Experiences of International Students in Postsecondary Education: A Literature Review

Jane P. Preston, *Charlottetown, PE*

Author's Note

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Dr. Jane P. Preston at janeslifewellness@gmail.com .

Abstract

The purpose of this literature review is to describe the educational experiences of international students enrolled in English-medium postsecondary institutions. Because the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia currently host the largest international student populations globally, enrollment statistics for each country are presented. A systematic review of 70 peer-reviewed publications was conducted to identify key findings related to the experiences of international students in English-medium postsecondary education. Data were collected and analyzed to ensure the reliability and validity of the results. Findings indicate that academic English proficiency significantly influences the experiences of international students. Moreover, a key challenge for these students often lies in navigating and adapting to the unfamiliar pedagogical approaches employed within host institutions. Finally, the well-being and academic success of international students are significantly influenced by sociocultural factors, surrounding acceptance, integration, and experiences of discrimination. The paper concludes with a summary of the results and a discussion of possible avenues for future research.

Keywords: international students, postsecondary education, higher education, experiences, barriers

Beyond academic credentials, many international students studying abroad gain life-changing experiences that significantly broaden their global perspectives. Despite encountering challenges related to unfamiliar academic structures, pedagogical approaches, and cultural norms, most international students successfully navigate within their new environment and thrive in their studies. In 2022, a remarkable 6.9 million students opted to pursue the transformative experience of studying abroad, showcasing the growing global appeal of international education (Project Atlas, 2024). The commitment to internationalizing postsecondary education has become a strategic priority for many nations. In the past decade, the four most popular English-delivery postsecondary destinations for international students were the United States (1,126,690 million students), Canada (842,760 million students), the United Kingdom (758,855 million students), and Australia (437,485 million students) (Project Atlas, 2024).

The purpose of this literature review is to describe the educational experiences of international students enrolled in English-medium postsecondary institutions. To address the research purpose, in what follows, I established clear research delimitations and provided concise definitions of key terms. Thereafter, I provide background information on international students in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Subsequently, I detail the data collection and analysis procedures. The findings are then presented and organized into three key themes: academic English proficiency, pedagogical approaches, and sociocultural issues. I conclude by providing possible suggestions for future research.

Delimitations and Significance of the Research

Delimitations define the scope of the study by explicitly specifying what is included and excluded from the investigation. Transparency regarding these factors is crucial for conducting rigorous research and enhancing the transferability and generalizability of the findings. The first delimitation is that the findings are limited to research published within the last ten years (i.e., 2016–2025). This focus on recent literature is a strength of the paper, because the findings reflect current knowledge. This restricted timeframe also enabled me to present the findings concisely within the word limit required for a publishable academic journal article. Second, I limited my research to data gathered from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States, because these four countries are the most popular destinations for international students in postsecondary programs. As a final point, the terms "international student" and "postsecondary education" need to be addressed. Herein, international students are defined as "students who study at higher education institutions outside their countries" (IGI Global, 2022, para. 1), and postsecondary education is any level of institutional study after completing high school (e.g., trade schools, colleges, and universities). In this paper, the terms postsecondary education and higher education are used interchangeably.

For myriad reasons, the topic of international students in postsecondary education is significant. Excluding the COVID-19 period, international student enrollment has grown significantly over the past decade, and international students constitute a substantial portion of the total enrollment in many English-medium postsecondary programs. With the international student population well-established in these institutions, it is essential to understand their academic, social, psychological, and cultural experiences. This knowledge enables educators to adopt effective pedagogical practices that enhance learning, support mental health, and promote overall student well-being. This research is also significant, because it supports collaboration and innovation among locally and internationally diverse populations. Such robust international collaborations cultivate a dynamic environment that both fosters academic excellence and drives cutting-edge

research within and across institutions. Furthermore, international students, like all students, have an inherent right to access high-quality educational services and support. However, many English-speaking institutions, unfortunately, fall short of adequately supporting the unique needs of their international student populations. This shortfall includes limited academic resources, insufficient assistance with housing, and a lack of adequate scholarship opportunities (Monaghan, 2018). Such issues have been highlighted by researchers such as Turnage (2017), who noted that international students are often an "overlooked population" (para. 1). With increasing numbers of international students attending English-medium institutions, postsecondary organizations have a fiduciary responsibility to create culturally and social just, research-grounded policies and practices promoting international student success (Jabeen et al., 2019; Ma, 2022). This timely and crucial information is designed to assist researchers, policymakers, educators, and community leaders in developing comprehensive and inclusive strategies that effectively address the specific needs of international students.

Background and Demographics

Many educational institutions actively recruit international students due to academic, social, and financial advantages. International students foster stronger academic, economic, and social ties between their home countries and the host country. These ties are strengthened through increased business, trade, investment, research collaborations, and greater cultural understanding. However, international students often face significantly higher tuition costs, typically paying two to three times the amount charged to domestic students. This situation raises ethical concerns, with some critics arguing that international students are often treated as "cash cows" by institutions primarily focused on generating revenue (Weber et al., 2024, p. 538). The high tuition fees paid by international students often subsidize the shortfall in government funding for education. As Hurley (2024) starkly observed, "no university could function... without the revenue from international student fees" (para 20), highlighting the growing financial dependence of many institutions on this revenue stream. Furthermore, international students make significant contributions to the local economy by injecting substantial funds through tuition fees, living expenses, and spending on goods and services. This economic impact extends beyond universities, benefiting local businesses and communities. For example, in the United Kingdom during the 2018–2019 school year, the economic benefit of international postsecondary students was £28.8 billion, while the costs were £2.9 billion (Universities UK, 2022). Despite primarily pursuing academic credentials, international students also fill important roles in the host country's labor market (Crossman et al., 2021). International students are a cornerstone of many universities, enriching academic life, fostering innovation, and contributing significantly to the economic and cultural development of the host nation.

What percentage of postsecondary students in top-hosting countries are international students? In the 2022–2023 academic year, international students comprised approximately 6% of the total student population in U.S. postsecondary institutions (Stewart-Rozema & Pratts, 2023), or about 1.1 million international students (Open Doors, 2025). In Canada within the past decade, colleges and universities have experienced a significant surge in international student enrollment with the number of international students doubling. For the 2022–2023 school year, the international student populace accounted for 21% of Canadian postsecondary enrolments (Statistics Canada, 2024). International students currently account for more than 30% of undergraduate enrollment at the University of Toronto (2023), and the university aims to increase this number. Current United Kingdom (UK) statistics show that international students comprise

26% of the total student population (Bolton et al., 2024). The London School of Economics and Political Science in the UK boasts the highest international student enrollment, with a remarkable 71% of its student body comprised of international students (UniScholars, 2024). According to a recent OECD (2024) report, international students account for 23% of all enrollments in Australian postsecondary institutions. A review of this information highlights that in Canada, the UK, and Australia, international students represent about one-fourth of the student population. International student numbers in the United States are also on the rise.

Description of Data Collection and Analysis

Fink (2020) defined a literature review as a "systematic, explicit, and reproducible method of identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners" (p. 6). This literature review commenced with a data collection phase. Utilizing the University of Prince Edward Island's library database system, Google Scholar, Sage Premier, and ResearchGate, an extensive online search was conducted. The resulting data encompassed a wide range of scholarly sources, including peer-reviewed books, book chapters, journal articles, dissertations, and conference papers. Thereafter, a targeted search of specific journals publishing studies about international students and postsecondary education was conducted. Main search terms (and their combination) included: "international student," "pedagogy," "experience," "culture," "social," "positive," "challenges," "acculturation," "student adjustment," "undergraduate," "graduate," "university," "postsecondary education," and "higher education." The dominant exclusion criteria were non-peer-reviewed literature and peer-reviewed studies older than 10 years.

During the initial screening phase, titles, abstracts, and/or introductory sections of over 120 online documents were carefully examined to assess their relevance to the research topic. Subsequently, promising documents were electronically saved for further in-depth review. The search also extended to the local university library, where relevant books were identified and accessed. Following an initial review, a more rigorous examination of the saved documents was conducted. This in-depth analysis revealed that only 70 documents directly addressed the research purpose. A thematic data analysis was conducted on these documents. Utilizing a qualitative approach (Patton, 2015), the author systematically coded the data, identifying and categorizing recurring patterns, themes, and regularities. These identified themes were then sorted and analyzed. More specifically, each article was analyzed by carefully reading and noting keywords, findings, and significant phrases. After several documents were processed in such a manner, similar codes started to repeat, which created themes and sub-themes.

Findings

Analysis of the data on the educational experiences of international students in English-medium postsecondary institutions revealed three key themes related to the academic English language, the pedagogical approaches of host institutions, and the challenges and opportunities related to sociocultural acceptance and integration. Below, each of these themes is further elaborated upon using sub-themes.

Academic English

The academic English proficiency of international students significantly influences their overall educational experiences. These academic English experiences encompass a range of factors, including proficiency in understanding both written and spoken English, navigating local and

foreign accents, interpreting regional jargon, adapting to the rapid pace of spoken English, and building confidence to communicate effectively in front of others.

Proficiency

Research consistently highlights English language proficiency as the most significant academic challenge encountered by international students in the classroom setting (e.g., Alqudayri & Gounko, 2018; Bai & Wang, 2022a; Gautam et al., 2016; Heng, 2017, 2018; Igwe et al., 2020; Jackson & Chen, 2018; Le et al., 2017; Ma, 2020; Munna, 2020; Ogunsanya et al., 2018; Park et al., 2017; Tang et al., 2018). Even with a general understanding of written English, international students often encounter significant challenges when engaging with academic literature (Liu, 2016; Schneider, 2018). International students have difficulty understanding local English accents, foreign English accents, and local jargon (Bai & Wang, 2022a, Le et al., 2017; Lindner & Margetts, 2022; Ploner, 2018; Rao, 2017). In a study by Bai and Wang (2022a) with 22 Chinese students in Australian higher education, 19 reported significant difficulty understanding their instructors' accents. Nine of these participants conveyed that they had little to no understanding of what their instructor was saying during the first one to two months. In Wang's (2016) Canadian research focusing on five international Chinese students who quit their program before graduating, students revealed that their greatest obstacle was English speaking and writing. For many international students, local jargon, fast-paced speech, academic reading, academic writing, and local English accents are learning obstacles impeding postsecondary success. Hepworth et al. (2018) found that English proficiency levels, as measured by standardized tests, emerged as the most critical factor influencing academic success among international students.

Reticence To Speak

Research verifies that international students are often reticent to speak during class discussions (Kerridge & Simpson, 2021). Jackson and Chen (2018) conducted a comprehensive, multi-national study (123 survey respondents and 19 personal interviews) with Chinese exchange students in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Fast-paced classroom discussions were identified by participants as the most challenging aspect of their overseas learning experience. A significant number of international students experience anxiety, shyness, and embarrassment when participating in open-class discussions, hindering their active engagement in the learning process (Jackson & Chen, 2018; Lindner & Margetts, 2022; Matsunaga et al., 2021; Yu, 2018). Many international students lack confidence in speaking English, especially in front of their teachers and classmates (Bai & Wang, 2022b; Wang & Freed, 2021; Xiao, 2024). Some international students are concerned that, after answering or commenting on a question, they will not understand the teacher's response (Bai & Wang, 2022b; Freeman & Li, 2019). The cognitive process of formulating thoughts in a second language and then translating them into English can be time-consuming, a point often exacerbated by the limited response time typically afforded by instructors during classroom discussions (Heng, 2018). In Xiao's (2024) qualitative study with six Chinese participants, students expressed a strong desire to participate in classroom discussions, but they felt they could not express themselves fluently and accurately. Both directly and indirectly, instructors and institutions sometimes foster a culture of silence for international students, thereby limiting their access to insightful, inclusive classroom discussions and enriching academic experiences.

Writing Challenges

Many studies noted that international students often struggle to adapt to the conventions and styles of Western academic writing, including citation and referencing styles. While Chinese written discourse may emphasize subtlety and indirectness, Western academic writing typically values clear, concise, and direct expression (Bai & Wang, 2022a). In Heng's (2017) research of 18 international students (predominantly Chinese) studying in the United States, a significant challenge emerged. Participants were unfamiliar with the expected argumentative essay structure. This structure, common in Western academia, typically requires a clear introduction, a well-developed body of arguments, and a strong concluding statement. Similarly, in Ravichandran et al.'s (2017) study of 15 international graduate students from 11 different countries, the researchers identified a range of challenges associated with navigating the conventions of Western academic writing. These issues included English grammar, English vocabulary, academic formatting, the organization of information, the flow or transition of information, the critical thinking process, the formulation of an argument, the provision of evidence, and the formation of new and concluding ideas. Likewise, in Rao's (2017) study, both Russian and Chinese international students reported significant challenges in adapting their writing to the conventions of Western academic discourse. Specifically, the students struggled to incorporate key elements such as a clear thesis statement, well-defined topic sentences, and a concise concluding statement. In Chauhan's (2021) dissertation research, 10 international students at an American university reported experiencing significant challenges across various aspects of academic writing, including content development, organizational structure, vocabulary usage, genre awareness, grammatical accuracy, and proper citation and referencing practices. Mastery of these specialized Westernized writing skills often necessitates dedicated instruction, which is frequently absent from core academic curricula.

Pedagogical Approaches

The second theme focuses on pedagogical practices and classroom culture. Sub-themes include foreign teaching methods, open-ended assignments, independent learning, critical thinking, lack of international content, and unfamiliar mannerisms.

Foreign Teaching Methods

Many international students are confused by host-country teaching methods and learning expectations. Research consistently demonstrates that international students often experience surprise, frustration, and even anxiety when confronted with Westernized interactive learning methods, such as active learning strategies (e.g., including in-class discussions, debates, and group work activities), hands-on learning (e.g., activities emphasizing practical application and experiential learning), and dynamic assessment methods (individualized homework assignments, oral presentations, and creative projects) (Bai & Wang, 2022a; Cena et al., 2021; Leong, 2017; Newsome & Cooper, 2017; Preston & Boateng, 2024; Preston & Wang, 2017). In Heng's (2023) study, 18 Chinese undergraduate students in the United States experienced confusion and discomfort with dominant pedagogical approaches. They attributed this discomfort to the stark contrast between the Chinese emphasis on rote memorization, teacher-centered instruction, and respect for authority in their home country and the more student-centered, interactive learning environment prevalent in American higher education. In an American study involving eight graduate students in the Education and Tourism fields, international students were baffled by having a grade partially associated with active oral participation during class time. In their home

country, active participation was reflected in written midterms and final examinations (Sato & Hodge, 2018).

Open-Ended Instructions

Many international students find themselves initially surprised or even overwhelmed by the level of academic freedom and autonomy afforded to students while completing assignments. In Le et al.'s (2017) study involving 22 Vietnamese students in Australia, participants reported difficulties in adapting to the more student-centered, passive pedagogical approach of instructors, particularly when encountering open-ended homework assignments that emphasized independent learning and critical thinking. Participants anticipated a more teacher-centered approach to instruction, expecting their professors to primarily lecture and provide assignments with clear and direct answers. In Newsome & Cooper's (2017) study of 18 international students at a British university, participants expressed discomfort with the ambiguity inherent in assignments where instructors provided only broad guidelines. In Bai and Wang's (2022b) study, international students sought guidance from their instructor regarding the appropriate format for completing an assignment. However, the instructor indicated that it was the students' responsibility to determine the correct approach. For many international students, the shift towards personalized and creative learning demands can be a significant source of confusion and frustration, potentially impacting their academic performance and overall well-being (Heng, 2018; Kaya, 2020; Le et al., 2017; Lindner & Margetts, 2022; Liu, 2016; Matsunaga et al., 2021; Newsome & Cooper, 2017).

Independent Learning

In many English-medium postsecondary institutions, innovative pedagogical approaches often emphasize student autonomy, placing significant responsibility on students for independent reading and learning. In Jackson and Chen's (2018) study, undergraduate international Chinese students reported feeling overwhelmed by the volume and nature of independent reading assignments, which were crucial for active participation in ensuing interactive classroom discussions. Freeman and Li's (2019) research with six international students in Australia revealed a stark contrast in host and host country course loads. In their home countries, international students were accustomed to enrolling in a significantly higher number of courses per semester, typically ranging from 10 to 15. At their host Australian university, they had four courses per semester. However, a major challenge for many international students was the increased level of independent learning required within each course, demanding significantly more effort and time compared to their prior educational experiences. This included key skills such as independently selecting assignment topics, conducting academic research, and completing creative projects (Freeman & Li, 2019). For Lucas's (2019) narrative research involving Asian international graduate students in the United States, the instructor required international students to be inquisitive, independent thinkers in their written assignments. These studies collectively demonstrate that, ironically, successful academic integration for international students necessitates an ability to independently complete schoolwork.

Critical Thinking

In many Western, individualistic cultures, the ability to engage in critical analysis and express oneself through insightful writing is highly valued (Lucas, 2019). English-medium postsecondary institutions tend to prioritize the development of critical thinking and writing skills, integrating them across their curricula. Research consistently demonstrates that many international students encounter significant challenges in effectively integrating critical thinking skills into their

academic assignments (Jaffar, 2025; Lucas, 2019; Samanhudi, 2021; Zhong & Cheng, 2021). This critical thinking ability encompasses the capacity to reason, judge, analyze, argue, justify, and effectively communicate information. In contrast, the predominant collectivist cultures of many Asian countries often prioritize conformity and social harmony, which may not always align with the emphasis on independent creativity prevalent in some Western educational contexts. Li's (2016) qualitative study with 20 undergraduate and graduate international students revealed that participants struggled to grasp the concept of "critical writing," highlighting potential differences in cultural understandings of academic discourse. In this study, some participants, either consciously or unconsciously, associated critical thinking and writing with challenging authority figures (i.e., instructors and established scholars). This perception, prioritizing respect for authority and harmonious relationships, can hinder the development of critical thinking skills in some international students. In other words, openly questioning a teacher's ideas or critiquing subject matter may be perceived as culturally disrespectful (Rao, 2017). Many international students tend to harmoniously agree with instructors, people of authority, classmates, and/or published literature (Zhong & Cheng, 2021), which is often not conducive to critical analysis of content.

Lack of International Curriculum Content

Research suggests that international students studying abroad often have limited opportunities to engage with curriculum content from their home countries, which can both hinder their understanding of global perspectives and their ability to connect their own cultural experiences. In Heng's (2018) study, international students reported significant challenges in comprehending course content due to their unfamiliarity with the host country's cultural context. Issues included a lack of knowledge about prominent authors, local companies, national historical events, political figures, and references to local religions. In Gopal's (2016) Canadian research, the international student reported experiencing a graduate curriculum that predominantly focused on information and perspectives from North American and English-speaking countries, neglecting global perspectives. Moreover, when participants attempted to apply course concepts to their home country contexts, the instructor sometimes implicitly or explicitly positioned the Western educational system as superior, potentially hindering critical engagement with alternative perspectives and fostering a sense of cultural dissonance among the students. Research by Ai (2017) and Lyken-Segosebe (2017) suggested that acculturative pressure can arise from Western-centric biases within some academic settings, potentially leading international students to feel compelled to conform to dominant perspectives and values. However, research shows that international students want their culture recognized in the host curriculum (e.g., Guo & Guo, 2017; Liu, 2017; Taveres, 2024). In a Canadian study involving 26 undergraduate students, Guo and Guo (2017) found a significant discrepancy between the program's advertised focus on optimizing the experiences of international students and the students' actual experiences. Participants reported feeling disconnected from the curriculum, citing a lack of relevance and a limited ability to connect course content to their own cultural experiences. Both Preston & Wang (2017) (Canadian research with 21 international students) and Wang and Freed's (2021) (an American-based study with 10 international graduate students) found that participants rarely, if ever, encountered references to their own cultures within course materials or discussions. Wang & Freed (2021) suggested that instructors teaching international students may have limited knowledge or experience regarding the cultural and lived realities of their students.

Priya and Tapis' (2016) research, which involved 10 international students studying in the United States, offered numerous examples of how a lack of cultural consideration can significantly

impact learning experiences and academic engagement. As part of a business course, one participant shared an experience in which students were tasked with creating a business plan for a funeral home. One international student struggled to comprehend the concept of a funeral home, as such an institution was nonexistent in their home country. Another student from India explained that in their culture, death was rarely discussed, making the assignment both unsettling and distressing. This highlights a key challenge for international students: while studying abroad is intended to provide valuable experience in the host country, it often comes with the pressure to abandon their cultural heritage and fully adopt the norms and practices of the host institution.

Cultural Mannerisms

Culture can be defined as the shared and accepted language, beliefs, attitudes, values, customs, behaviors, symbols, and artifacts that distinguish a particular group of people. Cultural differences can significantly impact communication and understanding. In Li's (2016) study, some international students expressed surprise or discomfort with certain classroom practices observed in their host country, such as instructors' casual attire, sitting on classroom tables, and allowing students to eat in class. Also, in this study, international students found it strange when instructors utilized humor, engaged in casual conversation with students, or promoted a relaxed and informal classroom atmosphere. Heng (2018) reported that some international students experienced difficulties in understanding and appreciating the humor used by their instructors. Cultural differences in humor styles and communication norms can lead to misunderstandings and potential feelings of exclusion for international students. These interactions, while common in some Western educational contexts, often differ significantly from the more formal and hierarchical teacher-student relationships prevalent in their home cultures. Some international students find it difficult to read cursive or handwritten English, either written on the whiteboard or as feedback on their papers (Kerridge & Simpson, 2021). In Newsome and Cooper's (2017) research, one participant described feeling uncomfortable addressing the male instructor by his first name, a practice that differed significantly from their cultural norms, where addressing teachers with formal titles such as "Sir" is considered appropriate. This finding aligns with other research (Elliot et al., 2016; Jackson & Chen, 2018). In an Australian study, a Chinese participant observed that local students frequently interrupted the instructor with questions during class, which contrasted sharply with their own cultural norms where students typically defer to the instructor and ask questions after class (Bai & Wang, 2022b). This observation highlights the potential for cultural misunderstandings in classroom settings, as student-teacher interaction styles can vary significantly across different cultural contexts.

Sociocultural Issues

Across multiple studies, a third key finding is that international students frequently encounter a range of sociocultural challenges, including social isolation, feelings of exclusion, identity tension, and potential experiences of discrimination. These challenges can significantly impact their academic performance, social integration, and overall confidence and well-being.

Social Disconnection and Alienation

A prominent theme emerging from peer-reviewed research highlights the significant sociocultural challenges faced by international students (Arkoudis et al., 2019; Avenido, 2023; Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez, 2017; Guo & Guo, 2017; Newsome & Cooper, 2016; Tang et al., 2018; Tran, 2020). Preston and Wang (2017) found that, although most international students arrived in the host country with aspirations of forming local friendships, many ultimately experienced a sense of

social isolation from domestic students as they progressed through the program. Arkoudis et al.'s (2019) mixed-method research, which studied 393 undergraduate international students at an Australian university, revealed significant social fragmentation between domestic and international students, both on- and off-campus. Notably, in this study, only about 20% of the participants reported having a local friend, highlighting the extent of social disconnection. Some international students reported that, at first, they perceived local students as approachable and friendly; however, over time, they came to view this initial warmth as largely superficial and lacking genuine authenticity (Newman & Cooper, 2016). Liu's (2017) narrative research, conducted with five undergraduate and graduate students in British Columbia, Canada, revealed a striking lack of social integration; participants consistently expressed that they did not have any local friends. Tran (2020) found that international students consistently identified the absence of local friends as the most dissatisfying and isolating aspect of their experience abroad.

Tang et al.'s (2018) American study, which involved focus group interviews with 60 international students in Business and Engineering, revealed that, while most participants expressed a strong desire to network with local students, they faced significant challenges in accessing these social circles and overcoming sociocultural barriers. In other studies, some international students did not interact with locals, because international students had difficulty with certain social behaviors and norms including the use (sometime excess) of alcohol (Elliot, et al., 2016). Furthermore, research by Liu (2016) and Wang (2016) demonstrated that limited language proficiency serves as a significant barrier, severely hindering the development of social connections in social circles. When international students experience social disconnection with local students, they often gravitate toward forming friendships with peers from their own cultural background, seeking familiarity and shared experiences (Li, 2016). Furthermore, Li (2016) explained that while international students strive to maintain their own sociocultural values and behaviors, local students often expect them to assimilate to the norms and customs of the host country, creating a tension between cultural preservation and social integration. When their cultural background appears to hold little value in the host country, they often feel marginalized and disconnected, as if they are outsiders (Alqudayri & Gounko, 2018; Tavares, 2021). When international students encounter social divisions with local students, it often exacerbates feelings of loneliness and intensifies homesickness (Hunter-Johnston & Niu 2019; Meade et al., 2022; Park et al., 2017).

Personal Marginalization and Discrimination

Another key thematic issue in the experiences of international students in postsecondary education is discrimination. In Igwe et al.'s (2020) British study involving 45 international business undergraduate students, group discussions were often dominated by local students, effectively marginalizing international students and limiting their opportunities for active participation. In Matsunaga et al.'s (2021) qualitative research with six Japanese undergraduate students studying in Australia, participants reported feeling that their contributions in class were often sidelined, overlooked, or interrupted by other students, diminishing the international student's sense of academic agency and inclusion. In Gopal's (2016) study, international graduate students reported feeling ostracized when attempting to engage in discussions, as their accents and nonverbal communication, including body language, were often perceived as barriers, hindering their ability to express their ideas and connect with others. Other research has shown that international students often feel their perspectives are disregarded in class due to their accents or language proficiency, further contributing to their sense of exclusion (Guo & Guo, 2017; Wekullo, 2019). Additional

research reveals that international students frequently feel ignored, isolated, and shunned by local students and the broader community, deepening their sense of alienation and exclusion (Arkoudis, 2019; Yakaboski et al., 2018; Yeo et al., 2019). In Ge et al.'s (2019) Canadian ethnographic study involving 12 international students, participants reported that some instructors consistently prioritized responses from local students over those of international students, reinforcing a sense of marginalization in the classroom.

In Ritter's (2016) study, which involved 47 interviews with international students, participants reported witnessing and/or experiencing racial discrimination from domestic peers. This discrimination manifested as a racial hierarchy, further entrenching feelings of inequality and exclusion. Domestic students were observed to selectively interact with students from certain countries, while avoiding engagement with students from other countries, reinforcing social divisions and exclusion. In an Australian study involving Saudi Arabian students, which included 100 survey respondents and seven qualitative interviews, the findings revealed that the majority of participants experienced discrimination (Alsahafi & Seong-Chul, 2017). Van Horne et al. (2018) conducted a large-scale quantitative study involving nearly 4,000 undergraduate international students across nine American universities. The study found that, compared to their domestic peers, international students reported a significantly lower sense of belonging to their host campus and a diminished sense of respect while on campus.

However, other research presents mixed findings regarding discrimination against international students. In Mwangi et al.'s (2019) qualitative study involving 33 Black international undergraduate and graduate students across various American universities, many participants shared experiences of racism and discrimination, while others reported that they did not encounter such challenges, highlighting the varied and complex nature of these experiences. Guo and Guo's (2017) research revealed that while Latino students did not report experiencing discrimination, other international students in the study did, further emphasizing the varying experiences of discrimination based on cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Arafeh (2020)'s research with 10 Saudi Arabian in an American university revealed that they experienced "positive culture shock" (p. 750). These women shared that while studying in an American environment, they did not feel singled out or judged for wearing traditional attire. Instead, they felt that their teachers and classmates showed them respect, fostering an inclusive and accepting atmosphere. This information suggests that international students experience varying levels of discrimination, ranging from none to high, with these experiences often differing based on culture, race, and gender.

Campus Discrimination

In many ways, international students face campus discrimination, particularly when compared to local students. International students often encounter fewer opportunities for research internships, part-time jobs, and other academic or professional experiences, exacerbating their sense of exclusion and limiting their academic and career prospects (Ge et al., 2019; Liu, 2017; Singh, 2023). In Hunter-Johnson and Niu's (2019) study involving 15 Bahamian graduate students at American universities, participants reported experiencing a lack of financial support, limited teaching opportunities, and insufficient access to research opportunities provided by their host institutions. In a mixed-method study involving 28 survey respondents and six interviewees with international students in the United States, participants consistently expressed frustration with on-campus employment. They reported feeling uninformed about the employment process and lacking the social capital necessary to secure quality local references, which further thwarted their

ability to access meaningful job opportunities (Gautam et al., 2016). Marangell et al. (2018) explained that many international students find it difficult to secure employment due to working regulations, lack of familiarity with employment processes, English language competency, or lack of previous work experience in the host country. Cultural discrimination manifested on campus in various ways. For instance, in Tavares' (2024) Canadian postsecondary study, the university cafeteria offered limited food options, with international cuisine being particularly scarce. Despite being required to purchase meal plans, international students faced dietary challenges, which compounded their sense of exclusion.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this literature review is to describe the educational experiences of international students enrolled in English-medium postsecondary institutions. A critical analysis of research literature highlights that international students' academic English proficiency significantly impacts their educational experiences. Key challenges include understanding written and spoken English, overcoming difficulties with local and foreign accents, interpreting regional jargon, and adapting to rapid speech. Many students, particularly those from non-English speaking backgrounds, face obstacles in academic reading and writing, as well as speaking in class. Anxiety, reticence, and lack of confidence about speaking English hinder their participation in classroom discussions. Additionally, international students struggle with Western academic writing conventions, such as clear argumentation, citation styles, and essay structures. These language barriers are major factors affecting their academic success and overall experience.

Many international students face challenges adapting to the pedagogical approaches of host institutions, which often differ significantly from those in their home countries. Research shows that students can experience confusion, frustration, and anxiety when confronted with Western teaching methods, including active learning, hands-on learning, and dynamic assessments like oral presentations and group work. Additionally, the academic freedom and autonomy in completing open-ended assignments can be overwhelming, because these students are often accustomed to teacher-centered approaches with clear and direct instructions. The emphasis on independent learning, critical thinking, and student autonomy in Western education can also be difficult for students from more collectivist cultures. Furthermore, international students may feel disconnected from the curriculum, which often lacks content relevant to their own cultures, leading to a sense of cultural dissonance. Cultural mannerisms, such as informal classroom practices and differences in communication styles, can also create misunderstandings and discomfort. These factors, collectively, highlight the need for a better understanding of the diverse learning needs of international students to improve their academic integration.

International students often face significant sociocultural challenges in host countries, including social division, isolation, and marginalization. Research shows that many international students struggle to form meaningful connections with local students, leading to feelings of loneliness and homesickness. Despite desires for social integration, students frequently encounter barriers such as language proficiency, cultural differences, and varying social behaviors, which hinder their ability to connect with domestic peers. Moreover, when international students seek to preserve their cultural values, they may face pressure to assimilate, further exacerbating tensions between cultural preservation and integration. Experiences of personal marginalization and discrimination, whether related to accents, nonverbal communication, or racial biases, are common, with many students feeling excluded or overlooked in academic and social settings. While some students report positive experiences, the overall picture reveals that social divisions

and campus discrimination remain. The complex nature of these challenges highlights the importance of fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for international students.

Future Research

The international student population is inherently diverse and multifaceted, necessitating the provision of tailored educational services and inclusive strategies to effectively support their unique needs and foster a truly inclusive environment. To effectively address and cater to the diverse needs of this student population, targeted and in-depth research is essential. Such research will provide valuable insights into the unique challenges and experiences faced by international students, enabling institutions to develop more informed, responsive, and tailored support systems that better serve this heterogeneous group.

To begin, the experiences of immigrant students, as well as those with refugee status and spousal sponsorship, remain significantly understudied (D'Cruz, 2022). There is a critical gap in understanding the unique educational needs, career aspirations, and personal challenges faced by these students. What are their specific barriers to academic success? How do their backgrounds shape their career trajectories and personal goals? Addressing these questions is essential for developing targeted interventions and support mechanisms that promote equitable opportunities and outcomes for these often-marginalized student populations.

While some research has explored the unique needs of Chinese international students (e.g., Preston & Wang, 2017), there remains a lack of focused studies on the lived experiences of students from other major home countries, such as India and various African nations. Research that specifically examines the experiences of international students from these diverse geographic regions would provide valuable, context-rich insights into their challenges, needs, and aspirations. Such studies would enhance understanding of the complexities and nuances of the international student experience, ultimately informing more tailored support systems and strategies for students from a broader range of cultural backgrounds.

Furthermore, scholars emphasize that meaningful social engagement between international and host students is essential for fostering the academic success and personal well-being of international students (e.g., Ammigan, 2019). This raises an important research question: What types of curricular, extracurricular, and social interactions occur both inside and outside the classroom between international and host students, and how, if at all, do these interactions shape the educational outcomes and lived experiences of international students? Investigating these dynamics can provide a deeper understanding of how cross-cultural engagement impacts students' academic development, social integration, and overall adjustment to life in the host country, ultimately, informing strategies for enhancing the international student experience.

Future research should expand beyond traditional academic programs to explore the diverse experiences of international students in non-degree pathways. For instance, what are the experiences of international students who engage in short courses, such as summer programs or bridge programs, and how do these experiences influence their academic, professional, and personal development?

Equally important, it is crucial to examine the lived experiences of international students who choose to discontinue their educational programs—understanding the factors that lead to such decisions can offer valuable insights into the challenges and barriers faced by this group, ultimately contributing to more effective support structures for all international students.

Lastly, to more accurately assess the long-term impact and effectiveness of postsecondary education, longitudinal studies that track the career trajectories and lifestyle outcomes of international students after graduation are essential.

References

Ai, B. (2017). The communication patterns of Chinese students with their lecturers in an Australian university. *Educational Studies, 43*(4), 484-496. https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2017.1293507

Alqudayri, B., & Gounko, T. (2018). Studying in Canada. Experiences of female graduate students from Saudi Arabia. *Journal of International Students, 8*(4), 1736-1747. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v8i4.228

Alsahafi, N., & Seong-Chul, S. (2017). Factors affecting the academic and cultural adjustment of Saudi international students in Australian universities. *Journal of International Students, 7*(1), 53–72. https://www.ojed.org/index.php/jis/article/view/245/188

Ammigan, R. (2019). Institutional satisfaction and recommendation: What really matters to international students. *Journal of International Students, 9*(1), 262-281.

Arafeh, A. (2020). Insights into Saudi female international students: Transition experiences. *Journal of International Students, 10*(3), 741-757. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v10i3.1111

Arkoudis, S., Dollinger, M., Baik, C., & Patience, A. (2019). International students' experience in Australian higher education: Can we do better? *Higher Education: The International Journal of Higher Education Research, 77*(5), 799-813. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-018-0302-x

Avenido, K. (2023). An intersectional analysis of Chinese international students' experiences in postsecondary institutions in British Columbia. *Journal of International Students, 13*(1), 22-39. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v13i1.2877

Bai, L., & Wang, Y. X. (2022a). Combatting language and academic culture shock— International students' agency in mobilizing their cultural capital. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/dhe0000409

Bai, L., & Wang, Y. X. (2022b). In-class and out-of-class interactions between international students and their host university teachers. *Research in Comparative & International Education, 17*(1), 71-88. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F17454999211038774

Bolton, P., Lewis, J., & Gower, L. (2024). *International students in UK higher education*. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7976/CBP-7976.pdf

Cena, E., Burns, S., & Wilson, P. (2021). Sense of belonging and the intercultural and academic experiences among international students at a university in Northern Ireland. *Journal of International Students, 11*(4), 812-831. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v11i4.2541

Chauhan, P. B. (2021). *Academic writing challenges experienced by international students in a Midwest U.S. university: A phenomenological inquiry*. [Doctoral thesis, Minnesota State University]. https://cornerstone.lib.mnsu.edu/etds/1129/

Contreras-Aguirre, C. H., & Gonzalez, G. E. (2017). Experiences of international female students in U.S. graduate programs. *College Student Journal, 51*(1), 33-46. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1083286.pdf

Crossman, E., Choi, Y., & Hou, F. (2021). International students as a source of labour supply: Engagement in the labour market during the period of study. *Economic and Social Reports, 1*(11), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.25318/36280001202101100001-eng

D'Cruz, A. M. (2022). *Neither here nor there: A phenomenological study of immigrant students enrolled in Canadian higher education* [Master's thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education]. https://utoronto.scholaris.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/b4871446-23fa-43bf-983b-152fb6e7c0e0/content

Elliot, D. L., Reid, K., & Baumfield, V. (2016). Beyond the amusement, puzzlement and challenges: An enquiry into international students' academic acculturation. *Studies in Higher Education, 41*(12), 2198-2217.

Freeman, K., & Li, M. (2019). "We are a ghost in the class:" First year international students' experiences in the global contact zone. *Journal of International Students, 9*(1), 19-38. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v9i1.270

Fink, A. (2020). *Conducting research literature reviews: From the internet to paper* (5th ed.). Sage.

Gautam, C., Lowery, C. L., Mays, C., & Durant, D. (2016). Challenges for global learners: A qualitative study of the concerns and difficulties of international students. *Journal of International Students, 6*(2), 501-526. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v6i2.368

Ge, L., Brown, D., & Durst, D. (2019). Chinese international students' experiences in a Canadian university: Ethnographic inquiry with gender comparison. *Journal of International Students, 9*(2), 582-612. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v0i0.272

Gopal, A. (2016). Academic experiences of international graduate students: The Canadian perspective in the context of internationalization. In K. Bista & C. Foster (Eds.), *Exploring the social and academic experiences of international students in higher education institutions* (pp. 21-37). IGI Global.

Guo, Y., & Guo, S. (2017). Internationalization of Canadian higher education: Discrepancies between policies and international student experiences. *Studies in Higher Education, 42*(5), 851-868. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2017.1293874

Heng, T. (2017). Voices of Chinese international students in USA colleges: "I want to tell them that …" *Studies in Higher Education, 42*(5), 833-850. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2017.1293873

Heng, T. T. (2018). Different is not deficient: Contradicting stereotypes of Chinese international students in U.S. higher education. *Studies in Higher Education, 43*(1), 22-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2016.1152466

Heng, T. T. (2023). Socioculturally attuned understanding of and engagement with Chinese international undergraduates. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 16*(1), 26-39. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000240

Hepworth, D., Littlepage, B, Hancock, k. (2018). Factors influencing university student academic success. *Educational Research Quarterly, 42*(1), 45-61.

Hsu, C-F., & Huang, I-T. (2017). Are international students quiet in class? The influence of teacher confirmation on classroom apprehension and willingness to talk in class. *Journal*

of International Students, 7(1), 38-52.
https://www.ojed.org/index.php/jis/article/view/244/226

Hunter-Johnson, Y., & Niu, Y. (2019). Bahamians as international adult learners determined for academic success: Challenges and required support system. *Journal of International Students, 9*(4), 1038-1054. https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7884-4578

Hurley, P. (2024). International students are returning to Australia, but they are mostly going to more prestigious universities. *The Times*. https://www.thetimes.com.au/world/18070-international-students-are-returning-to-australia-but-they-are-mostly-going-to-more-prestigious-universities

IGI Global. (2022). *What is international students?* https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/international-students/33499

Igwe, P. A., Rahman, M., Ohalehi, P., Amaugo, A., & Anigbo, J. A. (2020). Responsible education: What engages international postgraduate students—Evidence from UK. *Journal of Global Responsibility, 11*(4), 363-376. https://doi.org/10.1108/JGR-03-2020-0036

Jackson, J., & Chen, X. (2018). Discussion-based pedagogy through the eyes of Chinese international exchange students. *Pedagogies: An International Journal, 13*(4), 289-307. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2017.141126

Jabeen, R., Wang, P., & Cheng, L. (2019). Academic engagement, social interaction, and academic socialization: English as an Additional Language in Higher Education. *BC TEAL Journal, 4*(1), 95-107. https://doi.org/10.14288/bctj.v4i1.337

Jaffar, K. (2025). Critical thinking skills: Challenges faced by international students in finance and accounting. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Education, 14*(2), 176-196.

Kaya, J. (2020). Inside the international student world: Challenges, opportunities, and imagined communities. *Journal of International Students, 10*(1), 124-144. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v10i1.103

Kerridge, C. P., & Simpson, C. (2021). Tutor and international student perspectives on an action research project: Use of a business strategy simulation with mixed nationality cohorts. *Journal of International Education in Business, 14*(2), 240-258. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JIEB-07-2019-0034

Le, H., Koo, F. K., Arambewela, R., & Zutshi, A. (2017). Voices of dissent: Unpacking Vietnamese international student experience. *International Journal of Educational Management, 31*(3), 280-292. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-07-2015-0099

Leong, P. (2017). Coming to America: Assessing the patterns of acculturation, friendship formation, and the academic experiences of international students at a U.S. college. *Journal of International Students, 5*(4), 459-474. https://www.ojed.org/index.php/jis/article/view/408/325

Li, M. (2016). Learning the rules of the game: Issues affecting academic acculturation of Asian international students in New Zealand universities. In K. Bista & C. Foster (Eds.), *Exploring the social and academic experiences of international students in higher education institutions* (pp. 38-58). IGI Global.

Lindner, K., & Margetts, K. (2022). English language expectations and experiences of Chinese students in Australian secondary schools: Opportunities and challenges. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, pp. 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2022.2044287

Liu, J. (2017). Beyond the cultural approach: Understanding the experiences of Chinese international students in Canada from an intersectionality perspective. *International Journal of Chinese Education, 6*(2), 236-258. https://doi.org/10.1163%2F22125868-12340082

Liu, T. (2016). *Learning experience of Chinese international students in Master of Education program at a mid-sized Ontario university* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Windsor. https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/5841/

Lucas, K. J. (2019). Chinese graduate student understandings and struggles with critical thinking: A narrative-case study. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 13*(1), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsotl.2019.130105

Lyken-Segosebe, D. (2017). Acculturative stress and disengagement: Learning from the adjustment challenges faced by east Asian international graduate students. *International Journal of Higher Education, 6*(6), 66-77. http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n6p66

Ma, J. (2020). Supporting practices to break Chinese international students' language barriers: The first step to facilitate their social adjustment. *Journal of International Students, 10*(1), 84-105.

Ma, J. (2022). Challenges and strategies facing international students and faculty in U.S. higher education: A comprehensive literature review. *GATESOL Journal, 32*(1), 18-38. https://doi.org/10.52242/gatesol.122

Marangell, S., Arkoudis, S., & Baik, C. (2018). Developing a host culture for international students: What does it take? *Journal of International Students, 8*(3), 1440-1458.

Matsunaga, K., Barnes, M. M., & Saito, E. (2021) Agency and hysteresis encounters: Understanding the international education experiences of Japanese students in Australian universities. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 51*(6), 765-784. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2021.1926927

Meade, A. F., Ong, C., & Pradhan, S. (2022). "Belonging" at a liberal arts college: Creating emotional and physical spaces of home. In M. Mohamad & J. Boyd (Eds.), *International student support and engagement in higher education: Exploring innovative practices in campus* (pp. 60-75). Routledge.

Monaghan, P. (2018). The case for treating international students fairly. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 64*(36), 25-26.

Munna, A. S. (2020). International students' learning experience on global curriculum. *Journal of Education,* 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0022057420972063

Mwangi, C., Daoud, N., Peralta, A., & Fries-Britt, S. (2019). Waking from the American dream: Conceptualizing racial activism and critical consciousness among black immigrant college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 60*(4), 401-420. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2019.0037

Newsome, L. K., & Cooper, P. (2016). International students' cultural and social experiences in a British university: "Such a hard life [it] is here." *Journal of International Students, 6*(1), 195-215. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v6i1.488

Newsome, L. K., & Cooper, P. (2017). International students' experience of Western pedagogy in a British university. *World Journal of Educational Research, 4*(4), 620-637.

Ogunsanya, M. E., Bamgbade, B. A., Thach, A. V., Sudhapalli, P., & Rascati, K. L. (2018). Determinants of health-related quality of life in international graduate students. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning, 10*(4), 413-422. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2017.12.005

OECD. (2024). *Education at a glance 2024: OECD indicators*. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/education-at-a-glance-2024_c00cad36-en.html

Open Doors. (2025). *International students*. https://opendoorsdata.org/annual-release/international-students/#key-findings

Park, H., Lee, M.-J., Choi, G.-Y., & Zepernick, J. S. (2017). Challenges and coping strategies of East Asian graduate students in the United States. *International Social Work, 60*(3), 733-749. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0020872816655864

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Sage.

Ploner, J. (2018). International students' transitions to UK higher education—revisiting the concept and practice of academic hospitality. *Journal of Research in International Education, 17*(2) 164-178. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1475240918786690

Preston, J. P., & Boateng, S. (2024). Classroom experiences of international students in Canadian postsecondary education. *Futurity Education, 4*(2), 206-224. https://futurity-education.com/index.php/fed/article/view/315/158

Preston, J. P., & Wang, A. (2017). The academic and personal experiences of Mainland Chinese students enrolled in a Canadian Master of Education program. *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development, 19*(4), 177-192. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJCED-05-2017-0006

Priya, K., & Tapis, G. P. (2016). Are American cultural examples losing the international students in U.S. classrooms? *Management Teaching Review, 1*(3), 198-204. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2379298116647968

Project Atlas. (2024). *A quick look at global mobility trends*. https://www.iie.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Project-Atlas_Infographic_2024-1.pdf

Roa, P. (2017). Learning challenges and preferred pedagogies of international students: A perspective from the U.S. *International Journal of Educational Management, 31*(7), 1000-1016. https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJEM-01-2016-0001/full/html

Ravichandran, S., Kretovics, M., Kirby, K., & Ghosh, A. (2017). Strategies to address English language writing challenges faced by international graduate students in the U.S. *Journal of International Students, 7*(3), 3-7. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.570033

Ritter, Z. S. (2016) Globalization of racism: Chinese, Japanese, and Korean international students' racial stereotypes and experiences with cross-racial interactions. In K. Bista & C. Foster (Eds.), *Exploring the social and academic experiences of international students in higher education institutions* (pp. 132-155). IGI Global.

Samanhudi, U. (2021). Reflexive account of an Indonesian international student's challenges and opportunities in a U.K. university's doctoral education program. *Journal of International Studies, 11*(1), 144-155. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v11i1.1096

Sato, T., & Hodge, S. R. (2018). Asian international graduate students' academic and social experiences in American higher education. In K. Bista & C. Foster (Eds.), *Exploring the social and academic experiences of international students in higher education institutions* (pp. 1-20). IGI Global.

Schneider, J. (2018). Passages into college writing: Listening to the experiences of international students. *Composition Forum, 40*, pp. 1-14. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1196520.pdf

Singh, J. K. N. (2023). Unequal opportunities in accessing employability-related programmes: South Asian graduates' experiences in Australia. *Higher Education Quarterly*. Advanced online publication. https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12416

Statistics Canada. (2024). Canadian postsecondary enrolments and graduates, 2022/2023. *The Daily.* https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/241120/dq241120b-eng.htm

Stewart-Rozema, J., & Pratts, C. (2023). International student enrollment statistics. *Best Colleges*. https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/international-student-enrollment-statistics/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Tang, X., Collier, D. A., & Witt, A. (2018). Qualitative study on Chinese students' perception of U.S. university life. *Journal of International Students, 8*(1), 151-178. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v8i1.158

Tavares, V. (2021). *International students in higher education: Language identity, and experience from a holistic perspective*. Lexington Books.

Taveres, V. (2024). Feeling excluded: International students experience equity, diversity and inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 28*(8), 1551-1568. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.2008536

Tran, L. T. (2020). Teaching and engaging international students: People-to-people connections and people-to-people empathy. *Journal of International Students, 10*(3), xii-xvii. https://doi.org/10.32674/JIS.V10I3.2005

Turnage, C. (2017). In higher ed's mental-health crisis, an overlooked population: International students. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 64*(1), 60-71.

Universities UK. (2022). *The costs and benefits of international higher education students to the UK economy*. https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/universities-uk-international/insights-and-publications/uuki-publications/costs-and-benefits-international-higher

University of Toronto. (2023). *Enrolment report 2022-23*. https://planningandbudget.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/22-23-Enrolment-Report-Final.pdf

Unischolars. (2024). *All about LSE acceptance rate 2025*. https://unischolars.com/blog/lse-acceptance-rate/

Van Horne, S., Lin, S., Anson, M., & Jacobson, W., (2018). Engagement, satisfaction, and belonging of international undergraduates at U.S. research universities. *Journal of International Students, 8*(1), 351-374. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v8i1.169

Wang, P. Y. (2016). *A study of drop-out Chinese international students from a Canadian pre-university English language improvement program: Acculturation experiences and challenges* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Windsor. https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/5873/

Wang, X., & Freed, R. (2021). A Bourdieusian analysis of sociocultural capital of Chinese international students in the United States. *Journal of International Students, 11*(1) 41-59. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v11i1.952

Weber, T., van Mol, C., & Wolbers, M. H. J. (2024). International students as sources of income? Moving beyond the neoliberal framing of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 28*(4), 526-545. https://doi.org/10.1177/10283153231211999

Wekullo, C. S. (2019). International undergraduate student engagement: Implications for higher education administrators. *Journal of International Students, 9*(1), 320-337. http://dx.doi.org/10.32674/jis.v9i1.257

Xiao, M. (2024). Chinese international graduate students at Canadian universities: language barriers, cultural identities and perceived problems of engagement. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 28*(5), 491-508. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1941318

Yakaboski, T., Perez-Velez, K., & Almutairi, Y. (2018). Breaking the silence: Saudi graduate student experiences on a U.S. campus. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 11*(2), 221-238. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000059

Yeo, H., Mendenhall, R., Harwood, S., & Huntt, M. (2019). Asian international student and Asian American student: Mistaken identity and racial microaggressions. *Journal of International Students, 9*(1), 39–65. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v9i1.278

Yu, Z. R. (2018). *A study of Chinese international students' classroom participation in an international M.Ed. program* [Master's thesis]. University of Windsor, ON. https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1057&context=research-result-summaries

Zhong, W., & Cheng, M. (2021). Developing critical thinking: Experiences of Chinese international students in a post-1992 university in England. *Chinese Education and Society, 54*(3/4), 95-106. https://doi.org/10.1080/10611932.2021.1958294