RESEARCH PAPER

Global student mobility from Southeast Asia and South Asia: Trends, challenges, and policy interventions

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Abstract

Students from Southeast Asia and South Asia are flocking to international education centers in search of better academic opportunities, better political frameworks, and higher economic prospects, all driven by globalization. This research delves into the emerging trends of student migration from these areas, illuminating key motivators, barriers, and the influence of governmental initiatives on migration patterns. Statistical methods based on SPSS, including descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and t-tests, were used to examine correlations between socioeconomic factors and mobility decisions. The data was collected from 50 respondents using a quantitative research methodology. According to the findings, the most significant challenges to pursuing an international education include limited financial resources, stringent visa requirements, and challenges related to cultural adaptation. Even though many host nations provide scholarships and policy incentives, their influence is still restricted because of low awareness, difficult application procedures, and fierce competition. Plus, disparities in access to high-quality pre-departure counseling and post-arrival support amplify students' challenges. Additionally, the study highlights how geopolitical relations, university rankings, and career opportunities in host countries impact students' decision-making.

Keywords: International student mobility, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Global higher education, Scholarships, Visa policies, Student migration, Education policies.

Introduction

Background of the Study

International student mobility, especially from South and Southeast Asia, has increased dramatically due to the globalization of universities. Every year, thousands of students from countries like Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Thailand travel overseas to pursue higher education possibilities (Lee *et al*., 2025). Some reasons behind this

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movement trend include the desire for academic quality, job growth, and access to specialized research facilities (Collins *et al*., 2017). The pursuit of internationally recognized degrees and the opportunity to learn in diverse classrooms are two other reasons why students choose to study in countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany.

Studying abroad has many benefits, but students from these areas face significant challenges. Many students from lower-income households cannot pursue their educational goals due to the high cost of living and tuition. Students and their families are understandably concerned about how they can afford the expensive cost of higher education in Western nations, especially in light of fluctuating exchange rates (Marginson, 2018). High eligibility requirements, lack of knowledge, and fierce competition make it difficult to access financial aid and scholarships offered by various governments and organizations, such as the DAAD initiative in Germany, the Fulbright program in the United States, and the Chevening scholarships in the United Kingdom (Chao, 2023).

The ease of student movement is also greatly affected by immigration regulations and visa limits. Many students face difficulties such as lengthy processing times, complex visa application procedures, and stringent work criteria

after finishing their studies (Falk & Graf, 2016). Because host governments often change their immigration policies due to political and economic issues, prospective international students confront uncertainty. In light of recent legislative shifts in the UK and Canada, concerns over work visa limits and sponsorship requirements have arisen, impacting students' choice of study-abroad locations (King & Raghuram, 2021).

Adaptation to new social and cultural norms is another major challenge. It is typical for overseas students to struggle with language, social integration, and adjusting to new academic environments. A student's mental health and academic performance might take a serious hit when they experience feelings of isolation, homesickness, or discrimination (Ward *et al.*, 2019). Universities and host countries have launched mentorship, orientation, and student support programs to ease this transition; nevertheless, the success of these programs is conditional on institutional policies and efforts to promote cultural inclusion.

Global politics also has a significant impact on patterns of international student mobility. Foreign policy, political stability, and the strength of bilateral relations between the sending and receiving countries all have a role in shaping the patterns of student movement. For instance, due to policy shifts influenced by the strained relationship between China and the US, Chinese students are influencing the mobility of students from other South and Southeast Asian countries (Altbach & de Wit, 2020).

These concerns highlight the growing need for targeted governmental actions to enhance student mobility by reducing administrative, cultural, and financial barriers. We can create a more sustainable and equitable foreign education landscape by distributing scholarships fairly, streamlining visa processes, and improving academic cooperation. The purpose of this research is to analyze the current state of student mobility from South and Southeast Asian countries and to propose policy changes that would make it easier for students from these regions to pursue higher education opportunities abroad.

Research Problem

Despite the increasing globalization of higher education, South Asian and Southeast Asian students still face financial, administrative, and societal obstacles that restrict their mobility. There has been an uptick in the number of foreign students attending universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany. However, there are still many challenges that students from these regions have when trying to make the most of their international education possibilities.

Among the most significant challenges are limited resources. Tuition, housing, transportation, and daily living expenses are prohibitive for students from low- and middle-income families in many popular study spots (Altbach & Knight, 2021). Lack of awareness, stringent qualifying requirements, and intense competition are reasons financial aid and scholarship opportunities are few. According to (Choudaha, 2017), many students find it challenging to get college loans due to high interest rates, limited financial guarantees, and an absence of institutional support in their home nations. Students' academic performance and overall well-being are affected by financial burden, which also limits their access to programs overseas.

Bureaucratic hurdles, particularly those associated with immigration rules and visa applications, impede student mobility. Many students face delays, rejections, or uncertainty due to complex visa application procedures, changing immigration regulations, and stringent post-study work constraints (King & Raghuram, 2021). For instance, international students' future career opportunities have come under scrutiny due to changes in the regulations controlling work permits following graduation in the United Kingdom and Canada. It can be particularly difficult for students from low-income families to complete the necessary paperwork, such as sponsorship agreements, financial documents, and language competency assessments.

Sociocultural factors also have a substantial role in shaping students' mobility experiences. Barriers to social integration, language barriers, and cultural adaptation can hurt students' mental health, academic performance, and overall health. Many international students report experiencing homesickness, loneliness, and discrimination, all of which can lead to stress and a decrease in academic participation (Ward *et al.*, 2019). Counseling, mentorship, and cultural orientation programs are institutional support services; nevertheless, their accessibility and effectiveness vary greatly between host nations and institutions.

Geopolitical and economic factors exacerbate the already complex problem of international student mobility. Diplomatic ties, commercial policies, and political tensions between sending and receiving countries can directly influence visa requirements, scholarship opportunities, and bilateral educational partnerships. For example, in countries where immigration is strictly regulated, students may find it challenging to pursue higher education abroad due to economic downturns or national security concerns (Altbach & de Wit, 2020).

Objectives of the Study

- Examine the patterns of Southeast Asian and South Asian international student movements.
- Determine the obstacles that students have while trying to obtain an international education.
- Assess how well policy initiatives and scholarships contribute to increased student mobility.
- Offer policy suggestions to increase accessibility to international education.

Literature Review

International Student Mobility Trends

Research shows that Asia is now the leading region for international student mobility. Students from South and Southeast Asia favor nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and Germany (Ziguras & McBurnie, 2011). Even now, students from these regions are leaving in pursuit of higher education, more employable skills, and degrees that are respected worldwide. Western countries are often considered to have better post-graduation career prospects, more diverse academic environments, and state-of-the-art research facilities, all of which attract many students.

Within the past several years, regional factors have also begun to influence mobility trends. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has strengthened educational ties between China and other Asian nations, encouraged academic collaboration, and impacted student migrations within Asia-Pacific education centers (Lee *et al.*, 2025). Scholarships, university affiliations, and increased financing for higher education are ways the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has helped increase student interactions between China, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Countries like South Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore have emerged as formidable rivals to traditional Western tourist hotspots due to their affordable tuition, world-class colleges, and welcoming cultures (Marginson, 2020).

Governments and organizations in host nations have also made concerted efforts to attract international students, acknowledging the cultural and economic benefits these students bring to their home countries. The post-pandemic recovery era has seen an explosion of efforts to increase access to overseas education through hybrid learning techniques, greater scholarship money, and simpler visa procedures. For example, due to more liberal immigration rules, countries like Australia and Canada now welcome international students who study there and want to work when they graduate (Choudaha, 2021). However, Germany has become a popular study-abroad destination due to its low or nonexistent tuition fees for international students, particularly those majoring in STEM.

Despite these benefits, students from South and Southeast Asia face numerous challenges, including high tuition costs, visa restrictions, and cultural adaptation issues. Inflation and currency depreciation in home nations exacerbate financial obstacles, making it tougher for students to continue their education abroad without outside aid. In addition, the visa requirements and post-study job prospects of overseas students could be impacted by shifts in geopolitical connections, such as US-China tensions or UK policy changes about Brexit (Altbach & de Wit, 2020).

As patterns in student mobility evolve, there is a growing need for data-driven policy interventions to increase foreign education's accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity. To make sure that people from all walks of life can afford to go to college, we need to strengthen bilateral collaborations, offer more scholarship opportunities, and promote mobility throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Future research should focus on determining how changes in economic conditions, regulations, and educational hotspots impact the future of international student movement from Southeast Asia and South Asia.

Challenges Faced by International Students

South and Southeast Asian overseas students have several challenges in their host countries that impact their academic performance and overall welfare. According to research, The most significant barrier is still the lack of funds; next on the list are difficulties in acquiring a visa and, finally, difficulties adapting to a foreign culture (Collins *et al.*, 2017). Despite the increasing focus on educational accessibility on a global scale, these concerns continue to hinder student mobility and contribute to disparities in international higher education.

South and Southeast Asian students face some challenges, one of the most significant being the high cost of studying overseas. Tuition, books, housing, food, transportation, health insurance, and other miscellaneous costs can significantly strain students' and their families' budgets. Many students have to work part-time, rely on family, or save all their money for college, which can be tough on their finances and grades.

Competitive selection processes and lack of awareness continue to limit access to financial aid, grants, and scholarships, even though they exist (Do & Pham, 2014). The number of students who get financial aid remains relatively small compared to the total number of students who wish to study abroad. However, programs such as the Fulbright (USA), Chevening (UK), Australia Awards, and DAAD (Germany) do provide some. Furthermore, due to the high interest rates, complex qualification requirements, and collateral demands, school loans are often not an option for students from lower-income families.

Applying for a visa is another big roadblock for foreign students. Many students face difficulties due to the extensive documentation requirements, long processing times, and high rejection rates. Strict criteria for proof of funds, language proficiency tests, and visa laws that vary by country add further complications (King & Raghuram, 2021).

The changing immigration regulations of host nations are another source of anxiety for potential students. For example, changes to post-study work visa requirements in the UK, Canada, and Australia have affected students' study site options. Many students also have a hard time getting work visas once they graduate, which makes it difficult for them to gain experience in their field and return the money they spent on their studies.

It could be challenging for international students to adjust to a different academic and cultural environment. Communication barriers, differences in teaching methods, and unfamiliar social norms all contribute to an already overwhelming sense of isolation and culture shock. Anxieties, depression, and low self-esteem are some of the negative outcomes that can result from South Asian and Southeast Asian students' struggles to integrate into their societies (Ward *et al.*, 2019).

Racism and xenophobia worsen these problems. Because of stereotypes and social isolation, international students may have difficulty integrating into the host country's culture. There is a stigma associated with seeking professional help for mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, which prevents many international students from accessing the services they need. University counseling facilities and cultural orientation programs have been established, with varying degrees of success depending on institutional regulations and funding.

Students from other countries may find adapting to the new academic norms and assessment methods challenging. Western universities, in contrast to their South and Southeast Asian counterparts, often stress the importance of student-instructor collaboration, critical thinking, and independent research (Marginson, 2018).

Problems with research paper writing, citation styles, and the use of complex digital technologies for schooling are particularly prevalent when students do not have access to adequate academic support. Academic writing centers, peer mentorship, and tutoring facilities are sometimes unknown to international students because of insufficient orientation programs.

Graduate job opportunities are a major consideration for international students. Many individuals want to study abroad so they may gain work experience in a foreign country and get high-paying jobs after they graduate. Nevertheless, owing to labor market restrictions, work visa limits, and corporate preferences for domestic candidates, it is sometimes difficult for international students to secure jobs (Choudaha, 2021).

The United States and the United Kingdom have very tight qualification standards and renewal limits for post-study work permits, making it difficult for students to go from student to worker. However, many international students are flocking to countries like Germany and Canada for long-term job prospects after finishing their studies because of their more favorable post-study work visa requirements.

Policy Interventions in International Education

International student mobility is a key aspect of higher education worldwide, and various legal measures have been enacted to regulate and facilitate student mobility, degree recognition, and international academic collaboration.

Degree recognition, student mobility, and cross-border educational exchanges have all been targets of government-backed initiatives like the ASEAN Higher Education Internationalization Strategy and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) (Chao, 2023). Despite these efforts to remove societal, economic, and administrative barriers to international education, there are still substantial regional disparities (Huang, 2016).

Regional and Global Policy Initiatives

Many regional and international accords have been put into place to simplify students' mobility and expand access to universities.

• *ASEAN Higher Education Internationalization Strategy*

The ASEAN countries have prioritised student mobility through initiatives like the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) program. This strategy promotes student mobility within ASEAN member states through mutual recognition of credentials, credit transfer systems, and university cooperation. Students from more affluent nations, such as Singapore and Malaysia, participate more actively, whereas students from less developed nations, such as Myanmar and Cambodia, face financial constraints (Knight, 2018).

• *General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)*

Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATS) is an initiative of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to liberalize services related to higher education by making it easier for students and universities from different countries to operate together. Though this initiative has encouraged the recognition of foreign degrees and allowed schools to expand campuses overseas, concerns about the commercialization of education and the risk of uneven access, particularly for students from poor countries, continue (Huang, 2016).

• *Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Higher Education*

Scholarships and academic partnerships made possible by China's Belt and Road Initiative have greatly increased student mobility across Asia. Because of programs like the Chinese Government Scholarship, many students from South and Southeast Asia and other South Asian countries choose to study in China because of the country's reputation for providing excellent education at a reasonable cost. However, worries over the measures' long-term sustainability and geopolitical implications persist (Lee *et al.*, 2025).

National-Level Policy Interventions

Several host nations have instituted initiatives at the national level to attract and support international students:

• *United States*

The United States of America has long been a favorite among foreign students due to programs like optional practical training (OPT), which allows graduates to get real-world

experience. Unfortunately, new restrictions and concerns surrounding the H-1B visa have made it more difficult for international students to get long-term employment (Choudaha, 2021).

• *United Kingdom*

To keep foreign graduates in the workforce, the UK government has reinstated the two-year post-study work visa (Graduate Route). Additionally, students from South Asia and Southeast Asia can still receive financing through the Chevening and Commonwealth Scholarships. However, living expenses and tuition fees continue to be expensive, making it inaccessible to students from lower-income families (King & Raghuram, 2021).

• *Australia*

Australia has made several policy reforms, such as making immigration procedures easier, giving students more job opportunities after graduation, and providing scholarships like the Australia Awards. Despite these measures, concerns over the cost of accommodation and the exploitation of students in the employment market persist (Marginson, 2020).

• *Canada*

Canada has been a popular tourist destination due to its welcoming immigration policies, which include the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) and pathways to permanent residency for international students. According to Chao (2023), students from South Asia and Southeast Asia select Canada because of the country's strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.

• *Germany*

Since German public universities do not charge international students any tuition, studying there is a more economical alternative than traditional English-speaking nations. The DAAD fellowship program encourages student mobility despite challenges with language restrictions and bureaucratic hurdles in obtaining residence permits (Altbach & de Wit, 2020).

Challenges in Policy Implementation

Several barriers hinder these policy measures from being fully successful, even though they are being implemented:

• *Unequal Access to Scholarships*

Many students aren't aware that these scholarships exist, and the selection processes are so rigorous that only a small percentage of students can get them. Organizations and governments must do more outreach and simplify the application process to ensure equal access.

• *Visa and Immigration Barriers*

Students studying abroad still face bureaucratic hurdles and changing immigration restrictions, even if visa requirements have been relaxed in certain places. More openness and uniformity in the visa system are necessary to increase mobility.

• *Recognition of Foreign Degrees*

Disparities in recognition criteria continue to affect students' academic progress and career opportunities in certain countries, despite initiatives like the Lisbon Recognition Convention to promote degree equality.

• *Socio-Cultural Support Gaps*

Policies often emphasize hiring but disregard the need to help people when they arrive. Raising the quality of mental health services, cultural orientation programs, and academic support services can help students succeed and stay enrolled.

Research Questions

• What are the main determinants of South Asian and Southeast Asian students' mobility?
• What are the main sociocultural, economic, and administrative obstacles that these students must overcome?
• To what extent do current visa and scholarship arrangements facilitate student migration?
• What legislative suggestions may be implemented to improve accessibility for international students?

Methodology

Research Design

This study uses a quantitative survey-based technique to investigate the trends, challenges, and policy solutions related to international student migration from Southeast Asia and South Asia. A standardized questionnaire was developed to gather data from students attending or attending universities abroad. Using descriptive statistics, t-tests, and chi-square tests, the research examines the responses for significant patterns and correlations.

Budgetary constraints, complex visa procedures, difficulties with cultural adaption, and policy consequences are some factors that influence student mobility, and this study strategy may measure and investigate all of these variables methodically. By collecting data from a diverse group of people, this survey method can shed light on broader trends that affect international students.

Sampling

A systematic sampling approach was developed and implemented to conduct a focused and representative inquiry. Students from Bangladesh, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and India are the focus of this study. This is due to the fact that these countries are among the most significant contributors to international student mobility from Southeast Asia and South Asia.

Population

For this study, the population comprises students from the countries listed above who have either pursued higher education overseas or have previously studied higher education abroad. Based on the following criteria, these nations were chosen:

- There are high rates of outbound student mobility in these areas.
- Their growing influence in international markets for higher education, especially in places like the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, and China.
- Common difficulties include a lack of funds, visa limitations, and problems adjusting to a new culture.

Sample Size and Sampling Method

Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique that enables people to be selected who meet particular inclusion criteria, was used to choose 50 respondents. Must be a Bangladesh, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, or India citizen. Must have attended or been enrolled in a higher education institution studying abroad. Must be familiar with the obstacles of being an overseas student, including financial hardships, visa regulations, and cultural adjustment. Purposeful sampling was selected to guarantee that participants have firsthand knowledge of the research issue and can offer insightful commentary. This approach guarantees that the data gathered is extremely pertinent to the study's goals, even though it restricts the potential to extrapolate results to all students from the chosen locations.

Data Collection Method

Participation in the data-collecting process was made possible for students in various time zones by using an online survey form that was both easily available and simple to use. Anonymity ensures that participants are able to freely express their experiences without having to worry about potentially violating their privacy standards. In order to facilitate quantitative analysis, the questionnaire was organized using the Likert scale and closed-ended items. Through the use of email, university networks, and social media platforms (including Facebook, LinkedIn, and student forums), the survey was disseminated in order to reach a large and relevant pool of participants. In addition, alumni networks and student organizations were contacted in an effort to encourage participation.

Data Analysis

Through the use of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), the data from the survey was collected and analyzed in order to give useful insights into the trends, impediments, and policy interventions that influence student mobility between Southeast Asia and South Asia. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistical approaches was employed to analyze significant variables and the relationships between them.

Descriptive Statistics

For the purpose of providing a comprehensive overview of the challenges and patterns associated with student mobility, the survey data was gathered using descriptive statistics. For this study, the following statistical measures were utilized:

- *Frequency Distributions*

To investigate demographic characteristics such as gender, industry of study, location of origin, and countries of destination that are sought.

- *Measures of Central Tendency (Mean, Median, Mode)*

To take into consideration the typical patterns of financial constraints, scholarship awareness, visa concerns, and challenges associated with cultural adaptation.

- *Standard Deviations*

With the purpose of determining the extent to which the experiences of students in different categories differ from one another.

Chi-Square Test

The relationship between study choices (choice of nation or institution) and budgetary limitations was investigated using a chi-square test of independence. The purpose of this test was to ascertain whether or not financial constraints substantially impacted students' choices of certain nations or colleges.

For this study, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) and null hypothesis (H_0) were:

- H_0

Financial limitations and educational preferences do not significantly correlate.

- H_1

Study interests and budgetary limitations are significantly correlated.

The null hypothesis was rejected if the chi-square test yielded a p-value < 0.05, suggesting that students' choice of study locations was significantly influenced by their financial situation.

T-Test

Using a t-test, we were able to compare the differences in mobility obstacles that exist across different countries. The research was conducted with the intention of determining whether or not the challenges that overseas students face in terms of cultural adjustment, visa restrictions, and tuition expenses are comparable to one another or whether or not they differ from similar situations.

Two different types of t-tests were utilized, namely:

- *Independent Sample T-Test*

To assess the variations in mobility hurdles that exist between two groups (for example, South Asian students

and Southeast Asian students), it is necessary to examine differences.

- *One-Way ANOVA*

With the purpose of doing research into the differences in challenges faced by a number of countries (including Bangladesh, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and India).

The following are the alternative hypothesis (H1) and the null hypothesis (H1) that were used for the t-test:

- H_o

Students from various nations do not face significantly different mobility impediments.

- H_1

The mobility constraints faced by students from various nations vary significantly.

If the *p-value* was < 0.05, which indicated that there were significant variations in the challenges that different national groups encountered, then the null hypothesis was rejected.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The demographic analysis revealed that there was a gender distribution that was quite balanced in both India and Thailand, with the majority of respondents within the age range of 18 to 24 years old accounting for 77% of the total. The strong worldwide reputation of these educational institutions was reflected in the preferences of students from both countries for study abroad destinations. The United States of America (33%) was selected as the preferred destination by students, followed by the United Kingdom (22%) and Australia (17%). It was determined by the t-test ($p = 0.65$) that this difference did not meet the criteria for statistical

Table 1: Demographic profile

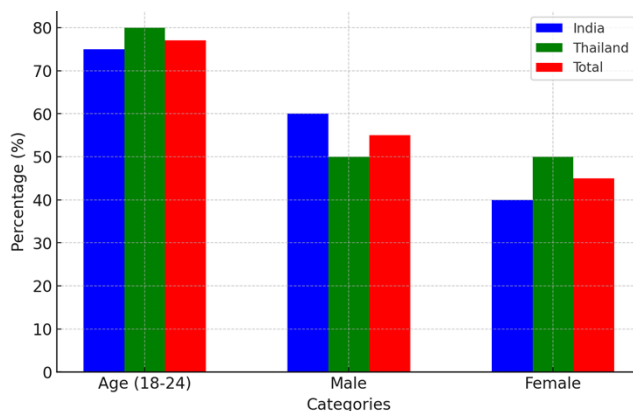| Variable	India (%)	Thailand (%)	Total (%)
Age (18–24)	75	80	77
Male	60	50	55
Female	40	50	45

Figure 1: Age and Gender Distribution in India and Thailand

significance; nonetheless, the most often mentioned barrier was financial constraints, which were experienced by 50% of Indian students and 40% of Thai students. Similarly, 30% of Indian students and 40% of Thai students indicated worry over visa issues; nevertheless, according to the t-test, there was no noticeable difference between the two groups ($p = 0.72$); this was the case. Despite the fact that students from both countries face equal obstacles when attempting to receive an overseas education, these findings underscore the necessity of governmental measures that increase financial support and expedite visa procedures in order to promote fair student mobility.

Major Findings

Financial worries are the most significant barrier to international student mobility, as indicated by the survey, which states that 50% of students in India and 40% of

Table 2: Study abroad preferences

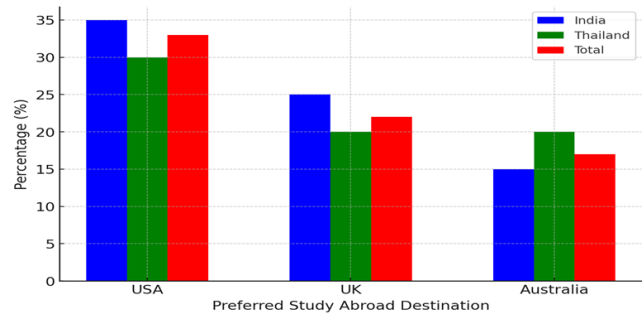| Country	India (%)	Thailand (%)	Total (%)
USA	35	30	33
UK	25	20	22
Australia	15	20	17

Figure 2: Study Abroad Preferences in India and Thailand

Table 3: Challenges faced by students

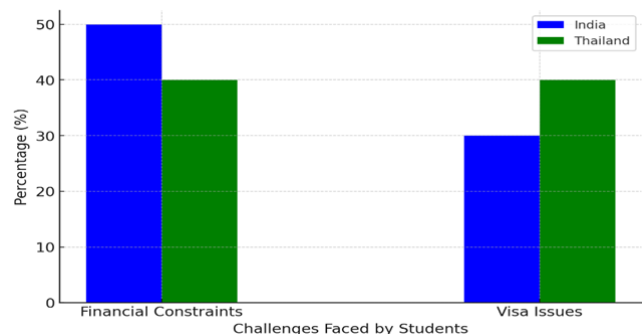| Challenge	India (%)	Thailand (%)	t-Test (p-value)
Financial constraints	50	40	0.65 ($p > 0.05$)
Visa issues	30	40	0.72 ($p > 0.05$)

Figure 3: Challenges Faced by Students in India and Thailand

students in Thailand indicate that they are their primary concern. These financial limits are made much more difficult by the high cost of tuition, the expenses associated with living, and the limited availability of student loans. Even in the event that there are scholarships available, access is further restricted due to the competitive nature of these scholarships, which makes it challenging for students who come from households with lesser incomes to pursue higher education in other countries. According to the findings, some programs that provide financial support, such as student loans with low interest rates and scholarships based on the criteria of need, have the potential to significantly boost accessibility for students from South Asia and Southeast Asia.

To add insult to injury, visa and immigration issues have become a more significant barrier for Thai students. This may be due to disparities in the admission rates, processing times, and immigration laws of the regions where they wish to pursue their education. Students may be dissuaded from applying to certain countries due to the stringent requirements and lengthy processing periods for visas, which may have an impact on the schools they choose to attend. Furthermore, the poll found that just 50% of students apply for available financial aid programs, which indicates that there is a very low level of scholarship knowledge and awareness among students. The fact that this is the case indicates that institutions and scholarship sponsors have a deficiency in their outreach and information-sharing operations. The gap might be addressed and the participation of international students could be expanded through the implementation of awareness activities, the improvement of digital access to scholarship databases, and collaboration with educational institutions located inside the country.

Recommendations

To improve the mobility of foreign students from Southeast Asia and South Asia, it is necessary to broaden the scope of outreach to educational groups that are underrepresented. A significant number of students, particularly those who come from families with lower incomes, continue to be unaware of the various financial options that are available to them since there is insufficient information transmission. It is recommended that governments, universities, and scholarship organizations carry out targeted awareness campaigns through the use of online platforms, educational fairs, and direct collaboration with high schools and colleges. Furthermore, suppose the application process is simplified and tailored guidance on scholarship eligibility is offered. In that case, a greater number of students may apply for scholarships. This would ensure that higher education is more accessible and inclusive.

Simplifying the process of applying for a visa is another vital step that should be taken to reduce the amount of bureaucratic red tape that discourages students from seeking education programs in other countries. Many students, particularly those studying in Western nations, are subjected to lengthy wait times for the processing of visas, stringent paperwork requirements, and high rates of visa denial. It should be the objective of governments and immigration authorities to simplify visa restrictions. This might include reducing the amount of time it takes to process visa applications, providing specialized services for student visa help, and establishing clear guidelines for career opportunities after graduation. Furthermore, suppose financial support programs are extended through institutional and governmental collaborations. In that case, students will have more funding options available to them. These options include work-study programs, tuition subsidies, and student loans with low interest rates. Academic connections between Asian and Western schools may be reinforced through the implementation of exchange programs, dual-degree partnerships, and cooperative research initiatives. This will further stimulate student mobility and contribute to the development of an educational system that is more tightly connected with the global community.

Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, the most significant barriers and policy gaps that restrict the migration of international students from Southeast Asia and South Asia are brought to light. Students continue to face significant barriers that prevent them from pursuing foreign education. These barriers include financial constraints, onerous immigration and visa processes, and a lack of awareness about the many funding sources available. Despite the growing demand for higher education in other countries, a significant number of students from these regions have a tough time obtaining sufficient funds and overcoming bureaucratic obstacles. This shows the need to come up with complete legislative solutions.

There are a number of important initiatives that may be taken to improve accessibility to overcome these difficulties. Some of these steps include expanding scholarship programs, expediting visa procedures, and fostering tighter academic links between Asian and Western universities. Governments, academic institutions, and lawmakers must work together to ensure that financial aid is distributed to underrepresented groups, that visa procedures are made more transparent and efficient, and that universities actively participate in cross-border cooperation. As a result of the application of these rules, international education will ultimately become more inclusive, egalitarian, and globally networked, which will be beneficial to students, institutions, and the nations that are hosting foreign students.

Acknowledgment

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