

# Media, Mobility and Well-Being

A Case Study of International Students' Media Use for Well-Being

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## Overview

- Introduction: My Story & Two Key Insights
- Research Questions
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Some Early Results



## Introduction: My Story



Malaysia



Fiji



Indonesia



Singapore



Australia

International Student for Life!  
Mobility

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## Introduction: My Story



#1: Students are already multicultural

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## Introduction: My Story



Family



Culture



Church



Fairness

#2: Students ~~Well-Being~~ construct unique narratives about a good life

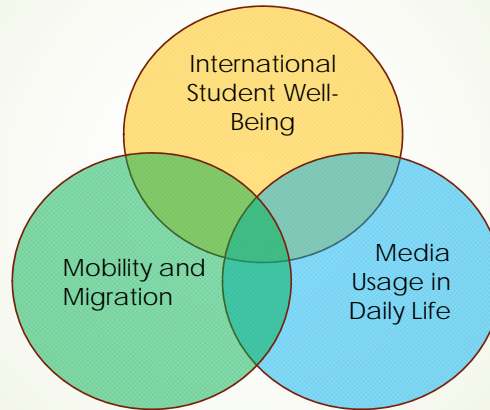
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## Research Questions

- How does a highly-mobile population of international students, with experiences of more than one culture and way of living, conceive of "well-being"?
- How do international students in Melbourne use media technologies to pursue practices that will enhance their current and future "well-being" in an age of global mobility and cultural diversity?

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## Literature Review



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## Literature Review

International Student Well-Being

### ► Questions (mostly) answered:

- What are the problems international students face?
- How widespread are these problems among international students?
- How effective are organizational initiatives in helping international students cope with their problems?

Passive vs. Active agents

### ► Questions yet to be answered:

- How do international students define "well-being", culturally?
- How do international student pursue their well-being on their own, outside organizational initiatives?

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## Literature Review

Mobility and Migration

Media Usage in Daily Life

- Why do students travel overseas to get an international education?
  - Social status, Cultural exposure, Global career, Multicultural identity, etc.
- Integration of migrants versus the “enclave society”
- How do new media technologies (internet, mobile phones, social media) change the lives of migrants?
  - Family relationships, Community participation, Changing power structures
- Surprisingly little about international students so far.

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## Methodology

- **Ethnographic approach:** Produce qualitative accounts of the beliefs, practices and “way of life” of a group of people (i.e. international students using media for well-being)
- **Participants:** 20 international students, at least 6 months in Australia.
- **Data collection:** Semi-structured interviews and picture diaries.



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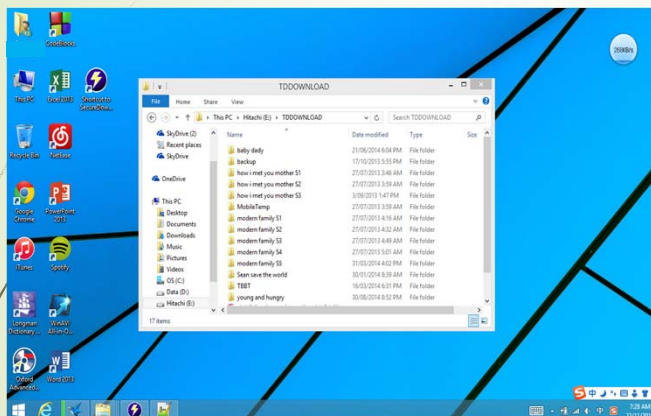
## Methodology

### Key Question Areas:

- Descriptions of life journey as international students
- Cultural influences on how they think about & practice well-being
- Challenges faced & connections to sources of well-being
- Role of media in their pursuit or practice of well-being

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## Picture diaries



"American drama is where I learn conversational English from. I will spend time watching and listening to each episode carefully and examine and [look] up those words I am not familiar with in the dictionary. It really helps me a lot with my English." – Male, 3<sup>rd</sup>-yr student, Chinese national and ethnicity.

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## Interviews: On Skype

- "Yeah, usually I would Skype my family – you know, like just leave it on the whole day while I do my work and they do their thing. Just like you know, the sound of home and the noises and their voices, and things like that. The noise back at home, seeing home and stuff, was just very comforting. My dog, I could hear him. The computer I usually Skype them faces the dining table, so they eat and things like that. They sometimes talk to me while eating." – Female, 4<sup>th</sup> yr student, Malaysian national, Chinese ethnicity

## Interviews: On Gaming

- "Social support? ... Turned back to my gaming communities. So basically, friends who have separated, but went to UK or Singapore while I was in Australia. True, there are some delays, because internet connection and the distance... when we played games together it's like we're back in high school again. So those were the initial support... Like, you're trying to get back what you lost. And, because of internet connectivity globally, everybody's in sync." – Male, 3<sup>rd</sup> yr student, Malaysian national, Chinese ethnicity

## The End


- Any Questions?

## Picture diaries



"One of the regular day-to-day activities of my life is taking yoga classes. I am using my laptop to practice a set of asana that our coach provides us. It is very important to make the asana precisely and in a particular order, that is why it is convenient to practice with the laptop watching video from the previous classes. Beyond this I can download to my laptop many different videos of yoga positions from the internet if I am interested in a type of practice apart from my one." – Female, 2<sup>nd</sup> yr student, Russian national, Slavic ethnicity





## Thesis Structure

1. Introduction
2. Literature Review
3. Family Ties
4. Religion and Spirituality
5. Play and Leisure
6. Community Life
7. Security
8. Health, Fitness & Diet
9. Other factors
10. Conclusion