



Educational Mobility and Citizenship: Chinese “Foreign Talent” Students in Singapore and Indian Medical Students in China

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Contents

Introduction	2
International Student Mobility and Citizenship: A Conceptual Scheme	3
International Student Mobility and Formal/Legal Citizenship	4
International Student Mobility and Global Citizenship	6
Empirical Illuminations: Two Views from Asia	8
Case Study 1: Chinese “Foreign Talent” Students in Singapore	8
Case Study 2: Indian Medical Students in China	10
Conclusion	12
References	13

Abstract

This chapter builds a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between educational mobility (with a focus on international student mobility) and citizenship based on an exploration of existing literature and applies this framework to examine empirical findings. Conceptually, citizenship is conceived on two varied levels: narrowly as a nationally based *legal* status and more broadly as an *informal* sense of belonging and agency in transnational contexts. It is argued that citizenship in the narrower definition intersects with student mobility mainly around the issues of skill formation and population strategies under the framework of the nation-state. In contrast, educational mobility relates to the broader notion of citizenship through the concept of “global citizenship,” which in turn comprises two different emphases – the *cultural* and the *political*. Having set out such a conceptual scheme, the chapter uses two recent empirical studies of student mobilities within Asia – a case of Chinese “foreign talent” students in

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Singapore and a case of Indian medical students in China – to provide insights into how individuals experience the complex and sometimes conflicting relationships between international educational mobility and citizenship. To date, intra-Asia educational mobility has received limited research attention, and thus potentially offers a unique perspective on citizenship and education.

Keywords

International student mobility · Educational mobility · International education · Citizenship · Global citizenship

Introduction

This chapter attempts to both conceptualize and illustrate the relationship between citizenship and a key contemporary phenomenon of education in global contexts – international student mobility (ISM). International student mobility in higher education (HE) has undergone significant expansion over the past decades: the number of students enrolled in tertiary education outside their countries of citizenship grew from 1.3 million in 1990 (OECD 2013) to an estimated 5 million in 2014 (ICEF Monitor 2015). This figure has been projected to increase further to 8 million by 2025 (Institute of International Education 2015). This rapid rise in the number of internationally mobile students in HE worldwide has significant implications for the question of citizenship.

In line with Peterson and Brock (2017), we take a two-level conception of citizenship. Narrowly defined, citizenship refers to the formal membership of a political state (almost always a *nation-state*) in the form of legal status, which entitles the citizen to certain rights and privileges, but also obliges them to certain responsibilities in relation to the state. In contrast to this technical/formal/legalistic definition, citizenship may also be defined more broadly as informal community membership, inclusion, and participation in a much wider range of contexts and situations. Even in the absence of legally defined status and rights, it is possible to speak of citizenship as a form of belonging to, and participation in, certain communities that allow the “citizen” to feel a sense of *agency*. We emphasize the notion of agency – or the ability to act upon the world and potentially make a difference (Isin 2009; Ortner 2005) – to distinguish citizenship from mere *membership*, which may be passive. The narrower and the broader definitions of citizenship overlap with each other, further complicating the ways in which ISM and citizenship (s) intersect.

We first outline a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship (s) between international student mobility and citizenship. We then elaborate on this conceptual structure with reference to existing literature. Subsequently, the framework is applied to empirical case studies from an Asian context, drawing on the first author’s two recent studies of international student mobility. Finally, we conclude by summarizing the chapter briefly.

International Student Mobility and Citizenship: A Conceptual Scheme

Building on a preliminary survey of existing scholarship, we argue in this chapter that there are mainly two ways in which citizenship is implicated in the studies on International Student Mobility (ISM).

Firstly, given a world in which the sovereign nation-state remains the foremost source of political authority, international student migration, like other types of discretionary (im)migration (see Blake 2002), is primarily regulated by national states. When an international student migrates across national borders, the receiving state sets out the rules governing the legal statuses of international students, including those pertaining to their potential obtainment of citizenship rights. In today’s knowledge-driven global economy in which nation-states compete with each other for talent (Kuptsch and Pang 2006), many countries – especially economically more developed ones – integrate international student policies into broader strategies of skilled migration and population management (She and Wotherspoon 2013). In general, international students with advanced qualifications and desirable skills tend to be favored by immigration systems when it comes to the granting of partial (e.g., permanent residency) and/or full citizenship (e.g., naturalization). Thus, studying abroad has become a route for immigration, with obvious implications for citizenship in its formal and legal sense. In fact, the prospect of acquiring such formal/legal citizenship rights in the destination country can be a major consideration – sometimes even the primary motivator – in some students’ pursuit of international educational mobility (“A” in Fig. 1). Since the nation-state remains the principal anchor of formal/legal citizenship (Heater 2002), this first way in which ISM and citizenship intersect each other entails a notion of citizenship that is mainly *nationally* based or defined (“A1”).

A second way in which educational mobility has been linked to citizenship in existing research has to do with the role study abroad supposedly plays in relation to *global citizenship* (“B”) (Lewin 2009). Global citizenship is an ambiguous term (Lilley et al. 2017), having been conceptualized somewhat differently by different scholars, as shall be unpacked subsequently in this chapter. Despite this ambiguity, it is nevertheless clear that global citizenship is not primarily about formal or legal status, considering the fact that there is no viable global authority to serve as an anchor for such a status in the same way nation-state does provide a viable basis for nationally based formal/legal citizenship. Indeed, a scan of academic discourses on global citizenship reveals broader definitions of citizenship that de-emphasize legal/technical status in favor of informal participation, inclusion, and agentic belongingness (“B1”) situated in sociopolitical domains and spaces stretching beyond the national. Suffice it to say here, global citizenship is for the most part a matter of perspective, disposition, and commitment (Rhoads and Szelényi 2011), short of legal/formal entitlements and obligations (“B2”). In converse, legal/formal citizenship in relation to a nation-state often also entails *informal* citizenship in one way or another (“A2”), although such informal citizenship is not equivalent to *global* citizenship.

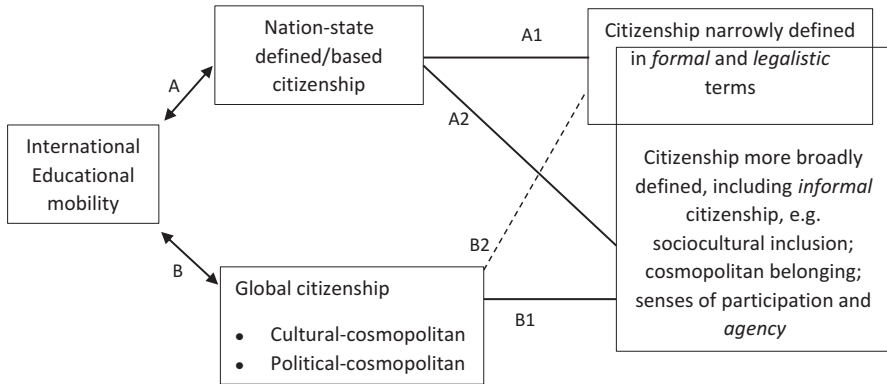


Fig. 1 International educational mobility and citizenship

International Student Mobility and Formal/Legal Citizenship

Citizenship in its formal/legal sense is implicated in international student mobility not only for the obvious reason that foreign students enter and reside in the host country according to the latter's immigration/citizenship laws, but also because international student recruitment has been increasingly linked with strategies of skill formation and population management in many national contexts. These latter strategies about skills and population are often materialized through policies and legislations in the areas of immigration and citizenship incorporation.

Research on the linkage between international student mobility and immigration began to emerge since the early 2000s. Explaining the background to the rise of this linkage, Tremblay (2005) observed that by the late 1990s, many Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries faced shortages in highly skilled labor due to sustained economic growth and the development of information technology industries. Faced with the additional challenges of low birth rates and ageing population that typically confronted developed economies, these countries responded by relaxing immigration laws to attract skilled migrants from abroad. International students already studying in these countries are naturally favored because they have the advantage of being familiar with the host country society and labor market. Conversely, favoring international students as potential high-skilled immigrants also serves to further enhance the ability of these countries' HE institutions to recruit more foreign students, which bring in significant tuition fee revenues as well as talent. Thus, in various developed countries, the recruitment of international students and skilled immigration became intertwined phenomena.

A number of scholars have examined in detail how this education-immigration intertwinement manifests in several key countries in the world that receive significant numbers of both international students and skilled migrants, such as the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and France (She and Wotherspoon 2013;

Tremblay 2005; Ziguras and Law 2006). Among them, it has been said that “Australia’s immigration and international education policies have become enmeshed to a degree not (yet?) found elsewhere” (Ziguras and Law 2006, p. 73). Scholars in Australia have described the system variously as “education-migration nexus” (Robertson 2013), “two-step migration” (Hawthorne 2010), or “study-migration pathway” (Hawthorne 2013), whereby it has been observed that many international students went to study there with the explicit objective of subsequently obtaining permanent residence (PR). Coupled with Australia’s policy of treating international education overtly as a revenue-generating “export service industry,” this has led to the mushrooming of substandard private colleges which were essentially “PR factories” with particular appeal to under-qualified students (Baas 2006, 2010, 2017). Later on, such problematic developments triggered a backlash, leading to policy changes that sought to “de-couple” international student mobility and immigration in Australia (Gribble and Blackmore 2012; Robertson 2011). In the context of some other countries, such as the UK and Japan, the education-immigration linkage is configured somewhat differently. In the UK, for instance, while non-EU international students are strongly desired, the state is more reluctant as a labor-importer and thus imposes more restrictive rules governing the student-to-immigrant transition (She and Wotherspoon 2013). In Japan, a country noted for its closed and homogenous notion of citizenship, the state taps into international students as a major supply of labor to address domestic shortages while remaining highly conservative towards immigration and citizenship through naturalization (Liu-Farrer 2009, 2011).

Such variation in approaches shows that a certain country’s way of understanding and managing the relationship between international student mobility on the one hand and immigration and citizenship on the other is not exclusively determined by the logic of human capital accumulation. With regard to this, She and Wotherspoon (2013, pp. 11–12) summarize usefully: “Managing international student mobility as part of the strategy to manage highly skilled migration goes beyond merely a matter of skill formation and in fact represents specific social relations and power struggles in each host nation.” As shall be illustrated in the empirical section of this chapter, the two cases of student mobility to Singapore and China exhibit, each in its own way, contextually specific social, cultural, and sometimes political forces that collectively shape what citizenship might mean in relation to the mobile students.

As we asserted in the previous section, in one way or another, formal/legal citizenship entails or implies some form of informal notions of citizenship. In the context of educational mobility, this may manifest in the ways in which *both* the narrowly defined (formal/legal) citizenship and citizenship more broadly conceived (informal/social/cultural) are the objects of international students’ aspiration and desire, such as is the case for youths from China’s urban singleton generation (Fong 2011). Alternatively, it could be expressed through ways in which students’ legal citizenship status profoundly impacts their educational experiences and their subsequent perceptions of inclusion/exclusion within the school community, the education system, and host country society at large. For example, Torres and Wicks-Asbun’s (2014) study of undocumented Latino students in North Carolina, USA, unpacks the

poignant manners in which these legally liminal students negotiate a “liminal citizenship” whereby their legal status relegates them to discrimination and marginalization in school, yet they sought to recoup senses of legitimacy and agency through their status as successful and meritocratic deserving students. In the Australian context, Robertson (2011) has shown how international students exercised forms of “activist citizenship” through lobbying activities such as protests, in response to perceived discrimination.

Suffice it to say, although international student mobilities are often initiated and regulated under frameworks hinging on formal and legalistic citizenship, the broader and multifarious social consequences of such mobilities often entail wider ideas of citizenship involving the notion of *agency* at its core.

International Student Mobility and Global Citizenship

Scholarly discourse linking international student mobility to global citizenship generally revolves around the claim that study abroad fosters global citizenship among students (e.g. Lewin 2009; Stoner et al. 2014; Tarrant 2010; Tarrant et al. 2014, 2011). However, scholars do not seem always to define global citizenship in the same way, except for the commonly held – though often unstated – assumption that global citizenship is not primarily a matter of legal status or formal rights. The linchpin for understanding various scholars’ different approaches towards global citizenship seems to be the notion of *cosmopolitanism*. According to cultural anthropologist Hannerz (2006), the protean concept of cosmopolitanism has principally two faces: culture and politics. When the cultural is emphasized, cosmopolitanism refers to an openness to and appreciation of cultural “others” and hence the ability to move between cultures and be at ease with difference. Political cosmopolitanism, on the other hand, derives from Kantian philosophical ideals about “citizens of the world” and perpetual world peace based on a commitment to universally valid human values and moral principles – often manifested in contemporary terms as “human rights” (Vertovec and Cohen 2002). Indeed, we find existing scholarly discussions of global citizenship to fall roughly under these two categories, which we venture to call respectively the *cultural-cosmopolitan* and the *political-cosmopolitan*.

We use the label “cultural-cosmopolitan” to describe the perspective of those scholars of international education who generally equate global citizenship with cultural cosmopolitanism, which in turn refers essentially to intercultural awareness and practice. For example, writing in the context of UK, Caruana (2014) discusses global citizenship mainly as an issue of “intercultural sensitivity” and competence amidst multicultural learning environments and student diversity. Killick (2012, p. 384) similarly takes “global citizenship learning” to mean the forging of bonds with “‘cultural’ others” and the formation of identity for international students as well as their host-country counterparts amidst negotiating differences. Since mainstream research on the relationship between intercultural sensitivity/competence and study abroad has been dominated by a positivistic paradigm stressing measurement

and assessment (Deardorff 2006; Williams 2005), one important contribution by scholars such as Caruana (2014) and Killick (2012) is their qualitative and ethnographic investigative foci on students’ experiences in situ – for instance, in the multicultural university campus.

In contrast, political-cosmopolitan conceptualizations of global citizenship tend to invoke more politically charged vocabularies such as “responsibility,” “commitment,” “social justice,” and “activism.” Lyons et al.’s (2012, p. 361) following definition of global citizenship – as a “viewpoint that suggests that global forms of belonging, responsibility, and political action counter the intolerance and ignorance that more provincial and parochial forms of citizenship encourage” – serves well as an example. The civic and political face of cosmopolitanism that is largely obscured in the cultural-cosmopolitan view on global citizenship is foregrounded here. Synthesizing scholarly literature on global citizenship thematically, Morais and Ogden (2011, p. 447) provide a comprehensive conceptual model of global citizenship from this political-cosmopolitan perspective. They argue that global citizenship encompasses three key dimensions: *social responsibility* (including global justice and how it relates to personal responsibilities felt by a “global citizen”); *global competence* (comprising self-awareness, intercultural communication, and global knowledge); and *global civic engagement* (referring to involvement in global civic/political actions). Such formulations are echoed by other educational scholars writing about global citizenship from the political-cosmopolitan angle too (e.g., Davies 2006; Shultz 2007). Interestingly, while educationalists have written a fair deal about global citizenship as a kind of political cosmopolitanism, there are far fewer attempts to link it specifically with student mobility. The few who have done so concentrated on demonstrating the *measurability* of global citizenship through conceptual refinement (Streitwieser and Light 2016) or conceptual framing/modeling (Stoner et al. 2014; Tarrant 2010). What remains missing so far is more empirically grounded reflections on how global citizenship has been experienced – if it is deemed relevant in the first place – by international students. In particular, qualitative or ethnographic accounts seem scarce.

To sum up this survey of literature on ISM and global citizenship, two observations can be made. First, global citizenship in the educational context has been conceptualized in close relation with the idea of *cosmopolitanism*. What we have termed the “cultural-cosmopolitan” take and the “political-cosmopolitan” take are not mutually exclusive or conflictual, but represent two different emphases educational scholars have used. While the cultural-cosmopolitan strand has delved deeper into mobile students’ experiences through ethnographic and qualitative studies, research in the political-cosmopolitan strand has remained largely conceptual. Secondly, regardless of which strand, virtually all the studies mentioned above involved white students situated in developed, Western, English-speaking countries (see Yemini and Maxwell 2018). There seems to be little insight into how internationally mobile students who do not occupy such privileged structural positions in the world – such as those of less affluent backgrounds from non-Western developing countries – experience “global citizenship.”

Empirical Illuminations: Two Views from Asia

This section shows how some of the abstract conceptual ideas above are manifested in empirical data. We do so by offering brief accounts of two cases of international student mobility in Asia based on the first author's research. Intra-Asian student mobility has received limited research attention so far due to its relative marginality vis-à-vis West-bound student mobilities (Yang 2018b). Thus, looking at the neglected experiences of students moving between Asian countries can potentially offer unique insights. Yang conducted both studies using an ethnographically inspired methodological approach, with qualitative interviewing and participant observation as the main data collection methods. The first study on Chinese youths recruited as “foreign talent” students by city-state Singapore was conducted mainly during 2010–2012 (for details see Yang 2016), whereas the second study about Indian youths pursuing medical degrees in China was carried out more recently between 2014 and 2016 (for details see Yang 2018a).

In narrating these two cases below, we seek to cover succinctly the general background and overviews of the form of student mobility in question before proceeding to key findings and analyses pertaining to the question of citizenship. Our analyses shall be loosely structured to answer the following broad questions: What role does formal/legal citizenship play in both cases of student mobility? How does informal and transnational citizenship factor into the mobile students' experiences – educational or otherwise? To what extent, and in what ways is global citizenship – be it the cultural-cosmopolitan or political-cosmopolitan variation – relevant for both groups of students?

Case Study 1: Chinese “Foreign Talent” Students in Singapore

The case of Chinese students being recruited by the Southeast Asia city-state Singapore as “foreign talent” instantiates well the intertwinement between education and the receiving state's strategies of skill formation and population management. Not dissimilar to situations confronting developed economies elsewhere, the Singapore state faced with challenges of low domestic birth rates and shortages of skilled human capital, responded by seeking proactively to attract foreign talent since the 1980s (Quah 1984). As part of a wider range of foreign talent policies, a series of scholarship schemes were developed in the 1990s to recruit students from Asian developing countries such as Singapore's neighboring Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, India, and China (Yang 2016).

In particular, China stood out as a major – possibly the largest – source of foreign talent students for Singapore, with three scholarship schemes instituted in the 1990s. Known as the SM1, SM2, and SM3 schemes (with SM standing for “senior middle”), these schemes, respectively, recruited junior middle school graduates, second-year senior middle school students, and senior middle school graduates across dozens of provinces and cities in China. Feeder schools for these schemes were academically distinguished ones locally and sometimes nationally, and

scholarship applicants had to undergo a competitive selection process consisting of written examinations and interviews administered by officials from the Singapore Ministry of Education. Upon being selected, SM1 scholars would be channeled into upper secondary schools in Singapore and subsequently junior colleges, with full financial assistances on tuition and board. SM2 and SM3 scholars would be channeled into studying engineering and science courses at public universities, also with all expenses exempted and living allowance provided. The intake scales of these scholarship programs increased over time, rising from an estimated 100 students per year per program at initial stages to 300–400 students annually per program in more recent times, although the numbers have dropped slightly in the past 5 years or so. At the time of writing, the SM1 and SM2 programs are believed to be ongoing, whereas the SM3 program had terminated after 2011. Cumulatively, these programs could have brought an estimated total of some 20,000 Chinese youths into the Singaporean education system – not an insignificant number considering the compact size of the local system.

From the outset, it is clear that the Singaporean government selected these Chinese scholars not only as academically competitive talent, but also as potential future citizens. All three schemes have built in some mechanisms or features serving to tie the students to the city-state in the long run. As part of the scholarship terms and conditions, SM2 and SM3 scholars are required to serve a “bond” by working in Singapore for 6 years upon completing undergraduate studies. Until relatively recently, SM2 and SM3 scholars had also been automatically issued with invitations to apply for permanent residency (PR) upon graduation, and application success is more or less guaranteed as long as they secure employment in Singapore. Although scholars under the SM1 scheme are not required to serve a bond, they are also given the option of becoming PR. Because of their younger age, male SM1 scholars who take up this offer would also be required to register for National Service in the Singapore military – arguably the ultimate citizenship rite. Furthermore, all these should be seen in a broader picture wherein the Chinese has consistently had the lowest reproductive rates among various ethnic/racial groups in Singapore (Yang et al. 2017), which makes naturalizing ethnic Chinese foreign talent crucial to maintaining the *status quo* racial profile of the Singapore citizenry (Yeoh and Lin 2013; Yim 2011). Thus, for these Chinese students on Singaporean scholarships, educational mobility is not only a privileged pathway to citizenship, it could even be said that Singapore’s strategies about citizenship and population fundamentally underpinned this form of mobility in the first place.

Taking a wider definition of citizenship, the Chinese scholars’ experiences are more mixed. The first author’s work has shown that receiving various privileges from the Singapore state and institutions sometimes makes them targets of local society’s resentment and criticism (Yang 2014a, c), which can impede their achieving a sense of inclusion and belonging. Due to academic competition and differences in sociocultural backgrounds, the Chinese scholars encounter some instances of discrimination and marginalization in university life, although it is also found that they exercise agency through carving out their own social and symbolic spaces to counter perceived exclusion (Yang 2014b). On a broader societal level, the rise of

anti-immigrant sentiments in Singapore in recent years (Yang 2017a) inevitably affected how the Chinese student-turned-migrants perceive their ambiguous positionality in their adopted home (Yang 2017b).

Notwithstanding these mixed experiences, according to Yang's ongoing observation, this group enjoyed overall positive life outcomes in terms of career progression and rise in socioeconomic status (Yang 2018b). The academic credentials and professional skills they developed through studying and working in Singapore serve as the basis for them to claim social and economic citizenship in a city-state that upholds the principle of meritocracy. Culturally, Chinese students and student-turned-immigrants are in a uniquely advantageous position to be able to use their native language and culture knowledge to establish social connections with the Singaporean society, which remains Chinese to a significant degree culturally and linguistically. Thus, despite embodying marginal identities such as foreign students and immigrants, this group's actual experiences turn out to be characterized more by fulfillment, agency, and inclusion, than by marginalization or exclusion.

Finally, with regard to global citizenship, there is relatively little evidence in Yang's research to link the Chinese students' educational mobility in Singapore and *political-cosmopolitan* global citizenship, insofar as the latter emphasizes global social awareness, responsibility, and civic engagement. As a polity that consciously distances itself from liberal Western values and ideologies, Singapore does not fully embrace all the key tenets of global citizenship in the first place (Chua 2017). Indeed, scholars have argued that global citizenship education in Singapore tends to be subsumed under nation-centric objectives and agendas, defined largely in neoliberal and instrumental terms (Alviar-Martin and Baildon 2016). As such, Singapore hardly represents a conducive environment for the Chinese students to learn political-cosmopolitanism. However, when it comes to global citizenship in the *cultural-cosmopolitan* sense, receiving their pretertiary and/or tertiary education in Singapore often proves to be transformative for the Chinese students in terms of exposing them to diverse cultures, peoples, and places that were simply not accessible in China. Through studying and working in Singapore's highly multicultural and globally connected environments, and through opportunities for venturing further afield using Singapore as a springboard, the Chinese foreign talent students get to hone their intercultural awareness and competence, verily becoming "global citizens" in a cultural sense (Yang 2017b).

Case Study 2: Indian Medical Students in China

The case of Indian students heading to China for bachelors' degrees in medicine (MBBS) contrasts strongly with the above case in many regards.

Since early 2000s, each year hundreds of Indian students have been heading to China to enroll in English-medium MBBS programs offered by second-tier and provincial-level Chinese universities (Aiyar 2006). By the 2010s, China had become the top destination for Indian students seeking medical training abroad (Mishra 2012), overtaking traditionally favored destinations such as Russia and Ukraine.

By 2015, there were a total of 16,694 Indian students in China (CAFSA 2016), the majority of whom could be safely assumed to be on MBBS programs. One common characteristic of Indian students who pursue medical education in such non-Anglophone overseas destinations is that they are typically academically not-high-performing students coming from not-so-affluent, lower sections of India’s emerging middle classes (Sancho 2017; Yang 2018a). This means that neither India’s affordable but extremely competitive public medical schools, nor the academically easier-to-enter but prohibitively expensive private medical colleges are accessible to them. Thus, attending overseas colleges with relatively lax admission criteria and affordable fees such as that offered in China became a “second chance” for these students and their families to realize their middle-class aspirations through entering the esteemed medical profession.

Citizenship in the formal/legal sense does not play as significant a role here as compared with the Singapore case. From the outset, the Indian students were *not* recruited as potential immigrants. This does not mean that international student mobility is not linked to China’s national strategies and interests in some ways. Indeed, higher education is one sphere in which China seeks to project its soft power globally (Yang 2015), with the emblematic example being the active recruitment of African students (Haugen 2013). However, at least based on the first author’s investigation at one provincial university in eastern China which had several hundred Indian students enrolled in its MBBS program (Yang 2018a), there was little evidence that the Indian students were treated as potential bearers of international good will towards China. Instead, the said provincial Chinese university seemed primarily interested in the tuition fee revenues and the superficiality of “internationalization” that the Indian students brought. The MBBS program suffered from many issues with regard to admission process/screening, quality of instruction and assessment, student service, and program management in general. Students on the program typically had low levels of satisfaction. However, being acutely aware of their own lack of choice, they generally acquiesced into a cynical and resigned state. As a result, the Indian students typically did not report any meaningful sense of agency or citizenship in the university campus setting or more broadly. There were also conspicuous patterns of segregation between the Indian medical students and the local Chinese students, owing to language barriers and, allegedly, race/nationality-based prejudices. Although the Indian students tended to have a strong community bonding among themselves which helped them cope with various practical and psychological challenges associated with studying aboard, it is nevertheless difficult to describe their positionality vis-à-vis the program, the university, the city, and the country they find themselves in, in terms of “citizenship.”

Lastly, when it comes to the question of global citizenship, Yang’s observation points towards a generally pessimistic picture, but with some interesting “bright spots.” Insofar as political-cosmopolitanism is defined prevalingly in Western liberal democratic terms, an experience of educational mobility to China added little to the Indian students’ global citizenship. However, in fieldwork, Yang often heard praises from his Indian research participants for China’s superior socioeconomic development compared to that of India, which were usually attributed to China’s

one-party political system and the associated political stability that the Indian students' raucous democratic homeland apparently lacked. Although this is certainly not an instance of political-cosmopolitan global citizenship to be found in existing literature, it *is* an example that studying and living in China has to some degree made Indian students – possibly other foreign students too – reflect on diverse political systems and their merits.

As for global citizenship of the cultural-cosmopolitan variation, it would appear studying in China benefited the Indian students modestly. While most Indian students did learn about Chinese culture and society through some local travel and other explorations, they seldom established meaningful connections with local society members, nor indeed with other international MBBS students from the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Africa, which were all present on the campus which Yang studied. Thus, even though traveling afar to China surely widened the horizons of these youths hailing from small-town/rural India, they were certainly not in as privileged a position to gain cultural global citizenship as the Chinese students in Singapore. Exceptions do exist: in his ongoing observations, Yang has also encountered a minority of Indian students who either achieved high levels of proficiency in Chinese language or used their social and professional networks in China to launch transnational professional or business endeavors.

Conclusion

To conclude, in this chapter, we have ventured to address the relationship(s) between educational mobility (mainly, international student mobility, or ISM) and citizenship. We conceived of citizenship principally in two ways: as a formal and legal status under the framework of national states and as an informal sense of belonging and agency in a variety of contexts and on multiple scales not restricted to the national. We argued that ISM intersects with these two different notions of citizenship in distinct ways. Drawing on existing scholarship, we suggested that under the nation-state framework, ISM has been closely linked to national strategies about skilled migration and population management. Accordingly, study abroad has often become a pathway for immigration, or at least a component of the receiving state's manpower policies or strategies. On the other hand, concerning the informal and broader definition of citizenship, extant literature mostly points to the relationship between student mobility and the cultivation of "global citizenship." We further differentiated the *cultural* and *political* emphases in conceptualizations of global citizenship. Existing scholarship notes that ISM fosters both cultural global citizenship and political global citizenship; however, we maintained that such assertions tended to be insufficiently grounded in qualitative and ethnographic data. In addition, we also noted a lack of attention to less privileged mobile students such as those from nonelite backgrounds and who move primarily within Asia. To address these gaps, drawing on recent research done by the first author, we sought to illuminate the various ways in which student mobility intersects with citizenship using two empirical cases of intra-Asian student mobility: Chinese "foreign talent" students in

Singapore and Indian medical students in China. Taking an implicitly comparative view, our accounts have sought to highlight the contrasting experiences of “citizenship” by these two groups of Asian students under contrasting circumstances. Notwithstanding various nuances, on the whole, the Chinese “foreign talent” students are found to have somewhat more positive experiences of “citizenship” when compared with the Indian medical students thanks to the former’s more privileged structural positions.

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