

"Understanding Youth Perspectives on Parental Influence in Study Abroad Decisions: A Study from Ernakulam District, Kerala"

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Abstract

With the increasing globalization of higher education, there is a hike in number of young people from Kerala are seeking educational opportunities abroad. This study explores the youth perception of parental influence on study abroad decision making. Using a combination of data collection methods, including questionnaires and interviews, this study examines the extent of parental influence in study abroad decision-making as well as the factors that impact parental involvement. Parent-child communication dynamics, cultural norms, parental educational ambitions, and socioeconomic level are all significant contributing factors related to their children perception. The research objective is to determine the parental influence and factors that motivate parental involvement in study abroad decision making, specifically in relation to Ernakulam District, Kerala.

Keywords: Youth perception, Parental Influence, Study Abroad, Decision Making.

1. Introduction

Miles Lee, (2018) It is well acknowledged that, in our increasingly globalized culture, studying overseas is crucial. The desire to pursue further education abroad has been increasingly common among young people in Ernakulam, in recent years. This tendency is a result of the internationalization of education as well as the benefits of varied learning environments and exposure to various cultures. Even though parental influence is significant, many other variables influence each student's choice to pursue an education overseas. Babu & Arasavilli, (2024) With a focus on the interplay between peer dynamics, parental influence, and academic concerns within the framework of the global higher education market. This study investigates the factors that impact students decisions to pursue higher education abroad. Studies highlight the influence of parents on making decisions about education, particularly when it comes to studying overseas, given Kerala's focus on family ties. (Yusoff, Ationg, & Esa, Irma Wani Othm) While selecting a place of study, a proactive decision for each individual, family and friends have a significant social influence. The purpose is to give a thorough knowledge of how a group of international students were able to have their families have an impact on their decision to study overseas. However, in the context of Ernakulam, this phenomenon has received very little attention.

By examining how parents participate in the decision-making process, this study tries to close this gap and explore the complex ways that parent-child dynamics influence children's desires for studying abroad.

II. Need of the Study

The younger generation in Kerala is more inclined to pursue higher education elsewhere.

The growing significance of international education makes it necessary to investigate young people's perspectives of parental influence on their decision to study abroad, particularly in the Ernakulam region. Study abroad initiatives give students access to priceless cross-cultural experiences, opportunities for personal development, and improved professional prospects (Perna, 2006). These decisions are greatly affected by parental influence, which has an impact

on career guidance, emotional support, and financial assistance (Gofen, 2009). Gaining insight into this influence in the socio-cultural environment of Ernakulam, a region distinguished for its excellent educational standards offers different perspectives on family dynamics and choices regarding education. The present study aims to determine the perception of youths regarding the level of parental influence on them while they consider about studying abroad, and also the factors that lead to parental involvement in the decision-making process, with a focus on the Ernakulam District.

III. Objective of the Study

- ❖ To examine the youth perception with regard to parental influence on studying abroad decision making with special insight on Ernakulam District.
- ❖ To determine the factors that motivate parental involvement in study abroad decision- making with special insight on Ernakulam District.

IV. Statement of the Problem

The decision to study abroad is a significant milestone in a student's educational journey, often influenced by various factors, including parental guidance and support. In the context of Ernakulam District, where educational aspirations are high, understanding the extent and nature of parental influence on students' study abroad decisions is crucial. However, there is limited research on how youth in this region perceive their parents' role in this decision-making process. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring youth perceptions of parental influence on their decision to pursue education abroad, providing insights from family guidance and practices.

This investigation will help to identify youth perception with regard to parental influence on studying abroad decision making and also to determine the specific areas, where parents play a pivotal role, such as financial considerations, academic reputations and career guidance, cultural exposure, safety measures and adaptability.

V. Review of Literature

1. Johnson & Meng, (2023) This study examines how Chinese students decide which countries to study in, with a particular emphasis on a minority that is under represented in the literature: families of students. Three goals are pursued by the paper. In the context of a child's decision to study abroad, to examine the relationship between Chinese parents and their offspring; to learn the justifications parents provide for influencing their child's choice; and to look into the impact of the macroenvironment on the family decision- making process in the context of international education. The study's conclusions show that Chinese parents are very interested in and involved in their children's choices about their overseas education.
2. Babu & Arasavilli, (2024) This study explores the factors that influence students' decisions to pursue higher education overseas, with a particular emphasis on the interactions among peer dynamics, parental influence, and academic concerns in the context of the global higher education market. The results highlight how crucial family dynamics and educational expectations are in determining social interactions and academic achievement. The report also identifies areas that require greater investigation, highlighting the necessity for a more thorough comprehension of the decision-making environment and its consequences for international higher education.
3. Amani and Kim (2017) The purpose of this study was to better understand and identify the factors that influence college students' decisions to engage in short-term study abroad programs. The once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, chances for academic transfer, individual timing, financial affordability, support from family and professors, the honors program, and group affinity were among the contributing factors. Additionally, participants in this study discussed how they managed to get past obstacles related to their families and careers such as money and worries about striking a balance between their studies and personal lives in order to participate in study abroad programs.
4. Miles Lee, (2018) It is commonly known how important it is to study abroad in our increasingly globalized society. The number of American students who actually study abroad is rather low, despite the well-established advantages that study abroad programs offer. The combined influence of parents, friends, professors, and significant others on students' decisions to study abroad has not only been studied, but research has also concentrated a great deal on the financial reasons students choose not to study abroad and has touched on the impact of social pressures on this choice.

5. Spindler (2017) Academic study abroad programs have gained popularity at colleges across the nation as a result of educators' growing awareness of the value of students receiving a global education as a result of globalization. The findings showed that attitudes about scheduling, homesickness, family expectations, and job possibilities were important determinants of students' intent as opposed to their action when it came to choosing to study abroad. By examining two novel notions, homesickness and fun, and examining the factors influencing both intended and actual behavior for the first time, this study adds to the body of research on study abroad experiences.
6. Marjanovic and Pavlovic (2018) Higher education institutions are becoming more transnational in order to meet the difficulties posed by globalization. Based on a survey of the literature, this paper discusses the problem of consumers' decision-making in higher education. The purpose of this essay is to develop a theoretical framework that identifies and organizes the variables that affect high school graduates' decisions to pursue international education. Six categories comprise the 114 components that make up the suggested model. The model facilitates the evaluation of every component and its impact on the student's choice, in addition to the evaluation of the interactions between the factors.
7. Sobol & Griner, (2014) This study aims to shed more light on the reasons Chinese students in Zhejiang Province choose to study overseas. Globalization is increasing and so is the significance of international business and education in today's world. To investigate the following hypothesis: Does globalization impact Chinese students' interest in and desire for studying abroad? surveys were sent out and interviews were held. The findings reveal five phases of motivation: outlying influences, parental influence, personal dynamics, reverse motivation, and globalization persuasion. Chinese students in Zhejiang Province are found to consider each category unevenly when making decisions, based on analysis.
8. Christine, University of Minnesota case study on parental involvement in study abroad, (2010) Parents now have a major role in their children's study abroad experience. This study looked at how parents' ties with the school and their students help to define their roles in a constructive way. This study specifically examined the situation of the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities campus's Learning Abroad Center. In order to examine how the office assigns a position to parents and how parents create their own role, the researcher employed a variety of techniques to collect opinions from the institution as well as parents of study abroad students.
9. Yusoff, Ationg, & Esa, Irma Wani Othm, (2020) While the choice of a study destination rests with the individual, social influences from family and friends remain important. The purpose of this essay is to give a thorough knowledge of how a group of international students were able to have their families have an impact on their decision to study overseas. Using a series of interview questions that were developed through a comprehensive protocol interview conducted during a pilot research, a group of international students were successfully questioned. The results of this qualitative study, which involved 40 foreign students, discussed the role of family in making decisions to continue education overseas as a result of diaspora-driven incentives.
10. Othman, Mohd, & Jupiter, (2017) Higher education institutions are a vital sector that significantly and competitively contributes to the growth of a nation. One of the primary requirements for fulfilling the vision and mission of international level colleges is the enrollment of overseas students, who are also considered a source of revenue. This concept paper investigates the elements that influence students' decisions to study abroad, with the goal of helping universities plan their marketing strategies and enroll more foreign students. The conversation also highlights how crucial it is to comprehend why overseas students select the programs and courses they do at their preferred universities.

VI. Research Methodology

Population

The target population includes those aspirants who completed their higher secondary education, graduation and post-graduation studying overseas from Ernakulam District made up the population of the study.

Sample

A sample of 100 students were selected through convenience sampling. It is a technique used to choose samples according to the convenience of the researcher from various places in Ernakulam District. Using a structured questionnaire, primary data were gathered from young people in the Ernakulam District who were enrolled and wishes to study international education. In the present study, the information gathered for secondary data from publications, journals, and websites. For the present study, percentage analysis, weighted mean and One-way ANNOVA were the tools used.

Hypothesis

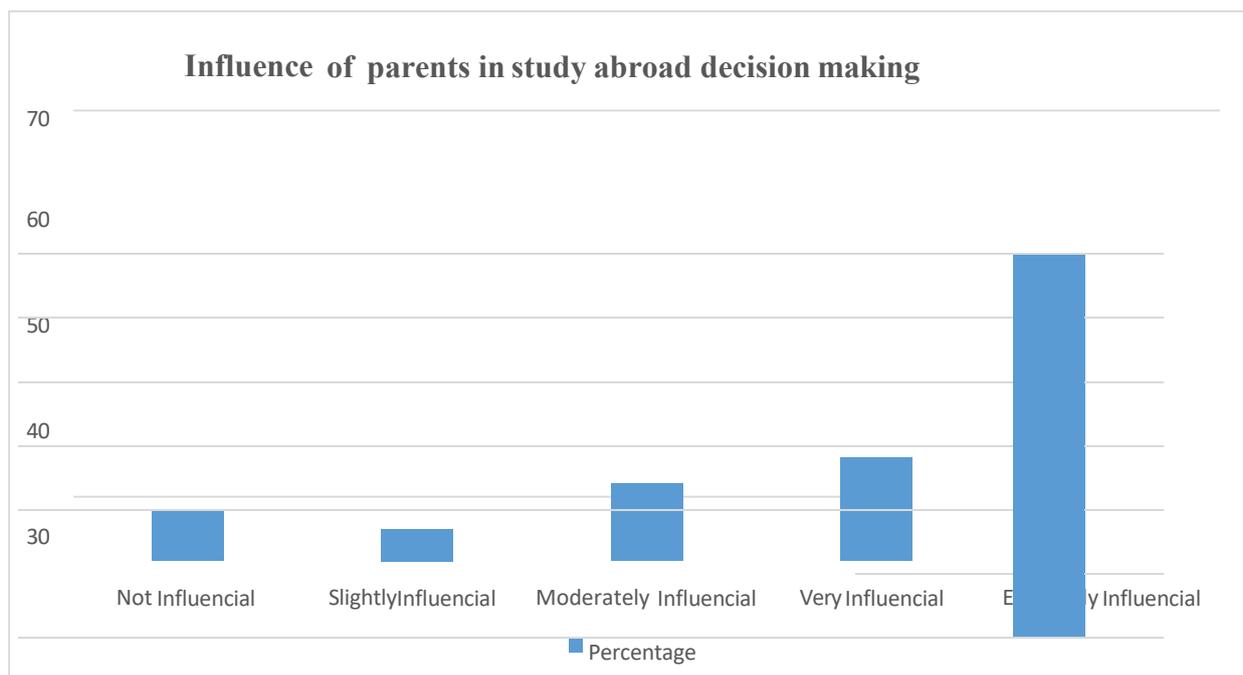
Ho: There is no significant difference in the factors that motivate parental involvement in the study abroad decision-making process for male & female students.

VII. Results and Discussions

Table – 1 Students perception of parental Influence in study abroad decision making

| Influence of your parents in study abroad decision Making | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|------------|------------|
| Not Influential | 8 | 8 |
| Slightly Influential | 5 | 5 |
| Moderately Influential | 12 | 12 |
| Very Influential | 16 | 16 |
| Extremely Influential | 59 | 59 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

(Source: Field Survey)



The above table shows that, in the eyes of the youth, 59% of their parents have extreme influence, 16% have a very significant influence, 12% have a moderate influence, 5% have a slight influence, and only 8% have no influence over their decision to study abroad.

Table -2 Factors that motivate parental involvement in study abroad decision making

| Sl. No. | Factors that motivate parental involvement in study abroad decision making | Mean | Rank |
|---------|--|------|------|
| 1 | Family and social expectation | 3.61 | 1 |
| 2 | Financial considerations | 3.60 | 2 |
| 3 | Cultural exposure and personal growth | 3.49 | 3 |
| 4 | Adaptability and interpersonal skills | 3.48 | 4 |
| 5 | Academic Reputation and career prospects | 3.47 | 5 |
| 6 | Safety concerns | 3.35 | 6 |

(Source: Field Survey)

The table mentioned above shows an overview of the factors that motivate parental influence regarding study abroad decisions.

The ranks assigned by the respondents were tabulated, and a mean score was determined. Based on the mean score, the factors which have highest mean score will be the mostly motivated factor of parental involvement in study abroad decision making.

Here, social and familial expectations drove parental participation the greatest. The financial consideration was the second motivating factor. Exposure to many cultures and personal growth come next, then interpersonal skills and flexibility. The fifth and sixth factors that drove the parental participation were academic reputation & career prospects and safety concerns.

Table -3 Factors that motivate parental involvement in study abroad decision making-Gender wise analysis

| Sl. No. | Gender | Factors that motivate parental involvement in study abroad decision making | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------|------|
| | | Family and social Expectation | Financial considerations | Cultural exposure and personal growth | Adaptability and interpersonal skills | Academic Reputation and career prospects | Safety concerns | |
| 1 | Male | Mean | 3.75 | 3.68 | 3.39 | 3.33 | 3.53 | 3.32 |
| | | Rank | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| 2 | Female | Mean | 3.42 | 3.49 | 3.63 | 3.67 | 3.41 | 3.4 |
| | | Rank | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 6 |

(Source: Field Survey)

Table -4 One-way ANNOVA- Results

| Factors motivated | Sources of Variations | Sum of Squares | Degree of Freedom | Mean Square | F-Ratio (Calculated Value) | Sig. Value (Table Value) |
|--|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.Academic Reputation and career prospects | Between Groups | 00.420 | 1 | .420 | .137 | .712 |
| | Within Groups | 300.490 | 98 | 3.066 | | |
| | Total | 300.910 | 99 | | | |
| 2.Cultural Exposure & personal growth | Between Groups | 1.435 | 1 | 1.435 | .469 | .495 |
| | Within Groups | 299.555 | 98 | 3.057 | | |
| | Total | 300.990 | 99 | | | |
| 3.Family & social Expectation | Between Groups | 2.763 | 1 | 2.763 | .894 | .347 |
| | Within Groups | 303.027 | 98 | 3.092 | | |
| | Total | 305.790 | 99 | | | |
| 4.Financial consideration | Between Groups | .940 | 1 | .940 | .321 | .572 |
| | Within Groups | 287.60 | 98 | 2.929 | | |
| | Total | 288.00 | 99 | | | |
| 5.Safety concerns | Between Groups | .155 | 1 | .155 | .056 | .813 |
| | Within Groups | 270.595 | 98 | 2.761 | | |
| | Total | 270.75 | 99 | | | |
| 6.Adaptability & interpersonal skills | Between Groups | 2.851 | 1 | 2.851 | 1.012 | .317 |
| | Within Groups | 276.109 | 98 | 2.817 | | |
| | Total | 278.960 | 99 | | | |

Table-4 mentioned that, there is a significant gender wise difference in the factors, such as family and social expectations and adaptability and interpersonal skills, that motivate parental involvement in the study abroad decision-making process.

All other factors have no gender wise significant difference that motivate parental involvement in the study abroad decision-making process.

VIII. Findings

1. Majority of the children have interaction with their parents
2. Most of the parents influence their children’s study abroad decisions.

3. According to the perception of youth, 92% of their parents were influenced in study abroad decisions.
4. The mostly motivated factor of parental involvement was family and social expectations.
5. Second motivated factor was financial considerations.
6. Thirdly and fourthly motivated factors were cultural exposure and personal growth and adaptability and interpersonal skill.
7. Lastly motivated factors were Academic reputation & career prospects and safety concern.

IX. Suggestions

1. Create and implement parental empowerment initiatives with the goal of enlightening and including parents in the selection of study abroad programs.
2. Work together with specialists in fields like psychology, sociology, education, and cultural studies to embrace multidisciplinary methods for comprehending the role that parents play in their children's decision to study abroad.
3. Use social network analytic approaches to investigate how social networks, such as friends, family, and neighbors, affect parental engagement in study abroad choices, determine the social networks that influence the attitudes and actions of parents.

X. Conclusion

Based on the results, it can be concluded that youth's perception regarding parental influence has a big impact on how young people in the Ernakulam District decide which to study abroad. When making such selections, the majority of the students might take their parents' preferences and opinions into consideration. The study concluded that the parents in Ernakulam District were highly influential highlighting a number of factors that involve parents' decision-making when it comes to their children's study abroad experience, including expectations about the children's future academic and professional success, safety and well-being worries, cultural norms, and financial considerations.

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