[1]*Jingwen Ma

[2]Yuntong Zeng

Chinese Students' Decision to Study in Philippine Universities:

An Empirical Study Based on Push and Pull Theory

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Abstract: - There is relatively few research on the factors influencing the flow of international students to the Asia-Pacific region, whereas previous studies on studying abroad have mostly concentrated on factors affecting the movement of international students from developing countries to developed countries. Specifically, it has been more and more evident in recent years that Chinese students are traveling in large numbers to Southeast Asia to further their studies. Based on push and pull theory, this study made use of factor analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to elucidate the push and pull factors at all levels that influenced Chinese students' decisions to study in Philippine universities. 8 dimensions were found with different levels of impact on the decision, among which the dimension of geographical advantages and educational system was the greatest, then followed by the demand for highly educated talent in China, the honor of studying abroad and local culture, the possibility of overseas employment, the peer competition, the rich educational resources and lower costs, the employment pressure and personal skill enhancement, and the possibility of settling in major cities in the future. Recommendations were also discussed to Chinese and Philippine education administrations regarding the push and pull factors.

Keywords: Decision, Chinese Students, Philippine Universities, Push and Pull Theory

I. INTRODUCTION

Higher education has been globally recognized as a significant instrument for economic development via human capital creation through talent training, scientific innovation by research, and social impact via community services, in addition to its function in national building and identity shaping [1]. Higher education in China has experienced significant transformations since the country's implementation of reform and opening up. In particular, the number of ordinary higher education institutions and students on campus have grown at a significantly faster rate since the first expansion of enrollment in Chinese universities in 1999. As a result, higher education has gradually moved from being exclusive to being accessible to all. In China, there are 3,117 higher education institutions and 47.6319 million students enrolled in various types of higher education as of 2024, according to the data from the Ministry of Education of China. The Chinese government has further encouraged the growth of higher education in China ever since it put forth the plan of "strengthening the country through education" in April 2023. Chinese institutions announced plans to raise master's and doctorate student enrollment from the start of 2024. The goal was to enroll 150,000 doctoral students, which was an increase of almost 20,000 from 2023. Even so, it remains challenging for Chinese colleges to accommodate students' needs in terms of learning. China's Ministry of Education released data showing that, in 2023, there was 12.91 million undergraduate applicants with an admission rate of almost 42%, and 4.74 million graduate applications nationally with an admission rate of approximately 25%. The growing popularity of higher education in China is a reflection of the country's growing need for elite talent, but it also reveals, from a different angle, that graduates are under more pressure to find employment and that there is a significant discrepancy between the number of graduates and available positions. Based on statistical data, 11.58 million graduates from Chinese universities graduated in 2023, representing an 820,000 annual increase. Additionally, master's and doctoral graduates surpassed undergraduate graduates for the first time, contributing to the phenomenon of academic involution in the labor market. For example, a bachelor's degree is no longer sufficient to obtain a respectable career. When hiring, elementary and junior high school teachers whose positions were previously open to undergraduates but now demand a master's degree, and high school instructors even need a doctorate. Due to these trends, an increasing number of graduates are choosing to pursue additional education in order to enhance their skills since they are

[1] Faculty of Guilin Tourism University China; PhD student in Centro Escolar University Philippines. *Corresponding author: Jingwen Ma

[2] PhD student in Centro Escolar University Philippines.

dissatisfied with their current academic credentials. It is challenging to meet the needs of most graduates to continue their studies because of the uneven regional development of higher education in China and the small number of admissions. Thus, some students from wealthier families decide to study abroad in order to obtain higher academic credentials and a wider international perspective. Students who struggle to find learning resources in China are being forced to flock to the international study abroad market by the competition for academic qualifications within the country and the challenges in the labor market. In 1981, China started allowing its nationals to pursue independent studies abroad. The self-funded study abroad policy has gradually improved since the State Council published the "Interim Regulations on Self-funded Study Abroad" in 1984. China today has more students studying abroad than any other country in the world, with the majority of these students being self-funded Chinese nationals. According to UNESCO data, in 2021, there were 1.021 million Chinese students studying in overseas higher education institutions, ranking first in the world. The top five destinations for Chinese students were the United States (accounting for 28.92%), the United Kingdom (accounting for 14.27%), Australia (accounting for 9.15%), Canada (accounting for 7.81%), and South Korea (accounting for 5.81%). Chinese students in these five countries accounted for 65.96% of the total number of Chinese overseas students. With the ongoing development of bilateral cultural exchanges, the number of two-way students between China and ASEAN surpassed 175,000 in 2023. Of these, approximately 70,000 Chinese students study in ASEAN nations, with the majority of these students are in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and other ASEAN nations. Even in light of the recent escalating geopolitical tensions, a growing number of Chinese students continue to decide to study in ASEAN nations because they think that active cooperation between China and ASEAN to forge a closer community with a shared future is the path toward peaceful development and that studying abroad in ASEAN will benefit them personally.

Chinese students have recently made the Philippines one of their top choices among these ASEAN countries for study abroad programs. Despite their geographical isolation, China and the Philippines maintain extensive cultural, educational, economic, and social political ties. China-Philippines relations have been deeper ever since the two nations established diplomatic relations in 1975. In particular, China-Philippines relations have been steadily improved under the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte, the 16th President of the Philippines, and in 2018 a comprehensive strategic cooperative relationship was established. There were more than 300 weekly round-trip flights between China and the Philippines in 2018, and 1.25 million Chinese visitors visited the country. 34 pairs of amicable provinces and cities had been created between China and the Philippines, providing a strong basis for mutual cultural exchanges and cooperative educational efforts. In the Philippines, there were 2,410 higher education institutions for the 2022–2023 academic year, according to the data from the Philippine Higher Education Commission. China lacks the higher education resources that the Philippines possesses in terms of population ratio. Compared with China, the Philippines has a far more flexible school system than China. Many Chinese students are drawn to the Philippines because of its wonderful cosmopolitan combination of Western traditions, the country's extraordinarily high sense of happiness, and its respect for women.

This study examined the level of factors that influence Chinese students' decisions to attend higher education institutions in the Philippines from the perspective of push and pull theory. The goal was to identify the main factors that influence Chinese students' decisions as well as the impact of various dimensions on Chinese students' decision to study in the Philippines. The results would be used to provide China and the Philippines, as push and pull countries, respectively, with references for future improvements in higher education quality and related policy formulation.

II. Literature Review

Making the decision to study abroad was not something that students did lightly. Students' decisions to study abroad were influenced by a broader range of social, political, and economic factors. Conditions and individual goals might have a direct impact on students' decisions. Studying overseas was thought to represent a person's selective consumption of education from the standpoint of human capital theory [2]. Pimpa stated that people's decision to pursue higher education abroad was an example of an investment in consumption, with the goal of this activity being to satisfy the urge for personal development in the hope of increasing financial gains. Prior to enrolling in an international graduate program, a prospective international student must decide six things: whether to seek a graduate degree, whether to study abroad, which nation, university, and city to attend, and which course to take [3]. The definition of student decision-making was

the process of solving problems that candidates go through while making decisions [4]. The choice to study in a certain country might have an indirect impact on the international ties between nations as well as the larger social, political, and economic environments of the countries of origin and destination. Research indicated that when students choose to study overseas, they took into account a nation's reputation or image [5]. Decision-making was believed to be influenced by culture [6]. The primary reason Chinese students chose to study abroad was to pursue graduate degrees, and scholars stated that parents' "significant financial sacrifices" had an impact on the students' choices [7]. Higher education marketers could obtain a competitive edge by better understanding graduate students' decision-making processes and the cultural and other factors that influenced them by adopting the decision-maker typology that was proposed [8]. Higher education institutions could use the decision maker typology as a foundation for their positioning and segmentation initiatives. Regarding the empirical study, group differences in significant university image factors among males and females, students from various nationalities and socioeconomic backgrounds, and students who planned to study a variety of subjects were examined using univariate and multivariate ANOVA [9].

Chinese students also took into account the importance of studying overseas when making decisions. There were typically two layers to the worth of studying abroad. The national level was the first level, and the individual level was the second. It was impossible to overlook the benefits of studying overseas for both the nation and the individual. Throughout history, a large number of university students who had studied overseas returned to their home country to work after graduating, making significant contributions to the advancement of the nation's political civilization, science and technology, and society. Opinions on the merits of studying overseas differ. There were four main reasons why college students decide to study abroad for their higher education. The four pillars of culture, thought, economy, and development were all closely related to each other and had a significant influence on education. The six main benefits of studying overseas were as follows: cultural value, thought value, economic value, talent development value, information dissemination value, and development value [10]. The value of government-sponsored international students in China at the end of the 20th century was investigated using quantitative research methods, and it was discovered that after returning home, international students had aided in the advancement of both higher education standards and China's social modernization. During their study abroad experience, they had significantly enhanced China's worldwide standing and raised the traditional Chinese culture's level of competitiveness internationally. It was evident that the concept of collectivist honor—which was widely promoted in China—as well as the concepts of family and personal honor, all demonstrate the benefits of studying abroad. This was now a deciding factor for students who wanted to study abroad [11].

The number of students who were self-funded has increased exponentially since the 2000s due to the rapid rise of China's wealthy upper and middle classes [12]. The groundbreaking study employed five categories—geographical location, social and learning environment, recommendations from friends and family, knowledge and comprehension of the host country, and cost concerns to analyze the choices made by international students studying in Australia [13]. Chen mentioned that students' decisions to study in a particular country would be influenced by the unpredictability of the political climate [14]. International schools ought to comprehend the needs of international students as well as the psychology of Chinese pupils [15]. A theoretical model was developed in order to fully explain the phenomenon of differences in the selection of individual study abroad destinations by international students [16]. This model was then used to further explore the phenomenon of differences in the selection of individual study abroad destinations based on statistical data. Ultimately, the following findings were made: International students' individual investment goals and consumption patterns were related to their behavior in selecting various study locations. European nations were the most desirable places for Chinese high school students to study abroad, followed by Oceania nations, North American nations, and Asian nations. Study destinations were chosen in large part due to individual characteristics. To a certain extent, the phenomenon of individual disparities in study destination choice was explained by the theoretical model developed in this article. In line with the model construction, variations in the study destinations selected by each individual were due to variations in their individual consumption and investment patterns, which in turn were influenced by their individual background. There was some practical use to the approach in understanding why different people choose different study destinations. Numerous researches had been conducted on the variables that affect students' inclination to study overseas. According to statistical surveys, over 95% of students decided to pursue their

studies overseas with the primary goal of earning the corresponding international professional qualifications. Other reasons why students study abroad include bettering their own overall quality and receiving a higher-quality education abroad [17]. Chinese students aspired to abandon China's conventional university education system and acquired a global perspective [18].

The 19th century saw the emergence of the push and pull theory. The push and pull hypothesis were frequently applied in the fields of demography to investigate the variables influencing population movement. In immigration theory [19], the push and pull paradigm was first applied to describe the forces influencing population movement. The push and pull theory was mostly used in the sphere of education to investigate the mobility of foreign students. Scholars such as Agarwal and Winkler had been investigating the factors that influence overseas students' decision to study in the United States since 1985. They compiled information on four factors that influence the mobility of international students: the personal household GDP of international students in their home countries, the cost of higher education consumption in the United States, higher education opportunities in the sending countries of international students, and the anticipated benefits of studying abroad [20]. McMahon in1992 applied the push and pull theory to the research subject of foreign study education. He described studying abroad as an international student's mobility behavior. He thought that students' choice of destination countries would be directly impacted by trade between sending and receiving nations. Three areas were affected by the migration of international students: education, the economy, and national policy. External influences were the focus of research on the push factors of students in developing nations and the pull elements of international students in receiving nations [21]. Pull forces operated within the host country and draw students to the destination, whereas push factors are elements associated to the home country that encouraged students to depart for foreign study [13]. The push and pull factors that influence students' decision on where to study abroad were found in the study. The findings indicated that universities' encouragement and marketing of study abroad was a push element. Through travel, language practice, and cross-cultural communication, exchange learning enhances students' personal development. Their resumes were enhanced by these abilities and experiences. Conversely, the pull factors that students took into account while selecting a host nation and educational institution include the country's economic and social standing, geography, climate, and culture. Students' choice of study abroad destination was influenced by a number of factors, including the cost of living and the educational system (including the language used, courses provided, perceived image, communication and cooperation, and recommendations) [22]. The push and pull theoretical models had been discussed by academics as well. The push and pull theory was limited in its ability to fully explain the process of international students choosing their study destination countries; it could only synthesize and organize a variety of contributing aspects unilaterally [23]. Intention, search, and selection, or the three-step synthesis theory, was suggested as an addition to the theory of external cause as the impact of internal cause, and together they investigated the internal and external components of the push-pull model [24]. According to Park in 2009, the 2-D model depicted in Fig. 1 was put out. Individual variables were internal factors that affect student mobility, and internal factors were just as significant as exterior reasons. The two components worked together to influence the direction of international student mobility [25].

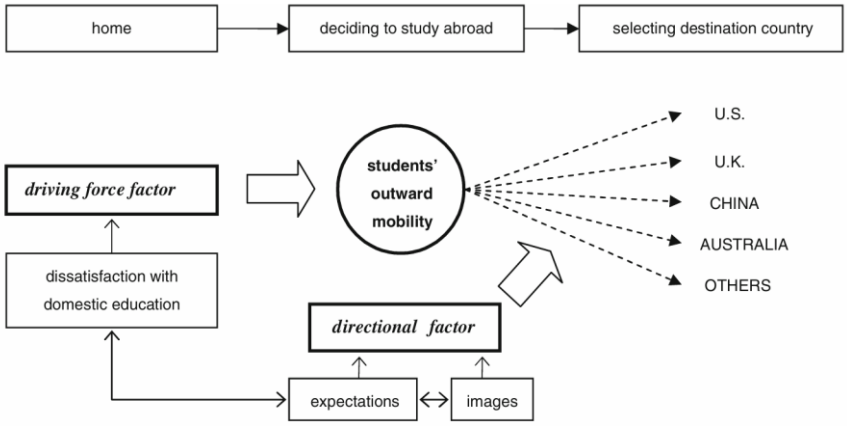

Fig.1 2-D model: driving force factor and directional factor

The aforementioned review indicated that, despite the high number of Chinese students studying in Southeast Asian nations, there were only a small number of studies that thoroughly examine the learning mobility of Chinese students in this field. These studies also hardly ever took into account the influence of other factors, such as the international students' personal objective characteristics, the pressure from their home country, and the allure of the destination country. It was vital to choose a destination nation as a case study in order to examine the elements that influence Chinese students' decisions to study abroad, particularly in light of the recent trend of studying abroad in Southeast Asian nations.

III. Empirical Design

The decision of Chinese students to study in Philippine universities was influenced by a variety of variables. For this reason, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the approaches. Eight Chinese students currently enrolled in classes in the Philippines were first interviewed for this study. The common elements that impact Chinese students' decision to study at Philippine universities were sorted out based on the interviews. The interviews were separated into three sections: demographics, push factors in the sending country, and pull factors in the receiving country, in accordance with Park's 2-D model of the literature study. The common keywords were sorted out based on the interview findings, and an existing questionnaire and prior research were combined to create a new one.

A. Scale design and procedure

The interview and updated questionnaire were the two steps in this section. Firstly, we conducted interviews with eight Chinese students—two undergraduates, three masteral students, and three doctorate students—who were enrolled in courses in the Philippines. The face-to-face interview was in Mandarin. The following were the questions that focused on push and pull factors:

① What factors made you decide to leave China and study overseas?
② What drew you to pursue your studies in the Philippines?
③ Do you think family situation and academic background are important for finding a decent job? What experiences would you like to share?
④ What are your main worries and concerns regarding studying in the Philippines?

We performed a word frequency analysis on the eight respondents' responses using NVIVO 12. As depicted in Fig. 2, The most frequently occurring keywords were: culture, China, employment, interest, knowledge, tuition, graduation, time, diploma, education, family, and language. Of these, China, employment, interest, knowledge, education, and family were the most frequently occurring keywords for push factors, and culture, climate, tuition, geographical proximity, graduation, time, diploma, and language were the most frequently occurring keywords for pull factors.

Fig. 2 Word frequency cloud of the interview

Secondly, we adjusted the structure and content in light of the interview findings. The factors of this study were established and the questionnaire was modified in accordance with Park's 2-D model and the findings of the interviews. A Likert five-point scale was used, with 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. After the questionnaire was completed, we asked 20 Chinese students to fill out the sample questionnaire and conducted

reliability and validity tests on the returned questionnaires, and the result met the expected requirements.

B. Data collection

We distributed the questionnaire online to the Chinese students studying in Philippine universities on WeChat on October 9, 2024. Out of the 284 individuals in the group, 113 completed the questionnaire and all of the answers were valid.

C. Research method

We first conducted a descriptive statistical analysis of the overall questionnaire and then performed a factor analysis. We used the average score of the decision for Chinese students studying in the Philippine universities as the dependent variable Y, and the average factor scores of each dimension of the questionnaire as independent variables. We employed regression analysis to determine the impact of each dimension on the decision of Chinese students. The correlation analysis between different dimensions and the decision was described using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The significance level (α) was set at 0.05. The software SPSS 27 was utilized for data analysis.

D. Sociodemographic feature of sample

As could be seen from the data in Table 1, males accounted for 42.7% and females accounted for 57.3% of the sample. In terms of age, the largest proportion was 26-30 years old, accounting for 42.5%, followed by 18-25 years old, accounting for 29.2%, then 31-40 years old, accounting for 19.5%, and finally 41-50 years old, accounting for 8.8%. Those engaged in professional occupations, here referring to teachers, doctors, lawyers, etc., accounted for 23%, freelancers accounted for 27.4%, company employees accounted for 27.4%, and students accounted for 22.2%. In terms of the choice of majors, more students chose educational management, accounting for 39.8%, management science accounted for 35.4%, philosophy accounted for 14.2%, and medicine accounted for 10.6%. This part was related to the information mentioned by the interviewees during the interview. Many interviewees believed that it might be easier to enter Chinese universities to achieve a decent and stable life after obtaining a diploma in education management. In terms of previous education level, the highest was undergraduate, accounting for 58.4%, meaning that this part of the respondents were currently studying for a master's degree in the Philippines, followed by 19.5% of the master's degree respondents who were studying for a doctorate, and the least was the postdoctoral degree respondents, with a progress of 2.7%. The data distribution of previous education level was basically consistent with the distribution of age. From the perspective of work experience, the most students had 3-5 years of work experience, followed by 6-10 years, and then less than 3 years. The monthly income could be inferred the students' ability to support their study abroad expenses. Among them, the students with 5001-10000 RMB accounted for 52.2%, less than 5000 RMB accounted for 24.8%, and more than 10001 RMB accounted for 23%. In addition, scholarship support, which referred to various forms of scholarships. 55.8% of students had scholarship support, while 44.2% did not.

Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	Percent
1.Gender	Male	48	42.7
	Female	65	57.3
2.Age	18-25	33	29.2
	26-30	48	42.5
	31-40	22	19.5
	41-50	10	8.8
3.Career	Professionals	26	23
	Freelancers	31	27.4
	Company staff	31	27.4
	Student	25	22.2
4.Major	Management Science	40	35.4

	Educational Management	45	39.8
	Philosophy	16	14.2
	Medical Science	12	10.6
5.Prerequisite Education Level	Senior high	5	4.4
	Higher vocational college	17	15
	Bachelor's degree	66	58.4
	Master's degree	22	19.5
	Doctoral degree	3	2.7
6.Working Years	0	20	17.7
	Less than 3 years	21	18.6
	3-5 years	42	37.2
	6-10 years	22	19.5
	More than 10 years	8	7
7.Monthly Income	Less than 5000 RMB	28	24.8
	5001-10000 RMB	59	52.2
	More than 10001 RMB	26	23
8.Scholarship Support	Yes	63	55.8
	No	50	44.2

IV. Analysis And Result

A. Reliability and validity testing of the questionnaire

We conducted a reliability analysis on the data, with an overall reliability of 0.913, indicating good internal consistency and high reliability. Additionally, a validity analysis on the data was also performed, with an overall validity of 0.819. The KMO and Bartlett's test showed a p-value less than 0.05, indicating that the overall validity of the questionnaire was high, and suitable for factor analysis.

B. Factor analysis of Chinese students' decision to study in Philippine universities

We conducted a factor analysis on the questionnaire items, using principal component analysis as the method. The results of the analysis were shown in Table 2 and Fig. 3. It could be seen that extracting eight factors explains 63.664% of the total variance, and there were eight factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.739	29.129	29.129	8.739	29.129	29.129	2.882	9.607	9.607
2	1.965	6.550	35.679	1.965	6.550	35.679	2.505	8.351	17.958
3	1.702	5.673	41.352	1.702	5.673	41.352	2.426	8.087	26.045
4	1.582	5.272	46.624	1.582	5.272	46.624	2.413	8.043	34.088
5	1.446	4.819	51.443	1.446	4.819	51.443	2.365	7.883	41.971
6	1.304	4.348	55.791	1.304	4.348	55.791	2.336	7.786	49.757
7	1.232	4.106	59.897	1.232	4.106	59.897	2.169	7.230	56.987
8	1.130	3.767	63.664	1.130	3.767	63.664	2.003	6.677	63.664
9	0.978	3.261	66.925						

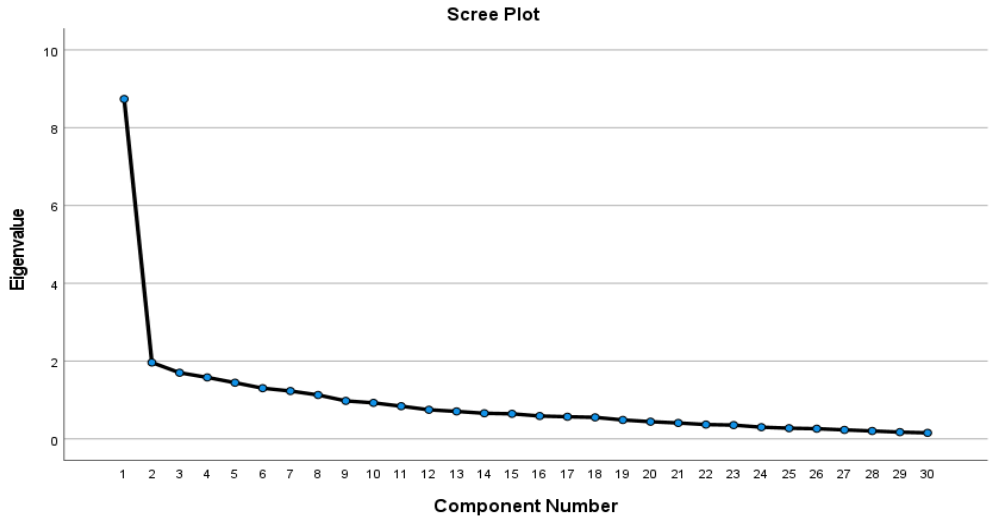

Fig.3 Scree Plot

Table 3 was the result of the factor analysis. A component greater than 0.5 indicated the corresponding variable had a significant impact. In our SPSS software operation, we set components less than 0.5 to not display data. Common factor 1 consisted of 5 variables, we named it Geographical advantages and educational system; common factor 2 consisted of 4 variables, we named it Honor of studying abroad and local culture; common factor 3 consisted of 3 variables, we named it Rich educational resources and lower costs; common factor 4 consisted of 4 variables, we named Possibility of overseas employment; common factor 5 consisted of 4 variables, we named it Demand for highly educated talent in China, common factor 6 was composed of 3 variables, named as Employment pressure and personal skill enhancement; common factor 7 was composed of 2 variables, named as Possibility of settling in major cities in the future; common factor 8 was composed of 3 variables, named as Peer competition.

Table 3 Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9.The shortage of higher educational resources in China			0.643					
10.The requirement for higher education is gradually increasing							0.689	
11.Low education is hard to find a decent job						0.656		
12.Favorable policies for overseas returnees, such as to settle down in a big city							0.800	
13.A sense of honor in responding to the call of the China-ASEAN shared future		0.523						
14.China universities' policy for international talents					0.588			
15.Higher education level is good for personal career promotion						0.663		
16.Enhance the capacity of global citizens					0.635			
17.Expand international perspective						0.689		
18.The possibility of working overseas				0.734				
19.Peers have gone abroad to improve their education								
20.Career bottlenecks need to be broken					0.582			
21.Peers returning from abroad get more resources								0.595
22.My family urged me to study abroad				0.602				
23.Geographically close to China	0.633							
24.Philippine Chinese cultural matchmaking					0.642			
25.The charms of a multicultural lifestyle	0.611							
26.Convenient visa policy				0.653				
27.Favorable climate	0.700							
28.English as the official language								0.701
29.Safe social environment		0.520						
30.Good connection with universities in western countries								
31.Easier qualification review procedure	0.561							
32.High Education recognition in and abroad								0.559
33.Graduation difficulty and time duration	0.575							
34.Diploma competitiveness		0.725						
35.Affordable tuition fees			0.698					
36.The cost of living is similar to that of Chinese cities		0.502						
37.The fees for foreign students are not high			0.569					

38.Tuition fees can be paid in installments				0.543				

C. Dimensional analysis of factors influencing Chinese students' decision to study in Philippine universities

As shown in Table 4, we divided the factors into the pull factor of Geographical advantages and educational system (questions 23, 25, 27, 31, 33, set as F1), the pull factor of Honor of studying abroad and local culture (questions 13, 29, 34, 36, set as F2), the pull factor of Rich educational resources and lower costs (questions 9, 35, 37, set as F3), the pull factor of the possibility of overseas employment (questions 18, 22, 26, 38, set as F4), the push factor of Demand for highly educated talent in China (questions 14, 16, 20, 24, set as F5), the push factor of Employment pressure and personal skill enhancement (questions 11, 15, 17, set as F6), the push factor of Possibility of settling in major cities in the future (questions 10, 12, set as F7), and the push factor of peer competition (questions 21, 28, 32, set as F8). Combining the push-pull theory and the qualitative result, we classified F1, F2, F3, and F4 as pull factors, and F5, F6, F7, and F8 as push factors. Then, we conducted a descriptive statistical analysis of the influencing factors of these eight different dimensions.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
F1: Geographical advantages and educational system (pull)	113	1.60	5.00	3.8035	0.65081
F 2: Honor of studying abroad and local culture (pull)	113	1.50	5.00	3.7212	0.71476
F 3: Rich educational resources and lower costs (pull)	113	1.67	5.00	3.6696	0.69507
F 4: Possibility of overseas employment (pull)	113	2.00	5.00	3.7522	0.68993
F 5: Demand for highly educated talent in China (push)	113	2.00	5.00	3.8540	0.64063
F 6: Employment pressure and personal skill enhancement (push)	113	1.67	5.00	4.0737	0.73157
F 7: Possibility of settling in major cities in the future (push)	113	2.00	5.00	3.9513	0.75287
F 8: Peer competition (push)	113	2.33	5.00	3.8673	0.68071
Valid N (listwise)	113				

From the results of descriptive statistics, among the factors that affected Chinese students studying in Philippine universities, the one with the highest mean was F6, which showed that China's employment pressure and the requirement for high education for personal career development were very high. The second highest was F7, the push factor for settling in big cities in the future, which was basically consistent with China's employment situation. Young people like to stay in big cities with more opportunities and higher wages. However, settling in big cities and buying houses require support from high education and other points. The third highest was F8, competition among peers, especially after returning from overseas studies, the language and education of peers have been improved, and they would be easier to obtain better resources in China. The score differences among items were not significant, indicating that the push and pull were in a relatively balance.

D. Correlation analysis of factors influencing Chinese students' decision to study in Philippine universities

We used the score of Chinese students' decision as the dependent variable Y for regression analysis. We firstly examined the correlation between the scores of factors and Y. As shown in Table 5 that there was significant relationship between Y and F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8. The correlation coefficient values indicated a positive correlation.

Table 5 Correlations Between Y and Each Factor

		Y			Y
F1	Pearson Correlation	0.802**	F5	Pearson Correlation	0.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
F2	Pearson Correlation	0.787**	F6	Pearson Correlation	0.661**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
F3	Pearson Correlation	0.565**	F7	Pearson Correlation	0.595**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
F4	Pearson Correlation	0.721**	F8	Pearson Correlation	0.647**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

E. Regression analysis of decision factors of Chinese students studying in Philippine universities

We took F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8 as independent variables to conduct multiple linear regression analysis with Y of Chinese students' decision to study in Philippine universities. The analysis results were shown in Table 6. As can be seen from the table below, the R-squared value of the model was 0.996, proving that these eight factors could explain 99.6% of the decision. The significance level of the F test was less than 0.001, and the Durbin-Watson was 1.920, proving that there was no autocorrelation in the model. It was proved that these 8 factors had an impact on the score Y. According to table 7, the VIF values did not exceed 4, which proved that the model did not have multicollinearity problems.

Table 6 Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	0.998[a]	0.996	0.995	0.3343	0.996	2974.889	8	104	<0.001	1.920

Table 7 Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-0.020	0.026		-0.750	0.455		
	F1	0.170	0.007	0.227	24.720	<0.001	0.497	2.013
	F2	0.136	0.006	0.200	22.040	<0.001	0.510	1.961
	F3	0.117	0.005	0.167	22.111	<0.001	0.732	1.367
	F4	0.134	0.006	0.190	22.846	<0.001	0.606	1.651
	F5	0.144	0.007	0.189	20.795	<0.001	0.507	1.974
	F6	0.101	0.005	0.152	19.181	<0.001	0.669	1.495
	F7	0.079	0.005	0.122	15.771	<0.001	0.702	1.425
	F8	0.121	0.006	0.169	21.795	<0.001	0.695	1.439

We established the multiple linear equation for Y as follows:

$$Y = 0.17*F1 + 0.136*F2 + 0.117*F3 + 0.134*F4 + 0.144*F5 + 0.101*F6 + 0.079*F7 + 0.121*F8 - 0.020$$

The final analysis showed that these 8 factors all had a significant positive impact on the decision of Chinese students to study in the Philippine universities. Among them, F1 had the greatest impact, followed by F5,F2, F4, F8, F3, F6, F7, indicating: Geographical advantages and educational system (pull)> Demand for highly educated talent in China (push)> Honor of studying abroad and local culture (pull)> Possibility of overseas employment (pull)> Peer competition (push)> Rich educational resources and lower costs (pull)> Employment pressure and personal skill enhancement (push)> Possibility of settling in major cities in the future (push).

V. Conclusions And Recommendations

A. Conclusions

Based on the push and pull theory, this study made use of factor analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to elucidate the push and pull factors at all levels that influence Chinese students' decisions to study in Philippine universities. 8 dimensions were found with different levels of impact on the decision, among which the geographical advantages and educational system was the greatest, then followed by the demand for highly educated talent in China, the honor of studying abroad and local culture, the possibility of overseas employment, the peer competition, the rich educational resources and lower costs, the employment pressure and personal skill enhancement, and the possibility of settling in major cities in the future.

B. Recommendations for Chinese education

Admission to Chinese universities is exam-based, with only one opportunity for exams and admission each year. This places immense pressure on Chinese students regarding their studies. If they miss or fail the exam, they have to wait for the next year's exam opportunity, which increases the push for students to study abroad. The examination methods and

operational mechanisms for college admissions in the Philippines are very different from those in China. Both domestic and foreign students can freely participate. Since the admission mechanism of Philippine universities is mostly application-based, the number of admissions is controlled by the schools themselves, and the application periods vary among different universities, students have more opportunities to choose schools. Additionally, with three admission opportunities available each year, students' chances of being admitted are greatly increased, and their enthusiasm for continuing education is encouraged. China can refer to the examination systems of the Philippines or Western countries, through a combination of various institutional reforms, continuously meet the educational needs of Chinese students studying domestically, reduce students' resistance to the Chinese examination system, and thereby better select and retain diverse talents. In addressing the issues of education and employment, China's education system should adjust its disciplines and professional structures from the perspective of long-term social development needs and the quality of professional talent cultivation, optimize curriculum settings, and align talent cultivation with market demands. In addition, in the face of an increasing number of Chinese students seeking to study abroad, China should enhance its support services for students studying abroad, such as supporting Chinese institutions in establishing more foreign language training schools, discussing convenient student visa procedures with host countries, implementing degree recognition processes, and increasing support for innovation, entrepreneurship, and employment for returnees.

C. Recommendations for Philippine Education

The geographical proximity to China, the appeal of its diverse culture, and the ease of admission into its education system are among the biggest attractions for Chinese students. In the face of many students choosing Philippine education, Philippine universities should strengthen their management systems for Chinese students, such as appointing Chinese student counselors to facilitate timely understanding of visa processing, course arrangements, graduation procedures, and addressing issues related to the mental health of Chinese international students. In order to better facilitate the exchange between Chinese students and Filipino students, universities in the Philippines could also consider establishing Chinese cultural exchange centers, encouraging Chinese and Filipino students to celebrate Chinese festivals together and organize exhibitions of traditional Chinese dances, culture, and clothing. In terms of managing the personal safety of international students, universities in the Philippines can conduct lectures and other forms of education for foreign students, reminding them to strictly adhere to Philippine laws and regulations, enhance their self-protection awareness, and seek legal means to ensure their safety, so they can complete their academic journey in the Philippines in a healthy, safe, and enjoyable manner.

VI. Limitation and Future Direction

Due to the insufficient sample size and specificity, the generalizability of the results of this study was somewhat limited. Nevertheless, this study conducted a detailed and in-depth analysis of the push and pull factors influencing Chinese students' decisions to study at universities in the Philippines, providing developmental support and insights for the management of study abroad education between China and the Philippines, and even Southeast Asia.

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