

# Media, Mobility & International Student Well-Being

Joshua W.E. Wong<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RMIT University, School of Media & Communications, s3441587@student.rmit.edu.au

How do international students pursue their own well-being in an age of ubiquitous media technologies and global mobility? In an age where mobility is rapidly becoming a key feature of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, aided by widespread usage of mobile technologies and global media (Sheller and Urry 2006), international students are becoming key stakeholders in constructing factors that influence their own well-being. At the same time, there is growing academic interest in studying international student mobility not just as economic flows of labour or capital (e.g. 'brain drains'), but also as a socio-cultural process in which social or cultural factors play a role in influencing student mobility (King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003). Mobility then, can be linked to the socio-cultural processes that surround student aspirations for "a better life", and their current or future well-being. This thesis thus attempts to unpack, through ethnographic studies and interviews, how students with global exposure to different cultures conceive of and pursue "well-being" in culturally-nuanced ways, and how the usage of new media technologies has impacted or transformed these cultural practices. By shedding light on the complexities of what "well-being" actually means to students from multiple cultures and how media technologies are transforming the way these students are practising "well-being", this thesis may be of use to well-being service providers in helping them facilitate student efforts to pursue their current or future well-being on their own terms.

## Key Words

Mobility, media, well-being, international students, cross-cultural understandings