

How Millennials in Indonesia Perceive in Studying Abroad to China

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Abstract: China, officially the People's Republic of China (PRC), is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country. With a population of 1.3 billion, China is the second largest economy and is increasingly playing an important and influential role in development and in the global economy. Asian universities increased from holding just 8 spots to 18 in 2015 on the *World University League Tables* published by the *Times*. Hongkong, Japan, and Singapore are major contributors to this, as well as China. The researcher intends to find out how millennials perceive studying abroad to China. Method used in this research was descriptive. Sampling technique used in this research was non probability sampling using Hair et.al theory and the data were analyzed by using IBM SPSS. Millennials in Indonesia were interested in deepening new culture, that was the reason why they perceive studying to China could be interesting.

Keywords: Millennials; Studying Aboard; China; Perception.

1. Introduction

China, officially the People's Republic of China (PRC), is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country. Since initiating market reforms in 1978, China has shifted from a centrally-planned to a more market-based economy and has experienced rapid economic and social development. With a population of 1.3 billion, China is the second largest economy and is increasingly playing an important and influential role in development and in the global economy. China has been the largest single contributor to world growth since the global financial crisis of 2008. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that China is much richer as a whole than it used to be, and this is largely thanks to the economic reform, including lowering its tariffs and liberalizing some sectors of the economy, that accompanied China's accession to the WTO. In this sense, its economic status has changed. While it is still developing, it is much closer to the developed countries than before.

Generally, it is millennial's families that have the say in where they study. But it is not just wealthy families sending their millennial children abroad; many middle-class parents are also choosing to do so. A poll by 51jobs.com in Shanghai found: "Of the 607 parents who took part in the survey, 76.8% responded that they plan to send their children to study overseas even if the cost of tuition and living expenses may reach 1 million Yuan (US \$163,111)."

There has been a shift in the balance of scales of higher education from the West to the East. Asian universities increased from holding just 8 spots to 18 in 2015 on the *World University League Tables* published by the *Times*. Hongkong, Japan, and Singapore are major contributors to this, as well as China.

Seeta Bhardwa in Denis Simon (2018), the executive vice-chancellor of Duke Kunshan University, thinks that there are many reasons why students would choose to study in China.

“Students who are now studying in the Asia-Pacific region have all sorts of career opportunities,” he said. They can use their knowledge of the East and the West, and they can learn new languages and new cultures. In fact, research predicts that China will be teaching at least 500,000 international students by 2020.

The number of people that are interested in studying to China have been increasing because of medias, for example in Kenya, research by Zhang and Jane (2016) stated that medias in China generally help in promoting publics’ awareness about China, and people looked up to their roles as a provider in alternative information with a potential to benefit China and Kenya relationship.

According to the data published by IIE Atlas report 2015, countries that sent most students to China are South Korea, USA, Thailand, Russia and Japan. As economic ties tighten between China and rest of the world, some countries have launched campaigns to motivate their countrymen to learn Chinese. For example, during President Xi’s visit to USA in September 2015, President Obama announced the 1 million strong program which aims to expand the number of US K-12 students studying Mandarin to 1 million by 2020.

Thus, the purpose of this research was to examine how millennials in Indonesia percept studying abroad to China. The research questions for this study were:

1. How millennials percept studying abroad to China?
2. Which is the highest sub-variable of perception scored by respondents?

2. Related Works/Literature Review

Perception. According to Quinn in Sarlito (2012:93) “Perception is a combination of process from a sensation received by the result of brain work”. Pareek in Sobur (2003:446) said “Perception can be defined as a process of accepting, sectioning, interpreting, testing, and giving a reaction to data”. This explanation support Sarwono’s opinion (2012:86) “Perception happens when accepting stimulus from outside world that are captured by supporting organs that then enter inside of a brain”.

According to Yue (2016), there are several factors that could affect perceptions:

- a. Observer, an implementation from what a person sees depends on that person characteristics.
- b. Attitude, a person’s attitude really affect perception that he/she has towards his/her surroundings.
- c. Motives, reasons behind a person’s behavior that could stimulate and give strong influence on the formation of their perspectives towards everything.
- d. Interest, our attention focuses on things that are currently being faced make our perspectives different.
- e. Experience, events that someone has gained.
- f. Expectation, an illustration that forms an image of any circumstances.

Learning. E.R Hilgard in Sanjaya, Wina, 2009:112 defines learning as a “permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of prior experience”. Learning is defined as a process of change in attitude and behavior after the interaction with learning resources. Learning resources can through books, neighborhood, teachers and others. Gredler, While (1986) claimed that process of changing attitudes and behaviors that are substantially in an artificial environment and very little dependency on the natural situation.

Millennials. A generation is a group which can be identified by year of birth, age, location and significant events that create their personality (Guha, 2010; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Over the past sixty years, there have been three generations dominating the workplace: Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials (Kaifi, et al. 2012). The most recent generation to enter the workforce are the Millennials, who are individuals born between 1980 and 2000. They are called Millennials because of their closeness to the new millennium and being raised in a more digital age (Kaifi et al., 2012). This generation was influenced by computers and a greater acceptance of non-traditional families and values (Andert, 2011). Millennials are known to be achievement focused. They have a need not only to do well, but to excel and surpass all goals and aspirations (Kaifi et al., 2012; Kowske et al., 2010). This leads them to seek out new learning opportunities.

3. Material & Methodology

The researcher intends to find out how millennials percept studying abroad to China. Questionnaire was used as the instrument of this research and was spread through social media in Google Form. Method used in this research was descriptive. It involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). And the approach used in this research was quantitative through a survey based on social media (Sugiyono, 2017:35) with using primary and secondary data. The examined variables are quantified using ordinal scale with five levels (Strongly Agree- Agree- Quiet Agree- Disagree- Strongly Disagree), and for respondents' biography data were quantified using nominal and interval scale.

Sampling technique used in this research was non probability sampling using Hair et.al theory (2010) with a reason that the chosen respondents were those who will be and are studying in China. This sampling technique needed to be used because the populations were taken widely and the amount of accurate data statistically were not found. So, the formula for this sampling technique was $n \times 10, 8 \times 10 = 80$.

The data were analyzed by using IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 25.0. Reliability test (Ghozali, 2011) and Validity test are used to ensure the consistency level from the respondents in answering and their certainty in understanding, comprehending, and experiencing the proposed statements (Sugiarto et al. 2015:142).

Reliability concerns the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consist result (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). Reliability is also concerned with repeatability. Validity explains how well the collected data covers the actual area of investigation (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). Validity basically means "measure what is intended to be measured" (Field, 2005). Descriptive statistics are used to summarize data in an organized manner by describing the relationship between variables in a sample or population.

Calculating descriptive statistics represents a vital first step when conducting research and should always occur before making inferential statistical comparisons. Descriptive statistics include types of variables (nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio) as well as measures of frequency, central tendency, dispersion/variation, and position. Since descriptive statistics condense data into a simpler summary, they enable health-care decision-makers to assess specific populations in a more manageable form (Stoltzfus, Kaur P, J, Yellapu V. 2018). In this research, perception is interpreted in 5 interval scale;

Table 1. Interpretation of Variables Interval

Class Interval	Perception
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Uninterested
1.80 – 2.60	Uninterested
2.60 – 3.40	Interested Enough
3.40 – 4.20	Interested
4.20 – 5.00	Strongly Interested

Continuous variables are further categorized as either interval or ratio. Interval variables are measured along a continuum and have a numeric value, but without zero points, so the lowest point is 1.00. Interval is made from $5/5 - 1$ which equals 0.8. Then the lowest point (1.00) is added to 0.8 which later be the highest point of the first perception. 0.8 will continuously be added to the last highest point which becomes the next highest point for other perceptions until reach the maximum point of 5.00.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

Data processing techniques in this study use a computation calculation SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solution) Version 25.0 for Windows because this program has a high statistical ability and the data – 20 – management system in the graphical environment use a simple descriptive menus and dialog boxes, making it easy to understand how to operate it (Sugiyanto, 2012).

Table 2. The Result of Validity Test

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Behavior1	30.25	12.467	.274	.774
Behavior2	29.56	13.462	.372	.754
Motive1	30.00	12.000	.447	.740
Motive2	30.25	10.733	.527	.726
Motive3	30.00	10.933	.520	.726
Interest	29.88	11.317	.655	.705
Experience	29.69	12.229	.540	.728
Expectation	30.13	11.850	.450	.739

Degrees of freedom are the number of values in a distribution that are free to vary for any particular statistic (Healey, 1990). Degree of freedom is also used to count the intended population by r table, the formula is $n-2$ where n is the total population or the sample of respondents.

R table can be found by searching the t table first [transform – compute variable – target variable – type $t_{0.05}$ (0.05 was chosen because the researcher wanted to count t table with the significant level of 5%) – type the formula: $IDF.T(0.95df)$ in numeric expression (0.95 was the conviction level)], and the result will be shown in data view. After the result had been shown in the data view, the researcher intended to find the r table [transform – type $r_{0.05}$ in compute variable – type the formula: $t_{0.05}/SQRT(df+t_{0.05}^2)$ in numeric expression. The amount of r table for this research is 0.43.

The colored numbers from the Table 4.1 are considered as the t table, it was used in validity test to see if respondents were really understood the provided declaration in the questionnaire. R table and t table were compared with the rules of: t table > r table (t table is bigger (in numerical) compared to r table). If t table > r table, then the declaration is not valid which leads that respondents did not understand the situation provided in the declaration. From the result in Table, all declarations provided in the questionnaire are valid because of r table > t table.

Table 3. The Result of Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.763	8

The reliability of the instrument refers to the stability and consistency of the instrument developed (Creswell, 2010). The reliability level of the instrument is represented by Alpha Cronbach (Creswell, 2010). Pallant (2001) states Alpha Cronbach's value above 0.6 is considered high reliability and acceptable index (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Whereas, the value of Alpha Cronbach is less than 0.6 is considered low. Alpha Cronbach values in the range of 0.60 – 0.80 are considered moderate, but acceptable. This shows that the questionnaire is valid because of r table (From Table 4.2) > t table (From Table 4.1).

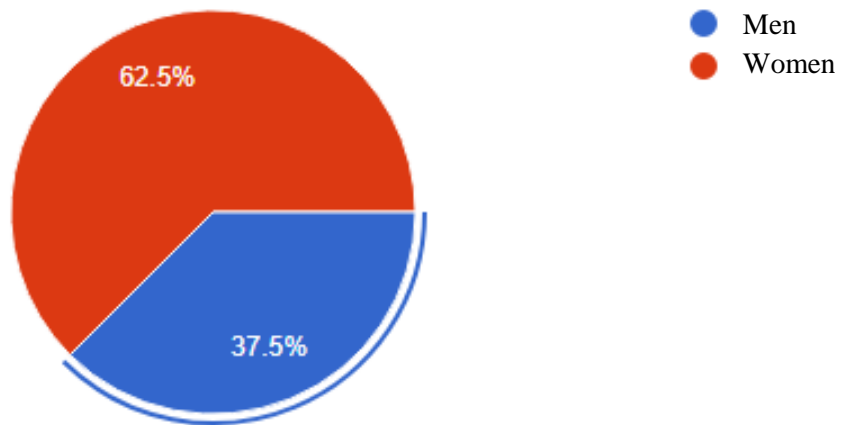


Figure 1. The Results of Respondents' Data (Gender)

The figure shown above is the result of respondents' gender. Which shown that from 80 respondents, 62.5% of them were women and 37.5% of them were men.

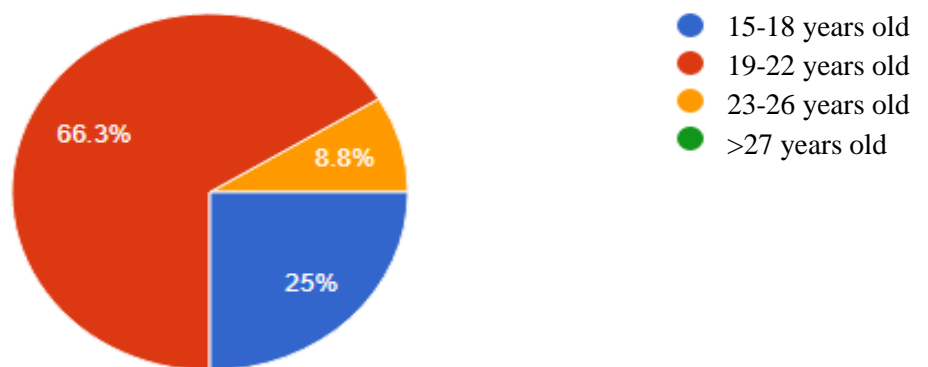


Figure 2. The Results of Respondents' Data (Age)

The figure shown above is the result of respondents' age. Which shown that from 80 respondents, 66.3% of them aged 19-22 years old, 25% of them aged 15-18 years old, 8.8% of them aged 23-26 years old, but none of them aged above 27 years old.

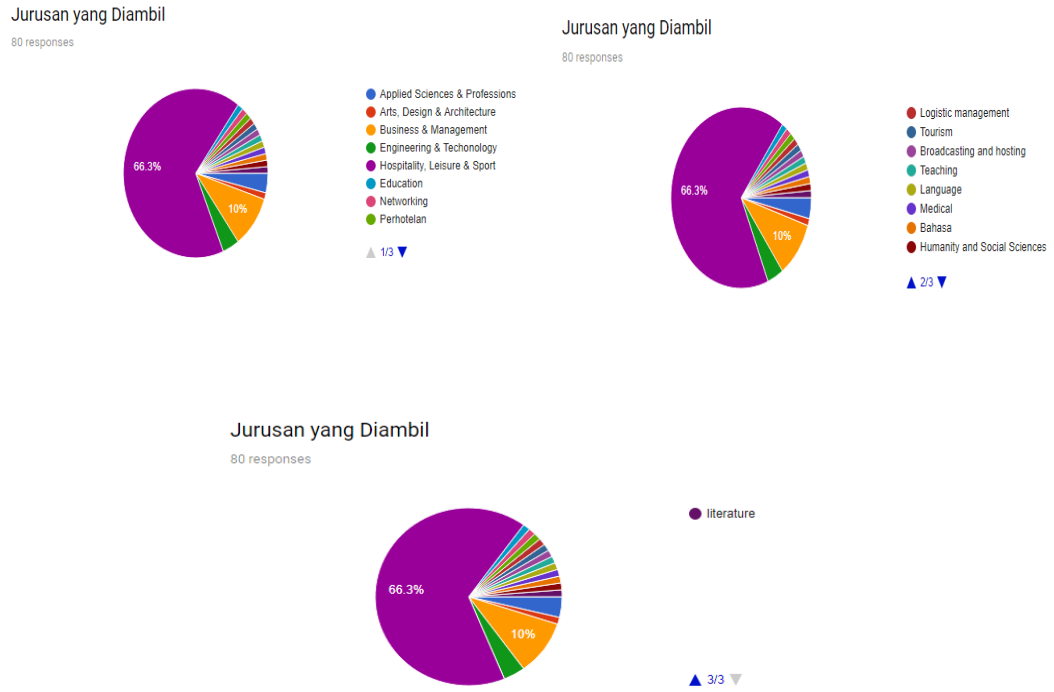


Figure 3. The Results of Respondents' Data (Major)

The table shown above are the results of respondents' major. The highest percentage with 66.3% is Hospitality, Leisure, and Sport. And the second highest one is Business Management with 10%.

Table 4. The Result Frequency of Behavior

		Open Minded			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	2.00	2	2.7	2.7	4.0
	3.00	17	22.7	22.7	26.7
	4.00	34	45.3	45.3	72.0
	5.00	21	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total		75	100.0	100.0	

Respondents' perception in studying abroad to China make them more tolerant towards changes, approved by 55% of them, only 3% of them that did not agree with the thought of studying to China then they will be more open minded, and 17% of them thought the changes of their attitude to be more open minded were only in the level 'enough'.

Shock Cultures

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	3.00	5	6.7	6.7	8.0
	4.00	32	42.7	42.7	50.7
	5.00	37	49.3	49.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Indonesia is a nation with diverse cultures and race that could ease out society to better understanding cultures and habits from each tribe. China is a big nation that has a lot of tribes as well as Indonesia. 69% respondents' perception towards studying in China will elevate their tolerance towards different cultures.

Table 5. Motive Learning Environment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	3.00	9	12.0	12.0	13.3
	4.00	25	33.3	33.3	46.7
	5.00	40	53.3	53.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Interested in The Title

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	2.00	5	6.7	6.7	8.0
	3.00	13	17.3	17.3	25.3
	4.00	25	33.3	33.3	58.7
	5.00	31	41.3	41.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Indonesia is a country that still puts formal diploma as a standard for work, so it is not surprising that 56% of respondents are motivated to study in China because they are interested in a degree from abroad. And 86.6% of their motivations want to feel the learning environment which is shared by them will be different and full of challenges.

Mattering Mandarin

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	3	4.0	4.0	4.0
	3.00	5	6.7	6.7	10.7
	4.00	28	37.3	37.3	48.0
	5.00	39	52.0	52.0	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

China's economy grew 7 times as fast as America's over the past decade (316% growth vs 43%). Also, there are 56 recognized ethnicities (Lee, Becki. 2018). The economy is on an upward trajectory and there has no sign of it slowing down anytime soon. Working alongside Chinese investors is the motive why Indonesian student think about going to China because, China's next project is not a far-fetched reality these days.

Table 6. Interest

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	3	4.0	4.0	4.0
	3.00	15	20.0	20.0	24.0
	4.00	29	38.7	38.7	62.7
	5.00	28	37.3	37.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Chinese society values order above all else. The predominant religious and philosophical views promote maintaining stability, and balance. They believe that the universe has a natural design, and everything can be explained by that design. Order and hierarchy are the foundations of their society (Doctoroff, 2011). Indonesian students percept that it can be interesting given little-known facts about Chinese history that nearly no one knows about. It certainly an impressive conversation topic at social gatherings.

Table 7. Experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	3.00	5	6.7	6.7	8.0
	4.00	23	30.7	30.7	38.7
	5.00	46	61.3	61.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

China has several languages, all of which share the same script, with Mandarin as its official language (Flower, 2010). China's rich cultural heritage has influenced western society in art, food, medicine, clothing, music, philosophy, and much more. They invented print and moveable type (Flower, 2010). By the diversity and the challenging cultures China offers, Indonesian students hope to gain new experiences that they wouldn't be able to get in Indonesia or in any other countries.

Table 8. Expectation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	3.00	16	21.3	21.3	22.7
	4.00	32	42.7	42.7	65.3
	5.00	26	34.7	34.7	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Within the Chinese culture, individuals highly value the opinions of their friends and family. This is referred to as maintaining "face." "Fundamentally "face," represents a person's reputation and feelings of prestige (both real and imagined) within their workplace, society, their family unit and among their friends" (Learnchinesebusiness.com, 2013). By that means, Indonesian students who had decided to go to China wished to have a higher expectation towards themselves.

Table 9. The Result of Mean

		Statistics							
		Beha vior1	Beha vior2	Motive1	Motive2	Motive3	Inter est	Expe rience	Expec tation
N	Valid	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	3.9600	4.4000	4.3733	4.0667	4.3733	4.0933	4.5200	4.1067

Based on the Table 4.7 with the references from Table 3.1, respondents were strongly interested to go to China to gain new experiences, acknowledge its' culture, feel the foreign environment and to master Chinese that will be useful in the future as world business language. Respondents were interested to go to China to have a higher expectation towards themselves, with the degree that they will achieve once they graduated, and will be more open-minded.

4.2 Discussion

Respondents' perception towards studying in China make them more tolerant towards the changes, approved by 55%, this thing can be assumed with the characteristics of generations. Baby Boomers has the characteristics of live to work, competitive, focused, disciplined, and want to make a difference. Generation X has the characteristics of crave independence, focused on results, think globally, adapt to change and thrive on flexibility. Generation Z has the characteristics of realists, individualistic, competitive, transparent, and tech innate (first generation to grow up with modern technology). And last but not least, the Millennials, the characteristics of millennials are fully transparent, value diversity, love technology, do well with detailed instructions and think that education is a highly expensive necessity.

Gracibelt Rendon, who chose to study in China to differentiate herself from others in the workplace, explains: "There is a saying that my friends who went to university together share, which is; if you survive living in China, you can survive and be prepared to face anything in the world. [The experience] allows you to be an open-minded person, ready to adapt and be flexible, which at the end of the day is what every employer is looking for. Studying in China gives you experience about how things work in this part of the world and helps you to become more independent." Gracibelt Rendon's thought support the statement that stated by studying in China help students to be more open minded by their interest in interact with people (Ardhashbc003, 2015, February 3rd).

5. Conclusion

1. Millennials in Indonesia were interested in deepening new culture, that was the reason why they percept studying to China could be interesting.
2. The highest sub-variable of perception scored by respondents is experience. They percept that by studying abroad to China, then they will gain new experiences that they couldn't get by studying in Indonesia.

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Adella Gloria Harjanto, Lestari Ningrum
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