



Life around and beyond study: Chinese students' voices on their experience in New Zealand

Yi Wang & Jenny Field

Waikato Institute of Technology

06-10-2018

Overview

- ❑ International students market & mobility
- ❑ Student satisfaction: What, why & how
- ❑ This study: Research questions, setting, participants & methods
- ❑ Findings
- ❑ Discussion & implications



China is a particularly lucrative market for international students.

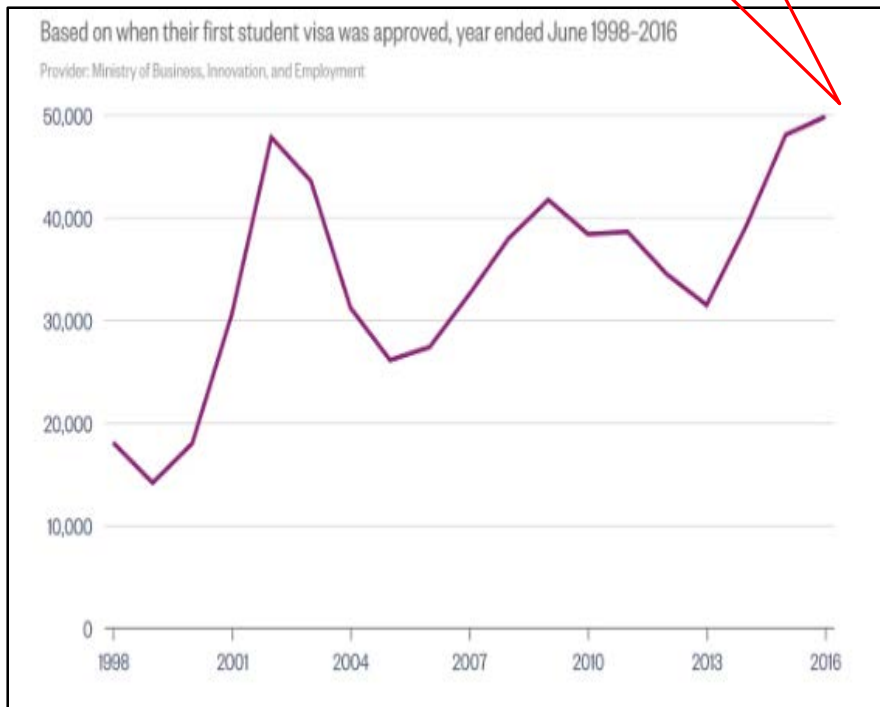
According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), China accounted for 17% of the world's international students in 2013, sending 712,157 young people abroad for higher education.

The majority of today's Chinese international students can afford the cost of a foreign higher education; over 95% of Chinese students studying overseas are self-funded (Choudaha et al., 2013).

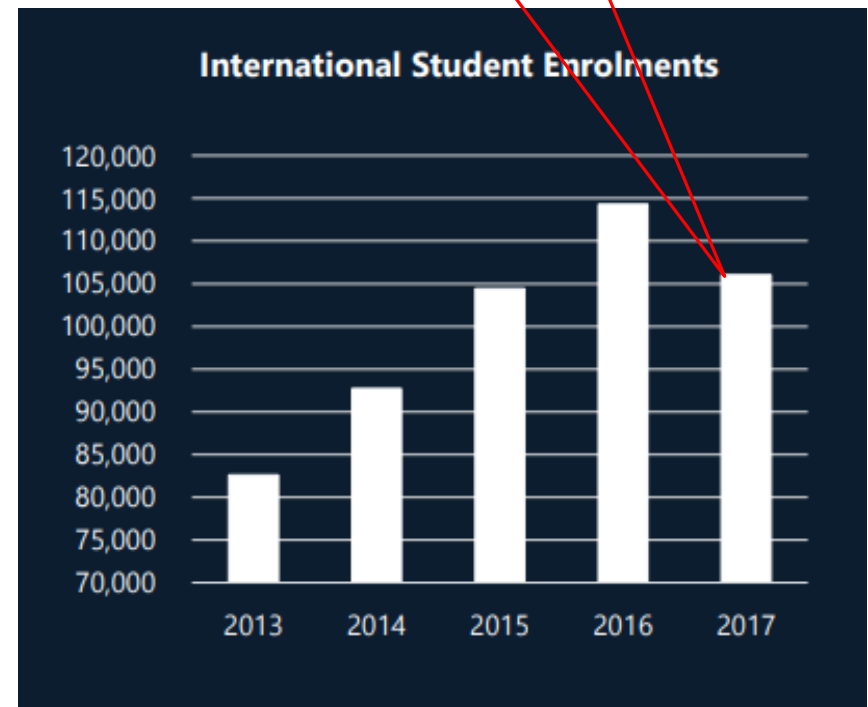
10,000 (1/5) are from China.

7% drop in 2017

International students in NZ

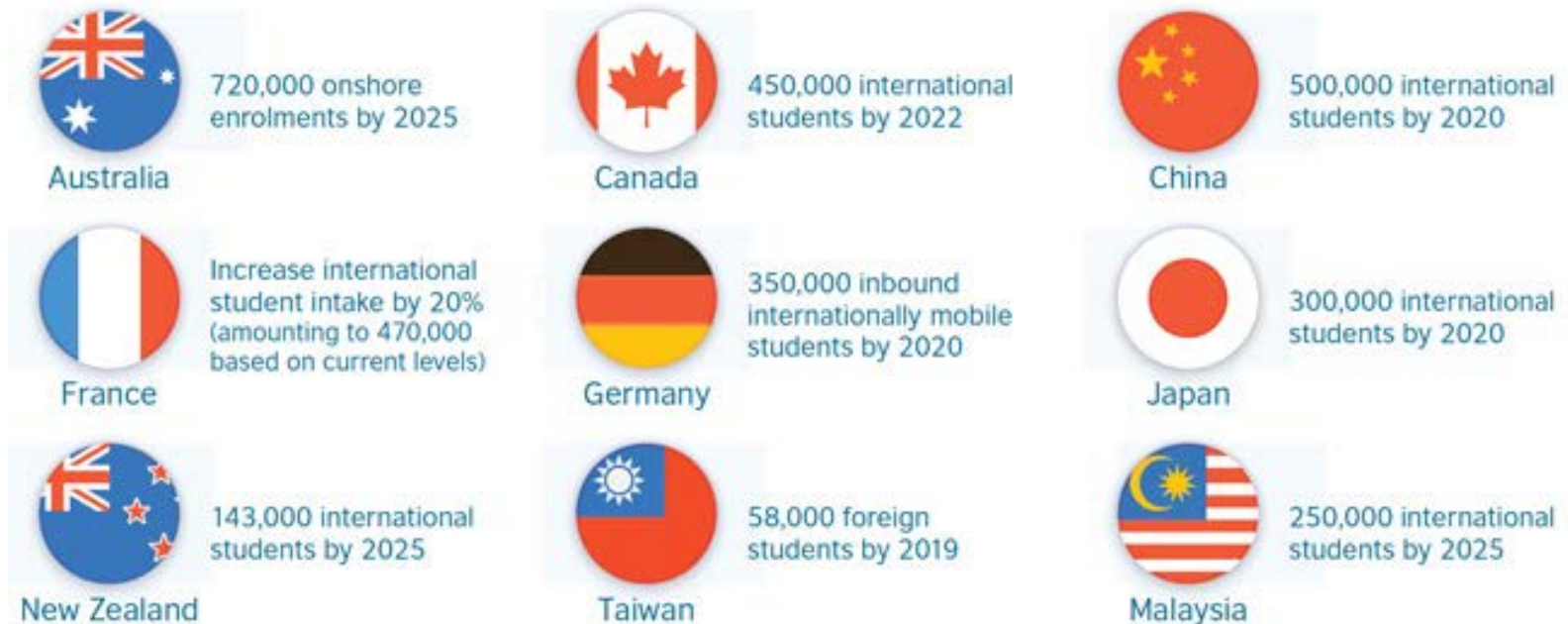


Trends in enrolment of international students 1998 – 2016 (Education NZ Dashboard, 2017)



Trends in enrolment of international students 2013 – 2017 (Education NZ Dashboard, 2018)

Increased global competition for enrolments



<http://monitor.icef.com/2017/07/mapping-trends-will-shape-international-student-mobility/>

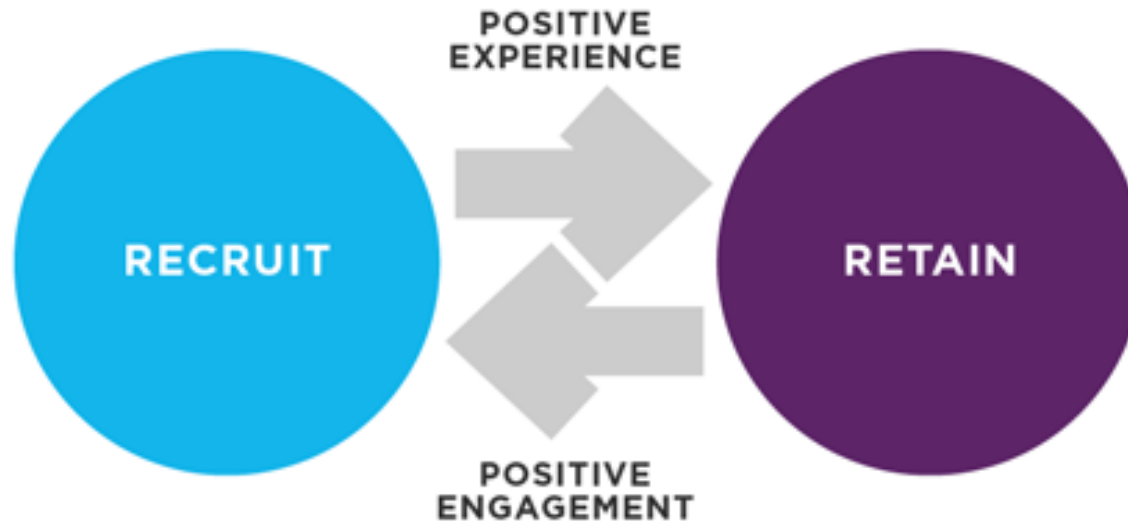
What is student satisfaction?

- “the favorability of a student’s subjective evaluations of the various outcomes and experiences associated with education” (Letcher & Neves, 2010)

Why is it important?

- Satisfaction with the institution as a whole is the strongest determiner of the overall satisfaction of the study abroad experience (Finn & Darmody, 2017)
- “customer satisfaction, rather than service quality, leads to increased market share, profitability, positive word of mouth, and customer retention for service providers” (Bianchi, 2013)

The Interdependency of Recruitment and Retention Practices



(Paul Schulmann, 2014)

World Education Services | wes.org/RAS
2014, International Student Retention and Success:
A Comparative Perspective



<https://wenr.wes.org/2014/09/international-student-retention-and-success-a-comparative-perspective>

How has it been researched?

- While the satisfaction of international students has been frequently surveyed, much of this research is based on a limited range of closed-item data collection methods, producing findings that partially reflect the researchers' assumptions in designing the question items.

Findings from previous studies

A finding from the NZ national survey (Schulmann, 2014) which aligned with Li (2016) was that Chinese students were relatively more dissatisfied with their experience in comparison with students from Europe, North America, South America and other Asian countries (ESANA).

- *Chinese students were the least satisfied with their accommodation, homestay arrangements, and social support. They were least satisfied with their academic progress despite reporting it to be significantly better than students from other Asian countries. Chinese students also had the lowest levels of life satisfaction amongst the three groups.*

The findings reported that Chinese students did not seem to integrate into educational institutions and into New Zealand society to the same degree as other international students. They had less contact with their New Zealand peers and had fewer friends than students from other Asian and ESANA countries. They reported more discrimination than ESANA students and saw New Zealanders as having more negative attitudes toward international students.

Yet despite these negative experiences, according to the report, the Chinese students were the most likely students to remain in New Zealand after their study experience and many stated that they planned to apply for permanent residence (Schulmann, 2014, pp. 70- 71).

This study

- The study explored the experiences of international students in tertiary vocational training in NZ.
- Data reported in this presentation derived from **55** participants who clearly stated their Chinese identity in the narrative frames and **eighteen** of these who agreed to the subsequent interviews, areas of their study ranging from language courses at various levels to mainstream programmes.

Research questions

1. What do international Chinese students find satisfying about studying and living in New Zealand?
2. What do international Chinese students find dissatisfying about studying and living in New Zealand?

Data collection

- Name:** (Optional)
- Contact email:** (Optional)
- Your country of origin:** (Optional)
- Your major:**
- How long you have been studying at [institution name]:**
- How long you have been in NZ:**
- Are you willing to be involved in a follow-up interview?**

Narrative frame (please write as much as you like)

When I think about my classes I remember feeling (very/ somewhat/ a little) satisfied about

because

However, I remember feeling (very/ somewhat/ a little) dissatisfied about

because

When I think about my experiences at [institution name] in general, I remember feeling (very/ somewhat/ a little) satisfied with

because

However, I remember feeling feel (very/ somewhat/ a little) dissatisfied about

because

When I think about my general experiences living in NZ, I remember feeling (very/ somewhat/ a little) satisfied about

because

However, I remember feeling (very/ somewhat/ a little) dissatisfied about

because

Narrative framework

follow up



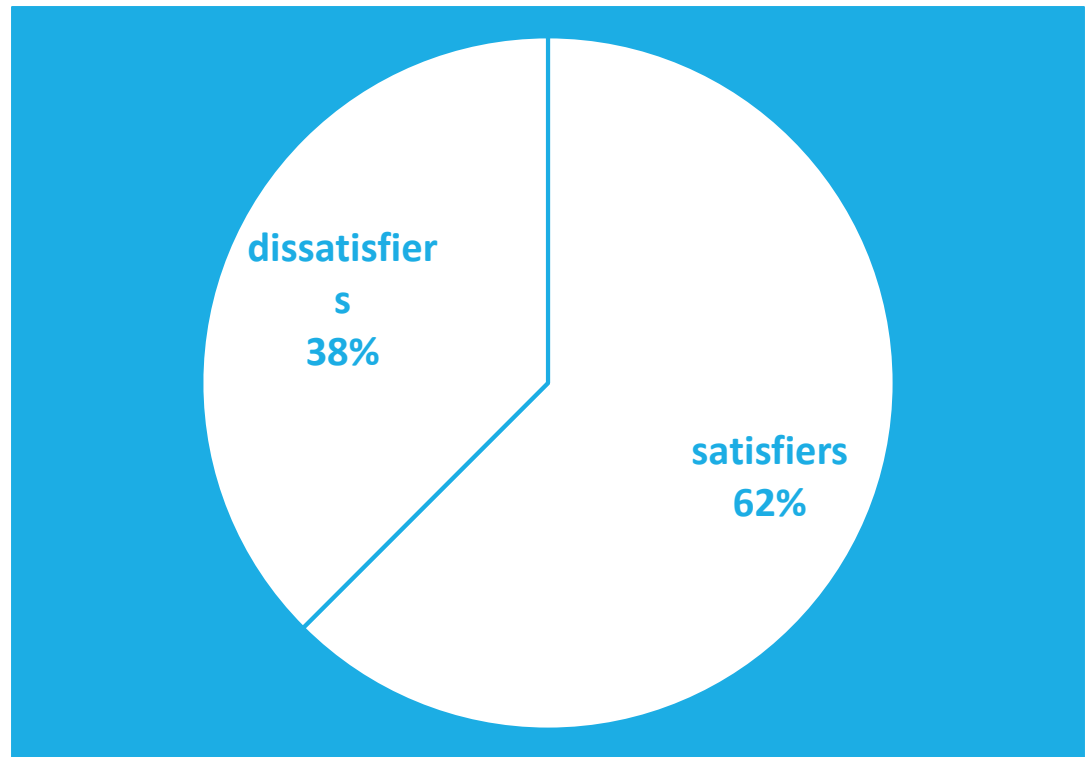
Collaborative data analysis

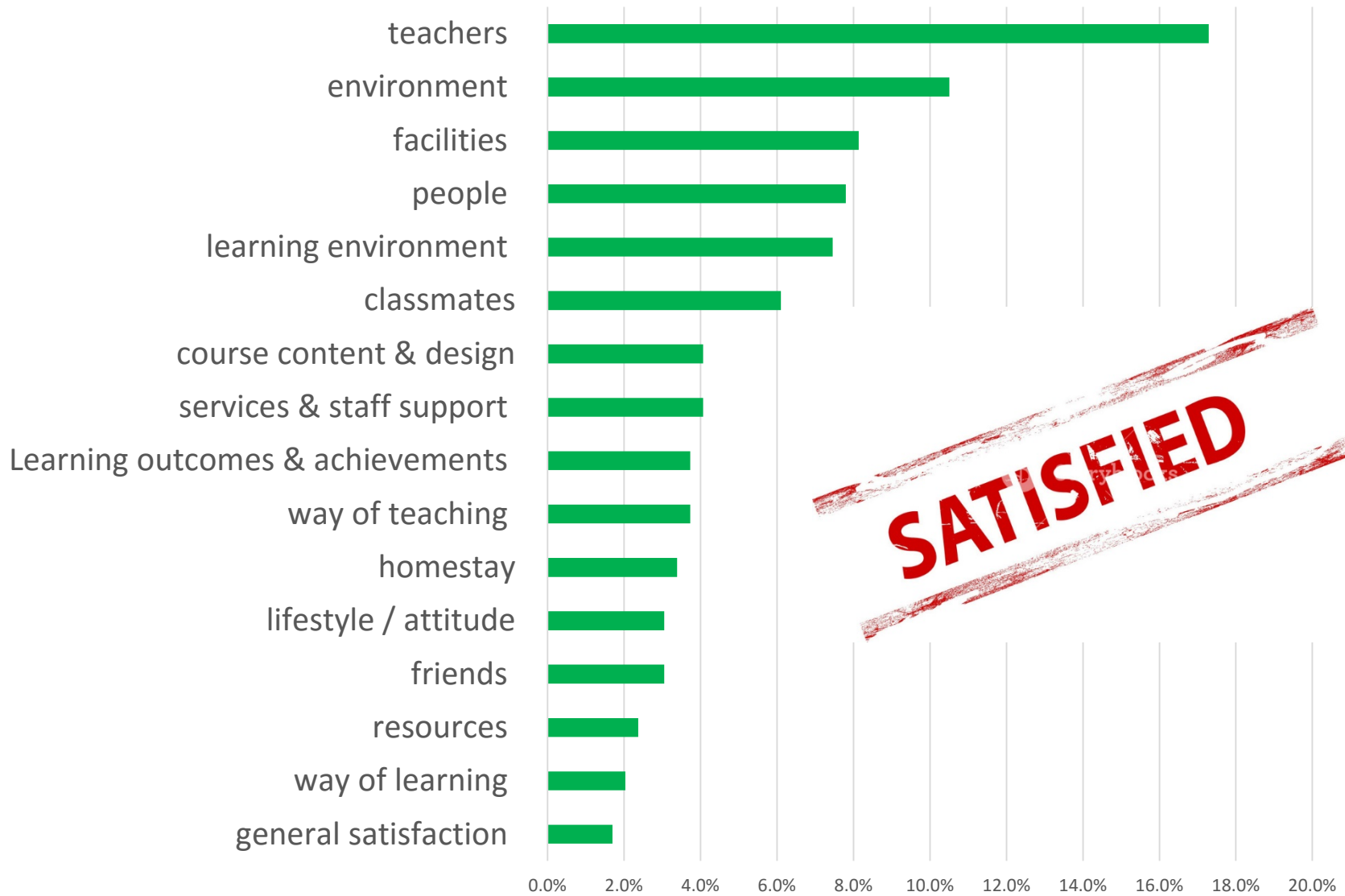
facilities						1) Printers: fast
facilities						2) Wifi: Because I was study in Uni,
		Los & achievements				3) speaking and listening: Because
		friends	overall			4) I have a good experience and I r
	services					5) student learning service, becau
facilities	services	friends				6) that it is convenience to buy som
TS						7) Teachers because most teachers
facilities: Hub		learning environment				8) 24 hours hub, free wifi in the car
facilities						9) the hub and library Because I ca
facilities	classrooms	learning environment				10) <u>Study environment and course a</u>
facilities						11) <u>the layout and the overall arrang</u>
TS						12) the tutors because the tutors wr
facilities	resources					13) TW Jill: Wintec has a lot of resou
TS	resources					14) Because the teacher's lecture is '
facilities	resources					15) Our facilities Because we have

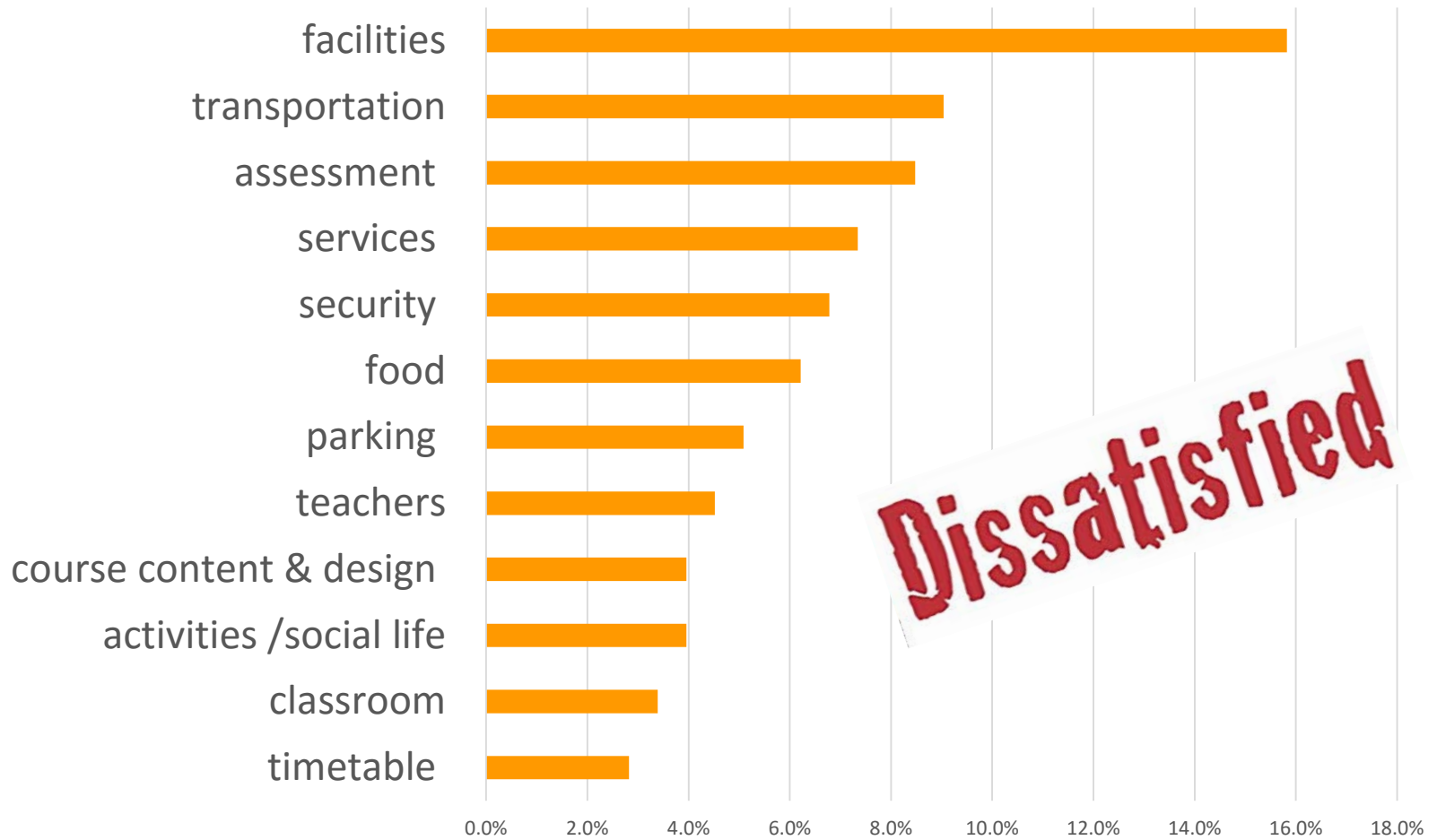


Findings: Overall satisfaction & dissatisfaction

satisfiers	295
dissatisfiers	177
	472







Satisfiers (295 comments)

teachers	51	17.3%
environment	31	10.5%
facilities	24	8.1%
people	23	7.8%
learning environment	22	7.5%
classmates	18	6.1%
course content & design	12	4.1%
services & staff support	12	4.1%
Learning outcomes & achievements	11	3.7%
way of teaching	11	3.7%
homestay	10	3.4%
friends	9	3.1%
lifestyle / attitude	9	3.1%
resources	7	2.4%
way of learning	6	2.0%
general satisfaction	5	1.7%

food	4	1.4%
language class	4	1.4%
timetable	4	1.4%
assessment	2	0.7%
class size	2	0.7%
customs & culture	2	0.7%
education system	2	0.7%
location	2	0.7%
safety	2	0.7%
transport	2	0.7%
weather	2	0.7%
accommodation	1	0.3%
activities	1	0.3%
classrooms	1	0.3%
institution brand	1	0.3%
shopping	1	0.3%
social system	1	0.3%

Dissatisfiers (177 comments)

facilities	28	15.8%
transportation	16	9.0%
assessment	15	8.5%
services	13	7.3%
security	12	6.8%
food	11	6.2%
parking	9	5.1%
teachers	8	4.5%
activities /social life	7	4.0%
course content & design	7	4.0%
classroom	6	3.4%
timetable	5	2.8%

classmates	4	2.3%
way of learning	4	2.3%
language	4	2.3%
way of teaching	3	1.7%
homestay	3	1.7%
resources	3	1.7%
weather	3	1.7%
lifestyle (slow pace)	3	1.7%
medical service	2	1.1%
T/ss relationship	1	0.6%
tuition fees	1	0.6%
employment	1	0.6%
learning environment	1	0.6%
rent cost	1	0.6%
discrimination	1	0.6%
workload	1	0.6%
friends	1	0.6%
city planning	1	0.6%
class size	1	0.6%
stress	1	0.6%

Some noticeable points

environment	31	0	31	100.0%
people	23	0	23	100.0%
Learning outcomes & achievements	11	0	11	100.0%
learning environment	22	1	23	95.7%
friends	9	1	10	90.0%
teachers	51	8	59	86.4%
classmates	18	4	22	81.8%
way of teaching	11	3	14	78.6%
homestay	10	3	13	76.9%
lifestyle / attitude	9	3	12	75.0%
resources	7	3	10	70.0%
course content & design	12	7	19	63.2%
way of learning	6	4	10	60.0%
language class	4	4	8	50.0%
services & staff support	12	13	25	48.0%
facilities	24	28	52	46.2%
timetable	4	5	9	44.4%
food	4	11	15	26.7%
safety	2	12	14	14.3%
classrooms	1	6	7	14.3%
activities	1	7	8	12.5%
assessment	2	15	17	11.8%
transport	2	16	18	11.1%
parking	0	9	9	0.0%

Assessment

Despite students being generally happy with their teachers and the content of their classes and the teaching approached there remained some stressors associated with their assessment.

They found the assessment regime quite stressful and opaque in terms of assessment policies and grading criteria. They are uncertain or can't understand about the assessment requirements and protocols.

Taking into account that generally students were satisfied with teachers and felt that they were supportive and helpful it seems that the negative comments about assessments may be found in the assessments themselves, or perhaps in the experience of undergoing assessments. There seems to be a disconnect between the positive experiences in the classroom where they enjoy the learning environment and the assessments they undertake.

Facilities

The [building name] has a central place in students' thinking as it has computers for their use, food and drinks and places to relax. There are also support services dotted throughout the building, the library, the ITS desk, and Student Support Services. These two comments reflected most of the students' opinions.

"[building name] and library: It's a very good place for students to study. I found the facilities and the working environment at [institution name] really pleasant. Classrooms are always clean and tidy. The [building name] is really nice and we can buy healthy food and hot drinks at any time. The library is great and the personnel is qualified and always happy to help."

Students also appreciated the study areas and the fact that the [building name] is always open and that they have easy access to websites. Some mentioned the good infrastructure at the institution that enabled them to study well.

However, some students felt that there were not enough boundaries between social and study spaces in the [building name], for example people would eat and talk in the computer area, which was distracting for others. Others complained about the food, that it was too expensive and that temperature settings in the [building name] were too cold.

Parking

Student parking was a large area of dissatisfaction was. Those students that were most disadvantaged were those that came to classes at midday or later as it seems that all available car spaces were gone. In addition many were inconvenienced by the long queues at the pay outlet which resulted in their being late for class.

Transportation

The other dissatisfier that links with parking was the bus system in Hamilton. Students were surprised that there was only one bus running every thirty minutes. The majority of students relied on the bus system as they were without a car. The inconvenience of the bus system, which would not allow them to study late, seemed to be a big dissatisfier.

This finding reflected the New Zealand study (2004), where the analysis revealed that when asked what was the biggest problem for international students 23% reported that it was with the public transport system.

Lack of activities

Other students noted the lack of activities available after study. “There are not many activities to join.” They queried whether more organised activities were available for students then this would assist them to ‘get used to the new lifestyle in NZ.

Safety

Safety and security was another area of concern for international students. Although two comments reported that New Zealand is a safe place and students felt free to travel around the country in their breaks, there were twelve students who reported that they felt unsafe and most of these reported a burglary or robbery that they or their friends had experienced.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

That the assessment regime for international and domestic migrant students be reviewed so that future assessments become fairer and more reliable and that students feel supported during the entire teaching and learning semester.

Recommendation 2:

To avoid the student car-park problem becoming institutionalized, we recommend that other venues for students to park are found or built.

To encourage the use of the bus service and potentially discourage use of vehicles, that the institution seek a discount for students who use the bus. The University of Waikato students receive a discounted fare from Busit paying \$1.70 per fare. Students purchasing a Busit fare will pay \$2.40 per fare. If a better rate is negotiated with the Bus Company, it potentially assists the student parking problem as well as the environment.

References

Bianchi, C. (2013). Satisfiers and dissatisfiers for international students of higher Education: An exploratory study in Australia. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 35(4), 396-409. doi:10.1080/1360080X.2013.812057

Choudaha, R., Li, C., & Kono, Y. (2013). *International student mobility trends 2013: Towards responsive recruitment strategies*. World Education Services. Retrieved from <http://wenr.wes.org/2013/03/wenr-march-2013-international-student-mobility-trends-2013-towards-responsive-recruitment-strategies/>

Education New Zealand (2017). International Student Enrolments Aug. 2017. Retrieved from <https://enz.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/2017-T2-Student-Enrolments-Dashboard.pdf>

Finn, M. & Darmody, M. (2017) [Examining student immobility: a study of Irish undergraduate students](#). *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 39:4, pages 423-434.

Letcher, D.W., Neves, J.S.,(2010) *Determinants of undergraduate business student satisfaction* Research in Higher Education Journal.

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). Hershet, PA: IGI Global.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301545316_Learning_the_rules_of_the_game_issues_affecting_academic_acculturation_of_Aasian_international_students_in_New_Zealand_universities

Schulmann, P. (2014). *International Student Retention and Success: A Comparative Perspective*. Retrieved from <https://wenr.wes.org/2014/09/international-student-retention-and-success-a-comparative-perspective>

Ward, C. & Masgoret, A-M. (2004) *The Experiences of International Students in New Zealand*. Ministry of Education, Wellington.

Thank You!
😊

Wang Yi: Wang.Yi@wintec.ac.nz

Jenny Field: Jenny.Field@wintec.ac.nz

