Education management and African college students' motivation to study abroad in China

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Abstract

With the advancement of China-Africa relations in the new era and the prosperous development of international student education in China, more and more African friends choose to study in China. This study aimed to study the education management and motivation of African students in China. The study made use of the descriptive design with 351 participants from a Jiangsu Normal University in China. The statistical tools used in the study were percentage for the profile weighted mean and ranking to determine the education management in terms of enrollment management, teaching management, management staff dealing with international students, daily management, and emotions and attitudes and the motivation dimension which included attractive factor to study abroad, opportunities in the future, and inducement to study abroad. To test the differences in the responses when grouped into profile, the ANOVA and the T-test were used, and Pearson r was used for the test of relationship. The findings of the study revealed that in terms of sex, the respondents had a nearly equal number, the age is concentrated in 19-30 years old, the most popular major was Internet Economics, all of them were African students in China. In terms of education management, African students generally agreed to all dimensions. Respondents agreed on the motivation to study abroad, with the highest being attractive factor and the lowest being inducement to study abroad. Sex had a significant difference on the dimensions on education management and on motivation, there were significant differences on attractive factor to study abroad, and opportunities in the future, which indicated that males and females have different levels of adaptability and preference for acceptance of education management and motivation to study abroad. All other items did not show significant differences. Alongside, education management was each significantly related to the dimensions of motivation. It indicates that there was a strong correlation between the education management of Chinese universities and the motivation of foreign students to study abroad. An action plan was proposed to improve education management and motivation in the universities. Optimization of education management in Chinese universities will stimulate foreign students to study in China, and foreign students' motivation to study in China will promote the progress of education management in Chinese universities.

Keywords: international student, education management, study abroad motivation

Education management and African college students' motivation to study abroad in China

1. Introduction

With the continuous development of China-Africa relations in the new era and the booming of international student education in China, more and more of our African friends are choosing to study in China. These international students are pursuing a variety of degrees in Chinese colleges and universities, covering a wide range of subject areas, including engineering, medicine, business, literature and so on. African students choose China as a study destination not only because of the close political relationship and organizational awareness of the Central African government but also because some Chinese universities have international reputation in specific fields, such as engineering, medicine, and economics, which provide quality education opportunities for African students. At the same time, the relatively low cost of study and the more affordable cost of living in China compared to some Western countries have attracted more international students to the country. In addition, China, as an important player in the global economy, offers various employment and development opportunities. By studying and living in China, African students hope to prepare themselves for better job opportunities in China or back in Africa in the future. In addition, international students want to learn about Chinese culture, language, and traditions, connect with the Chinese people and broaden their international perspectives through studying in China. The surge of African students studying in China promotes the healthy development of China-Africa relations and lays a foundation for enhancing China's cultural soft power and implementing the Belt and Road policy. At the same time, the scale and quality of international students have become important indicators to measure the level of international development of higher education in the country. This is as an important driving factor for the development of national education, the education of international students in colleges and universities and the satisfaction of international students with the educational services have received attention from all sides. However, there are a lot of challenges in the field of education management of international students though they are very interested to pursue their education in China. Although more and more scholars have paid attention to issues related to the education of international students in China and carried out in-depth research on the educational management model, educational management policy.

Besides, part of the research on the education management of African international students in China are conducted in the context of the "Belt and Road Initiative," scale and achievements is far inferior to the research on the education management of international students in China, lacking systematizes and integrity, and relevant research needs to be carried out urgently. Furthermore, it can be found that there exist problems in the current education management of African international students, such as insufficient enrollment channels, incomplete enrollment promotion, unreasonable curriculum settings, inadequate implementation of the tutorial system, and excessive differentiated management. In order to further improve the quality of educational management for African international students in China, countermeasures such as adhering to the idea of "a community with a shared future for mankind" to optimize the enrollment management; advocating the value of "harmony but different" to improve teaching management; implementing the "people-oriented" service tenet to improve daily management; deepening community value identification to promote students' cross-cultural adaptation should be implemented (Di, 2022).

As an important part of China's higher education management, the management of education for international students plays an active role in promoting the internationalization of higher education, supporting the construction of the "China Dream" and the "Belt and Road", and jointly building a community of human destiny. As the level of internationalization of higher education in China increases, international exchange and cooperation in education has made positive progress in promoting two-way study abroad, supporting China-Africa cooperation in running schools, and planning China-Africa humanities exchanges, etc., basically forming a pattern of opening education

in an all-rounded, broad field and at multiple levels. On the other hand, it is also important to examine the motivations of African students in choosing Chinese universities for their studies, which will enable Chinese educators to understand why Chinese universities attract African students, which will help educators to study what advantages and shortcomings Chinese universities have compared with those in other regions. This will help educators to study what advantages and shortcomings Chinese universities have compared to those in other regions, and to enhance the attractiveness of Chinese universities by expanding their advantages and making up for their shortcomings, so that more talents can be introduced to Chinese universities and China's talent pool can be expanded.

The African college students' motivation to study abroad in China are manifold. A few Chinese universities have an international reputation in specific fields, providing quality educational opportunities for African students. At the same time, the relatively low cost of study and the more affordable cost of living in China compared to some Western countries attract more international students to come. As a major player in the global economy, China offers abundant employment and development opportunities. By studying and living in China, African students hope to prepare themselves for better job opportunities in China or back in Africa in the future. By studying in China, African students also hope to learn about Chinese culture, language, and traditions, to connect with the Chinese people and to broaden their international perspectives (Chen, 2017). However, in the teaching management of colleges and universities, there are problems such as insufficient teachers of international student education in Africa, cross-cultural course articulation breaks, and lack of effective communication between teachers and students, etc. In the daily management of services, there are practical problems such as insufficient cross-cultural cognition of the administrators, and poor docking of the service management organizations. From the university level, universities should follow the national policy to expand the enrollment scale of African students coming to China, and they should not only focus on the increase of quantity and on the improvement of quality, but also innovate the management system and cultivation system, to improve the quality of African students coming to China as a whole.

In the face of these problems, this study collected data through the form of questionnaire survey, and combined the analysis of actual data with the existing relevant literature in the hope of prompting the education management personnel of Chinese universities to improve the education management system of international students from Africa in colleges and universities, to enhance the ability of self-governance of international students from Africa in China, to improve the theoretical strategy of the management system of international students in higher education and to promote the improvement of the humanistic management system, and to implement the flexible management. To carry out flexible management, for example: providing personalized support services to meet the different needs of international students. Provide international students with a diverse choice of programs and offer flexible arrangements where necessary. Provide diversified accommodation options to meet the different accommodation needs and affordability of international students. This will enhance the development of China's study abroad program. By studying education management in Chinese universities, problems and challenges can be identified, providing references and suggestions for improving education management. This includes aspects such as teaching quality, curriculum, teacher training, etc., which can help improve the quality of education and students' learning experience.

Understanding the motivation of international students can help universities better attract and retain international students and promote the internationalization of education. At the same time, it can also help provide better support and services to international students and enhance cross-cultural communication and understanding. By gaining a deeper understanding of the current situation and problems of education management in Chinese universities, it can provide the basis and suggestions for education reform and policy making. At the same time, the study of the motivation of international students can also provide reference for the development of related policies. It is beneficial through this research to help students better choose their schools and majors and improve their learning experience and employment competitiveness. Meanwhile, research on education management can help administrators to understand the problems and challenges of schools, and propose improvement measures to improve the quality of education and competitiveness of schools. Understanding the motivation of international

students can also help them to better attract and retain international students and promote the internationalization of schools. This study can also provide policy makers with evidence and recommendations to facilitate the formulation and implementation of relevant policies and promote education reform and international education exchange.

Objectives of the Study - This study aimed to determine the educational management and African college students' motivation to study abroad in China. Specifically, it described African students in terms of age and sex, assessed the educational management of African students in terms of enrollment management, teaching management, management staff dealing with international daily management, emotions and attitude, aspects of educational management of African students; identified participants' motivation in terms of attractive factor to study abroad, opportunities in the future, and inducement to study abroad; tested for significant differences when grouped according to characteristics, and tested for significant relationships between the variables. Finally, a plan of action to improve the educational management of African students was proposed.

2. Methods

Research Design - The researcher used a descriptive study to determine whether there is a relationship between educational management and the African college students' motivation to study abroad in China. A descriptive design is a research design that uses observation, survey, and description in a study to understand the nature, characteristics, and trends of a particular phenomenon, situation, or group. In descriptive research, the researcher is primarily concerned with describing and documenting the basic characteristics, frequencies, distributions, and relationships of the phenomenon, and is not concerned with making inferences about causation or the implementation of interventions. This research methodology is frequently employed to examine relationships, patterns, and trends while rigorously testing hypotheses in a structured and objective manner. Quantitative research finds extensive application across diverse disciplines such as psychology, sociology, economics, marketing, and the natural sciences, where using numerical data and statistical analysis is indispensable in deriving meaningful conclusions (Bloomfield, et. al., 2019). In this study through the questionnaire, the researcher conducted a descriptive analysis of the data, describing the general situation of the sample, analyzed the sample quantitatively through significance analysis and correlation analysis to get the relationship between each factor to further discuss the research.

Participants of the Study - This study involved 351 international students from Africa in Jiangsu Normal University in China. The total population of African students was 1,391. Many of the respondents were in the 19-24 and 25-30 age groups, there were about 80-150 people in each major, including master's and doctoral degree holders and undergraduate students. The questionnaire was randomly sent through the questionnaire star application and collected 351 questionnaires from those who responded.

Instruments of the Study - The researcher used a standardized questionnaire which was used for the study. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: the first part was the profile of African international students in China including sex, age, and major. The second part was about the education management of international students in Africa. It was based on Di 's (2022) Study of Educational Management of International Students in Africa. It consisted of five sub-areas: Enrollment management, Teaching management, Management Staff Dealing with International, Daily Management, Emotions and Attitudes. The third part was Motivation, adapted from Shan (2015) and Zhou (2015), "Exploring the motivation of college students to study abroad". The dimensions were taken from the survey which included questions on the attractive factors to study abroad, opportunities the participants saw in the future when studying abroad and the influences which induced them to study abroad.

Data Gathering Procedures - Based on combining literature review and empirical research, this study first collected relevant literature for retrospective analysis, grasped in-depth theory and practice related to the educational management of Chinese colleges and universities and the motivation of African international students to choose China. After receiving feedback from a research consultant, it underwent reliability testing by a

statistician to ensure suitability for the study. Following approval, the questionnaire was distributed, and its return was monitored and retrieved by the researcher. The study assessed the educational management of African students in Chinese universities in terms of enrollment management, teaching management, management staff dealing with international, daily management, emotions, and attitude, identified participants' motivations in terms of attractive factor to study abroad, opportunities in the future, and inducement to study abroad, and explored the pedagogical methods that Chinese universities should adopt in their educational management. It also explored the pedagogical methods and measures that should be adopted by Chinese colleges and universities to provide practical basis and theoretical support for the reform of Chinese colleges and universities' education and management of international students. Through the comprehensive application of these research methods, practical suggestions were put forward.

Data Analysis - The following statistical tools were used in analyzing the data. Frequency and percentage distributions were used to characterize the demographics of the respondents in terms of gender, age, and profession. Weighted averages and rankings were used to determine the influence of instructional management on Enrollment management, Teaching management, Management Staff Dealing with International, Daily Management, Emotions and Attitudes in the five dimensions of importance. As well as motivation in Attractive factor to study abroad, Opportunities in the future, Inducement to study abroad. The result of Shapiro-Wilk Test revealed that p-values of the main variable were greater than 0.05 which means that the data set is normally distributed. Therefore, Independent Sample t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test as part of the parametric tests to determine the significant differences.

Ethical Considerations - To observe the highly confidential nature of the interviews and data collected, no specific names were mentioned in the report. The identities of the interviewees were not revealed, except that they were African students studying in China. The researcher did not give personal opinions but just gave information and results based on the data collected.

3. Results and discussion

Table 1
Summary Table on Education Management

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Enrollment management	2.55	Agree	3.5
2. Teaching management	2.56	Agree	2
3. Management Staff Dealing with International	2.55	Agree	3.5
4. Daily Management	2.58	Agree	1
5. Emotions and Attitudes	2.48	Disagree	5
Composite Mean	2.5	5 Agree	

Legend: 3.50 - 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 - 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 1 is a summary of the above, the overall mean of 2.55 is higher than 2.50 indicating that the respondents had agreed towards the educational management of Chinese universities. First in rank was Daily Management with a score of 2.58, which indicates that the respondents maintain a highly appreciative attitude towards the Daily Management in Chinese universities. Although the efficient management methods were recognized, improvements should be made to address the difficulties of the different cultures and language barriers of the international students, including the strengthening of the daily management, the provision of better life support, and other aspects (Tian, et. al., 2018) to better serve international students.

The second rank was Teaching management with a score of 2.56. The teaching management of Chinese universities has been relatively mature, with strong faculty, strong academic atmosphere, and high-tech achievements, which was agreed by the respondents. However, in the face of students from different countries, teaching managers in Chinese universities should diversify and personalize their teaching management methods to meet the increasing number of international students (Li. et. al., 2020).

Enrollment management and Management Staff Dealing with International ranked third, with a score of 2.55.

Enrollment management is an important part of Chinese universities' efforts to recruit high-quality students, and the enrollment process must be open and transparent, mentor information must be complete, and scholarship programs must be tailored to the needs of international students. Enrollment management is an important part of recruiting high quality students to Chinese universities, the enrollment process must be open and transparent, information about mentors must be complete, and scholarship programs must be relevant to attract more talent into China. Management Staff Dealing with International is an essential part of the regulatory charter for African students in universities. This suggests that although there is some recognition of the need to deal with international affairs, there are some more pressing issues in the overall management of education such as language barriers and unclear regulations. There is a need to further examine this aspect of the work to determine where there may be room for improvement and to take measures such as establishing a foreign language commissioner and posting bilingual bylaws to enhance their effectiveness and impact in educational administration (Huang, et. al.,2018).

Emotions and Attitudes ranked at the bottom with a score of 2.48. Emotions and attitudes are a part of education that administrators must pay attention to, especially for international students who face different culture shock. The stress of cross-cultural adaptation has many effects on the emotions and attitudes of international students. There will be language barriers, cultural differences, and social disconnections. Educational administrators should pay attention to social support and mental health services. (Constantine, et. al.,2006)

Table 2
Summary Table on African College Students' Motivation to Study Abroad in China

	Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1.	Attractive factor to study abroad	2.55	Agree	2
2.	Opportunities in the future	2.56	Agree	1
3.	Inducement to study abroad	2.52	Agree	3
	Composite Mean	2.54	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 - 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 - 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 is a summary of the African college students' motivation to study abroad in China with the average score of 2.54. The indicator "Attractive Factors for Studying Abroad" had a weighted mean of 2.55 and ranked second. It indicates that participants perceive study abroad as having attraction factors, which may be various benefits such as cultural experiences, academic challenges, and personal growth. Smith, et. al.,(2020) believe that studying abroad can provide individuals with opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and enhance their international perspectives and cross-cultural communication skills. In addition, international students can receive broader and more in-depth education and training to enhance their professional skills and academic competencies.

The indicator "opportunities in the future" had a weighted mean of 2.56 and was ranked #1. This indicates that participants hold high expectations and confidence in future opportunities after studying abroad. These opportunities may involve career development, academic advancement, etc. High scores on this indicator reflect that participants hold a positive view of the potential rewards after studying abroad.

The "Inducement to Study Abroad", an indicator with a weighted mean of 2.52, was ranked 3rd. The slightly lower ranking suggests that participants had some agreement about their motivation for choosing to study abroad, perhaps because they saw value in studying abroad or were influenced by external factors such as family, social or professional pressures. Wilkins (2016) in his research, pointed out the benefits of study abroad, including expanding vision, improving language ability, enhancing self-confidence and other aspects, which are conducive to the comprehensive development of overseas students.

Taken together, Table 2 shows that participants have positive attitudes and expectations towards studying abroad. They perceived study abroad as having attractive factors and looked forward to the enriching opportunities and rewards that would come with it. This positive attitude may encourage them to actively pursue study abroad opportunities and to work hard to achieve their goals during the study abroad process.

Table 3	
Relationship Between Education Management and African College Students'	Motivation to Study Abroad in China

Relationship Between Education Management and Afr	rican College Studen	ts' Motivation to	Study Abroad in China
Enrollment management	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Attractive factor to study abroad	.935**	0.000	Highly Significant
Opportunities in the future	.933**	0.000	Highly Significant
Inducement to study abroad	.374**	0.000	Highly Significant
Teaching management			
Attractive factor to study abroad	.937**	0.000	Highly Significant
Opportunities in the future	.927**	0.000	Highly Significant
Inducement to study abroad	.359**	0.000	Highly Significant
Management Staff Dealing with International			
Attractive factor to study abroad	.938**	0.000	Highly Significant
Opportunities in the future	.929**	0.000	Highly Significant
Inducement to study abroad	.384**	0.000	Highly Significant
Daily Management			
Attractive factor to study abroad	.925**	0.000	Highly Significant
Opportunities in the future	.912**	0.000	Highly Significant
Inducement to study abroad	.362**	0.000	Highly Significant
Emotions and Attitudes			
Attractive factor to study abroad	771**	0.000	Highly Significant
Opportunities in the future	771**	0.000	Highly Significant
Inducement to study abroad	300**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant atp-value < 0.01

Table 3 demonstrates the relationship between educational management and African college students' motivation to study abroad in China. The r value in the table represents the Pearson's correlation coefficient, which is used to measure the degree of linear correlation between the two variables, while the p value is used to measure the significance level of the correlation. The strong positive correlation between educational management and motivation to study abroad, as indicated by the high correlation coefficients (r values) and the statistically significant p-values, suggests that effective educational management practices can contribute to enhancing students' motivation to study abroad. This implies that when students perceive that their educational institution provides good management practices, such as effective enrollment management, teaching management, staff support for international matters, and daily management, they are more likely to feel encouraged and supported in pursuing international study opportunities.

Whether it is enrolment management, teaching management, managers dealing with international affairs or daily management, they show a very strong positive correlation with "attractive factor to study abroad" and "opportunities in the future" in study abroad motivation. This suggests that improved educational management promotes students' perceptions of the attractiveness of study abroad and opportunities in the future, thus enhancing their motivation to study abroad. On the other hand, there was a negative correlation between the assessment of emotions and attitudes and African college students' motivation to study abroad in China. It is because most of the questions were negative questions, so motivation to study abroad showed negative correlation with the assessment of negative emotions and attitudes, suggesting a positive correlation between the assessment of positive emotions and attitudes and motivation to study abroad, indicating that positive emotions promote the initiation of study abroad behaviors. In conclusion, this table highlights the important relationship between the level of educational management and the motivation to study abroad.

Table 4
Proposed Action Plan for the Improvement of the Education Management and African College Students' Motivation to Study Abroad in China

Key Result Areas	Objectives	Strategies	Success Indicator	Persons Involved
1.Education				Educational
management	educational	situation of the international student	regularly invited to Assess the	administrators,
1.1 Emotions and	Administrators to value	group by conducting regular surveys	psychological problems of the	professors,
Attitudes	the	and evaluations of the international	international Student population,	international
	emotions and	student group to understand their	and the pass rate should reach	students,
	attitudes of	overall situation and changes in their	95%.	counselors, service
	African	needs and adjust management and	2.Two times a semester,a	providers.
	students in	support measures in time.	questionnaire is distributed to the	
	China.	Establishing Effective communication	international student body to assess	
		channels. Ensure that international	the level of satisfaction of the	

		students can easily communicate with	international student body with the	
		school administrators and counselors		
		by providing multiple	with 90% satisfaction rate.	
		communication		
		channels, such as face-to-face		
		meetings, emails, online chats, etc., so		
		that they can share their problems,		
		suggestions, and feelings at any time		
2.African college		Collaborate with foreign universities	1.Collaboration with two	Education
		for exchange programs.	universities per year increase in the	management team,
study abroad in China	African students on the	Engage alumni who studied abroad	number of	alumni association,
	Opportunities to study	to share their experiences.	exchange project partnerships	international office
,	abroad		established.	
abroad			Eighty percent (80%) of the	
			distributed flyers surveying alumni	
			and students on the percentage of	
			positive feedback	
		Offer scholarships and grants	8 11	Financial aid office,
	support for African	specifically for African students.		scholarship
	students	Develop financial planning	were awarded scholarship	committee,
		1	B	finance
		students.	8 11	advisors
			students attended	
			the financial planning workshops.	

4. Conclusions and recommendations

In terms of education management, African students generally agreed to all dimensions. Respondents agreed on the African college students' motivation to study abroad in China, with the highest being attractive factor and the lowest being inducement to study abroad. Sex had a significant difference on the dimensions on education management and on motivation, there were significant differences on attractive factor to study abroad, and opportunities in the future, which indicated that males and females have different levels of adaptability and preference for acceptance of education management and African college students' motivation to study abroad in China. All other items did not show significant differences. Education management were each significantly related to the dimensions of African college students 'motivation to study abroad in China. It indicates that there was a strong correlation between the education management of Chinese universities and the African college students 'motivation to study abroad in China. Optimization of education management in Chinese universities will stimulate foreign students to study in China, and foreign students' motivation to study in China will promote the progress of education management in Chinese universities. An action plan was proposed to improve education management and motivation to study abroad in the universities in China.

The government may provide more scholarships and subsidy programs to attract more foreign students to study in China. Formulate a more friendly and open visa policy, simplify visa procedures, and provide more convenience and security for foreign students. Also, strengthen legal protection and security management for foreign students to ensure that their rights and interests are not violated. The schools may provide more bilingual teaching programs in Chinese and English to meet the learning needs of students from different countries. They may also strengthen international exchanges and cultural exchange activities to enhance exchanges and cooperation between international students and Chinese students. Furthermore, they may provide good accommodation and living conditions to help international students better integrate into Chinese campus life. The education administrators may establish a perfect management system for international students, including all aspects of enrollment, cultivation, service, and management. They may also strengthen study counseling and life guidance for international students and help them solve problems in study and life and proactively listen to the opinions and suggestions of international students and adjust and improve management measures in time. The students may actively participate in campus activities and club organizations to expand interpersonal relationships and social circles and focus on learning and self-improvement as well as make full use of the opportunities to study in China to gain more knowledge and experience. The future researchers may conduct a similar study which will focus on ways to promote intercultural communication and support intercultural adjustment of international students. The international community may promote international cooperation programs among schools, including student exchange programs and dual-degree programs, to provide more choices and opportunities for international students. Also, establish alliances and partnerships with educational institutions in other countries or regions to jointly promote the development of international education and the exchange and cooperation of international students.

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