that she may encounter many problems and may not know how to solve them.

"*Only condition I need to call him every day to tell him what happened, he needs to make sure I am safe here all the stuff.*" (Respondent 119)

5.5. Other Qualitative Findings

Other qualitative information arose from the interviews that could help understand respondents' study, life, and future plans. This information could also form a basis for relevant recommendations.

Requirements of foreign study

Two respondents discussed the academic requirements they faced. Generally, if they satisfied the academic requirements, or surpassed the requirements, they would have a greater of courses.

"*Because I'm good in academic in general, so that's why I can, I have ability to actually apply for the course because of my grades.*" (Respondent 114)

"*For pharmacy, OK so I did foundation programme for a year in Dublin, and they had, I was doing four subjects in it, maths, English, biology and chemistry. They had grades required for each subjects and I basically meets all, so passes the degree they are looking for.*" (Respondent 125)

Two respondents mentioned that they needed to satisfy the language requirements. One respondent was required to take an interview in English after finishing all exams, the other respondent needed to get achieve a specified marks in the IELTS test to satisfy the language requirements.

"*Yeah I have, like, to do IELTS also, yeah the IELTS test…for IELTS, they ask for at least 6. I think or like 6.5, but I am not sure I can't remember.*" (Respondent 124)

One respondent mentioned that financial requirements came with the foreign study decision. In the case, his family was not able to afford the tuition fees and living cost. Therefore, the family applied for a bank loan to support him to study abroad.

Another respondent mentioned that he needed to attend two interviews before coming to Ireland. A different respondent also mentioned that she needed to attend an interview in English before coming to Ireland.

> "*In Ireland doesn't have to take the exams, mainly just the interviews, we have 2 interviews, 1 by the school and the other by the agency…well in Singapore, because there's 2 interviews, one is, I think it runs by the Dean of Medical School, he was being nice, he was being friendly, but there was another one by the lecturer, Singapore representative."* (Respondent 107)

Respondents' Future Plan

Thirteen respondents mentioned that they would like to continue further postgraduate study in either Ireland or other destination countries. The reasons that respondents may have changed their further education destination country were to have a different experience, scholarship/funding availability, topic/course/major availability, personal interest, and future job and family situation. A few respondents mentioned that, as part of the scholarship/funding requirements, they were required to return to their home country to get permission, or work for an appointed organisation or area for certain time period before they could pursue further study.

Some of the respondents planned their future career. They had different choices for their future career location. The factors influencing their choices included opportunities availability and accessibility, technology development, environment, and personal interest. The factors influencing their future career decision will be discussed in the next section.

Factors influencing career choice

Different factors influencing their career choices are explored in the interviews. Salary was mentioned most frequently in the interviews. The higher salary was, the higher possibility that respondent would like to choose the career.

> "*I think it has to have good benefits, at least a decent starting salary. I mean I will be, I will have just graduated, but I'm hoping it's a good salary and I will pick the job that has offering the most for first time graduate.*" (Respondent 116)

> "*Only the salary, if I get a good salary I will definitely go to the, where I'm getting a good salary.*" (Respondent 119)

Also a few respondents mentioned that salary was important, however, what they wanted make their family happy or maintain an independent lifestyle.

> "*You know, I just want to yeah, I just want what, what I earns can offer me you know, a good life. Not, not very high salaries, no I don't think so. But just make me happy and make my family happy.*" (Respondent 123)

> "*And the pay scale also…ah no, it's just sustain my living and yeah, clear my bank loan what I have, that's it. No other expectation, an average salary. I'm not a money man.*" (Respondent 126)

A few respondents mentioned that salary was not a factor to their career choice at all.

A factor that arose often was self-development. Respondents were interested to know what they could learn from the job and how the job could contribute to their self-growth.

"*First I think the most important thing is I can learn something in this job... so the first thing I think is I can learn skills, so I, I will have the skills even I was fired, even I'm fired by this company, I can still find a new job in other companies.*"(Respondent 105)

"*It is a job that would help me you know, to learn more, to upgrade, you know, my career, then definitely I will go for it. Respective of, let's say the other salary is more, but I was like where I would grow. When I grow, I will grow with the company, I would put in my best, and every day I'm learning something new.*" (Respondent 113)

The working environment was also important for the career decision. For respondents having a friendly working environment, it meant having peer support from colleagues, and less office politics.

"*Furthermore I think, furthermore I think, I think, I think the environment, the office environment is important. Somebody, some companies focus on like office politics, I don't like that. I like everybody focus on their own things. And the only thing can talk is your skill.*" (Respondent 105)

"*I guess the working environment is really important…those that can help, peer support, like they are willing to help, you can learn from each other. Not those who like they feel they are superior to you, they just don't really want to teach.*" (Respondent 115)

Their future company's reputation and growth was essential to their career decision. Respondents preferred to choose a company with a good reputation or well-established in the industry.

> "*Of course the reputation of the hospital itself, you can see if it is a better hospital…Well, even after you graduate, you still have a lot of more to learn. So I wish to go to those with better reputation in teaching me as a better doctor. Because you can see there are some hospitals that have the reputation of the senior doctors not, the senior doctors ignoring the junior doctors and so, so, so I refuse to go to such a hospital, yeah.*" (Respondent 111)

Promotions and welfare also had effects on respondents' career decisions. Respondents preferred careers with future promotion opportunities, and better welfare such as insurance, holidays and pension. The match between career and personal interests was also important for respondents' choices. During interviews, respondents mentioned that they were interested in certain areas or a certain type of job, such as research work, charity work, teaching, translation and creative work. They mentioned that they favoured a career that matched their interest.

Some other factors were discussed in the interviews. One of the respondents would have liked to work with a big team as she can get more support from team members. Working in small teams may bring more stress and responsibility. Advanced technology and high quality research staff also influenced the career decision. Additionally, working hours, which included numbers of working hours per day and start time, was also important to a few respondents' career decision. Destination country's living cost was also considered in making the career decision plans.

Another respondent mentioned that the ability to secure long-term contracts would influence their career decision. Some other respondents also mentioned their preference for a less challenging career environment, or preferred a career destination country which provided residency. As a condition of their scholarship/funding contract conditions, some respondents were required to return to their home country for a specified length of time before they could choose to study further or change career.

As mentioned previously, respondents chose the career not only based on their parents' decision or recommendation, but also whether their parents would like the future career destination country, as they intended on bringing their parents with them to the destination country in the future. Moreover, the distance between their home country and career destination country also influenced their career decision as it dictated whether respondents could visit their parents regularly. Respondents mentioned that they chose to work in their home country as family and friends were there and they could live more comfortably in their home country. One respondent stated that they chose their home country as they should help others there. Another respondent explained that she chose to return to her home country due to language difficulties making findings jobs in Ireland more difficult.

Source of information and social media's function

Sources of information mentioned during interviews include home university or destination university's staff , agencies, family members and their friends, friends and peers from the same country that have studied in the destination country or university, government, online resources, and social media.

When the respondents were asked where they got their information about destination country, city or university, their answers were:

From home country's tutor:

> "*It's my tutor, he told me about this country, and the scholarship, all those embassy, so they were telling me don't worry, Irish people are very good, very caring.*" (Respondent 119)

From destination university's staff:

"*Before came here, the UCC, my home uni, uni, sorry, my university called BTBU [Beijing Technology and Business University], they have a, they invite UCC staff to give us presentation to tell how beautiful it is, what kind of education, seem like, so I got booklet and gave my mum to tell them, so about what UCC look like.*" (Respondent 103)

"*They actually gave me a lot of information about how I can attend this programme, and what requirements are there, what requirements are there.*" (Respondent 105)

"*So when I was in Preparation College back in Malaysia, we have some Irish lecturers coming to our place and giving a talk about the place here…well, mostly from this [UCC] Cork, and also [NUI Galway]*." (Respondent 111)

"*One of the doctors from the health science, she came to interview us, we get to ask more questions.*" (Respondent 114)

Three respondents mentioned that they got relevant information from a foreign study agency or consultancy before they came to Ireland.

From family members and their friends:

"*From my dad's colleague who actually studied abroad…one of the colleagues was in Irish graduate. So we asked him.*" (Respondent 114)

"*One of my uncle is, OK, he's working in Northern Ireland, it's in London, but still he told me a lot about Ireland.*" (Respondent 119)

From friends and peers from the same country that had studied in the destination country or university:

> "*I got information from my friends, as I said my friends study here for 2 years, they have studied here for 2 years, so I got lots of information from them.*" (Respondent 103)

From the government (embassy):

> "*Actually I did my own search but then the Irish embassy, the Irish embassy assisted in Zambia now… because when I finished with my studies, in South Africa, and then I went to work home, yeah, and then [the Irish embassy in Zambia] are, they were advertising at that moment, they were advertising for the scholarships.*" (Respondent 112)

Respondent 112 mentioned that the Irish embassy in Zambia advertised in a Zambian national newspaper about the scholarship and relevant universities.

Eighteen respondents mentioned that they searched for information about the destination country, city and university online. Facebook, WeChat, and Internet Club were also sources of information for respondents. Through these social media channels respondents could reach other students who had studied in the destination country or university before and collected the information that they were interested in.

Life in Cork and Ireland

The interviews also covered international students' experiences of living and studying in Cork, and the extent to which these matched prior expectations. Respondents spoke mainly about accommodation, food, and transportation.

The difficulties in getting accommodation arose before respondents arrived in Cork. Searching for houses before the academic year begins was difficult. For international students, there was another problem besides lack of accommodation, time difference. As these accommodations were allocated mostly on a first come, first serve basis, time differences could result in international students missing opportunities to contact landlords or agencies to rent a house. Moreover, to respondents who needed to rent for a short, defined period of time, for example, after their exams. many houses were not available for short periods of time but insisted on longer contracts.

> "*Well, a lot of accommodation here, the, Ireland is 5 hours ahead of the US. Booking is on the first come first serve base. So automatically for me, that's a disadvantage because it's 3am in the morning when the booking opens at 8am their time. So I had to get up at 3am, 4am in the morning to get things done with accommodation as their emails will come through and sometimes like I mentioned the email would just say we are not ready yet, and I got 3am in the morning for nothing.*" (Respondent 116)

Food was also important to respondents living in Cork, Ireland. One factor which has been mentioned a few times in interviews was religious dietary restrictions.

> "*I think it's also the food. Because we need to eat halal meat which is only Muslims can eat. So it's basically hard to find you know the halal meat, so I'm becoming more vegetarian.*" (Respondent 118)

> "*So Muslims shops, I need to find Muslims shops for meat particularly.*"
> (Respondent 114)

> "*Also like, like Halal, Halal shops like for like meat. Indian shops maybe, you can find like some Arabic food there.*"(Respondent 124)

Transportation included public transportation and respondents' personal transportation, such as cars and bikes. The reason that transportation was important to respondents was that they lived a long distance from the university campus.

Studying in UCC

Respondents mentioned different factors that they considered important to their study in UCC. Libraries and study facilities, such as laboratory and equipment were mentioned the most in the interview. The next popular factor was lecturers and supervisors. Respondents described their lecturers as "*very responsible*", "*fantastic*", and "*supportive*". They also mentioned that it was important that the lecturer could teach them different ideas and opinions rather than read from the book.

Some respondents mentioned they thought that language barriers influenced their study in UCC.

> "*I think maybe the language, I couldn't understand the, the professor's lecture very well and maybe I, I need to improve my hearing, my listening.*" (Respondent 122)

> "*I'm not very good at English, so maybe the teacher blah, blah, they just, they just say the things, I may miss something.*" (Respondent 123)

Moreover, classmates and friends were important to the respondents studying in UCC. They enjoyed the company of their friends, and the support they received from their friends and classmates. A few respondents discussed the support they received from Peer Support, a student-led support programme run by UCC. To the respondents, it was helpful especially for the students who are fresh to university life. One of the respondents joined in the Peer Support programme the year she was interviewed. Another factor mentioned during interviews were societies and social groups. It helped international students integrate into Irish life faster, and made meeting and making friends with Irish

people easier.

5.6. Recommendations to Irish Universities

Based on the qualitative data analysis, recommendations for Irish universities and policy makers can be provided.

Specific course/major availability has been revealed as both a push and pull factor in the interviews. It was the most frequent discussed push factor in the interviews. Respondents revealed that they chose to study abroad as their home country did not have certain modules/programmes. Also as a pull factor, major availability influenced respondents' destination university. For Irish universities attending education fairs internationally, providing a list and description of modules that undergraduate/postgraduate programme teach could help respondents to decide. Additionally, staff from Irish universities could provide relevant and person-specific recommendations based on international students' interests and academic background. Based on the interviews, Irish universities have already developed cooperative programmes with different countries and foreign universities. In order to attract more students from target countries/universities, Irish universities should include detailed module/programme information in their brochures and have staff available to answer questions and give module/programme selection advice online.

Respondents also revealed that they preferred the modules/programmes of shorter duration. This applied to full-time masters programmes only. Irish universities could also emphasise this in brochures and international education fairs. Shorter modules/programmes with the same quality as other module/programme options in other destination countries would be more preferable to international students. It would allow them to begin working earlier and thus pay less tuition fees and living cost. Irish universities could address the time length and quality of the masters programmes to attract international students.

Another factor that identified from the qualitative data was competition avoidance. One of the respondents revealed that he chose to study in Ireland and UCC as it was a less popular choice. He could avoid competition in the college and labour market. Respondents' answers also show that respondents would be influenced by the destination university's ranking. From his perspective, a high ranking meant intense competition for places. Also choosing less a popular destination country meant that there would be less competition in the labour market. Irish universities could attract international applicants by promoting the universities' high level teaching and research quality, ranking in the relevant field, and high acceptance rate.

University's ranking was a factor discussed in both the quantitative and qualitative data. Respondents used it to measure universities teaching and research quality. Some respondents sought information about a destination university's ranking in a specific field. It is important to address it in promotional material. Quantitative data indicated that respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* were more interested in this factor. Irish universities could emphasise rankings in promotions in Asia. Moreover, Irish universities could promote Irish universities' quality and brand value to the respondents from Asia and Africa, and that the qualification is widely recognised in many countries.

Qualitative data also indicated that respondents would take their peers' and friends' recommendations when they select a destination university/country, though based on quantitative results, this factor was not a priority. Irish universities could use alumni networks and encourage graduates and current students to act as brand ambassadors. From the respondents' view, their peers and friends could understand their requirements and concerns about the destination university and country. Most importantly, their peers and friends were more trustworthy as they were not being paid to give positive feedback. In this way, Irish universities could build an alumni network to promote the university and also help the international students to settle down in a new environment.

Both quantitative and qualitative results showed that Asian respondents perceived strong influence from their parents. During the interviews, respondents revealed that their

parents decided that they should study abroad, consulted with foreign study agencies or the staff from destination universities. Respondents also mentioned that they would bring brochures to their parents and let them read it, even though their parents did not speak English. To attract Asian students to study in Ireland, it is important to promote to both the students and their parents. It would be helpful that create brochures in target countries' native languages so applicants' parents could also read it. Some Asian respondents came to study in UCC as part of a cooperative programme between their home country/university and Ireland/UCC. This highlights that cooperative programmes work very well. It is also a quality promise as applicants trust the university that their home university or home country's government recommend. To expand the international education market, Irish universities should expand the number of cooperative programmes as this is a very efficient way to recruit international students. One respondent from China who came to study in UCC through a cooperative programme also mentioned that in the meeting with UCC's staff, the students who attended the meeting had already decided to study abroad. This is another point that Irish universities should be aware of. In meetings with students associated with cooperative programmes, Irish universities should focus on their teaching and research quality, ranking in general and in specific fields, as well the career prospects from certain modules/programmes.

Some respondents revealed that they chose UCC as UCC were the first to offer a place. The speed of offer given is essential as international students are often risk-averse, unwilling to wait for long periods of time for other offers.

Accommodation issue was mentioned very frequently in the interviews. However it is not a problem that Irish universities could solve by themselves. Irish universities can develop online services to assist international students secure accommodation before their arrival. As international students must deal with time-zone differences and visa application processes, and most of the accommodations are first come, first serve, it is difficult for the international students to secure accommodation before they arrive. Irish universities and local governments could provide help to international students with accommodation

to improve their life experience in Ireland.

Respondents also revealed that they had language difficulties, even though they all passed the language requirements to enter UCC. It remained a challenge for international students. Irish universities could provide workshops and programmes to develop language proficiency and peer support to help international students to keep up with course material.

5.7. Conclusion

Chapter 5 examined the qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews. 24 respondents' answers were analysed through NVivo. The qualitative information collected were coded and categorised by the content and theme. Then based on the respondents' demographic details gave, the quotes were analysed and categorised into different sections.

The push factor that had been discussed most frequently in the interviews was major/programme availability. This factor proved to an important push factor for international students in the quantitative data analysis. Respondents chose to study abroad as their home country did not have the modules/programmes that they were interested in. Some respondents revealed that it was because their home countries' universities did not provide certain full programmes, such as medicine. If the respondents wanted to study medicine, they needed to complete half of the programme in their home country and the other half abroad.

Respondents also revealed course duration as a push. This push factor was observed in UCC's masters programme specifically. As Irish full-time taught masters programme last one year, and most of respondents' home countries masters programme were at least two years. Respondents preferred masters programme with a short duration when they could not perceive any difference on qualification obtained and the quality of the programme.

Other push factors were also discussed in this chapter, such as home country's social tolerance level, lack of employment opportunities, lesser value of home country's qualification in the labour market, and demanding academic requirements. There were some push factors related to the respondents themselves, such as the desire to be independent, development of foreign language proficiency, and wish to reduce burden on family. Some respondents revealed that they preferred to study abroad as desired a change of environment and to leave their comfort zone.

There were six types of pull factors discussed in this chapter. Pull factors influenced respondents' decision on destination university and/or destination country. First was destination university's pull factors, such as destination university's qualification's value and recognition by home country's government and education authority, ranking, cooperation with home universities. Second was destination country's pull factors, such as destination country's culture, life experience, natural environment and general financial cost. Third was family and peer recommendations. In contrast with results from the quantitative data, family, peer and friends' recommendations played an important role when respondents were selecting destination university/country. Foreign study agencies' recommendations were another pull factor. There were other pull factors, such as scholarship availability, and speed of destination university's offer also influenced respondents' choice of destination university.

There were two areas that were not present in previous literature and is thus a novel finding international education research. The first one was competition avoidance. There were two types of competition avoidance strategies. The first type was the choice to study abroad due to limited space and intense competition in home countries' universities. Foreign study would allow them more opportunities. The second type was the decision to study in a less popular destination country/university to avoid intense competition with other applicants, but also to avoid competition with other people from the same country in the destination country's labour market.

The second surprise was the factor of home country's "norms". According to one respondent's answer, in Malaysia, studying abroad was a sign that the child was smart. It also strengthened a family's reputation. The norm influence of foreign study is discussed for the first time in this research. As only one Malaysian respondent revealed this factor, this factor requires further following research to explore the influence of societal norms.

Parental involvement is shown in the decision-making process of foreign study, career, future plan and respondents' study. Respondents' answers showed that Asian respondents' parents had stronger parental involvement compared to other regions' respondents' parents. The answers demonstrated that some Asian respondents' parents made the foreign study decision, career decision, and some of them even set education achievement goals for the respondents. Asian respondents tended to follow and obey their parents' advice and decision, even though their parents' decision may be in conflict with their wishes. Respondents' answer revealed Filial Piety's influence on their foreign study decisions, even on career and future plans. Under Filial Piety, parents make the decision for their children to maximise their children's benefits. Children study hard to achieve the education goal their parents set. Moreover, children strive to satisfy their parents' needs and wants, and follow their wishes. The qualitative information showed that Filial Piety influenced Asian parents' involvement in the decision-making process and respondents' attitude towards their parents' decision and advice.

Respondents' answers also revealed the different requirements required for foreign study, such as language and academic requirements. This point was also highlighted in the quantitative results.

Respondents collected information about their destination university/country from home university's staff, destination university's staff, family members and friends, peers that had studied in the destination university/country, and the Irish embassy in home country. Facebook, WeChat, and online chat groups were the social media channels that respondents used to communicate with students who had studied or were studying in the

destination university/country.

Accommodation issues were the most frequent discussed issues about respondents' life experiences in Cork. Language difficulty was the barrier that influenced their study in UCC. The chapter has provided practical and relevant recommendations to help Irish universities and policy makers to attract international students to Ireland and to improve their study and life experience.

Chapter 6 Comparison between Quantitative Data and Qualitative Data

6.1. Introduction of Comparison between Questionnaire and Interview Results

This section will compare analyses of the questionnaires and interviews. This research used questionnaires in conjunction with interviews as interviews allow more issues to be generated by respondents than those included in the survey. Moreover, respondents' opinions can be complex and interviews are a more appropriate approach to explore them. Questionnaires can uncover the factors influencing respondents' foreign study decision, however, interviews can explain why these factors are important to some respondents and how they worked in the decision-making process.

The results collected from the questionnaires and interviews had similarities and differences as shown in Table 6.1. These similarities and differences will be discussed in detail.

Table 6.1 Similarities and Differences on Quantitative and Qualitative Data Comparison	
Similarities	Differences
Perceived influence from subject/major/programme availability	Perception of destination university's advertisements
Perception of personal factors, including satisfying language and academic requirements	Destination university's attitude towards international education
Perceived parental involvement in their foreign study decision	Foreign study's benefit: experience with international students
Foreign study's benefit: benefits of foreign study on language proficiency	Friends' recommendations
Foreign study's benefit: perception that foreign qualifications are that highly regarded by employers	Scholarship/funding availability

The first similarity between the two types of data was the respondents' perceived influence of subject/major/programme availability. Based on the questionnaires' results, 74.9% of respondents agreed that subject availability had some or a lot of influence on their decision. Interview results corroborated this. Interviewees referred to it as a push factor when it was a reason to leave their home country, or a pull factor when it was why they chose the destination university.

Another similarity was respondents' perception of personal factors, including satisfying language and academic requirements. Questionnaire results showed that both personal factors had over 60% of respondents agreeing that they had some or a lot of influence on their decision. During the interviews, these two factors also arose very frequently. Satisfying language and academic requirements decided which destination university the interviewee could be sent to if the interviewee joined a programme with a foreign study agency or government. They also decided whether students would receive a destination

university's offer of a place in a desired major/programme in a destination university, and satisfy relevant visa policy requirements.

The next similarity was the parental involvement perceived by respondents in their foreign study decision. Questionnaire results indicated that over 65% of respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that their parents had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. 6.4% of respondents agreed that their fathers made the decision for them and 3.1% of respondents agreed that their mother made the decision for them. Only respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* mentioned that their parents made the decision for them. As 94.2% of respondents in the category of *Asia, Africa and Oceania* are Asian respondents, the result could be regarded that Asian respondents perceived stronger influence from parents. Similar results also were found in the question about parents' influence on career decision.

Interviews' results had a similar pattern with the questionnaires on parental involvement. Parental influence was stronger in Asian interviewees, particularly East Asian, than interviewees from other regions. The strong influence did not only apply to the foreign study decision, but also to their career decision, and future development plan. Asian interviewees tended to accept this influence and followed their parents' will. Some of interviewees referred to their parents' decision as a command and a better decision than theirs.

Both questionnaire and interview results show that respondents agreed that foreign study could benefit their language abilities. The questionnaire showed that 77.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that foreign study could improve their language proficiency. Compared with the questionnaires, the less interviewees discussed this benefit. In the interviews, language improvement was a reason that they left their home country and chose an English speaking country to study. One of the respondents mentioned that the reason she didn't select Spain as a destination country, even though she liked it, was the language spoken in the destination country. Most of respondents learned English before they studied abroad, thus a destination country where English was

spoken would be easier for them. It would also save time and financial cost compared with countries where English was not spoken.

The last similarity was respondents' perception that foreign qualification were better regarded by employers. 79.1% of respondents answered agree or strongly agree in the questionnaires that foreign study would bring them a benefit on qualification. In the interviews, respondents also mentioned that foreign qualifications were superior to local qualifications as foreign universities have higher quality, and better teaching facilities to train the students. Having a foreign qualification would give them a competitive advantage in the labour market.

There were five main differences between the questionnaires and interviews. The first one was the perception of destination university's advertisements. Questionnaire results indicated that respondents did not perceive much influence from advertisements, however, in the interviews, interviewees mentioned advertisements that influenced their decision. The reason that questionnaires and interviews may have had different results to the questions was because respondents may have had a different understanding of advertisements from the destination university. Presentations by destination university staff in a home university may not have been regarded as an advertisements by some respondents but it is a channel for international students to receive information of destination university.

The second difference related to the destination university's attitude to international education. Over 60% of respondents agreed that it had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision, however it was not a popular factor in the interviews.

On the question of experience with other international students, 91.2% of respondents agreed that it was one of foreign study's benefits. During interviews, this factor was not mentioned frequently; a few respondents mentioned that it would help them to work with people from different backgrounds. Interview results did not show this benefit was as popular as in questionnaire.

The fourth difference was friends' recommendations. Only 29.1% respondents agreed that had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decisions. It arose frequently in the interviews. Interviewees tended to trust their friends' recommendations. As these friends had studied in the destination country or destination university previously, their information and experience would be trustworthy, and they would be able to answer specific questions as they were from same cultural background. One of the interviewees said that her friend's recommendation made her rule out all other universities.

The final difference relates to scholarship/funding availability. This factor was more popular in interviews than in questionnaires. Only 34% of respondents answered in questionnaires that it had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. In the interviews, scholarship/funding availability was important when interviewees decided which destination university they would choose. Interviewees also considered this factor when they made their future education plan.

A contribution of this thesis to economics literature is the discovery of three new factors that influence international students. These three factors offer a new perspective to observe and understand international students' decision-making processes. They also demonstrate international students' strategic thinking and desire to maximise their benefits.

The first factor is competition's influence on foreign study decision. In the interviews, interviewees referred to this factor as the desire to avoid their home country's intense competition to enrol in certain programme. Studying abroad could allow them to enrol in a programme they are interested in and would encounter as strong competition as in their home country. Competition for places in a destination university was also discussed. One respondent said that he chose Ireland as Ireland was not as popular as the U.S.A., thus it had fewer applicants, especially applicants from the same country as him.

In the interviews, some interviewees discussed foreign study agencies' function. Some of the agencies co-operated with government, acting as a messenger and an examiner in the

decision-making process. They also provided advice to students to assist in their decision about major, university or country.

Saving time and financial costs was another factor that interviewees mentioned frequently. Interviewees chose to study abroad as their home country/university's major/programme took longer time than the destination university's. They also compared programme duration between different destination universities. A shorter duration programme meant that they could graduate earlier. Also it would reduce their tuition fees and living costs. Some respondents said that the reason they chose Ireland was because of the low tuition fees and living costs, as well as the cheaper Irish currency.

Moreover, the thesis also contributed by providing quantitative and qualitative data for Ireland international education field as there was no previous literature exploring Ireland's international education market. The thesis also provides quantitative and qualitative data across multiple regions compared with previous research, which focused on one country or one continent. The quantitative and qualitative data across different regions could help to explore the similarities and differences in perspectives of international students from different regions. It would also help to provide recommendations, policies suggestions and market-orientated advice.

The next sections will discuss the comparison between questionnaires and interviews from three angles, investment and return on education, push and pull factors and parental involvement.

6.2. Investment and Return

As mentioned in qualitative data analysis section, during the interviews, there were no questions asking respondents' tuition fees and expected returns, however, when speaking factors influencing their career choice, future salary was one of the factors is mentioned, and some respondents discussed their salary expectations.

Based on quantitative data's results, more respondents (58.9%) expected their salary to be €2,000 per month or less. 41.1% of them thought that their monthly salary would be greater than €2,000 per month. The result showed the salary expectations of their first job after graduation. In interviews, over half of respondents discussed salary's influence on their choice of career. Two of these respondents explained that salary was not the factor that would influence their career decision. Some mentioned that they preferred a high salary and they would choose a company or organisation that pays higher, indicating that it influences their career choice. Also some of them mentioned that a salary would be good if it could maintain their lifestyle. Three respondents talked about their expected salary levels. Two Chinese respondents initially expected to earn from 6,000 RMB (around €750) per month. One of them would like to earn 12,000 RMB (around €1,500) per month in 5 years. Another respondent mentioned that their expected salary would be set by a government pay scale.

Comparing the questionnaires and interviews, the answers in the questionnaires may be the lower end of their expectations. Moreover, due to differing currency exchange rates with the Euro, their expectation could be much higher than monthly salary of graduates from their home country.

6.3. Push Factors

Push and pull factors, as discussed previously, could be different perspectives on an issue. For example, a country with many career opportunities is a pull factor for a destination country, and lack of career opportunities is a push factor for a home country.

For push factors, the survey questionnaire used a matrix question by asking respondents the benefits they would obtain from foreign study. There were eight benefits listed in the questionnaire. In the past literature, these factors were common push factors for influencing students to study abroad.

- Qualification which will be highly regarded by employers

- Skills which will be highly regarded by employers
- Improved language skills
- Access to better further education
- More further education opportunities
- More job opportunities
- Better job opportunities
- Experience of living, studying and working with international students

The quantitative data shows that over 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with foreign study bringing these eight benefits. 91.2% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement related to the experience of living, studying and working with international students.

Qualitative data added more details on these benefits. During interviews, respondents mentioned factors such as qualifications highly regarded by employers, improved language skills, and better employment opportunities which were also mentioned in the questionnaire. Two respondents mentioned that foreign qualification would bring them a competitive advantage in the future career. Both of them explained why employers preferred foreign qualifications rather than domestic ones. One of the two respondents also talked about why domestic qualifications were not as valuable as foreign qualifications. One respondent mentioned in the interview that staying in their home country does not help to improve their English skills. In relation to employment opportunities, one respondent mentioned that it was difficult to find good career in their home country. Moreover, there were other push factors which were not covered in the questionnaires but were mentioned in the interviews: restlessness to live in another country, inability to live independently while in home country, unavailability of courses/majors/programmes, course/major/programme duration, home country's academic competition, and home country's academic requirements for certain courses/majors/programmes.

6.4. Pull Factors

In the survey questionnaire, pull factors were categorised into five sections, personal factors, destination university factors, destination country factors, and parental and peer factors. Based on the ranking results, personal factors had the greatest important influence on foreign study decisions. The second important factor was future plan factors. In descending order of importance, the other factors were destination university factors, destination country factors, and parental and peer factors. Of all the five factors, personal factor was important to respondents because it included satisfying academic requirements and language requirements. As most of the respondents were from non-English speaking countries, satisfying language requirements was essential in determining whether they could receive an offer. As with satisfying language requirements, satisfying academic requirements also determined whether respondents would be accepted by the destination university. Therefore, personal factors decided destination university acceptance, rather than pull respondents to study abroad.

The next important factor was future plan factors which included job opportunities, future education and post-graduate immigration. Qualitative data about job opportunities showed that it acted as a push. As what mentioned in push factor in qualitative section, some respondents chose to leave their home country for better job opportunities. In the interviews, three respondents mentioned postgraduate immigration. One of them considered Irish visa policy about working after graduation before coming to Ireland to study. Ireland's visa policy allowing students work in Ireland was one of the reasons that respondent finally decided to study in Ireland. Another respondent mentioned that immigration policy was one of the factors that he considered before he came to Ireland. One respondent mentioned that whether his ability to get residency decides which country he will work in in the future.

Destination university factors cover destination university's advertisement, rankings, scholarship, major availability, societies and clubs, tuition fees and attitude towards international students. In all these factors, ranking, major availability and attitude had

over 50% of respondents agreeing that they have some or a lot of influence on the foreign study decision.

In the interviews, five respondents mentioned that they used a ranking system to decide which university or universities would be on their selection list. However it was not a very strict selection based on ranking. When the destination university's ranking above a certain level, they considered it. Their choice is made based on satisfying, rather than maximising the benefits (Simon, 1959). Their searching and choosing destination university process terminated when they were satisfied with their choice, not when they find the best university in the academic area.

Scholarship availability was important for the foreign study decision, however, based on respondents' answers, the scholarship or fund did not always come from the destination university. It also could be from their home university or home country's government, or destination country's institutions (such as SFI). Major availability was mentioned by eight respondents during the interviews. Certain courses, majors or programme's availability was important to the respondents to make the decision. Some respondents mentioned that they chose UCC because it had a course or programme matching their academic area or their interests.

Societies and clubs were not mentioned when respondents were asked about their foreign study decision-making process, however, this factor was mentioned when respondents were asked about their study and life in UCC, Cork and Ireland.

Tuition fees was another factor that attracted respondents to select UCC. This factor, based on information collected from interviews, was a factor that Ireland had, rather than specifically UCC. Ireland's tuition fees were lower than the other destination countries mentioned in the interviews. Moreover, low living cost is another factor mentioned which also attracted respondents to select Ireland.

Some other pull factors from destination university were brought up from the interviews, such as destination university's qualification, supervisor, course/major/programme duration, staff, university's reputation, academic and language requirements, environment and cooperative programme with home university.

Destination university's attitude towards international students was also mentioned in the interviews. Based on the qualitative information, attitude could be seen as a reflection of UCC's staff. It would attract respondents to select UCC as a destination university.

Respondents mentioned that they could get destination university's advertisements through many channels, not only through brochures, a university's website, but also through presentations from UCC staff and home university's staff, and YouTube videos. Quantitative data results indicated that respondents did not agree that advertisements had significant influence on their foreign study decision, which differed from the qualitative data's results. It might be because there was a difference between what respondents perceived as advertisements and how universities advertised.

Destination country factors comprised of eleven factors, such as climate, environment, perceived life style, crime rate, social safety and racial discrimination. Quantitative data showed that over half of respondents agreed that perceived lifestyle, perceived social safety, environment, tolerance in society, social life, and culture had some or a lot of influence.

Based on the information collected from the interviews, social tolerance, safety, culture, natural environment, climate were all mentioned when respondents reviewed their foreign study decision-making process. Moreover, they also mentioned pull factors not included in the questionnaire, such as immigration and visa policy, language used in the destination country, low living cost and tuition fees, and friendly people.

Geographical distance and presence of local communities of own nationality were not mentioned as factors influencing their foreign study decision-making process, but they were mentioned as factors relevant to respondents' life in the destination country.

Based on the quantitative data, the least important factor to the respondents was parental and peer factors. This factor was related to parental involvement. Quantitative data showed that more respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* area, especially Asia, agreed that parents' recommendations, permission and earnings had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision compared with respondents from Americas and the EU. This part of the quantitative data matches with the qualitative results in the next section.

Even though quantitative data did not show that friends' link in destination country or friends' recommendation was important to the foreign study decision, qualitative data showed that friends' study and life experience in the destination university and destination country did influence respondents' foreign study decisions. One respondent mentioned that because of her friend's recommendation of UCC, she finally decided to study in UCC. Moreover, the group of friends and peers was one of sources about the destination country, city or university's information. Internet club, Facebook and WeChat group were other channels that respondents could get information about destinations. These channels could target on the certain aspects better. Respondents can ask questions about certain courses, universities, cities or countries, meanwhile the people providing information and answers are their peers or friends, independent sources so it is easier for respondents to trust their information. Also, as both groups of people are students, they would have common topics or interests to share so that their information may match respondents' situation better.

6.5. Parental Involvement

In the section of parental involvement in the foreign study decision, the questionnaire included two questions. The questions asked how much respondents' father or mother influenced the foreign study decision.

At the previous section of quantitative data analysis, on the question about perceived parents' permission's influence on foreign study decision, the questionnaires showed that 73.6% of the respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* agreed that parents' permission has some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. Less than half of respondents from other regions agreed.

On the questions about parental influence on the foreign study decision, the quantitative data shows that respondents from *Asia, Africa and Oceania* had the highest number that received some or a lot of influences from father and mother on the foreign study decision. There was significant difference on the answers of perceived paternal and maternal influence on the foreign study decision. Considering that the number of respondents from Africa and Oceania was 6 and that 90.8% of the remaining respondents were from East Asia and South East Asia area, it is reasonable to think that Asian respondents, especially East and South East Asian respondents, perceived more influence on their foreign study decision from their parents compared with respondents from the EU and the Americas. In the other words, parents from Asia, especially from East and South East Asia area had greater involvement in their child's foreign study decision compared to the parents from the other regions.

For the perceived father's influence question, 6 respondents agreed that their father made the decision for them. Of these 6 respondents, 5 of them were from China, and 1 of them was from India. For the question about perceived mother's influence, 4 respondents agreed that their mother made the decision for them. 2 of the 4 respondents were from China, 1 was from India, and 1 was from the EU. Similar results are indicated in the qualitative analysis, 3 respondents mentioned that their father and/or mother made the

foreign study decision for them. 2 of them were from China, and 1 was from Malaysia. The respondent from Malaysia mentioned that the foreign study decision was made by both parents.

Two questions asked respondents how much their father and mother influenced their career decision. As mentioned in the quantitative data analysis, respondents from Asia, Africa and Oceania had the highest percentage that perceived influence on future career decision from their parents. In the interviews, two respondents agreed that their fathers or mothers decided their future career. Moreover, in both situations, one respondent was from China, and one was from India. Two respondents also mentioned that their plans after graduation were also decided by their parents, and they did not want to displease their parents, so they would return to their home country.

Children following their parents' decision on foreign study or their career show signs of filial piety. Filial piety is common to see in Asia. Both quantitative and qualitative data show similar results with regard to filial piety.

Additionally, three respondents discussed the education achievement target that their parents set for them. One of them also mentioned that parents contacted UCC when they found out the respondent needed to repeat first year. As mentioned in the qualitative data section, filial piety also includes children striving to achieve the education achievement targets and bring honour to their family. Poor education achievement would be regarded as a violation of filial piety.

Based on the respondents' answers, parents from Asia had more parental involvement than the parents from the other areas.

Qualitative data also indicated that parents were also involved in the foreign study decision-making process through proposing the idea of foreign study, providing recommendations or advice on the destination countries and/or universities, contacting

foreign study agencies, collecting information about the destination country, city and/or university, and preparing paper work (such as the visa application). The previous list shows weaker involvement based on the placing of the action on the list. In the other words, proposing the idea of foreign study were seen as strong ways to be involved in respondents' decision-making process, while preparing paperwork could be seen as weak involvement.

6.6. Other Factors

Interviews results featured factors that did not appear in the questionnaires. Firstly, avoiding competition was one of the push factors. They wanted to avoid intense academic competition in their home country. Some respondents described the intense competition to obtain a place in certain programmes in their home country. The respondents said when they selected a destination country, they also wanted to avoid competition. Popular destination countries/universities have more applicants which meant more intense competition. Moreover, if they preferred to work in the destination country after graduation, a popular destination country will have more intense competition on employment.

Agencies played an important role in their foreign study decision too. These foreign study agencies may or may not co-operate with government. They provide choices of destination countries/universities to the respondents. They were also messengers between the students and destination universities. One of respondents said it was agency's decision to study in Ireland.

Another factor was saving time and financial cost in major/programme choice. Respondents discussed in the interviews that the reason they chose Ireland was that the same programme in their home country or other destination country took longer. Shorter programmes means they could being working earlier thus reducing tuition fees and living cost. Moreover, some respondents chose Ireland because the tuition fees and living cost were cheaper, and the currency was cheaper compared to UK.

Questionnaires and interviews showed similar results on respondents' perceived influence of major/programme availability, and satisfying language and academic requirements. The results of the interviews showed that satisfying language and academic requirements, for some international students, limited which country or university they could go to. It also decided whether they would receive destination university's offer and get a visa. In other words, satisfying language and academic requirements were necessary conditions for studying abroad. Both questionnaires and interviews also showed similar results on the strong influence of parental involvement on Asian respondents. Interviews also showed that Asian respondents followed their parents' advice, decision and strove to reach the educational achievement targets set by their parents. That foreign study could benefit their language proficiency was also shown in both questionnaires and interviews results. Compared to questionnaires, fewer respondents discussed this factor in the interviews.

Questionnaire results highlighted the influence of destination university's attitude to international education, and one of foreign study's benefits, experience with international students. However, these factors were not mentioned frequently in the interviews, and when they were mentioned, their importance was not as strong as the questionnaire results. The questionnaires results showed that destination university's advertisements, friends' recommendations and scholarship/funding availability were weaker influences, which was not the case in the interviews. The interviews also uncovered three new factors, competition avoidance, agency influence and course duration.

6.7. Conclusion

The research used questionnaires and in-depth interviews to collect quantitative and qualitative data. There were 214 responses collected from the questionnaires and 24 answers collected from the interviews. As discussed in Chapter 3, quantitative data and qualitative data compensated for each other. This chapter compared these two types of data.

There were similarities between the two forms of data. Firstly, both quantitative and qualitative data showed that module/programme availability was important to respondents' decision to study abroad. Quantitative data showed that 74.9% of respondents agreed that it had some or a lot of influence on their decision. Qualitative data showed that this factor was a push factor and pull factor in the foreign study decision. Lack of certain modules/programmes in their home country/university pushed international students to study abroad. Destination universities with certain modules/programmes pulled international students to study abroad .

Another similarity was the perceived importance of personal factors such as satisfying language and academic requirements. Personal factors were very important for respondents not only because it decides whether respondents were able enrol in a destination university, but also decided whether respondents could satisfy visa policy requirements.

Quantitative and qualitative data showed that Asian respondents perceived stronger parental involvement than the respondents from other regions. Both questionnaire and interview results showed that Asian respondents' parents made the foreign study and career decision for their children. Interview results showed that Asian respondents followed and obeyed their parents' decision and advice, even though it may not match their desires. Some of the respondents referred to their parents' decision as a command and believed it was a better decision than their own.

Respondents' answers from the questionnaires and interviews indicated that they believed that foreign study could improve their language skills. It was also a factor that influenced respondents' choice of destination country. As most of the respondents had learned English in their home country, choosing an English speaking country meant that they did not need to spend extra time and financial cost to study another foreign language.

79.1% of questionnaire respondents agreed or strongly agreed that foreign study would give them a qualification highly regarded by employers. Interview respondents also revealed that the reason they chose to study abroad was because a foreign qualification would be more valuable in the labour market in their home country.

There were also some differences that arose from the comparison. One related to destination university's advertisements. Questionnaire results indicated that respondents did not perceive significant influence from the advertisements. However, in the interviews, respondents collected information from the advertisements and some of them were influenced by the advertisements. The difference between the responses from questionnaires and interviews may have been because the respondents did not perceive some promotions as advertisements, for example, respondents may regard the destination university's staff visiting as an education fair rather than as a promotional activity.

Another difference was the destination university's attitude to international education. Over half of questionnaire respondents agreed that it had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. However, this factor was not discussed little in the interview. Very few respondents mentioned that they thought that the destination university's academic and administration staff's attitude to them was important. This could be seen as an indicator of destination university's attitude towards international education.

Quantitative data showed that 91.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that one of foreign study's benefits was experience with international students. Interview results indicated a different result. During interviews, few respondents revealed that this factor would benefit them. It was not a popular factor based on the qualitative data.

29.1% of respondents agreed that friends' recommendations had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. However, it was discussed frequently in the interviews. Friends' recommendation had a positive influence on the respondents' choice of destination university/country. The last difference was the perceived influence of

scholarship/grant availability. 34% of questionnaire respondents agreed that it had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. This factor was discussed often in the interviews. Respondents decided which university to study based on scholarship/grant availability. This factor was also very important to their future education plan. Respondents who preferred to pursue further education used this factor to decide which university/universities they would apply to.

The next chapter will provide a conclusion on the literature review, research methodology and quantitative and qualitative data analysis. It will also explain the recommendations for Irish universities and policy makers to increase their intake of international students. At the end of the next chapter, research limitations and the future research agenda will be discussed.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion and Recommendations for Foreign Study Policy and Promotion

This thesis explores the factors that influence international students' foreign study decision. The factors analysed in the research include investment and return on education, push and pull factors, and parental involvement. By using original survey data, this thesis addresses why international students chose to study in Ireland, how the decision was made, what factors influenced the decision-making process, how expected return on education (expected future salary) influenced the decision-making process, and the role of parents in the decision-making process.

7.1. Existing Evidence on Students Study Abroad

In Chapter 2, the thesis discussed the influence of push and pull factors on students' foreign study decision-making process. The factors that influence migration are generally distinguished into demand-pull factors, supply-push factors, and migration choices may also be influenced by network factors. Demand-pull and supply-push factors include economic factors such as employment, wage levels, and social welfare, and non-economic factors such as family reunion, war, and political risk (Binational Study on Migration, 1997; Martin and Widgren, 2002; Nurse, 2004; Quinn and Rubb, 2005; Martin and Zürcher, 2008; Parkins, 2010; Lowell and Findlay, 2002). Push and pull factors that affect migration choices are helpful for understanding international students' foreign study decision-making processes. International students' sole purpose for migration is for education, which makes them a specific group of migrants.

Push factors that influence overseas education decisions include education factors, such as insufficient qualifications and recognition by labour employers, insufficient teaching and research facilities, employment factors such as employment opportunities and wage level, economic factors, and political factors in the origin country (Pan, 2010; Wilkins and Huisman, 2011; Wilkins et al., 2011). Pull factors that influence education are

education advancement, scholarship availability, tuition fees, domestic factors such as climate and lifestyle, geographical location in the destination country, and connections between students' family and their friends and family members in the destination country (Bodycott, 2009; Wilkins and Huisman, 2011; Wilkins et al., 2011).

This research used multiple theories and results to explain education's influences on individuals earning (Mincer, 1974; Stafford and Duncan, 1979; Rosen, 1982; Barron et al., 1989; Brown, 1989; Mincer, 1989, 1991; Rubinstein and Weiss, 2006).

The difference on return of education between origin country and destination country is an important factor in the migration decision (Beggs and Chapman, 1988b; Kossoudji, 1989; Kee, 1995; Bratsberg and Ragan Jr, 2002; Friedberg, 2000; Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). Expected time spent in the destination country also plays an important role in migration choice. Based on the literature, the longer the migrants are willing to stay in the destination county, the stronger their motivation to invest in education is (Dustmann and Glitz, 2011). They also mention a specific type of migration; students where their single motive for immigration is education, their migration plan and future development plan are uncertain, *i.e.* they may choose to return to their origin country after graduation, stay in the current destination country to study or work, or move to another destination country to study or work.

Language, as a complementary skill, impacts on immigrants' education investment and return. It decides whether immigrants can complete their work correctly and effectively and so influences immigrants' return. It also decides whether immigrants' pre-immigration education could be transferred and how much of it could be transferred into destination countries. Ethnic effects also influence immigrants' investment and return on education (Bartel, 1989; Borjas, 1992; Jaeger, 2007; Dustmann et al., 2011; Dustmann and Glitz, 2011), especially ethnic capital which includes peer effects, model effects and ethnic communities' ambitions impact on immigrants and their children's educational achievement.

Parental involvement includes parents' expectations, values on education, and feedback perceived by children (Chow and Chu, 2007). Parents can strongly influence their children's schooling choices, education decisions and outcomes (Gilmour Jr et al., 1978; Yang, 1981; Manski and Wise, 1983; Carpenter and Fleishman, 1987; Stage and Hossler, 1989; Hossler and Stage, 1992; Maqsud and Coleman, 1993; Borjas, 1995; Paulson, 1996; Chow, 2000; Chow and Chu, 2007; Abada et al., 2009). More specifically, parents' education expectations and encouragement positively influences their children's post-secondary educational aspirations (Stage and Hossler, 1989; Gilmour et al, 1978; Carpenter and Fleishman, 1987; Conklin and Dailey, 1981; Ekstrom, 1985; Murphy, 1981; Russell, 1980; Soper, 1971; Tillery, 1973; Murphy, 1981; Sewell and Shah, 1978). Some researchers explore the reasons for lack of parental involvement, they summarise eight characteristics which are important to explain parental involvement (Eccles and Harold, 1993).

Filial Piety (Xiao Qin), as one of the important theories used in the research, is defined as the relationship between parents and children in Asian countries. It also works as an authoritarian moralism that regulates children's behaviour and attitude towards their parents. Furthermore, children regard their parents' needs and wants as part of their target and try to become the type of person that their parents expect them to be (Boey, 1976; Ho, 1987; Yau-Fai Ho, 1994; Chow and Chu, 2007).

The thesis mainly discussed the literature in these three areas, push and pull factors, investment and return on education and parental involvement.

7.2. Research Methods, Survey and Sampling Methods

Survey data included quantitative data and qualitative data. Both types of data were used to test different hypotheses that are relevant to investment and return on education, push and pull factors, and parental involvement. The data was collected through online questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Mixed methods' concurrent triangulation design

was the overarching methodology used for this thesis. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in the same time period. There was no priority given to any of the two types of data during the data collection and analysis stage. The reason concurrent triangulation design was selected was that quantitative and qualitative data have equal importance in explaining and answering the research questions. It was also the most effective use of the limited resources available.

UCC was selected as a sample because it is representative of international students' in the university sector in Ireland. UCC has the third highest number of international students in all the universities in Ireland (HEA, 2014a). UCC also has the highest number of non-EU students in all 7 universities in Ireland. Compared to the percentage of international students in total full-time education in all HEA-funded institutions, UCC's percentage of international students in all full-students is representative of the overall level.

Moreover, choosing UCC as a sample frame allowed the researcher the access and support from UCC offices. It was not possible to access all international students in UCC without UCC offices' help. The questionnaire's link was sent to the International Education Office in UCC first and then to all the international students. This preserved respondent anonymity and encouraged honest responses. The questionnaire reached to 1,600 international students in UCC.

For the interview, the sampling method was convenience sampling and the sample frame was UCC. UCC was selected as the sample frame because of its representativeness of Ireland's university sector, familiarity, ease of reaching respondents, convenient location and minimised expenses. Bringing interview questions sheets, information sheets and consent forms to recruit respondents in the UCC campus allowed for an easy explanation of the research's purpose, and answering the questions before respondent agree to attend interview. Students were more likely to trust and agree to be interviewed by a researcher from the same university. Moreover, arranging interviews on-campus could save respondents' travel time. The UCC campus also has group discussion rooms available for

use. It ensured respondents' privacy was protected and allowed for high-quality recording. As these group discussion rooms and other meeting areas in UCC campus were free and easy to access, it saved time and research expenses.

7.3. Quantitative Data Results Summary

Quantitative data results show that the perceived benefits of foreign study were obtaining a qualification highly-regarded by employers, skills highly regarded by employers, improved language abilities, better education opportunities and experience of studying and living with international students. Moreover, in the factors that international students would consider in the decision-making process, personal factors were the most important category. Over 60% of respondents agreed that satisfying language and academic requirements had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision, especially for international students from Asia, Africa and Oceania. This may be because of visa policy requirements. Satisfying language and academic requirements decide whether they could obtain a visa to study abroad.

Over 50% of respondents agreed that destination university's ranking, major availability and attitude towards international education had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision.

Parents' permission and earnings were also important to international students, especially to students from Asia, Africa and Oceania. Parents' permission's importance may be explained by Filial Piety (Xiao Qin Effect). Asian students were less likely to act against their parents' will. Their permission was more important in the decision-making process compared with students from other regions. Parents' earnings were very important because most of the respondents received financial support from parents and family. Parents' income level decided whether they could afford the cost of studying abroad.

For international students, perceived social safety and lifestyle, environment, tolerance in society and culture had some or a lot of influence in their decision-making process.

Future plan was the second most important category in the foreign study decision-making process. In this category, over 50% of respondents agreed that future education plan had some or a lot of influence on their decision.

Over 50% of respondents obtained information about their destination university from the lecturers of their home universities. The second main source of information was the internet.

59% of respondents expected to earn less than €2,000 a month for their first job after graduation. Over 70% of students from the Americas expected to earn greater than €2,000 a month. The internet and friends were the two main sources of salary information. Living cost was the most important factor that international students would consider in their salary expectations. Over half of students' tuition fees were less than or equal to €13,000 per year, and living costs were less than or equal to €9,000 per year.

Regarding parents' education background, over 60% of respondents' parents had a bachelor's degree or higher (master or PhD). Moreover, respondents' perceived that their parents supported their foreign study decisions and believed that their family would provide financial support. These two sub-questions got a higher percentage of agree and strongly agree than other questions in the category of perceived parental attitude toward foreign study and its benefits to their children.

For the question about perceived influence from father/mother on their foreign study decision, 50.5% of respondents agreed that father had no influence or little influence on their decision. For the same question about their mother, 43.2% of respondents agreed in the same category. Over 60% of respondents from Asia, Africa and Oceania agree that their father/mother had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. 6.4% of them agreed that their father made the decision for them.

51.8% of respondents thought that their father had little or no influence on their expected jobs. None of the respondents from the Americas or the EU agreed that their father or mother made the career decision for them. However, 6.4% of respondents from Asia, Africa and Oceania agreed that their father made the decision for them and 2.1% of them agreed that their mothers made the decision.

39.4% of respondents had contact with foreign study agency themselves, and 36.1% did not use a foreign study agency. Respondents from the EU and Americas were less inclined to use a foreign study consultancy agency, compared to respondents from Asia, Africa and Oceania. Respondents from Asia, Africa and Oceania reported the highest percentage of parental contact with an agency (father, mother or both of parents).

7.4. Qualitative Data Results Summary

Interviews not only sought to answer which factors influenced interviewees' foreign study decision-making process, but also attempted to answer about why some factors influenced some interviewees but not others, and how the factors influenced their final decision.

According to interviews' results, East Asian students had stronger parental involvement in foreign study decisions, career and future plan and they followed parents' advice, recommendations and decisions. This showed the influence of Filial Piety (Xiao Qin Effect). Parental involvement across interviewees from different regions varied in the level of some indicators, like foreign study support, from making the decision for interviewee to driving the interviewee to the airport.

Destination university's advertisements played a role in the foreign study decision. The advertisements may not only be the advertisements on television or in brochures, but also visits and presentations by destination university lecturers, and videos on a YouTube channel.

Another factor was recommendations from friends who had studied in destination country/university. They had a similar cultural background with interviewees, their information and experience were more trustworthy and they would be able to answer specific questions for interviewees.

Moreover, interviewees' strategic thinking was shown in their answers. Interviewees preferred higher ranking universities but they did not make their decision solely based on ranking. Once they were satisfied with the destination university's ranking, they would begin to search for other factors, such as facilities, and research interests. Some chose to study abroad to avoid intense competition for places in certain programmes in their home country. Avoiding competition was also shown to influence their choice of destination country. One of the interviewees chose a less popular destination country to avoid competition for destination universities and the competition in employment with students from the same country.

Even though scholarship/funding availability was not an important factor in the questionnaire results, it was discussed frequently in the interviews. Interviewees went to the destination country/university as they had scholarship/funding. Interviewees also considered this factor when they made their future education plan.

Saving time and financial costs was also important to interviewees. For some, Ireland or UCC was chosen over their home country had programmes of short duration. It would save interviewees time and allow them to begin to work earlier. It also meant reduced tuition fees and living costs.

Foreign study agencies played a messenger role between destination university and interviewees in the foreign study decision. Some of the agencies would even make the decision for interviewees on destination country.

There were two main factors that were discussed in qualitative data analysis, push and pull factors, and parental involvement factors. Interviewees discussed some push factors that they perceived as influences during the decision-making process. The three most mentioned push factors during the interviews (from most frequent mentioned to third most frequent mentioned) were limited availability of desired courses/programmes in their home country, courses/programmes duration and competition avoidance. In the quantitative data analysis, among destination university factors and among all five categories of factors, major availability also received the highest percentage of respondents agreeing that it had some or a lot of influence on their decision-making process. Comparing both qualitative results and quantitative results, it showed that courses/programmes availability played an important role in the decision-making process.

In the section of pull factors, there were five categories of pull factors discussed (from most frequent discussed to the least frequent discussed), destination university, destination country, family and peers, self-development, agencies and other pull factors. With regard to destination university factors, interviewees were more concerned about whether the destination university was recognised internationally and was recognised by authorities in their home country. Moreover, destination university's ranking and qualification's value were also very important to the interviewees. Compared to the quantitative data analysis, destination university's ranking received over half of respondents agreeing that it had some or a lot of influence on their decision. Additionally, course/programme availability was discussed as pull factor of destination university. Some other pull factors, such as co-operation between home university/home country's government and destination university, destination university's academic and language requirements, advertisements, staff and facilities also influenced interviewees' foreign-study decision.

Destination country's culture, natural environment, cost of living, general level of tuition fees, language, friendliness, safety and visa policy were the main factors that were discussed in the interviews. Interviewees preferred to choose a destination country with

relatively lower living costs and tuition fees. Moreover, they preferred a destination country to be an English-speaking country. Some of interviewees have learned English in their home country. If choosing a destination country which does not speak in English, it would incur additional time and financial costs for them to learn a new foreign language.

Interviewees' decisions were also influenced by family and peers' recommendations. However, in the quantitative data analysis section, both parents' and friends' recommendations hade less than half of respondents agreeing that they had some or a lot of influence on their foreign study decision. Interviewees also mentioned that their desire to develop themselves through foreign study experience as important to their decision-making process. Moreover, an agency's recommendations on destination country, scholarship/fund availability, academic year starting time, and home country's norms related to foreign study also influenced interviewees' foreign study decision. A few of interviewees mentioned that they made the decision when the destination university's offer arrived.

The thesis discussed parental involvement from their involvement in foreign study decision, career decision, and future plan. The answers indicated a difference between East Asian interviewees and other regions. There were three East Asian interviewees who said that their foreign study decision was made by their parents. Two East Asian interviewees' career decisions were made by their parents. Three East Asian interviewees' future plans followed their parents' will or considered their parents' future life, for example, bringing their parents to live with them in the destination country. However, no other regions' interviewees mentioned that any of these three decisions were made by their parents. This proved Filial Piety's (Xiao Qin Effect) influence on the East Asian students, as Filial Piety (Xiao Qin Effect) is a common moral institution in East Asia. Under Filial Piety (Xiao Qin Effect), children would listen to parents' recommendations and advice, follow their will, and strive for high educational achievement to make them proud. The interview results have displayed the influence of Filial Piety (Xiao Qin Effect) on East Asian students.

Other parental involvement includes parents' recommendations on the destination university or destination country, providing financial and non-financial support and concern about their child's life and safety in the destination country.

Some factors were also discussed in the qualitative data analysis. First was foreign study requirements. It includes academic, language, financial and other requirements. Interviewees were required to satisfy academic and language requirements to be accepted by the destination university. Moreover, they also needed to have enough money to cover the tuition fees and living cost. Some of the courses/major/programmes required interviewees to attend interviews as part of the application process.

Interviewees' perceptions on future plans could be categorised into future education plan, future career plan and no future plan. Some interviewees explained the reason they may change country for their future education were for novel experiences, scholarship/fund availability, and course/major/research topic availability. The factors which influenced interviewees' choices of destination countries were employment opportunities, technological development, environment and personal interests.

Some interviewees, as part of the conditions of their scholarship/fund, must return to their home country to work for an appointed organisation for a certain time before they can undertake further education or look for other jobs. Family influence, and geographical distance between home country and career destination country were also reasons that some interviewees chose to return home after graduation. One interviewee explained the reason that they chose to return to their home country was because of English language difficulties which would influence their career development in the destination country.

Salary, self-development, personal interests in a certain area, and working environment were most frequently discussed factors that influenced interviewees' career decisions. Factors such as future company's reputation and growth, promotion opportunities and

welfare, working team, working hours, career destination country's living cost and the length of contract were also important to their career decisions.

18 respondents searched for information on the destination university/country on the internet. Students who had studied in the destination university/country before, family members, and UCC's staff visiting interviewees' home universities were another three of the most frequently discussed source of information of destination university/country. Interviewees also received information from agencies, summer camps, home university's lecturers, newspapers and the Irish embassy in their home country.

Interviewees also discussed the factors that were important to their life in Cork and Ireland, which were accommodation, food, transportation and local people's friendliness. Accommodation was one of the factors that international students worried about the most as the time difference between home country and Ireland, length of renting and gap time between academic year and graduation made their accommodation search process more difficult than local students. The factors that influenced their study in UCC were the library, facilities, lecturers, language barriers and classmates and friends' help. The library and other teaching and learning facilities were the two most important factors to interviewees. Some of interviewees mentioned that even though they learned English in their home country, it was still difficult for them to fully understand their lecturer. The help from lecturers, classmates and friends were very important for their study.

7.5. Thesis Contributions

This thesis has six contributions. Firstly, this is the first study that measures the factors that influence international students' decision to study in Ireland. Secondly, this research uses concurrent triangulation design to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data. There is no priority given to either quantitative or qualitative data. This is the first research using concurrent triangulation design to collect and analyse data to test the theory of push and pull factors, investment and return on education decisions and earnings expectation.

Another contribution is that this thesis is unique in that it does not only focus on one country or one continent. It covers all international students studying in UCC, which covers Asia, the Americas, the EU, Africa and Oceania. It had a wider range of information and data to analyse and examine international students' decision-making process. Additionally, the thesis could compare different factors' role in the international students' decision-making process with different students' characteristics, such as gender, region, degree status, year of study and college.

It also focused on international students and their parents' perception of future earnings. Previous studies mainly focussed on the relationship between education level and actual earnings. This thesis explored perceived future earnings' impact on the foreign study decision.

Fifth, this thesis explored the relationship between investment in education (foreign study) and earnings expectation on international students' decision of study abroad. Lastly, this thesis also recommends strategies to universities and policy makers. It provides advice and recommendations on future promotions, international education market expansion and service improvement.

7.6. Limitation of Thesis

A key limitation of this thesis, though it applies generally for all qualitative analyses, is the difficulty in generalising from the context-specific results. The findings apply to the UCC experience, and it may be the case that different results could be found in other destination countries and/or Irish universities. This does not diminish the value of the analyses and recommendations for University College Cork, but means other institutions must be cautious in applying the results to their own situations. Further cross-university and cross-country qualitative research would be worthwhile.

Representativeness is an important aspect that presents potential limitations for this research. Respondents' parents' education background was higher than their home

country's average level. Moreover, in both quantitative and qualitative data analysis, as recruitment was through convenience sampling, the distribution of respondents' nationality, major, degree status and education level may not represent UCC international students' actual distribution. The thesis can only generalise from Cork and Ireland to foreign study with caution.

Moreover, as mentioned previously, it is difficult to test respondents' salary expectations in interviews. If respondents are given salary ranges as an anchor, it could be construed as a leading question. Also respondents may be under pressure not to answer their real salary expectation. This is another limitation of qualitative data analysis as it does not test respondents' expected return on education; this was only tested in the quantitative data section. Therefore no comparison between quantitative data and qualitative data results were possible.

Another limitation was access to international students' parents. This thesis only tested perceptions on parental involvement from international students. It did not test the perceptions from parents. The thesis could not compare students' perceived parental involvement and their parents' perception on the roles they played in the decision making process. Also in this limitation, the thesis could not discuss parental involvement from the parents' angle. Moreover, based on the interviews' results, some interviewees said their parents made the foreign study decision for them, but with no access to their parents' results the factors influencing parents, the real decision makers' decision-making process, cannot be examined.

The thesis only tested international students' expected salary ex-ante, before they got a job. As there was no access available to the international students who had graduated, there is no follow-up survey to test how much they earned in their first job after graduation. This meant it was not possible to test whether their foreign study experience and foreign qualification brought them benefits and competitive advantage in employment competition, salary scale and promotion.

This thesis did not survey international students' *ex-ante* their foreign study decision, but only tested after the decision was made. As a result, the thesis cannot compare *ex-ante* and *ex-post* the decision was made, what factors' influence scales had changed, what new factors were considered in the decision-making process.

Another limitation of this thesis is that it did not explore the supply side of international education, the destination universities' side. For this limitation, it was difficult to find what activities the destination universities had completed, and what they were planning to do. It would also be difficult to compare the destination universities' activities and international students perception on these activities to make an evaluation.

7.7. Foreign Study Policy and Promotion Recommendations

7.7.1. Recommendations to Destination Universities

Based on the research results discussed in the previous sections, in order to promote UCC's brand name, social media is a good means. Facebook and YouTube channels have shown good results. Moreover, word of mouth is very important, however, it is a variable that cannot be controlled. From the previous section, it is easy to see that the information provided by students who have studied/graduated from UCC is important to respondents' decision. In future promotions, bringing in the students that have foreign study experience could be more helpful, as they are in the same or similar age group with the international students. Students with similar cultures and backgrounds could make conversation easier and focuses on the points that students would be interested in.

Quantitative data analysis indicated that the effectiveness of destination university's advertising seems low. It could be because the current form of advertising is not appropriate. Qualitative data showed that some forms of advertising worked before and during the foreign study decision was made. It works more effectively on the students who had already decided to study abroad, rather than the students who had not decided. A

destination university could use targeted advertising at those who have already decided to study abroad.

Destination university's advertising may not be effective because of the difference in what university and students consider advertising to be. Home university's lecturers' recommendations, destination university's lecturers' presentations and social media promotions, such as YouTube videos could be various methods of advertising, however, from a student's perspective, these may not be advertisements.

The attitude of UCC staff during presentations shows UCC's attitude towards international students. Based on respondents' answers, past presentations had produced good outcomes. Moreover, one of the respondents mentioned that in their university, the students who attended the presentation, had already decided to study aboard. This hints at that some universities could invite students who would like to study abroad. In this type of situation, the presentation could more focus on the destination university, such as attractiveness, and facilities. Moreover, information about visa application, academic and language requirements would be essential to mention in the presentations.

A few respondents mentioned that they had problems understanding the presentations, but they still brought the brochures back to show their parents. This provides another recommendation; providing brochures or booklets in English and local language, coupled with pictures. Parents may not attend the presentation, however, as mentioned before, they may be the people who ultimately make the decision. They would prefer to read the information themselves. Information in the local language and pictures would make it easier for the parents.

Based on quantitative data analysis, higher proportions of students from *the Americas* agreed that friends' recommendations had at least some influence on their decision-making process. Moreover, friends' recommendation was important to higher proportion of CMH and CSEFS students. Universities could consider collaborating with their alumni

network and seek to approach peers for students from the Americas' interested in CMH and CSEFS courses. Social network, internet chat groups and other channels would also be useful.

Moreover, according to respondents' answers on the perceived influence of parents' earnings, the target market in *Asia, Africa and Oceania* should be more affluent areas and emerging economic areas as foreign study would be more financial feasible.

Developing a house/apartment booking system that would be suitable for international students is another recommendation. Due to time zone differences and visa progress, international students may need more time to get connected with landlords to book accommodation. If a network could be provided that is suitable for international students, it would save their time and energy on searching for houses before they arrive. Accommodation problems are not only a crucial problem for international students, but for local students, it is a difficulty too. It may take time to develop the network, but once it is developed, it would benefit the international students in the long run.

Additionally, respondents talked about difficulties that they faced during their study in UCC, such as have language comprehension, and needing time to get use to a different education system. Classes are not always on campus so students may miss the beginning of lectures because of travelling.

7.7.2. Recommendations to the Irish Education Authority

According to the interviews results, agencies' role is important in the decision-making process. Some agencies only promote universities in Ireland, and some agencies would make the decision on destination country for the students. It would be worthwhile to build up foreign study agencies networks to promote Irish universities and colleges. These agencies could promote Irish universities and specific major/programmes.

Qualification recognition is also important. Interviewees discussed that it is important to them whether their qualification would be recognised by their home country's education authority. It would be helpful to promote Irish education by getting more countries' recognition of Irish universities and colleges' qualification.

Moreover, interviewees were attracted by Ireland's low tuition fees and living cost compared with the UK. This would be an advantage that should be emphasised in promotions. As Ireland and UK are the only two English-speaking countries in Europe, and based on the interviews' information, students tended to choose English-speaking countries as it saves them the time, financial cost and effort of learning another foreign language. It is important to highlight the advantages to attract international students. The advantage of the Euro currency's exchange rate over the Sterling was discussed in the interviews, however, as exchange rates fluctuate, this factor may be helpful depending on the foreign exchange rate at the time.

7.7.3. Recommendations to International Students and their Parents

Based on the answers from interviews, some factors were important to international students' study and life in Ireland. However, in the decision-making process as these factors were not perceived as relevant to the choice of destination country/university, international students and parents may overlook these factors. Examples are language, food, accommodation and transportation. To the students who would like to study abroad in the future, language would be important to them as they must use it in study and living. It would be advantageous to learn academic language and jargon before arriving in destination countries. Language abilities such as speaking, listening, reading and writing should be practiced rather than focusing on one or two aspects as in future foreign study life, all of these abilities will be essential to them to complete their degree.

As students come from different backgrounds, it would be helpful to speak with destination universities' international education office and friends/peers who have studied

in the destination country/university before to find where the home country's food can be purchased and how to navigate the city by public transportation.

Moreover, as accommodation reservation generally is first come, first serve, it would be good to book the accommodation as soon as possible. Contacting destination universities' international education office, and searching local accommodation websites would be helpful.

Parents will always be concerned about their children's safety. It would be useful for them to get destination universities' international education office contact details, and home country in Ireland's embassy emergency contact details for emergency situations. Moreover, international students should understand parents' concerns, get these contact details for emergency use, and provide an emergency contact person in the destination city to the destination university and their parents.

7.8. Future Research Agenda

Future research will expand the target destination universities to get access to a larger number of international students inside and outside of Ireland to explore the factors that influence international students' decision to study abroad and explore the differences and similarities between international students in different destination countries. It would also increase the representativeness of data and analysis results.

Future research will also further explore how the foreign study decision is made. It will compare the factors' influence in different stages of the decision-making process, explore the difference on their influences and seek what factors are removed from or added into the decision-making process in different stages and why.

Moreover, the research will look from the parents' perspective to examine parental involvement. Future research will survey parents to see how they perceive their role in the decision-making process and how they perceive their child's understanding on their

decision, advice and recommendations. Comparing parents' perception of their involvement to international students' perception of parental involvement would help to explore how parents' involvement actually influences the decision-making process. Additionally, future research will also involve interviewing the parents of international students to explore the factors that they think are important in the foreign study decision. As interviews' results and questionnaire results showed that some of the parents made the foreign study decision for their children, it would be valuable to know what factors influence their decision-making process.

Future research will also involve surveying international students who have graduated. Comparing international students' expected salary of their first job after graduation to actual earnings would be useful to examine the factor of investment and return on education. Moreover, interviews with international graduates will explore whether their foreign study experience and foreign qualification brought them benefits and competitive advantages on employment competition, their position and salary in their career, and if so how the experience and qualification made a difference.

The future research will also feature surveys of the supply side, destination universities. Research will describe how destination universities promote themselves and how they evaluate these activities. Moreover, comparing the activities that destination universities have influenced international students' perception of them and evaluation of the effect of these activities' roles in the decision-making process would also be useful to test the effectives of destination universities' promotion activities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

Survey of International Students' Decision to Study in UCC

Questionnaire (International Students Study in UCC)

Survey used for PhD (Economics)

Questionnaire Design: Wei Xiong

Supervisors: Dr. Declan Jordan

Survey of International Students' Decision to Study in UCC

Date: 2nd April 2015

School of Economics,
University College Cork,
Cork,
Ireland

Dear respondent,

We are Wei Xiong (PhD in Economics) and Dr. Declan Jordan (PhD supervisor) from the School of Economics, University College Cork, Ireland.

This questionnaire aims to analyse the factors influencing international students' decisions about foreign study. Its purpose also includes examining parental influence on students' foreign study decision-making process.

This questionnaire is anonymous. All information gathered will be used by our research only and no individual response will go to a third party.

We would appreciate your help on this research by completing the following questionnaire. All responses are treated with the strictest confidence.

It is estimated that this questionnaire will take you 5 to 10 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us: Wei Xiong: wxiongucc@gmail.com or Dr. Declan Jordan: d.jordan@ucc.ie. Thank you for your cooperation!

Yours sincerely,





Wei Xiong

Declan Jordan

Instructions:

This questionnaire is related to your foreign study decision-making process. The questionnaire is divided into two parts. Section 1 contains general questions about you and section 2 contains questions about your foreign study decision-making process.

This questionnaire is anonymous. All responses will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Please answer each question. If you require clarification related to any question, please contact Wei Xiong at wxiongucc@gmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Section 1: General Information

1. What gender are you?
    a) Female
    b) Male
2. Which country do you come from?

a) China
b) U.S.A.
c) Ethiopia
d) Mexico
e) Other (Please Specify) _____

3. In UCC, are you
    a) Studying for a degree (for undergraduate or postgraduate degree)
    b) A visiting student (i.e. for 1 academic year or 1 semester)
4. What is your current educational level?
    (a) First Year
    (b) Mid-Degree (not first or final) Year
    (c) Final Year
    (d) Postgraduate
    (e) PhD
5. Please specify your current major and degree title.

_____

6. What is your father's occupation?

_____

7. What is your mother's occupation?

_____

8. What is your father's highest level of education?(please tick one):
    (a) Primary School
    (b) High School
    (c) Bachelors Degree
    (d) Masters Degree
    (e) PhD Degree
    (f) Not applicable
9. What is your mother's highest level of education? (please tick one):
    a) Primary School
    b) High School
    c) Bachelors Degree
    d) Masters Degree
    e) PhD Degree
    f) Not applicable

Section 2: Foreign study decision making process

10. Please tick the appropriate box to indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.
    (These questions are intended to understand parental influence on decisions to study abroad)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
My father believes the benefits of foreign study for my career outweigh the costs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes the benefits of foreign study for my future education outweigh the costs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes I should study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father will support me if I study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My father believes my family will support me financially.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

My mother believes the benefits of foreign study for my career outweigh the cost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes the benefits of foreign study for my future education outweigh the costs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes I should study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother will support me if I study abroad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mother believes my family will support me financially.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. Please indicate which member(s) of your family that had contact with foreign study consultant agencies. (Please tick one):
    a. Self
    b. Father
    c. Mother
    d. Both of parents
    e. Both parents and you
    f. Didn't use a foreign study constancy agency.
    g. Other (Please Specify) _____

12. To what extent did your father influence your decision on foreign study?
(1: no influence, 2: little influence, 3: some influence, 4: influence a lot, 5: my father made the decision, 6: not applicable) Please tick one.

1 2 3 4 5 6

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

13. To what extent did your mother influence your decision on foreign study?
(1: no influence, 2: little influence, 3: some influence, 4: influence a lot, 5: my mother made the decision, 6: not applicable) Please tick one.

1 2 3 4 5 6

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

14. What is your expected occupation after graduation?

_____

15. To what extent does your father influence your expectation of occupation?
(1: no influence, 2: little influence, 3: some influence, 4: influence a lot, 5: my father made the decision, 6: not applicable) Please tick one.

1 2 3 4 5 6

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

16. To what extent does your mother influence your expectation of occupation? (1: no influence, 2: little influence, 3: some influence, 4: influence a lot, 5: my mother made the decision, 6: not applicable) Please tick one.

1	2	3	4	5	6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. How much do you expect to earn in monthly salary in your first job after graduation?
    a. Under €1,500
    b. €1,501 - €2,000
    c. €2,001 - €3,000
    d. €3,001 - €4,000
    e. Above €4,000
18. Have you done any research on earnings expectations?
    a) Yes
    b) No (please skip to question 19)

19. If you choose Yes for Question 17, where did you get information about salary expectations? (Please tick all that apply)
    a) From related webpage
    b) From television/radio
    c) From job vacancy fair
    d) From employers
    e) From parents
    f) From friends
    g) Other (Please Specify) _____

20. Which of the following is the most important influencing your salary expectations? (You can choose multiple options if it is necessary).
    a) Perception of cost of living
    b) Experience of friends who have gone to work
    c) Parents' views on a reasonable salary level
    d) Research you have done on salary level in your expected occupation
    e) Other (Please Specify) _____

21. Please indicate the extent to which you agree that each of the following is a benefit from studying abroad?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Qualification which will be highly regarded by employers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Skills which will be highly regarded by employers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Improved language skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Access to better further education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. More further education opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. More job opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7.	Better job opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Experience of living, studying and working with international students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. Please indicate the extent to which the following factors influenced your decision to study abroad at UCC.

A. Personal factors

		No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	Satisfying language requirements	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Satisfying academic grade requirements	☐	☐	☐	☐

B. University in destination country (Ireland)

		No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	University advertisement	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Ranking of destination university	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Access to scholarship/grant in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐

4	Access to major/subject for selection	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Presence of universities' societies and clubs	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Tuition fees of university in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Destination university's attitude of international education	☐	☐	☐	☐

C. Parents/Peer

		No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	Parents' recommendations	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Parents' permission	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Parents' link in destination country (which includes parents' relations and acquaintance in the destination country, such as family members, friends, colleagues, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Friends' link in destination country (has friends in the destination country)	☐	☐	☐	☐

5	Friends' recommendations	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Parents' earnings	☐	☐	☐	☐

D. General conditions in destination country (Ireland)

		No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	Climate of destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Perceived lifestyle in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Perceived crime rate in the destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Perceived social safety of destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Perceived racial discrimination in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Environment of destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Tolerance in society in the destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Social life in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	Geographical distance between home country and destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Culture in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐

11	Presence of local communities of your nationality in the destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐

E. Future careers and education plans

		No Influence at all	Little Influence	Some Influence	Influence very much
1	Available job opportunities in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Opportunities for further study in destination country	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Immigration prospects in the destination country after graduation	☐	☐	☐	☐

23. Please rank the importance of each heading above on your decision to study abroad, where 1 is the most important, 5 is the least important.

	Ranking
Personal factors	
University in destination country	
Parents/Peers	
Surrounding conditions of destination country	
Future Career and education plans	

24. How did you hear about your Irish university? (Please choose as many as apply.)

a) From lecturers/staff in your home university/school
b) From lecturers/staff visiting your home university/school
c) From parents
d) From friends
e) From foreign study consultant agency
f) From internet
g) Other (Please Specify) _____

25. Do you have financial support in the form of scholarship/grant from host university, home university or public agency?

a) Yes
b) No

26. Has your expected occupation changed since you came to Ireland?

a) Yes
b) No

27. How much is your current annual tuition fees in Ireland?

e) Under €12,000
f) €12,001 - €13,000
g) €13,001 - €14,000
h) Above €14,000

28. Approximately how much are your annual living costs in Ireland (excluding tuition fees)?

a) Under €8,000
b) €8,001 - €9,000
c) €9,001 - €10,000
d) €10,001 - €11,000
e) €11,001 - €12,000
f) Above €12,000

Thank you for completing this survey.

Your help is greatly appreciated!

Appendix 2 Interview Questions

INFORMATION SHEET



Purpose of the Study.

As part of the requirements for PhD study at UCC, I have to carry out a research study. The study is concerned with the factors that influence the decision of International students to study abroad.

What will the study involve?

The study will involve exploring the factors that influencing foreign students' foreign study decision-making process. The research uses questionnaires and interviews to collect information.

Why have you been asked to take part?

You have been asked because you are a Non-EU student who is currently enrolled in third-level education (university/college).

Do you have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary. Your information will be anonymous and you have the option of withdrawing before the study starts and discontinuing it even after data collection has begun. Moreover, you are also allowed to ask to withdraw and destroy your data within two weeks of participation.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?

Your information will be anonymous. I will ensure that no clues to your identity appear in the research and thesis.

What will happen to the information that you give?

Your information will be kept confidential for the duration of the research, only available to me and my supervisors. The information will be securely stored. The data will be kept for up to 7 years after the research is completed and then it will be destroyed.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be presented in the research thesis. The results, but not necessarily the interview transcript, will be seen my supervisors, a second marker and the external examiner. The results may be published in a research journal and/or presented in academic conferences.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

I do not envisage any negative consequences for you in taking part.

What if there is a problem?

At any stage you may withdraw from the study.

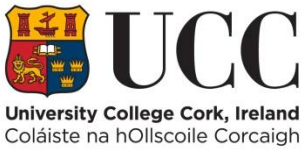
Who has reviewed this study? My supervisor, Dr. Declan Jordan, has given approval for this study.

Any further queries? If you need any further information, you can contact me:

Wei Xiong, 0879422833, wxiongucc@gmail.com.

If you agree to take part in the study, please sign the consent form overleaf.

CONSENT FORM



I……agree to participate in Wei Xiong's research study.

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

I am participating voluntarily.

I give permission for my interview with Wei Xiong to be audio-recorded.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

I understand that anonymity will be ensured.

I understand that anonymous extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications

Signed: ……. Date: ……..

PRINT NAME: …….

Appendix 3 Respondents' Nationality

This table provides a breakdown of questionnaire respondents' nationality distribution.

Respondents' Nationality Distribution		
	Number of Respondents	**Percentage**
Asia, Africa and Oceania	**104**	**48.1%**
China	79	76%
India	8	8%
Nigeria	1	1%
Zambia	1	1%
Uganda	1	1%
Vietnam	1	1%
South Africa	1	1%
Bahrain	1	1%
Japan	1	1%
Pakistan	1	1%
Malaysia	3	3%
Singapore	2	2%
Philippines	1	1%
Brunei	2	2%
New Zealand	1	1%
Americas	**52**	**24.1%**
United States of America	43	83%
Canada	4	10%
Honduras	1	2%
Brazil	3	6%
EU	**58**	**26.9%**
Spain	10	20%
France	25	43%
Germany	12	21%
Italy	6	10%
The Netherlands	3	5%
Czech Republic	1	2%
Belgium	1	2%

Appendix 4 Foreign Study's Benefits

Appendix 4 shows the bivariate analysis results of perceptions of perceived benefits of foreign study.

Table 4.1 displays the bivariate analysis between respondents' perception of foreign study brings skills that highly regarded by employers across their year of study. Both tables show that the result is statistically significant.

Table 4.1 Skills that are Highly Regarded by Employers by respondents' year of study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduate	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	0 0%	9 10.8%	3 4.3%	2 5.7%	14 6.9%
No Opinion	0 0%	13 15.7%	13 18.8%	2 5.7%	28 13.7%
Agree, Strongly Agree	17 100%	61 73.5%	53 76.8%	31 88.6%	162 79.4%
Chi Square value = 11.000, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.088					

Table 4.2a to 4.2d display the bivariate analysis results between improved language skills across respondents' gender, region, year of study and college. Results show that there are significant differences in perception across these four characteristics.

Table 4.2a Improved Language Skills Across Respondents' Gender (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Female	Male	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	7 4.7%	8 14.3%	15 7.3%
No Opinion	16 10.7%	6 10.7%	22 10.7%
Agree, Strongly Agree	126 84.6%	42 75.0%	168 82.0%
Chi Square value = 5.568, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.062			

Table 4.2b Improved Language Skills Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	EU	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	4 4.3%	11 21.2%	0 0%	15 7.4%
No Opinion	5 5.3%	17 32.7%	0 0%	22 10.8%
Agree, Strongly Agree	85 90.4%	24 46.2%	57 100%	166 81.8%
Chi Square value = 61.775, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.000				

Table 4.2c Improved Language Skills Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	2 11.8%	6 7.3%	3 4.3%	4 11.4%	15 7.4%
No Opinion	7 41.2%	9 11.0%	3 4.3%	3 8.6%	22 10.8%
Agree, Strongly Agree	8 47.1%	67 81.7%	64 91.4%	28 80.0%	167 81.9%
Chi Square value = 22.913, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.001					

Table 4.2d Improved Language Skills Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	6 11.3%	3 3.5%	3 16.7%	2 5.9%	14 7.4%
No Opinion	5 9.4%	7 8.2%	5 27.8%	5 14.7%	22 11.6%
Agree, Strongly Agree	42 79.2%	75 88.2%	10 55.6%	27 79.4%	154 81.1%
Chi Square value = 12.453, degree of freedom = 6, p value =0.053					

Table 4.3a and 4.3b show the results of bivariate analysis between respondents' perception to access to better education opportunities across respondents' region and degree status. Analysis results indicate significant differences across region and degree status.

Table 4.3a Access to Better Education Opportunities Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	3 3.2%	4 7.7%	9 16.1%	16 7.9%
No Opinion	6 6.3%	13 25%	14 25%	33 16.3%
Agree, Strongly Agree	86 90.5%	35 67.3%	33 58.9%	154 75.9%
Chi Square value = 23.622, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.000				

Table 4.3b Access to Better Education Opportunities Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study for Degree	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	15 15.5%	1 1.3%	16 9.1%
No Opinion	22 22.7%	11 14.1%	33 18.9%
Agree, Strongly Agree	60 61.9%	66 84.6%	126 72.0%
Chi Square value = 14.308, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.001			

The following three tables show the results of bivariate analysis between respondents' perception to access to more education opportunities across respondents' region, degree status, and college. Analysis results indicate significant differences across all three characteristics.

Table 4.4a Access to More Education Opportunities Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	3 3.2%	5 9.6%	10 17.5%	18 8.8%
No Opinion	7 7.4%	6 11.5%	12 21.1%	25 12.3%
Agree, Strongly Agree	85 89.5%	41 78.8%	35 61.4%	161 78.9%
Chi Square value = 17.435, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.002				

Table 4.4b Access to More Education Opportunities Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Visiting Student	Study for Degree	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	16 16.3%	2 2.6%	18 10.2%
No Opinion	14 14.3%	7 9.0%	21 11.9%
Agree, Strongly Agree	68 69.4%	69 88.5%	137 77.8%
Chi Square value = 11.100, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.004			

Table 4.4c Access to More Education Opportunities Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	9 17.0%	3 3.5%	2 11.1%	3 8.8%	17 8.9%
No Opinion	8 15.1%	6 7.0%	3 16.7%	4 11.8%	21 11.0%
Agree, Strongly Agree	36 67.9%	77 89.5%	13 72.2%	27 79.4%	153 80.1%
Chi Square value = 11.513, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.074					

Table 4.5 shows that there is significant difference between respondents' perception of access to more job opportunities and degree status.

Table 4.5 Access to More Job Opportunities Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study for Degree	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	13 13.3%	3 3.8%	16 9.1%
No Opinion	18 18.4%	11 14.1%	29 16.5%
Agree, Strongly Agree	67 68.4%	64 82.1%	131 74.4%
Chi Square value = 5.811, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.055			

Bivariate analysis indicated that there is significant difference between respondents' perception on experience with international students and their region and degree status.

Table 4.6a Experience with International Students Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	4 4.2%	1 2.0%	1 1.8%	6 3.0%
No Opinion	10 10.5%	0 0.0%	2 3.5%	12 5.9%
Agree, Strongly Agree	81 85.3%	50 98.0%	54 94.7%	185 91.1%
Chi Square value = 8.657, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.070				

Table 4.6b Experience with International Students Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	0 0.0%	5 6.1%	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	6 2.9%
No Opinion	1 5.9%	2 2.4%	9 12.9%	0 0.0%	12 5.9%
Agree, Strongly Agree	16 94.1%	75 91.5%	61 87.1%	34 97.1%	186 91.2%
Chi Square value = 15.116, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.019					

Bivariate analysis indicated there is no significant difference between respondents' perception on qualification that highly regarded by employers and access to better job opportunities across their characteristics (gender, region, degree status, year of study and college).

However, from the description of data shows here, 79.1% of respondents agree or strongly agree that one of foreign study's benefits is qualification that highly regarded by employers. 73.9% of respondents agree or strongly agree that foreign study would help them get access to better job opportunities.

Table 4.7 Highly Regarded Qualification	
	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	6.8
No Opinion	14.1
Agree, Strongly Agree	79.1
Total	100.0

Table 4.8 Access to Better Job Opportunities	
	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	7.7
No Opinion	18.4
Agree, Strongly Agree	73.9
Total	100.0

Appendix 5 Personal Factors

Bivariate analysis indicated that there are significant differences between respondents' perception on satisfying language requirements across their region, year of study and college.

Table 5.1a Stratifying Language Requirements Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	15 15.8%	39 75.0%	4 7.0%	58 28.4%
Little Influence	12 12.6%	2 3.8%	3 5.3%	17 8.3%
Some Influence	38 40.0%	3 5.8%	24 42.1%	65 31.9%
Influence a lot	30 31.6%	8 15.4%	26 45.6%	64 31.4%
Chi Square value = 81.090, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 5.1b Stratifying Language Requirements Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
No Influence	10 58.8%	22 26.5%	12 17.1%	14 40.0%	58 28.3%
Little Influence	2 11.8%	7 8.4%	4 5.7%	4 11.4%	17 8.3%
Some Influence	2 11.8%	26 31.3%	30 42.9%	9 25.7%	67 32.7%
Influence a lot	3 17.6%	28 33.7%	24 34.3%	8 22.9%	63 30.7%
Chi Square value = 18.936, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.026					

Table 5.1c Stratifying Language Requirements Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	23 43.4%	16 18.6%	9 50.0%	9 26.5%	57 29.8%
Little Influence	4 7.5%	7 8.1%	2 11.1%	1 2.9%	14 7.3%
Some Influence	13 24.5%	35 40.7%	4 22.2%	10 29.4%	62 32.5%
Influence a lot	13 24.5%	28 32.6%	3 16.7%	14 41.2%	58 30.4%
Chi Square value = 17.462, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.042					

Bivariate analysis indicated that there are significant differences between respondents' perception on satisfying language requirements across region, degree status and college.

Table 5.2a Stratifying Academic Requirements Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	4 4.2%	14 26.9%	10 17.5%	28 13.7%
Little Influence	15 15.6%	12 23.1%	14 24.6%	41 20.0%
Some Influence	46 47.9%	12 23.1%	21 36.8%	79 38.5%
Influence a lot	31 32.3%	14 26.9%	12 21.1%	57 27.8%
Chi Square value = 22.522, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.001				

Table 5.2b Stratifying Academic Requirements Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	19 19.4%	8 10.1%	27 15.3%
Little Influence	26 26.5%	13 16.5%	39 22.0%
Some Influence	31 31.6%	30 38.0%	61 34.5%
Influence a lot	22 22.4%	28 35.4%	50 28.2%
Chi Square value = 7.599, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.055			

Table 5.2c Stratifying Academic Requirements Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	16 30.2%	8 9.2%	1 5.6%	3 8.8%	28 14.6%
Little Influence	10 18.9%	16 18.4%	1 5.6%	9 26.5%	36 18.8%
Some Influence	15 28.3%	38 43.7%	8 44.4%	12 35.3%	73 38.0%
Influence a lot	12 22.6%	25 28.7%	8 44.4%	10 29.4%	55 28.6%
Chi Square value = 19.674, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.020					

Appendix 6 Destination University Factors

Bivariate analysis shows that there is no significant difference on respondents' perception on university advertisements, and university societies and clubs, across all five characteristics respectively.

There is evidence of significant differences between respondents' perception on university's ranking across their region, degree status and college.

Table 6.1 a University Ranking Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	6 6.3%	18 35.3%	28 49.1%	52 25.6%
Little Influence	12 12.6%	8 15.7%	16 28.1%	36 17.7%
Some Influence	48 50.5%	15 29.4%	10 17.5%	73 36.0%
Influence a lot	29 30.5%	10 19.6%	3 5.3%	42 20.7%
Chi Square value = 55.542, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 6.1 b University Ranking Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	43 43.9%	11 14.3%	54 30.9%
Little Influence	21 21.4%	11 14.3%	32 18.3%
Some Influence	22 22.4%	37 48.1%	59 33.7%
Influence a lot	12 12.2%	18 23.4%	30 17.1%
Chi Square value = 24.941, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.000			

Table 6.1c University Ranking by Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	27 50.9%	10 11.6%	5 29.4%	10 29.4%	52 27.4%
Little Influence	8 15.1%	11 12.8%	2 11.8%	8 23.5%	29 15.3%
Some Influence	13 24.5%	41 47.7%	7 41.2%	7 20.6%	68 35.8%
Influence a lot	5 9.4%	24 27.9%	3 17.6%	9 26.5%	41 21.6%
Chi Square value = 33.953, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Bivariate analysis indicated significant differences between respondents' perception on scholarship availability across their region, and college.

Table 6.2a Scholarship Availability Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	30 31.9%	34 66.7%	25 44.6%	89 44.3%
Little Influence	32 34.0%	5 9.8%	6 10.7%	43 21.4%
Some Influence	26 27.7%	7 13.7%	11 19.6%	44 21.9%
Influence a lot	6 6.4%	5 9.8%	14 25.0%	25 12.4%
Chi Square value = 35.510, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 6.2b Scholarship Availability by Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	36 69.2%	31 36.5%	7 41.2%	10 29.4%	84 44.7%
Little Influence	5 9.6%	26 30.6%	4 23.5%	7 20.6%	42 22.3%
Some Influence	5 9.6%	21 24.7%	6 35.3%	7 20.6%	39 20.7%
Influence a lot	6 11.5%	7 8.2%	0 0.0%	10 29.4%	23 12.2%
Chi Square value = 33.427, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Bivariate analysis shows significant differences between respondents' perception on major availability across respondents' region, degree status and college.

Table 6.3a Major Availability Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	5 5.3%	2 4.0%	13 22.8%	20 10.0%
Little Influence	11 11.7%	8 16.0%	10 17.5%	29 14.4%
Some Influence	41 43.6%	5 10.0%	11 19.3%	57 28.4%
Influence a lot	37 39.4%	35 70.0%	23 40.4%	95 47.3%
Chi Square value = 36.824, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 6.3 b Major Availability Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	15 15.5%	5 6.6%	20 11.6%
Little Influence	21 21.6%	5 6.6%	26 15.0%
Some Influence	17 17.5%	26 34.2%	43 24.9%
Influence a lot	44 45.4%	40 52.6%	84 48.6%
Chi Square value = 14.586, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.002			

Table 6.3c Major Availability by Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	8 15.4%	6 7.0%	2 11.8%	1 3.0%	17 9.0%
Little Influence	8 15.4%	11 12.8%	2 11.8%	3 9.1%	24 12.8%
Some Influence	6 11.5%	34 39.5%	6 35.3%	10 30.3%	56 29.8%
Influence a lot	30 57.7%	35 40.7%	7 41.2%	19 57.6%	91 48.4%
Chi Square value = 16.291, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.061					

Table 6.4a Destination University's Tuition Fees Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	16 16.8%	20 39.2%	30 52.6%	66 32.5%
Little Influence	33 34.7%	10 19.6%	12 21.1%	55 27.1%
Some Influence	27 28.4%	14 27.5%	9 15.8%	50 24.6%
Influence a lot	19 20.0%	7 13.7%	6 10.5%	32 15.8%
Chi Square value = 23.583, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.001				

Table 6.4b Destination University's Tuition Fees Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	49 50.0%	13 16.9%	62 35.4%
Little Influence	19 19.4%	25 32.5%	44 25.1%
Some Influence	18 18.4%	22 28.6%	40 22.9%
Influence a lot	12 12.2%	17 22.1%	29 16.6%
Chi Square value = 20.762, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.000			

Bivariate analysis indicated that significant differences between respondents' perception on destination university's attitude of international education across gender, region and degree status.

Table 6.5a Destination University's Attitude of International Education Across Respondents' Gender (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Female	Male	Total
No Influence	18 12.0%	12 21.8%	30 14.6%
Little Influence	37 24.7%	8 14.5%	45 22.0%
Some Influence	55 36.7%	25 45.5%	80 39.0%
Influence a lot	40 26.7%	10 18.2%	50 24.4%
Chi Square value = 6.513, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.089			

Table 6.5b Destination University's Attitude of International Education Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	7 7.4%	9 17.6%	13 22.8%	29 14.3%
Little Influence	18 18.9%	15 29.4%	12 21.1%	45 22.2%
Some Influence	43 45.3%	15 29.4%	21 36.8%	79 38.9%
Influence a lot	27 28.4%	12 23.5%	11 19.3%	50 24.6%
Chi Square value = 11.634, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.071				

Table 6.5c Destination University's Attitude of International Education Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	20 20.4%	6 7.8%	26 14.9%
Little Influence	27 27.6%	11 14.3%	38 21.7%
Some Influence	34 34.7%	35 45.5%	69 39.4%
Influence a lot	17 17.3%	25 32.5%	42 24.0%
Chi Square value =13.488, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.004			

Appendix 7 Parents and Peers Factors

There is evidence of significant for perception on parents' recommendation across global region, year of study and college.

Table 7.1a Parents' Recommendation Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	17 17.9%	29 56.9%	31 55.4%	77 38.1%
Little Influence	30 31.6%	9 17.6%	16 28.6%	55 27.2%
Some Influence	35 36.8%	11 21.6%	6 10.7%	52 25.7%
Influence a lot	13 13.7%	2 3.9%	3 5.4%	18 8.9%
Chi Square value = 36.129, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 7.1b Parents' Recommendation Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
No Influence	4 23.5%	30 36.6%	20 28.6%	24 70.6%	78 38.4%
Little Influence	7 41.2%	19 23.2%	23 32.9%	6 17.6%	55 27.1%
Some Influence	6 35.3%	28 34.1%	17 24.3%	1 2.9%	52 25.6%
Influence a lot	0 0.0%	5 6.1%	10 14.3%	3 8.8%	18 8.9%
Chi Square value = 30.023, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Table 7.1c Parents' Recommendation by Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	33 63.5%	17 19.8%	3 17.6%	20 58.8%	73 38.6%
Little Influence	14 26.9%	22 25.6%	6 35.3%	8 23.5%	50 26.5%
Some Influence	3 5.8%	33 38.4%	7 41.2%	6 17.6%	49 25.9%
Influence a lot	2 3.8%	14 16.3%	1 5.9%	0 0.0%	17 9.0%
Chi Square value = 47.951, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

There is evidence of significant for perception on parents' permission across global region, degree status, year of study and college.

Table 7.2a Parents' Permission Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	11 11.6%	17 33.3%	25 44.6%	53 26.2%
Little Influence	14 14.7%	11 21.6%	16 28.6%	41 20.3%
Some Influence	33 34.7%	10 19.6%	8 14.3%	51 25.2%
Influence a lot	37 38.9%	13 25.5%	7 12.5%	57 28.2%
Chi Square value = 34.975, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 7.2b Parents' Permission Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	34 35.1%	19 24.7%	53 30.5%
Little Influence	26 26.8%	12 15.6%	38 21.8%
Some Influence	16 16.5%	24 31.2%	40 23.0%
Influence a lot	21 21.6%	22 28.6%	43 24.7%
Chi Square value = 8.844, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.031			

Table 7.2c Parents' Permission Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
No Influence	2 11.8%	19 23.2%	15 21.4%	18 52.9%	54 26.6%
Little Influence	6 35.3%	20 24.4%	13 18.6%	2 5.9%	41 20.2%
Some Influence	4 23.5%	22 26.8%	19 27.1%	5 14.7%	50 24.6%
Influence a lot	5 29.4%	21 25.6%	23 32.9%	9 26.5%	58 28.6%
Chi Square value = 19.982, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.018					

Table 7.2d Parents' Permission by Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	24 46.2%	13 15.1%	1 5.9%	11 32.4%	49 25.9%
Little Influence	11 21.2%	9 10.5%	6 35.3%	10 29.4%	36 19.0%
Some Influence	7 13.5%	31 36.0%	3 17.6%	9 26.5%	50 26.5%
Influence a lot	10 19.2%	33 38.4%	7 41.2%	4 11.8%	54 28.6%
Chi Square value = 38.572, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Bivariate analysis indicated that there was a significant difference on the perception of parents' link in destination country across different colleges.

Table 7.3 Parents' Link in Destination Country by Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	38 73.1%	46 53.5%	5 29.4%	25 73.5%	114 60.3%
Little Influence	8 15.4%	16 18.6%	5 29.4%	3 8.8%	32 16.9%
Some Influence	3 5.8%	21 24.4%	3 17.6%	4 11.8%	31 16.4%
Influence a lot	3 5.8%	3 3.5%	4 23.5%	2 5.9%	12 6.3%
Chi Square value = 25.311, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.003					

Bivariate analysis between this factor across respondents' characteristics (gender, region, degree status, year of study and college) were conducted. Test results indicated statistically significant differences between perception on friends' link in destination country across gender, region, degree status and college.

Table 7.4a Friends' Link in Destination Country Across Respondents' Gender (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Female	Male	Total
No Influence	96 64.9%	34 61.8%	130 64.0%
Little Influence	29 19.6%	6 10.9%	35 17.2%
Some Influence	15 10.1%	13 23.6%	28 13.8%
Influence a lot	8 5.4%	2 3.6%	10 4.9%
Chi Square value = 7.367, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.061			

Table 7.4b Friends' Link in Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	54 56.8%	32 64.0%	42 75.0%	128 63.7%
Little Influence	20 21.1%	6 12.0%	9 16.1%	35 17.4%
Some Influence	18 18.9%	8 16.0%	2 3.6%	28 13.9%
Influence a lot	3 3.2%	4 8.0%	3 5.4%	10 5.0%
Chi Square value = 11.198, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.082				

Table 7.4c Friends' Link in Destination Country Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	68 70.8%	44 57.1%	112 64.7%
Little Influence	16 16.7%	12 15.6%	28 16.2%
Some Influence	6 6.3%	17 22.1%	23 13.3%
Influence a lot	6 6.3%	4 5.2%	10 5.8%
Chi Square value = 9.402, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.024			

Table 7.4d Friends' Link in Destination Country Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	40 78.4%	48 55.8%	9 52.9%	25 73.5%	122 64.9%
Little Influence	7 13.7%	21 24.4%	2 11.8%	1 2.9%	31 16.5%
Some Influence	2 3.9%	15 17.4%	4 23.5%	6 17.6%	27 14.4%
Influence a lot	2 3.9%	2 2.3%	2 11.8%	2 5.9%	8 4.3%
Chi Square value = 19.748, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.020					

There is significant difference between respondents' perception on friends' recommendation across their region and college.

Table 7.5a Friends' Recommendation Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	35 37.2%	22 43.1%	29 51.8%	86 42.8%
Little Influence	37 39.4%	9 17.6%	10 17.9%	56 27.9%
Some Influence	20 21.3%	14 27.5%	10 17.9%	44 21.9%
Influence a lot	2 2.1%	6 11.8%	7 12.5%	15 7.5%
Chi Square value = 18.029, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.006				

Table 7.5b Friends' Recommendation Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	32 61.5%	27 31.4%	7 43.8%	17 50.0%	83 44.1%
Little Influence	9 17.3%	36 41.9%	3 18.8%	4 11.8%	52 27.7%
Some Influence	8 15.4%	20 23.3%	5 31.3%	9 26.5%	42 22.3%
Influence a lot	3 5.8%	3 3.5%	1 6.3%	4 11.8%	11 5.9%
Chi Square value = 23.688, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.005					

Bivariate analysis shows significant difference between perception on parents' earnings' influence on foreign study decision across respondents' region, degree status, year of study and college

Table 7.6a Parents' Earnings Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	17 17.9%	21 41.2%	21 37.5%	59 29.2%
Little Influence	12 12.6%	12 23.5%	14 25.0%	38 18.8%
Some Influence	39 41.1%	13 25.5%	16 28.6%	68 33.7%
Influence a lot	27 28.4%	5 9.8%	5 8.9%	37 18.3%
Chi Square value = 24.646, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 7.6b Parents' Earnings Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	34 35.1%	24 31.2%	58 33.3%
Little Influence	27 27.8%	9 11.7%	36 20.7%
Some Influence	27 27.8%	27 35.1%	54 31.0%
Influence a lot	9 9.3%	17 22.1%	26 14.9%
Chi Square value = 11.033, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.012			

Table 7.6c Parents' Earnings Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
No Influence	4 23.5%	22 26.8%	16 22.9%	18 52.9%	60 29.6%
Little Influence	3 17.6%	21 25.6%	12 17.1%	2 5.9%	38 18.7%
Some Influence	4 23.5%	29 35.4%	29 41.4%	7 20.6%	69 34.0%
Influence a lot	6 35.3%	10 12.2%	13 18.6%	7 20.6%	36 17.7%
Chi Square value = 21.032, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.013					

Table 7.6d Parents' Earnings Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	21 40.4%	19 22.1%	4 23.5%	12 35.3%	56 29.6%
Little Influence	12 23.1%	10 11.6%	3 17.6%	7 20.6%	32 16.9%
Some Influence	14 26.9%	36 41.9%	3 17.6%	11 32.4%	64 33.9%
Influence a lot	5 9.6%	21 24.4%	7 41.2%	4 11.8%	37 19.6%
Chi Square value = 19.607, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.021					

Appendix 8 Destination Country Factors

Bivariate analysis shows that there is a significant difference between respondents' perception of climate's influence across their regions.

Table 8.1 Climate of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	27 28.7%	15 29.4%	31 54.4%	73 36.1%
Little Influence	41 43.6%	17 33.3%	18 31.6%	76 37.6%
Some Influence	21 22.3%	14 27.5%	6 10.5%	41 20.3%
Influence a lot	5 5.3%	5 9.8%	2 3.5%	12 5.9%
Chi Square value = 15.091, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.020				

Bivariate analysis shows that there is a significant difference between respondents' perception of perceived lifestyle in destination country across their regions.

Table 8.2 Perceived Lifestyle of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	15 16.0%	3 5.9%	11 19.3%	29 14.4%
Little Influence	33 35.1%	9 17.6%	12 21.1%	54 26.7%
Some Influence	36 38.3%	23 45.1%	22 38.6%	81 40.1%
Influence a lot	10 10.6%	16 31.4%	12 21.1%	38 18.8%
Chi Square value = 16.610, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.011				

Bivariate analysis shows statistically significant differences between perception of perceived crime rate in destination country across respondents' regions, degree status and college.

Table 8.3a Perceived Crime Rate of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	9 9.6%	12 23.5%	33 57.9%	54 26.7%
Little Influence	21 22.3%	24 47.1%	15 26.3%	60 29.7%
Some Influence	40 42.6%	7 13.7%	6 10.5%	53 26.2%
Influence a lot	24 25.5%	8 15.7%	3 5.3%	35 17.3%
Chi Square value = 64.823, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 8.3b Perceived Crime Rate of Destination Country Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	38 39.2%	15 19.5%	53 30.5%
Little Influence	35 36.1%	21 27.3%	56 32.2%
Some Influence	14 14.4%	23 29.9%	37 21.3%
Influence a lot	10 10.3%	18 23.4%	28 16.1%
Chi Square value = 15.867, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.001			

Table 8.3c Perceived Crime Rate of Destination Country Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	25 47.2%	10 11.8%	2 11.8%	11 32.4%	48 25.4%
Little Influence	15 28.3%	25 29.4%	4 23.5%	10 29.4%	54 28.6%
Some Influence	10 18.9%	30 35.3%	5 29.4%	7 20.6%	52 27.5%
Influence a lot	3 5.7%	20 23.5%	6 35.3%	6 17.6%	35 18.5%
Chi Square value = 30.593, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

There is evidence of significant differences between perception of perceived social safety of destination country across respondents' regions, degree status and college.

Table 8.4a Perceived Social Safety of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	5 5.3%	9 17.6%	22 38.6%	36 17.8%
Little Influence	14 14.9%	20 39.2%	13 22.8%	47 23.3%
Some Influence	38 40.4%	15 29.4%	18 31.6%	71 35.1%
Influence a lot	37 39.4%	7 13.7%	4 7.0%	48 23.8%
Chi Square value = 50.405, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 8.4b Perceived Social Safety of Destination Country Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	27 27.8%	9 11.7%	36 20.7%
Little Influence	29 29.9%	16 20.8%	45 25.9%
Some Influence	30 30.9%	27 35.1%	57 32.8%
Influence a lot	11 11.3%	25 32.5%	36 20.7%
Chi Square value = 16.274, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.001			

Table 8.4c Perceived Social Safety of Destination Country Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	19 35.8%	8 9.4%	1 5.9%	3 8.8%	31 16.4%
Little Influence	13 24.5%	16 18.8%	3 17.6%	11 32.4%	43 22.8%
Some Influence	13 24.5%	33 38.8%	8 47.1%	13 38.2%	67 35.4%
Influence a lot	8 15.1%	28 32.9%	5 29.4%	7 20.6%	48 25.4%
Chi Square value = 26.627, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.002					

Bivariate analysis shows there are statistically significant differences across respondents' perception of perceived racial discrimination and respondents' region, degree status and college.

Table 8.5a Perceived Racial Discrimination of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	11 11.7%	26 51.0%	42 73.7%	79 39.1%
Little Influence	28 29.8%	15 29.4%	9 15.8%	52 25.7%
Some Influence	39 41.5%	9 17.6%	5 8.8%	53 26.2%
Influence a lot	16 17.0%	1 2.0%	1 1.8%	18 8.9%
Chi Square value = 69.747, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 8.5b Perceived Racial Discrimination of Destination Country Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	57 58.8%	21 27.3%	78 44.8%
Little Influence	23 23.7%	23 29.9%	46 26.4%
Some Influence	15 15.5%	23 29.9%	38 21.8%
Influence a lot	2 2.1%	10 13.0%	12 6.9%
Chi Square value = 21.620, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.000			

Table 8.5c Perceived Racial Discrimination of Destination Country Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	36 67.9%	21 24.7%	2 11.8%	18 52.9%	77 40.7%
Little Influence	10 18.9%	25 29.4%	5 29.4%	5 14.7%	45 23.8%
Some Influence	7 13.2%	29 34.1%	6 35.3%	8 23.5%	50 26.5%
Influence a lot	0 0.0%	10 11.8%	4 23.5%	3 8.8%	17 9.0%
Chi Square value = 38.295, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

There is significant difference between respondents' perception of destination country's environment across their regions.

Table 8.6 Environment of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	7 7.4%	9 18.0%	6 10.7%	22 11.0%
Little Influence	22 23.4%	15 30.0%	8 14.3%	45 22.5%
Some Influence	47 50.0%	17 34.0%	17 30.4%	81 40.5%
Influence a lot	18 19.1%	9 18.0%	25 44.6%	52 26.0%
Chi Square value = 20.726, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.002				

There is evidence of significant difference between respondents' perception of social tolerance of destination country across their region and degree status.

Table 8.7a Social Tolerance of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	9 9.6%	13 25.5%	25 43.9%	47 23.3%
Little Influence	25 26.6%	16 31.4%	10 17.5%	51 25.2%
Some Influence	43 45.7%	20 39.2%	14 24.6%	77 38.1%
Influence a lot	17 18.1%	2 3.9%	8 14.0%	27 13.4%
Chi Square value = 29.424, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 8.7b Social Tolerance of Destination Country Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	34 35.1%	11 14.3%	45 25.9%
Little Influence	23 23.7%	20 26.0%	43 24.7%
Some Influence	29 29.9%	33 42.9%	62 35.6%
Influence a lot	11 11.3%	13 16.9%	24 13.8%
Chi Square value = 10.226, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.017			

There is no significant difference for the distribution of respondents' perception of destination country's social life across their gender, region, degree status, year of study and college.

Bivariate analysis indicated significant difference between respondents' perception of geographical distance between home country and destination country across their region.

Table 8. 8 Geographical Distance Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	41 43.6%	25 49.0%	16 28.1%	82 40.6%
Little Influence	27 28.7%	14 27.5%	11 19.3%	52 25.7%
Some Influence	18 19.1%	8 15.7%	19 33.3%	45 22.3%
Influence a lot	8 8.5%	4 7.8%	11 19.3%	23 11.4%
Chi Square value = 13.522, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.035				

Bivariate analysis indicated statistically significant differences between respondents' perception of destination country's culture across their regions, degree status and college respectively.

Table 8.9a Culture of Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	6 6.4%	2 3.9%	6 10.7%	14 7.0%
Little Influence	33 35.1%	6 11.8%	11 19.6%	50 24.9%
Some Influence	43 45.7%	23 45.1%	13 23.2%	79 39.3%
Influence a lot	12 12.8%	20 39.2%	26 46.4%	58 28.9%
Chi Square value = 31.389, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 8.9b Culture of Destination Country Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	7 7.3%	7 9.2%	14 8.1%
Little Influence	18 18.8%	23 30.3%	41 23.8%
Some Influence	32 33.3%	31 40.8%	63 36.6%
Influence a lot	39 40.6%	15 19.7%	54 31.4%
Chi Square value = 9.090, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.028			

Table 8.9c Culture of Destination Country Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	6 11.3%	3 3.6%	2 11.8%	3 8.8%	14 7.5%
Little Influence	6 11.3%	25 30.1%	7 41.2%	8 23.5%	46 24.6%
Some Influence	18 34.0%	40 48.2%	6 35.3%	12 35.3%	76 40.6%
Influence a lot	23 43.4%	15 18.1%	2 11.8%	11 32.4%	51 27.3%
Chi Square value = 21.496, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.011					

Bivariate analysis shows there is evidence of significant difference between the perception of presence of local community in destination country across their regions, degree status and college.

Table 8.10a Presence of Local Community in Destination Country Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	26 27.7%	27 52.9%	43 75.4%	96 47.5%
Little Influence	40 42.6%	11 21.6%	7 12.3%	58 28.7%
Some Influence	22 23.4%	12 23.5%	6 10.5%	40 19.8%
Influence a lot	6 6.4%	1 2.0%	1 1.8%	8 4.0%
Chi Square value = 36.062, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 8.10b Presence of Local Community in Destination Country Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	62 63.9%	27 35.1%	89 51.1%
Little Influence	17 17.5%	28 36.4%	45 25.9%
Some Influence	16 16.5%	17 22.1%	33 19.0%
Influence a lot	2 2.1%	5 6.5%	7 4.0%
Chi Square value = 15.677, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.001			

Table 8.10c Presence of Local Community in Destination Country Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	39 73.6%	30 35.3%	6 35.3%	15 44.1%	90 47.6%
Little Influence	6 11.3%	29 34.1%	6 35.3%	12 35.3%	53 28.0%
Some Influence	6 11.3%	20 23.5%	5 29.4%	7 20.6%	38 20.1%
Influence a lot	2 3.8%	6 7.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	8 4.2%
Chi Square value = 25.260, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.003					

Appendix 9 Future Plan Factors

There is evidence of significant evidence between job opportunities across respondents' region, degree status, and college respectively

Table 9.1a Job Opportunities Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	10 10.6%	26 50.0%	35 61.4%	71 35.0%
Little Influence	32 34.0%	11 21.2%	10 17.5%	53 26.1%
Some Influence	37 39.4%	14 26.9%	8 14.0%	59 29.1%
Influence a lot	15 16.0%	1 1.9%	4 7.0%	20 9.9%
Chi Square value = 50.295, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 9.1b Job Opportunities Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	54 55.7%	15 19.2%	69 39.4%
Little Influence	22 22.7%	21 26.9%	43 24.6%
Some Influence	17 17.5%	29 37.2%	46 26.3%
Influence a lot	4 4.1%	13 16.7%	17 9.7%
Chi Square value = 28.232, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.000			

Table 9.1c Job Opportunities Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	33 62.3%	16 18.8%	2 11.1%	14 41.2%	65 34.2%
Little Influence	7 13.2%	25 29.4%	5 27.8%	11 32.4%	48 25.3%
Some Influence	10 18.9%	33 38.8%	7 38.9%	6 17.6%	56 29.5%
Influence a lot	3 5.7%	11 12.9%	4 22.2%	3 8.8%	21 11.1%
Chi Square value = 36.266, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Bivariate analysis indicated significant difference between perception on future education opportunities across respondents' region, degree status and college.

Table 9.2a Future Education Opportunities Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	3 3.2%	17 32.7%	33 57.9%	53 26.2%
Little Influence	21 22.6%	14 26.9%	9 15.8%	44 21.8%
Some Influence	37 39.8%	19 36.5%	10 17.5%	66 32.7%
Influence a lot	32 34.4%	2 3.8%	5 8.8%	39 19.3%
Chi Square value = 69.336, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.000				

Table 9.2b Future Education Opportunities Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	44 45.4%	9 11.7%	53 30.5%
Little Influence	18 18.6%	21 27.3%	39 22.4%
Some Influence	25 25.8%	26 33.8%	51 29.3%
Influence a lot	10 10.3%	21 27.3%	31 17.8%
Chi Square value = 25.302, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.000			

Table 9.2c Future Education Opportunities Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	27 50.9%	11 13.1%	2 11.1%	8 23.5%	48 25.4%
Little Influence	10 18.9%	18 21.4%	5 27.8%	7 20.6%	40 21.2%
Some Influence	11 20.8%	32 38.1%	8 44.4%	11 32.4%	62 32.8%
Influence a lot	5 9.4%	23 27.4%	3 16.7%	8 23.5%	39 20.6%
Chi Square value = 29.789, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Bivariate analysis shows between respondents' perception on post-graduate immigration prospects across respondents' regions, and their degree status, there is significant difference.

Table 9.3a Post-graduate Immigration Prospects Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	24 25.8%	23 44.2%	36 63.2%	83 41.1%
Little Influence	37 39.8%	16 30.8%	12 21.1%	65 32.2%
Some Influence	20 21.5%	11 21.2%	6 10.5%	37 18.3%
Influence a lot	12 12.9%	2 3.8%	3 5.3%	17 8.4%
Chi Square value = 22.887, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.001				

Table 9.3b Post-graduate Immigration Prospects Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	51 52.6%	25 32.5%	76 43.7%
Little Influence	29 29.9%	22 28.6%	51 29.3%
Some Influence	12 12.4%	20 26.0%	32 18.4%
Influence a lot	5 5.2%	10 13.0%	15 8.6%
Chi Square value = 11.374, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.010			

Appendix 10 Salary Expectation

Bivariate analysis indicated significant differences between expected salary across gender, region, year of study and college. All the test results are statistically significant.

Table 10.1a Salary Expectation Across Respondents' Gender (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Female	Male	Total
Under €1,500	37 25.0%	12 22.2%	49 24.3%
€1,500--€2,000	57 38.5%	13 24.1%	70 34.7%
€2,001--€3,000	31 20.9%	13 24.1%	44 21.8%
€3,001--€4,000	17 11.5%	9 16.7%	26 12.9%
Above €4,000	6 4.1%	7 13.0%	13 6.4%
Chi Square value = 8.388, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.078			

Table 10.1b Salary Expectation Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
Under €1,500	27 28.4%	6 12.0%	15 27.3%	48 24.0%
€1,500--€2,000	35 36.8%	8 16.0%	27 49.1%	70 35.0%
€2,001--€3,000	20 21.1%	15 30.0%	8 14.5%	43 21.5%
€3,001--€4,000	8 8.4%	13 26.0%	5 9.1%	26 13.0%
Above €4,000	5 5.3%	8 16.0%	0 0.0%	13 6.5%
Chi Square value = 34.734, degree of freedom = 8, p value = 0.000				

Table 10.1c Salary Expectation Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
Under €1,500	3 17.6%	19 23.8%	23 33.3%	3 8.6%	48 23.9%
€1,500--€2,000	2 11.8%	32 40.0%	26 37.7%	10 28.6%	70 34.8%
€2,001--€3,000	5 29.4%	15 18.8%	14 20.3%	10 28.6%	44 21.9%
€3,001--€4,000	5 29.4%	10 12.5%	4 5.8%	7 20.0%	26 12.9%
Above €4,000	2 11.8%	4 5.0%	2 2.9%	5 14.3%	13 6.5%
Chi Square value = 24.972, degree of freedom = 12, p value = 0.015					

Table 10.1d Salary Expectation Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
Under €1,500	11 21.2%	27 31.4%	2 11.8%	5 15.2%	45 23.9%
€1,500--€2,000	20 38.5%	32 37.2%	2 11.8%	11 33.3%	65 34.6%
€2,001--€3,000	14 26.9%	12 14.0%	6 35.3%	7 21.2%	39 20.7%
€3,001--€4,000	4 7.7%	12 14.0%	4 23.5%	6 18.2%	26 13.8%
Above €4,000	3 5.8%	3 3.5%	3 17.6%	4 12.1%	13 6.9%
Chi Square value = 20.573, degree of freedom = 12, p value = 0.057					

Bivariate analysis shows significant difference between respondents' salary expectation and whether they did salary research.

Table 10.1e Salary Expectation Across Salary Research (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
Expected Salary	No	Yes	Total
Less than or equals to €2,000 a month	83 64.3%	36 49.3%	119 58.9%
Greater than €2,000 a month	46 35.7%	37 50.7%	83 41.1%
Chi Square value = 11.777, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.018			

Bivariate analysis shows significant difference between salary research and respondents' college.

Table 10.2 Salary Research Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No	38 71.7%	65 72.2%	11 61.1%	14 41.2%	128 65.6%
Yes	15 28.3%	25 27.8%	7 38.9%	20 58.8%	67 34.4%
Chi Square value = 4.348, degree of freedom = 1, p value = 0.037					

Appendix 11 Scholarship

There is evidence of significant for respondents' scholarship across respondents' regions, degree status, year of study and college.

Table 11.1a Scholarship Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No	71 75.5%	19 37.3%	7 12.3%	97 48.0%
Yes	23 24.5%	32 62.7%	50 87.7%	105 52.0%
Chi Square value = 60.040, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.000				

Table 11.1b Scholarship Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No	18 18.8%	52 67.5%	70 40.5%
Yes	78 81.3%	25 32.5%	103 59.5%
Chi Square value = 42.209, degree of freedom = 1, p value = 0.000			

Table 11.1c Scholarship Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
No	12 70.6%	31 38.3%	35 49.3%	18 52.9%	96 47.3%
Yes	5 29.4%	50 61.7%	36 50.7%	16 47.1%	107 52.7%
Chi Square value = 6.895, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.075					

Table 11.1d Scholarship Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No	19 35.8%	55 64.7%	13 72.2%	8 24.2%	95 50.3%
Yes	34 64.2%	30 35.3%	5 27.8%	25 75.8%	94 49.7%
Chi Square value = 23.907, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.000					

Appendix 12 Tuition Fees

There is evidence of significant differences between respondents' tuition fees level across all respondents' characteristics.

Table 12.1a Tuition Fees Across Respondents' Gender (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Female	Male	Total
Under €12,000	68 47.2%	14 26.4%	82 41.6%
€12,000-€13,000	34 23.6%	15 28.3%	49 24.9%
€13,001-€14,000	14 9.7%	4 7.5%	18 9.1%
Above €14,000	28 19.4%	20 37.7%	48 24.4%
Chi Square value = 9.893, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.020			

Table 12.1b Tuition Fees Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
Under €12,000	15 16.3%	13 26.0%	53 98.1%	81 41.3%
€12,000-€13,000	38 41.3%	11 22.0%	0 0.0%	49 25.0%
€13,001-€14,000	12 13.0%	5 10.0%	1 1.9%	18 9.2%
Above €14,000	27 29.3%	21 42.0%	0 0.0%	48 24.5%
Chi Square value = 23.583, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.001				

Table 12.1c Tuition Fees Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
Under €12,000	66 72.5%	14 18.2%	80 47.6%
€12,000-€13,000	9 9.9%	26 33.8%	35 20.8%
€13,001-€14,000	4 4.4%	11 14.3%	15 8.9%
Above €14,000	12 13.2%	26 33.8%	38 22.6%
Chi Square value =20.762, degree of freedom = 3, p value = 0.000			

Table 12.1d Tuition Fees Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
Under €12,000	2 11.8%	37 46.8%	33 49.3%	10 30.3%	82 41.8%
€12,000-€13,000	3 17.6%	19 24.1%	19 28.4%	8 24.2%	49 25.0%
€13,001-€14,000	0 0.0%	4 5.1%	4 6.0%	10 30.3%	18 9.2%
Above €14,000	12 70.6%	19 24.1%	11 16.4%	5 15.2%	47 24.0%
Chi Square value = 44.656, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Table 12.1e Tuition FeeAcross Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
Under €12,000	31 60.8%	21 25.6%	3 16.7%	17 53.1%	72 39.3%
€12,000-€13,000	9 17.6%	32 39.0%	1 5.6%	5 15.6%	47 25.7%
€13,001-€14,000	3 5.9%	10 12.2%	0 0.0%	4 12.5%	17 9.3%
Above €14,000	8 15.7%	19 23.2%	14 77.8%	6 18.8%	47 25.7%
Chi Square value = 50.067, degree of freedom = 9, p value = 0.000					

Appendix 13 Living Cost

There are evidences of significant difference of respondents' annual living cost across region and year of study

Table 13.1a Annual Living Cost Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
Under €8,000	36 39.1%	24 47.1%	23 42.6%	83 42.1%
€8,001 - €9,000	18 19.6%	10 19.6%	13 24.1%	41 20.8%
€9,001 - €10,000	15 16.3%	5 9.8%	5 9.3%	25 12.7%
€10,001 - €11,000	7 7.6%	5 9.8%	11 20.4%	23 11.7%
€11,001 - €12,000	2 2.2%	5 9.8%	1 1.9%	8 4.1%
Above €12,000	14 15.2%	2 3.9%	1 1.9%	17 8.6%
Chi Square value = 22.018, degree of freedom = 10, p value = 0.015				

Table 13.1b Annual Living Cost Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
Under €8,000	7 43.8%	42 51.9%	26 38.8%	10 29.4%	85 42.9%
€8,001 - €9,000	3 18.8%	13 16.0%	20 29.9%	5 14.7%	41 20.7%
€9,001 - €10,000	2 12.5%	11 13.6%	8 11.9%	4 11.8%	25 12.6%
€10,001 - €11,000	2 12.5%	6 7.4%	8 11.9%	7 20.6%	23 11.6%
€11,001 - €12,000	0 0.0%	3 3.7%	0 0.0%	5 14.7%	8 4.0%
Above €12,000	2 12.5%	6 7.4%	5 7.5%	3 8.8%	16 8.1%
Chi Square value = 24.539, degree of freedom = 15, p value =0.056					

Appendix 14 Father's Education and Perception of Foreign Study

Bivariate analysis results show that there is evidence of significant relationship between fathers' education across fathers' perception on foreign study's benefit on children' career, future education, and their perspective of support children's foreign study.

Table 14.1a Father's perception on Foreign Study Benefit Future Career Across Respondents' Father's Education (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Primary School and Secondary School	Bachelor, Master, PhD	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	7 13.5%	13 13.5%	20 13.5%
No Opinion	16 30.8%	13 13.5%	29 19.6%
Agree, Strongly agree	29 55.8%	70 72.9%	99 66.9%
Chi Square value = 6.592, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.037			

Table 14.1b Father's perception on Foreign Study Benefit Future Education Across Respondents' Father's Education (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Primary School and Secondary School	Bachelor, Master, PhD	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	5 9.8%	10 10.4%	15 10.2%
No Opinion	16 31.4%	14 14.6%	30 20.4%
Agree, Strongly agree	30 58.8%	72 75.0%	102 69.4%
Chi Square value = 5.869, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.053			

Table 14.1c Father Support Foreign Study Across Respondents' Father's Education (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Primary School and Secondary School	Bachelor, Master, PhD	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	8 15.7%	5 5.2%	13 8.8%
No Opinion	3 5.9%	5 5.2%	8 5.4%
Agree, Strongly agree	40 78.4%	86 89.6%	126 85.7%
Chi Square value = 4.646, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.098			

Appendix 15 Mother's Education and Perception of Foreign Study

Bivariate analysis shows significant differences between respondents' mothers' education across mothers' perception on foreign study will benefit the respondent's future career and education.

Table 15.1a Mother's perception on Foreign Study Benefit Future Career Across Respondents' Mother's Education (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Primary School and Secondary School	Bachelor, Master, PhD	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	5 9.4%	6 6.0%	11 7.2%
No Opinion	13 24.5%	9 9.0%	22 14.4%
Agree, Strongly agree	35 66.0%	85 85.0%	120 78.4%
Chi Square value = 7.965, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.019			

Table 15.1b Mother's perception on Foreign Study Benefit Future Education Across Respondents' Mother's Education (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Primary School and Secondary School	Bachelor, Master, PhD	Total
Strongly Disagree, Disagree	5 9.4%	8 8.0%	13 8.5%
No Opinion	16 30.2%	8 8.0%	24 15.7%
Agree, Strongly agree	32 60.4%	84 84.0%	116 75.8%
Chi Square value = 13.506, degree of freedom = 2, p value = 0.001			

Appendix 16 Perceived Parents' Influences on Foreign Study Decision

Bivariate analysis indicated that there is evidence of significant difference between perceived father's influence on foreign study decision across respondents' region, degree status and college.

Table 16.1a Perceived Father's Influence on Foreign Study Decision Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	13 13.8%	18 34.6%	29 53.7%	60 30.0%
Little Influence	17 18.1%	13 25.0%	11 20.4%	41 20.5%
Some Influence	38 40.4%	14 26.9%	12 22.2%	64 32.0%
Influence a Lot	20 21.3%	7 13.5%	2 3.7%	29 14.5%
My Father Made the Decision	6 6.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	6 3.0%
Chi Square value = 37.697, degree of freedom = 8, p value = 0.000				

Table 16.1b Perceived Father's Influence on Foreign Study Decision Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	40 41.7%	16 21.1%	56 32.6%
Little Influence	22 22.9%	14 18.4%	36 20.9%
Some Influence	26 27.1%	28 36.8%	54 31.4%
Influence a Lot	8 8.3%	14 18.4%	22 12.8%
My Father Made the Decision	0 0.0%	4 5.3%	4 2.3%
Chi Square value = 15.660, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.004			

Table 16.1c Perceived Father's Influence on Foreign Study Decision Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	25 50.0%	17 20.0%	4 23.5%	10 28.6%	56 29.9%
Little Influence	11 22.0%	18 21.2%	3 17.6%	4 11.4%	36 19.3%
Some Influence	11 22.0%	30 35.3%	7 41.2%	14 40.0%	62 33.2%
Influence a Lot	3 6.0%	17 20.0%	2 11.8%	6 17.1%	28 15.0%
My Father Made the Decision	0 0.0%	3 3.5%	1 5.9%	1 2.9%	5 2.7%
Chi Square value = 20.671, degree of freedom = 12, p value = 0.055					

Bivariate analysis indicated that there is evidence of significant difference between perceived mother's influence on foreign study decision across respondents' region, degree status and college.

Table 16.2a Perceived Mother's Influence on Foreign Study Decision Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	10 10.3%	13 25.0%	23 41.8%	46 22.5%
Little Influence	14 14.4%	13 25.0%	14 25.5%	41 20.1%
Some Influence	41 42.3%	19 36.5%	12 21.8%	72 35.3%
Influence a Lot	29 29.9%	7 13.5%	5 9.1%	41 20.1%
My Mother Made the Decision	3 3.1%	0 0.0%	1 1.8%	4 2.0%
Chi Square value = 33.533, degree of freedom = 8, p value = 0.000				

Table 16.2b Perceived Mother's Influence on Foreign Study Decision Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	30 30.9%	13 16.5%	43 24.4%
Little Influence	25 25.8%	16 20.3%	41 23.3%
Some Influence	27 27.8%	33 41.8%	60 34.1%
Influence a Lot	14 14.4%	15 19.0%	29 16.5%
My Mother Made the Decision	1 1.0%	2 2.5%	3 1.7%
Chi Square value = 7.906, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.095			

Table 16.2c Perceived Mother's Influence on Foreign Study Decision Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	24 46.2%	13 14.9%	1 5.9%	8 22.9%	46 24.1%
Little Influence	10 19.2%	14 16.1%	3 17.6%	8 22.9%	35 18.3%
Some Influence	11 21.2%	35 40.2%	9 52.9%	12 34.3%	67 35.1%
Influence a Lot	7 13.5%	23 26.4%	3 17.6%	7 20.0%	40 20.9%
My Mother Made the Decision	0 0.0%	2 2.3%	1 5.9%	0 0.0%	3 1.6%
Chi Square value = 28.056, degree of freedom = 12, p value = 0.005					

Appendix 17 Perceived Parents' Influences on Future Career Decision

Bivariate analysis indicated that there is evidence of significant difference between perceived father's influence on future career decision across respondents' region, degree status and college.

Table 17.1a Perceived Father's Influence on Future Career Decision Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)

	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	13 13.8%	15 28.8%	26 49.1%	54 27.1%
Little Influence	24 25.5%	14 26.9%	11 20.8%	49 24.6%
Some Influence	33 35.1%	19 36.5%	11 20.8%	63 31.7%
Influence a Lot	18 19.1%	4 7.7%	5 9.4%	27 13.6%
My Father Made the Decision	6 6.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	6 3.0%
Chi Square value = 29.625, degree of freedom = 8, p value = 0.000				

Table 17.1b Perceived Father's Influence on Future Career Decision Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	36 37.9%	15 19.7%	51 29.8%
Little Influence	24 25.3%	18 23.7%	42 24.6%
Some Influence	26 27.4%	24 31.6%	50 29.2%
Influence a Lot	9 9.5%	15 19.7%	24 14.0%
My Father Made the Decision	0 0.0%	4 5.3%	4 2.3%
Chi Square value = 13.135, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.011			

Table 17.1c Perceived Father's Influence on Future Career Decision Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	27 54.0%	14 16.7%	3 16.7%	4 11.8%	48 25.8%
Little Influence	13 26.0%	22 26.2%	3 16.7%	8 23.5%	46 24.7%
Some Influence	8 16.0%	30 35.7%	9 50.0%	14 41.2%	61 32.8%
Influence a Lot	2 4.0%	15 17.9%	2 11.1%	7 20.6%	26 14.0%
My Father Made the Decision	0 0.0%	3 3.6%	1 5.6%	1 2.9%	5 2.7%
Chi Square value = 36.551, degree of freedom = 12, p value = 0.000					

There is evidence of significant difference between perceived mother's influence on future career decision across respondents' region, degree status and college.

Table 17.2a Perceived Mother's Influence on Future Career Decision Across Respondents' Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa and Oceania	The Americas	The EU	Total
No Influence	13 13.4%	9 17.3%	20 37.0%	42 20.7%
Little Influence	23 23.7%	17 32.7%	17 31.5%	57 28.1%
Some Influence	38 39.2%	24 46.2%	14 25.9%	76 37.4%
Influence a Lot	21 21.6%	2 3.8%	3 5.6%	26 12.8%
My Mother Made the Decision	2 2.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 1.0%
Chi Square value = 27.657, degree of freedom = 8, p value = 0.001				

Table 17.2b Perceived Mother's Influence on Future Career Decision Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
No Influence	26 27.1%	14 17.7%	40 22.9%
Little Influence	33 34.4%	17 21.5%	50 28.6%
Some Influence	32 33.3%	32 40.5%	64 36.6%
Influence a Lot	5 5.2%	15 19.0%	20 11.4%
My Mother Made the Decision	0 0.0%	1 1.3%	1 0.6%
Chi Square value = 13.193, degree of freedom = 4, p value = 0.010			

Table 17.2c Perceived Mother's Influence on Future Career Decision By College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
No Influence	22 42.3%	14 16.3%	0 0.0%	4 11.8%	40 21.1%
Little Influence	14 26.9%	22 25.6%	3 16.7%	10 29.4%	49 25.8%
Some Influence	13 25.0%	34 39.5%	10 55.6%	16 47.1%	73 38.4%
Influence a Lot	3 5.8%	15 17.4%	4 22.2%	4 11.8%	26 13.7%
My Mother Made the Decision	0 0.0%	1 1.2%	1 5.6%	0 0.0%	2 1.1%
Chi Square value = 31.256, degree of freedom = 12, p value = 0.002					

Appendix 18 Contact with Foreign Study Agency

Bivariate analysis indicated there is evidence of significant differences between the person who contact foreign study agency across respondents' region, degree status, year of study and college.

Table 18.1a Contact with Foreign Study Agency by Region (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)				
	Asia, Africa & Oceania	Americas	EU	Total
Self	39 39.8%	19 36.5%	23 40.4%	81 39.1%
Father	3 3.1%	2 3.8%	2 3.5%	7 3.4%
Mother	2 2.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.8%	3 1.4%
Both of Parents	2 2.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 1.0%
Both of Parents and You	28 28.6%	4 7.7%	2 3.5%	34 16.4%
Didn't Use a Foreign Study Consultancy Agency	21 21.4%	27 51.9%	27 47.4%	75 36.2%
Other	3 3.1%	0 0.0%	2 3.5%	5 2.4%
Chi Square value = 33.565, degree of freedom = 12, p value = 0.001				

Table 18.1b Contact with Foreign Study Agency Across Respondents' Degree Status (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)			
	Visiting Student	Study For Degree	Total
Self	41 41.8%	22 27.5%	63 35.4%
Father	3 3.1%	4 5.0%	7 3.9%
Mother	1 1.0%	2 2.5%	3 1.7%
Both of Parents	0 0.0%	1 1.3%	1 0.6%
Both of Parents and You	8 8.2%	18 22.5%	26 14.6%
Didn't Use a Foreign Study Consultancy Agency	42 42.9%	32 40.0%	74 41.6%
Other	3 3.1%	1 1.3%	4 2.2%
Chi Square value = 11.703, degree of freedom = 6, p value = 0.069			

Table 18.1c Contact with Foreign Study Agency Across Respondents' Year of Study (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	First Year	Mid Degree Year	Final Year	Postgraduates	Total
Self	5 27.8%	28 33.7%	38 52.8%	10 29.4%	81 39.1%
Father	1 5.6%	5 6.0%	1 1.4%	0 0.0%	7 3.4%
Mother	0 0.0%	1 1.2%	1 1.4%	1 2.9%	3 1.4%
Both of Parents	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 2.8%	0 0.0%	2 1.0%
Both of Parents and You	6 33.3%	19 22.9%	9 12.5%	0 0.0%	34 16.4%
Didn't Use a Foreign Study Consultancy Agency	6 33.3%	29 34.9%	19 26.4%	21 61.8%	75 36.2%
Other	0 0.0%	1 1.2%	2 2.8%	2 5.9%	5 2.4%
Chi Square value = 36.286, degree of freedom = 18, p value = 0.006					

Table 18.1d Contact with Foreign Study Agency Across Respondents' College (Number of Respondents—Percentages in Parentheses)					
	Arts Humanities and Social Sciences	Business and Law	Medicine and Health	Science Engineering and Food Science	Total
Self	17 32.1%	39 44.8%	4 22.2%	16 45.7%	76 39.4%
Father	1 1.9%	4 4.6%	1 5.6%	1 2.9%	7 3.6%
Mother	0 0.0%	1 1.1%	0 0.0%	2 5.7%	3 1.6%
Both of Parents	0 0.0%	2 2.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 1.0%
Both of Parents and You	3 5.7%	22 25.3%	6 33.3%	2 5.7%	33 17.1%
Didn't Use a Foreign Study Consultancy Agency	31 58.5%	17 19.5%	6 33.3%	13 37.1%	67 34.7%
Other	1 1.9%	2 2.3%	1 5.6%	1 2.9%	5 2.6%
Chi Square value = 39.631, degree of freedom = 18, p value = 0.002					

Appendix 19 Interview Transcript Sample

This appendix includes a sample transcript for one interviewee. This is included to demonstrate the type of questions and responses in the interviews. Transcripts are available for all 24 interviews. In this transcript example general information, such as gender, age, nationality, and college that could identify the respondent have been removed.

Respondent 126

W: So in the very beginning what are, what is the reason you decide to come to Ireland please?

R: Ireland was one of the finest destinations for study, and it has leading biotech and pharma industries in the region alone and a lot of companies coming up and setting up their headquarters in Ireland.

W: yeah

R: and it's pretty safe for students and climate is, eh, very ambient to live it

W: yeah

R: and I don't want to go with crowd because you see a lot of people migrating to USA

W: yeah

R: and other countries, and I don't want to be in the crowd,

W: OK

R: and see, once I go to USA, there will be competition among ourselves because hundreds of Indians goes, so we have to compete with Indians, and then with the foreigners. But here comparatively the local people are the only ones to compete with. So getting a job and settling here is easy.

W: OK, just wait second I just pause, so it won't be record. (R's phone is buzzing). OK so you mentioned you don't want to go with crowd, so is that the reason you didn't go for?

R: USA

W: OK USA.

R: because Europe, Australia and USA, are the best destinations for doing a masters.

W: OK

R: and I, we choose Ireland for education because of the international culture, mixing with a lot of minds and discussing many ideas.

W: yeah

R: and then I will living independently, would make a better person, managing our finance and that.

W: yeah. OK and what, so why didn't you choose United Kingdom? Is that?

R: it's because of the cost of living over there is a thing,

W: yeah

R: and then the population is growing on in UK and immigration facilities are not so favourable

W: yeah

R: so Ireland seems really a reasonably good for students and immigration facilities so. Ireland was the best option available in Europe. And the degree, and the universities are really well developed as well, UCD and UCC are leading the way to the ranks. In the last 2 years, the ranking has come down to two hundred fourteen internationally for UCC, and that is really good.

W: OK and you mentioned UCC and UCD both, so what was the reason you finally choose UCC, not Trinity or UCD?

R: it's because I had to think a little bit logically, I got, I got to see into UCD and into UCC,

W: yeah

R: but the thing is UCD was in the top list and actually local priority, UCD is the top university, and second is UCC according to the ranking, so if I go in there, I will be in somewhere in the 20, or 30 in the rank academically, but this is the second university when I choose this, I will be the top 10 list from the university.

W: OK

R: so the approach of the other students and the professors might be great when compared to UCD and the professor's curriculum here interested me a lot. They wrote a lot of letters to my field, rather than UCC (should be UCD here) which only concentrate on technological advancement than the pure science.

W: OK so you mean UCC, your supervisors are more

R: friendly, yeah.

W: yeah

R: they are into my side of interest

W: OK, and so you did your bachelor degree in India or?

R: yeah in India

W: so, so what's the reason you want, like, you didn't do your master in India?

R: it's because I wanted an international education, [combination] with people from different nations, different culture, mixing up with them, and coping up with the international competition, because nowhere now is a local part, now all is a global village, you have to go international, and talk to different minds, even if you are doing it back in your country. But when you do your masters, you are already accustomed to all these conditions and things, so it will be easier when you go into the corporate role and you have the international people all around you, yeah

W: OK, that's great. That's good to hear. So what was your parents' attitude when you are telling them you are going to leave them for

R: that's alright, they are 2 sides, 1's when I got admission, they are very happy that the university is highly ranked.

W: yeah

R: and there was second sort of feeling that I am leaving them for a year

W: yeah

R: but keeping it apart, seeing the potential of the job opportunities, they are excited about things

W: OK

R: only the conversion rates of Indian rupees to European, that part is a little much, but apart from that everything is fine.

W: OK, sorry just one quick question, I didn't catch that properly, so, which part you were saying bother them a little bit.

R: the financial stuff.

W: oh, financial.

R: because I'm non-European have to pay the double the fees

W: OK

R: yeah. And €1 is equal to 75 Indian Rupees.

W: that's very expensive, yeah

R: so that conversion that gonna be a lot.

W: yeah, and so when you were applying for different universities, and choosing the countries, did your father or your mother try to talk with you, that, sorry I just, one second, I have a feeling that (W's phone has message/phone coming in). OK sorry for the interrupting, I will just the question again, OK

R: no problem, go on.

W: so when you were selecting countries and universities, were your, was your father or your mother try to give advice, for example, I, I think New Zealand is nice, why don't you go to New Zealand.

R: yeah, they didn't influence in the decision making.

W: yeah

R: but they were asking, once I made the decision, is it good for job opportunities, ah, or is the pay scale high, what about the immigration, if you want to come back immediately after or if you want to stay back for a couple of time and then come back.

W: yeah

R: there are questions are like this which I need to fulfil them in order to confirm, OK I am going to go to this place

W: yeah

R: there's, there's not much involvement in the decision making.

W: yeah, OK that's good. And so, you mentioned they were bothering a little bit, they were bothered a little bit by the fees

R: yeah

W: so did they pay for all the fees and living cost, or?

R: yeah, yeah I got a bank loan, my parents are not paying.

W: OK

R: there are a little paper, document conditions and the things. We can't afford so much fee, so I took a bank loan on my study

W: OK

R: all my fees and my living is on the bank loan now

W: OK and may I ask, because that's interesting to hear that, so was, is there any conditions for, for the bank loans?

R: it's only like what every year we need to pay them money back eleven point zero five percent (11.05%) of interests. Simple interest.

W: OK and may I ask does the bank check do you have the offer of the university, do you

R: oh yeah, oh yeah. They'll check all my offers and take up on all your passport, documents and it will sanction the loan only after the visa.

W: OK

R: so yeah

W: may I ask, because I just, interesting to hear that, is that easy to get it?

R: no, no, no, no we need to provide them some property, or something as their collateral.

W: OK

R: because if you are not paying the loan for a long time, they could take up that property and [auction] it.

W: OK

R: It enrols a lot of procedures, evaluation of my father's background, mother's background, and other bank details, whether we have loans and paid another things. And on the income tax returns and all these things. It will take about one month or so to get the process done.

W: OK that's, they have lots of procedures to follow and did your parents talk with any staff of UCC, for example

R: no, no, no

W: have you talk with any of the staff before you come here?

R: only the administrative staff. No one else, administrative, when I'm getting the fees and when there's trouble with IT systems. Nothing much.

W: OK

R: because UCC has everything very clearly on their website so there's no need to talking to

W: that's great, that's great to hear that. The website works well.

R: yeah

W: and so where were you get the information, for example before you come here did you search any information about Ireland?

R: obviously yeah, the decision of coming abroad was not made immediately. It was taken a year before

W: OK

R: when, the 4 years graduation in the third year ending, we tend to think about what to do next whether to go for a placement, so I skipped the placement. I got an offer in Infosys Limited, a software company

W: yeah

R: but I skipped that for doing it, because one year before we have to search nets and sites for the universities and international rankings

W: OK

R: and then there are career advisory councils all over the places, so they tell you which country and which information to go and all these things

W: OK

R: they might be not helpful, with the fields but they are really helpful with the immigration informations. So I have been to one consultancy and they were guiding me all through this.

W: OK. And was, because you were saying the consultancy, kind of give some information about that, so were they, did like, for example for your visa application, did they do all the work or?

R: no, no, no, no, they don't involve with the visa application, they only deal with telling whether the country is really good for international students, and how the job perspectives are and what the course are and what did the back students say

W: OK

R: they don't deal with the any visa or financial stuff.

W: OK, so they just consulting things,

R: yeah, they are just consulting and they are free

W: OK

R: they don't charge any money.

W: is that run by government or is that run by

R: it's a private thing. They are not. It's just free.

W: good to hear that.

R: yeah there are many of that.

W: OK and because you mentioned, I just quick question you mentioned they, they would tell the students whether or not the country is suitable for the international students, like what are the conditions, for example when they are describing to you, you will understand they mean actually it is good for international students.

R: because the consultancy is based in India, they will look about the first thing is the weather, the students can sustain there, because when you go to foreign Canada or Norway or Sweden, the conditions are too horrible. So first they think about the weather. And they think about the job perspective, what after finishing the course, because after doing a 1 year masters, spending 200,000 Rupees, euros and all these things, it's not so easy.

W: OK

R: so they look upon the job and then the value of the degree, is the degree valued out of the Europe?

W: yeah

R: they look about that. And then my profile. Is my profile suitable for the other country?

W: OK

R: because what's the average mark of the students over there, would I be getting admission or will I be spending only money on the application fee or something like that.

W: OK. So I just double check is the first condition you were mentioning is that weather

R: yeah weather and lifestyle, can we sustain over there.

W: OK

R: language, all these things

W: OK language. Like what type of weather or language will be, for example, will be Indian students like it

R: oh yeah, weather they don't mind anything which gets critical, too high, about 50 degree centigrade, or too low, like minus 20 at least they are not upset. Anything between that is fine. Language we can manage. Any language, and English is the best.

W: English is the best

R: best, yeah.

W: OK yeah, and so, so you get the information about UCC is mainly from UCC's website, and also you get some information about Ireland and Cork from the consultancy,

R: consultancy yeah

W: yeah consultancy, and is there any other media or channels you get information

R: Facebook

W: Facebook OK

R: obviously, students have passed out from UCC community, communities which are there on Facebook

W: OK

R: it's very good feedback

W: OK, so from their description, what was your imagination about Ireland before you come here?

R: the first thing they said is the people here are really good.

W: OK

R: they are really helpful, and there's no racism or anything like that

W: yeah

R: and they said academics are really good and is highly manageable.

W: yeah

R: so I was pretty satisfied by their words because they weren't boasting and put things on the top scale but they are saying in the reality.

W: OK

R: so I imagined ok this stuff will be like this. Only thing which bothers is the cost of living

W: OK

R: cost of living is a little higher than what you expected

W: yeah. So the people are good, and no racism and the academic are good so. Are they same with your expectation?

R: yeah, obviously, they are, it's more than my expectation, they said it's ok when I came into reality, the people are far better than what I expected. They are so friendly

W: yeah, OK, good to hear that

R: hmm—hmm

W: and so I understand you only like enrol, in the college for 3 weeks, and so for your master study, what are the things you feel could be very important for your study here

R: I don't get your question

W: like for example some people feel they need work in the lab all the time, so lab is very important for their study,

R: OK

W: some people probably study in the library, like me, all the time, so for me like library is very important for my study, so for you is there any facilities or any things, and also could be lecturers you feel is important?

R: definitely is the professors, because we don't need someone who is gonna say what is there in the book

W: OK

R: we need someone who's [idea/publish] because biotechnology is research orientated field

W: yeah

R: are where lab is important, but more than lab, idea is important

W: OK

R: so if there are teachings which can cultivate ideas, open things and they are talking about a lot of recent developments and how they make,

W: yeah

R: and that will be the most important resource

W: OK

R: because lab work, even the lab technician can do, no need for masters and PhD for that. Once you complete your undergraduation, you are able to work at the lab. Only thing is the professors and quality of teaching that matters.

W: OK, just double check was the professor include your supervisor or it's just the one professor from the department or

R: I'm talking in general.

W: in general OK

R: Here they are really good.

W: OK, that's good and so about you, about your life, and living in Cork while you are studying, so is there anything is important for your living here?

R: obviously, get used to the climate. I've been from a warm country to where the temperature is 30 degrees

W: yeah

R: here is cold so I guess spending one or two weeks inside the home to make yourself escape and the food pattern.

W: OK

R: obviously it's a lot different.

W: OK and may I ask are you in any religion?

R: yeah, I, I'm basically born in a Hindu family but I also believe in Christ.

W: OK

R: so I've been, I've been to Mass this Christmas at church

W: OK the reason I'm asking is just wondering do you have any specific food

R: ah, no, no, no, no nothing. I'm a vegetarian.

W: OK you are vegetarian, OK. Very healthy lifestyle. And so climate and food, so because we were talking about food, so do you mean, you were, you are looking for your home country's level

R: no, no, no, no, I'm not looking for my home country's food, I'm just discuss it because when you are eating your country's food you cannot keep up the fat and manage the cold. I have risk myself to eating cheeseburger and all these stuff to put some flesh on and get back again

W: OK all because of the weather.

R: yeah, all because of the weather.

W: OK so there's a question that I know it's still early to ask but after you graduate from UCC, do you have any plan about your future?

R: yeah, I'm gonna pursue PhD in current biological defence

W: OK, sorry biological?

R: defence

W: sorry how to spell

R: defence, d-e-f-e-n-c-e

W: Oh defence, oh sorry, after stop using laptop have problem to spell it. So where do you want to do PhD please?

R: where

W: which country or which university

R: it depends because it again now I'm doing a masters, it depending on my course and the lecturers available. I've chosen the colleges between UCD and UCC

W: yeah

R: similarly once I got through my masters, I will be deciding where to do my PhD in according to the particular topic, probably here or USA

W: OK

R: I think these are the best destinations are available today. USA and Ireland.

W: OK and because I know America has lots of universities, so probably will be hard to list it, but if you can choose from the university in Ireland, will, is there any university probably will be on the list?

R: in Ireland?

W: in Ireland

R: probably UCC is good, and UCD also

W: OK

R: yeah, probably in these two

W: yeah

R: As well interested in USA, in John Hopkins, Penn State and Boston.

W: OK

R: Because the scale of laboratories they have is really good.

W: OK and then it will be more depends on which university has the one in your filed.

R: yep

W: OK and have you think about if in the future, if you are working

R: hmm—hmm

W: which country you probably will choose to work?

R: home country is always the best,

W: OK

R: I wouldn't mind working in anywhere in Asia as well.

W: OK

R: and again it's only depending upon the climate.

W: OK depends on the climate.

R: because when you put Ireland people into India, it'll be the best place

W: OK

R: hah, hah, hah, hah, yeah. People here are really good.

W: yeah and I think if Ireland doesn't rain, we also have some good climate.

R: yeah

W: some days. It will come back. And so if we assume lots of companies at that moment because biotechnology is very popular subject even for now, for the technology field, I believe lots of companies will want you to work for them,

R: yeah

W: what are the conditions you will decide I will go to this company and I will say no to the others?

R: It's not have a labour work but like doing everything, doing things repeatedly, it's not of my kind

W: OK

R: I want something new everyday

W: OK

R: so some companies which are really into research and they can handle projects and stuff

W: yeah

R: which involve confluence of other things mathematics, computer science and biotechnology in a club that will be the best

W: yeah

R: Instead of going into a pharma company making the same quality test day by day, day by day. That's not my type

W: OK so you are more in the create new things all the time

R: yep

W: OK and if two companies, is for example, they both are very innovative, they create new things all the time, so how do you decide, like the next, will some other, like, factors will make you decide

R: obviously the growth aspect my career

W: OK your career growth aspect

R: so I gonna stay in the same position for a years and then I gonna crawl up

W: OK

R: and the pay scale also

W: OK the pay scales.

R: yeah

W: OK, do you have any kind of expectations, for example, after you graduate from your PhD, the pay cannot be lower than this number

R: ah no, it's just sustain my living and yeah, clear my bank loan what I have, that's it. No other expectation, an average salary. I'm not a money man.

W: OK, yeah I believe that will be very easy to reach

R: oh yeah

W: at your time at that moment. Yeah, and OK so the last question, is there any factor influence on your decision of come to study in UCC but we probably didn't talk in the conversation, we probably missed

R: no

W: OK you talked, you told everything

R: everything

W: OK brilliant, OK, the very last question, so how do you feel about the interview?

R: this is good, it's more like talking to a person rather than interview

W: OK, brilliant

R: that's good

W: OK good to hear that. I will turn this off