



Influence of social inclusion on happiness of international students in South Korea: Mediation of resilience and moderation of social justice

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Abstract

Background/Objectives: The continual increase of international students globally calls for the necessity for their well-being to be investigated. The existence of cultural differences if not well managed might lead to international students to be victims of social exclusion. Therefore, it is of absolute necessity that educators, researchers, school administrators, and all stakeholders of public administration seek for ways to improve on the wellbeing of international students. The current study aimed at investigating how social inclusion, resilience, and social justice can be used to improve levels of happiness for international students in South Korea. **Methods/Statistical analysis:** By use of a status cross-sectional quantitative research design, data for 274 international students in South Korea were collected by use of self-reporting questionnaires using online and paper survey was analyzed using SPSS PROCESS macro. **Findings:** Findings showed that social inclusion, happiness, resilience, and social justice constructs were significantly positively correlated to each other. Further results revealed that resilience partially mediated in the relationship between social inclusion and happiness, and that social justice moderated this mediating effect. **Improvements/Applications:** These findings contribute to the literature on ways to improve international students' well-being, and suggest the use of social inclusion, resilience and social justice as critically vital constructs that help to improve international students' happiness.

Index Terms

Social Inclusion, Happiness, Resilience, Social Justice, International Students

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I. INTRODUCTION

The quest for knowledge and the increasing number of scientific and environmental challenges has led to increase of international students globally, as students in the course of their academic careers seek for opportunities to study abroad. Though the decision to study abroad is viewed generally as been voluntary, the cultural and social transition to a different institution of higher learning might be very challenging to these international students [1]. These international students are then required to form and maintain social networks as it is a good way to their development of a sense of social inclusion. They establish networks with local students (outer circle), with other international students (middle circle), with students from their own country (inner circle), and most importantly with host citizens for their daily activities. It is evident that international students who share accommodation with one another, or join a student association, and who have friends with their home and host cultures showed influence on these aspects on their social inclusion [2]. However, this isn't the case with most international students, as social exclusion might occur as a result of a mixture of several aspects such as culture, language, gender, social background or special needs [3]. According to Venetz [4], quality of inclusion by students should capture (a) integration in the positive sense of well-being at school, (b) be socially included in the sense of peers' relationship and (c) be academically integrated in the sense of trust in one's own academic performance (academic self-concept).

Existing research has limitations on the well-being of international students as higher educational institutions focus on the students' financial requirements in the admission process and assume all international students have strong financial backgrounds to support them throughout their study period abroad. However, some students seek to travel abroad in pursuit of happiness while others see overseas education as a chance for personal reinvention [5]. Whatever, the reason for oversea education, international students' happiness is strongly met by several overseas challenges that stems from culture, immigration, language, food and social needs. For instance, empirical research suggests international students' happiness was strongly affected by acculturative stress [6]. In addition to the cultural challenges that international students face, feeling isolated from activities in host country can seriously affect their happiness and life satisfaction. For instance, [7] asserted that school youths who perceived themselves as being socially excluded have low levels of psychological wellbeing. It has also been established as empirically evident that change in student sojourners (herein referred to as international students) often has negative impacts

on their happiness, as a result causes emotional distress especially in their first few months in their host country [8,9]. The happiness of students in general is crucial to their mental health and therefore calls for concern. It is important to note that due to several related factors that affects each person [10], there is a need to look for several ways on how to improve the happiness levels of international students.

While having lived or living in South Korea for more than 8 years today, our (authors) experiences as students with other international students is the strong motivation to this research as we search for ways to improve happiness amongst international students living in this beautiful country, amidst the challenges they face. The Korea Ministry of Education reported 152,281 foreign students as at 2021 in South Korea (www.english.moe.go.kr). Therefore, seeking for ways to improve international students' happiness shouldn't be left alone to researchers, but will be very beneficial to the students themselves, education institutions, and policy makers.

Some educators and researchers might debate that the traditional curriculum of schools is not the appropriate area to expect transformation of equality and social justice [11]. While looking for ways to improve happiness of international students, the perception of social justice in the host country is critical for international students' adaptation and wellbeing, thus, in view of societal inequality can act as an obstacle to wellbeing [12]. Thus, it is important for this study to investigate the roles of social justice on happiness of international students.

While working to improve happiness of international students, it is necessary to look into some of their personality traits. The several challenges international students face have an impact on their academic performance. However, there is limited research on how international students combat these challenges in non – western countries [13] such as South Korea. The current study suggests the use of personality trait resilience as a critical construct that help students overcome life pressures and stresses [14] they encounter either in school or out of school in the host countries.

Based on the limited researches that helps address the challenges that international students face, and considering the gap in literature that suggest the direct impact of social inclusion on happiness of international students, and also the gap that suggest the use of social justice and resilience as vital constructs to help improve on international students happiness, the current study intends to examine the direct influence perceived social inclusion has on international students perceive happiness, and further investigate the mediating role of students resilience in the link between perceived social inclusion and

happiness. Lastly, this study intends to investigate if social justice play a moderating role in the mediating effect of resilience.

In order to address the research objective, researcher put forward the research questions. (1) Firstly, what correlation exists amongst the constructs; social inclusion, happiness, resilience and social justice? Then, (2), does student resilience mediates the influence of social inclusion on happiness? Lastly, (3) is social justice a good moderator in the link between social inclusion and resilience as perceived by the respondents of this study?

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

The current study suggests the use of social inclusion, resilience, and social justice as critical constructs to help improve international students' happiness. Here, social inclusion is the main antecedent construct, happiness is the main outcome construct, resilience is used as a mediating construct, while social justice is used as a moderator construct in this study.

A. Social inclusion – Main Independent variable

This study adopts the concept of social inclusion from sociological perspective. Several definitions of social inclusion exist. IGI Global (www.igi-global.com) defined as; “Social inclusion is a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all. The multi-dimensional process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision – making processes”. However, the current study adopts the world bank definition of social inclusion which simply states that - social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantage on basis of their identity” – 2WB (www.worldbank.org).

Some empirical studies suggest the use of social inclusion to improve wellbeing of students. For instance, [15] asserted that the higher the students get involved in singing, the more positive their self-concept and sense of being socially included, irrespective of their ethnicity, sex or age. A recent study carried out with international students in Australia by [16] reported the use of social media as a promoter to three dimensions of social inclusion; connection with local people, culture inclusion, and

participation in local community. Another study with Chinese studying in Ireland reported increase in social inclusion of these students by creating original cross-cultural collaborative games and using gamification that is based on new bespoke technology system [17]

Students' social inclusion and well-being in school can be seen as outcome of inclusive education [18]. However, some empirical studies, reported that international students were found to have low levels of social inclusion compared to peers of host country [19,20]. Similarly, [21] found out that students, who feel they are supported with good collaboration with two teachers, also feel higher levels of social inclusion and school well-being.

B. Happiness – main dependent variable

Due to cross- cultural variations in the meaning of happiness (i.e., what constitutes happiness), the motivations underlying happiness (i.e., what people try to do to be happy), and what factors predict happiness, it is but likely that what constitutes the good and valuable substantially vary across different cultures [22]. Thus, people in different cultures might have different views of experiences and positive events as happiness instances. Thus, a broader definition adopted in this study is – Happiness is a positive motivational state that is most general and, thus, not restrict to any specific circumstances or events [23]

Students' happiness has been found to be influenced by several factors. For instance, [24] reported that students' self-esteem, academic success and financial security influenced their happiness. Similarly, a study carried out in Western Australia University reported that grades achieved, friendships developed, school facilities, opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities, and the quality of lecture were all significantly associated to students' happiness [25] Similarly, [26] in a study with university students in Malaysia, found out that international students who had more peers with home country students reported higher levels of life satisfaction and lower levels of homesickness compared to those who had few local peers.

Students in general have several factors that affects their happiness negatively. For instance, Baltaci [27] in a study with university students in Turkey, posited that students' social media addiction levels had a significant negative influence on the students' happiness levels. Higher education student's happiness has been evident to be positively correlated to their resilience [28,29]

C. Resilience – mediator construct

A person's mental system might be able to buffer

² WB: World Bank

negative effects of migration on his or her mental and physical health naturally. Empirical studies provide support for the fact that not only is it difficult to completely eliminate all college or university stressors, but have also focus on how students in general cope with the challenges [30]. Several empirical studies suggest that the extent of coping with a transition by an individual is strongly related to how resilient the individual is [31]. Furthermore, [32] posited that resilience is of much significance in helping to adjust adequately to life stressors. Therefore, resilience is defined in this study as the individuals (international students) capability in coping with stress and adversity, which may see the individual being able to return to an earlier state of normalcy with little or no indications of negative effects [33]. Academic resilience has rich literature related to students' adjustment in general but limited literature on international students' perspective. [34] posited a direct relationship between resilience and levels of stress, reporting that high levels of resilience scores predicted lower levels of stress. Similarly, several empirical studies stated that resilient students are able to manage challenges faced during transition from one university (home) to a foreign university (oversea) and are academically successful. Upon the rich literature that supports the use of resilience as good construct that helps students cope with stress, very few researches suggest us academic resilience as a mediator variable in the influence of social inclusion on the wellbeing of international students. However, the use of resilience as a mediating variable has some empirical support. For example, a recent study by [35] on international students in the United States of America, posited that international students' resilience mediated the relationship between acculturative stress and binge drinking. However, that is a gap in the literature that addresses international students' resilience as a mediating construct in the link between their perception of social inclusion and their happiness.

D. Social justice – moderator construct

There exists a wide array of definitions for social justice because different institutions and organizations have their own definitions. According to the United Nations [36], "social justice may be broadly understood as the fair and compassionate distribution of the fruits of economic growth". According to the National Association of Social Workers (www.socialworkers.org) – "Social justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities. Social workers aim to open the doors of access and opportunity for everyone, particularly those in greatest need". In the context of educational institutions, three commonalities among all these

different definitions are drawn (equal rights, equal opportunity, and equal treatment). The American Association of College Nursing [37] defines social justice as 'acting in accordance with fair treatment regardless of economic status, race, ethnicity, age, citizenship, disability, or sexual orientation'. Therefore, this study defines social justice as equal rights, equal treatments and equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, citizenship, disability (www.sdfoundation.org).

Some studies suggest the commitment of international students to the practical implementation of social justice in the host countries. For example, [38] argue that student mobility experiences have the potential to be socially just pedagogy through increasing access to new forms of education for a broad range of students. Roffee and colleague further suggested that in turn, this positions mobility as pedagogy for social justice as it provides experiential learning opportunities which encourages critical engagement of students and as well increases their capabilities to act on social justice when they return to their home countries. Another study by [39] asserted that social justice work can increase professional resilience for African American counselor educators. Other study on international students' extent of social justice found out that some higher education institutions have focused on some proponents of inclusive education predominantly on what happens in classroom than what happens in the field [40]. Harrison and colleague further reported that minimal consideration has been given to how international students fare on field placements, and suggested that there is much concern on the lack of attention to international students learning experiences. Similarly, [41] posited that race, ethnicity and socioeconomic factors inhibit participation in study abroad programs. Additionally, [42] reported that students from developing countries similarly face constraints and together with obstacles posed by huge disparities in access in quality education at all levels, together with very few opportunities offered for fully funded international studies.

In the light of limited or lack of research on social justice frameworks that focus on international counseling psychology students, [43] recently illustrated psychological processes and outcomes of social justice identity of development for international counseling psychology students in four phases; (a) cultural and social awareness of privilege and oppression, (b) critical analysis of systemic oppression across cultures, (c) synergistic development of social justice competence and bicultural competence, and (d) integration of social justice identity and competence across cultures.

Empirical literature revealed limited or lack of evidence of social justice as a moderator construct.

Therefore, there is a need for this research gap to be explored. However, in part [44] reported in the context of organizations that employees' perceptions of social entity justice moderated the relationship between perceptions about their fairness of specific events and their reactions. Furthermore, recent study by [45] asserted that Teachers social justice leadership mediated the relationship between the principals' distributed leadership behaviors and their attitudes toward multiculturalism.

Thus, after careful review of the literature, the following hypotheses were tested based on the perception of the international students:

- H1:** social inclusion will be positively correlated to happiness.
- H2:** social inclusion will be positively correlated with resilience
- H3:** social inclusion will positively correlate with social justice
- H4:** resilience is positively correlated to happiness
- H5:** resilience is positively corelated to social justice
- H6:** resilience mediates the relationship between social inclusion and happiness
- H7:** social justice moderates the link between their perception of social inclusion and their resilience

III. METHOD

A. Research design and data collection

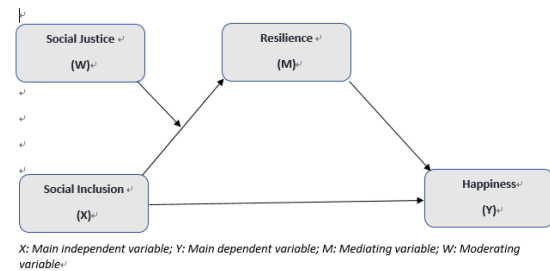
The current study used a cross-sectional quantitative design to gather data at one point in time as it allows us to describe and investigate the relationship that exists amongst the variables of study [46]. Using a self-reporting questionnaire, data for 274 participants out of 320 distributed questionnaires were selected and used for analysis, living a response rate of 85.6%. The questionnaires were distributed using online (google forms) and paper survey and data collection period was for a period of two months (December 2021 to January 2022). Participation was voluntarily and participants were ensured data confidentiality.

The locales of this study were international students living in South Korea, selected using random sampling. These participants responded to self-reporting measures with respect to their background characteristics (gender, age, education level, employment status, marital status, and family income level), and also responded to questions with respect to social justice, happiness, resilience, and social justice based on their experiences. Therefore, the gathered data was then used to investigate the relationships amongst the main constructs as depicted in the research model.

B. Research model

As gleaned from figure 1, the model of the study

as adopted from PROCESS macro model 7 [47][48] proposes that perceptions social inclusion as the main independent construct would have an influence on the happiness (main outcome variable) and an influence on resilience. Model further proposes that resilience would play a mediating role in the relationship between social justice and happiness, and lastly, that social justice would moderate the link between social inclusion and resilience as would be establish by international students in South Korea.



X: Main independent variable; Y: Main dependent variable; M: Mediating variable; W: Moderating variable

Fig. 1. Conceptual model

C. Participants

The characteristics of the 274 participants of this study can be gleaned from table1. According to gender, more than half of the participants were males (65%). It was observed that majority of the participants were master`s students (195), while the least were high school students (5), representing 72.2% and 2.2% of the overall sample respectively. Regarding employment status, majority of the participants were 'students only' (178), followed by 'students with part time job' (54) and then 'students self-employed' (41), representing 65.2%, 19.8%, and 15% of the overall study sample respectively. It was also observed that 60.6% of the participants were single while 39.4% of them were married. Furthermore, according to the family income level per annum of the participants, 139 students were from 'average income' family background, 122 students were from 'low income' family background, 5 students were from 'very low' family income background, 5 students from 'high' family income background and 3 students were from 'very high family income background.

Table 1. Profile of participants

Constructs	Sub-category	n	%
Gender	Male	178	65
	Female	96	35
Age (years)	18 – 25 years	55	20.1
	26 – 34	159	58
	35 – 44	49	17.9
	45 – 54	11	4
Education level	High school diploma	6	2.2
	Bachelor degree/equivalent	59	21.9
	Master`s degree	195	72.2

	Doctorate (PhD)	10	3.7
Employment status	Self-employed student	41	15
	Student with part time job	54	19.8
	Student only	178	65.2
Marital status	Married	108	39.4
	Single	166	60.6
Family income level	Very low	5	1.8
	Low	122	44.5
	Average	139	50.7
	High	5	1.8
	Very high	3	1.2

D. Research tools

In order to measure the constructs of this study, the following research tools were used.

1. Social inclusion measure (SIM)

In the current study, social inclusion was measured using ‘Social Inclusion Measure’ – SIM, as adopted from [49]. It is a 19 – item measure which was adapted to 17 items in the current study to suit the participants. Participants rated the items in a 5 – point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The scale consists of three domains; social isolation (5 – items; e.g., I have felt terribly alone and isolated), social relations (7 – items; e.g., I have been to new places), and social acceptance (3 – items; e.g., I have felt accepted in my neighborhood), and 2 items were fillers. A total score is obtained by summation of all individual item scores. Higher scores indicate higher perceptions levels of social inclusion and lower scores indicates lower levels of social inclusion. The Cronbach alpha value for this measure was 0.843, which indicate good reliability.

2. Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS)

In order to measure happiness, the subjective happiness scale (SHS) as adopted from [50] was used. It is a 4-item scale of global subjective happiness. A 4-point Likert scale was adapted for this study, where 1 = not all happy to 4 = very happy. A total is obtained by summing all individual scores. Highest score is 16 points and lowest score is 4 points. The Cronbach alpha (α) for this measure in this study was 0.728.

3. Conner – Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC)

In order to measure resilience, the CD-RISC Scale consisting of a 25 – item self-report measure scale was used as adopted from [51]. The respondents rated the items in a 5 – point Likert ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. All items are positively scored. Lowest score is 25 points and highest score is 125 points. A total score is obtained by summation of all individual item scores. Lower scores indicate lower level of resilience, while higher

scores indicate higher levels of resilience. The Cronbach alpha (α) value for this measure in this study was 0.768 which implies good reliability

E. Data analysis

The data for this study was analyzed using SPSS PROCESS macro [47,48] Frequency analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis was analyzed using SPSS, while the moderated mediation analysis was analyzed using SPSS PROCESS macro. Bootstrapping was performed at 95% confidence level based on 5000 corrected bootstrap samples to verify the direct, mediating, moderating, pairwise contrast effects, and index of moderated mediation.

Prior to data analysis, validity and reliability of the construct’s items were tested. For ³KMO test was used to test data adequacy, while composite reliability and Cronbach alpha was used to examine the reliability of the measures. All KMO values for constructs were above 0.5 and therefore, make data suitable for factor analysis [52,53] all composite reliability and Cronbach alpha values were above 0.7 [54] Prior analysis further reported that there was no common method bias in the research tools used since the common method variance (CMV) was 13.826 % which is less than 50% [55,56]. Therefore, the data for this study was suitable for analysis (see table 2). Prior to regression analysis, all continuous variables were mean centered and negative items were reverse coded.

Table 2. KMO’s, composite reliability and Cronbach alpha values for main constructs

Constructs	KMO measure	Composite reliability (CR)	Cronbach alpha (α)	Harman’s single factor test
Social inclusion	0.752	0.876	0.843	
Happiness	0.698	0.839	0.728	13.826%
Resilience	0.586	0.819	0.768	
Social justice	0.736	0.890	0.867	

IV. RESULTS

The results are presented in order of the research problems

A. Correlation analysis and descriptive statistics (problem 1)

In order to describe the main constructs of this study, descriptive statistics was used. As gleaned from table 3 below, the extent of perceived social inclusion was high (m = 3.801, sd = 0.316) as

³ KMO: Kaiser, Meyer, Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for factor analysis. A test that determines how suited the data is for factor analysis.

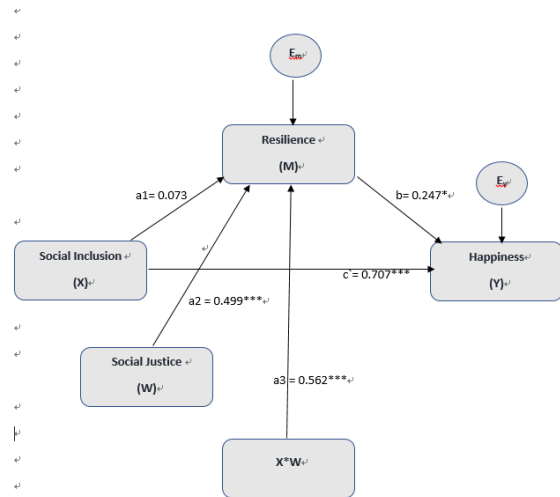
reported by the participants of this study. Regarding the extent of happiness, participants reported a perceived mean score of 3.449 (sd = 0.497) in a scale of 1 to 4, which indicates higher level of perceived happiness as reported by the participants of this study. Similarly, the perceived extents of resilience and social justice was high with reported mean scores of 4.235 (sd = 0.267) and 4.306 (sd = 0.328) respectively. The test of normality reported that the data points for these constructs supported the rule of a standard normal distribution since all absolute values of skewness were less than 3 and all absolute values of kurtosis were less than 7 [57-59]

Further investigation of the correlation among the main constructs revealed that social inclusion, happiness, resilience and social justice were all significantly positively correlated to each other. Accordingly, the positive correlation between social inclusion and happiness ($r = 0.464, p < 0.001$) implies that the more immigrants perceived high levels of social inclusion (acceptance, relations) amongst members of their new environment, their perceptions of happiness will increase and vice versa. Similarly, immigrants' levels of resilience will increase with increase in their perceptions of social inclusion as reported by the positive correlation between these two constructs ($r = 0.145, p < 0.05$). Positive correlation between social justice and social inclusion ($r = 0.411, p < 0.001$) indicate that the more immigrants perceived there is high levels of social justice the more socially inclusive they become to the host country, and also that the more socially excluded they perceive their presence in the host country the lesser their perception of social justice. Furthermore, the significant positive correlation between resilience and happiness ($r = 0.197, p < 0.01$) indicate increase levels of resilience will lead to increase levels of happiness as perceived by the respondents. Lastly, the positive correlation between resilience and social justice ($r = 0.407, p < 0.001$) indicate that immigrants will become more resilient to a high perception of social justice system in the host country.

Table 3. Correlation and descriptive statistics of main constructs

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Social inclusion	1			
2. Happiness	0.464***	1		
3. Resilience	0.145*	0.197**	1	
4. Social justice	0.411***	0.174**	0.407***	1
Mean	3.801	3.449	4.235	4.306
SD	0.316	0.497	0.267	0.328
Skewness	-1.074	-0.856	0.126	-1.000
Kurtosis	3.711	0.517	0.476	4.035

*** $P < 0.001$; ** $P < 0.01$; * $P < 0.05$; std. error: standard error



X*W: Interaction between social inclusion and social justice; * $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.001$; $F(2, 271) = 41.030^{***}$, $R^2 = 23.2\%$

Fig. 2. Statistical Model

B. Moderated mediation analysis (research problem 2 and 3)

In order to investigate research problems 3 and 4, moderated mediation analysis using ordinary least squares path analysis was performed. Presented in figure 2 (above) is the statistical model for this study. The model reported that social inclusion (main antecedent variable – X) affects happiness (main outcome variable – Y) in two pathways.

The first pathway is the direct path that runs from social inclusion (X) directly to happiness (Y) with passing through any other construct. This path reported that social inclusion had a significant positive influence ($B = 0.701, P < 0.001$) on happiness as perceived by the respondents. This effect implies that if the perception levels of social inclusion by the immigrants increases by 1-point, perceived happiness increases by 0.701 point.

Then, the second pathway is the known as the indirect path that runs from social inclusion passing through resilience to happiness. As reported in figure 2 or from table 4, the influence of social inclusion on resilience was positive but not significant ($a1 = 0.073, p > 0.05$) at 95% confidence level. However, the effect of social inclusion on resilience was moderated by social justice as the interaction effect between social inclusion and social justice on resilience was significant (SI*SJ: $a3 = 0.562, p < 0.001$). This second pathway also showed that social justice had a significant positive effect on resilience ($a2 = 0.499, p < 0.001$), and also that resilience significantly positively influenced happiness ($b1 = 0.247^*, p < 0.05$).

The overall model for this study suggests that social inclusion and resilience when taking as a set predicts 23.2% of the variance in happiness as established by the respondents of this study. In order

words findings suggest social inclusion and resilience are good predictors of perceived happiness. More also, study suggest that as established by the participants of the current study, social inclusion would have a direct influence of happiness and also have a significant indirect influence on happiness through its effect on resilience which is conditioned on social justice. Path analysis also revealed that social inclusion and social justice are significant predictors of students’ resilience as they were able to explain 32.6% of the variance in resilience.

C. Verification of the mediating effect

In order to verify the mediating effect of resilience in the relationship between perceived social inclusion and happiness, bootstrap analysis based on

5000 corrected bootstrap samples was performed at 95% confidence level. As presented in table 5, bootstrap confidence interval for the conditional indirect effect of social inclusion on happiness (B: 0.018 & 0.064), based on 5000 bootstrap samples was entirely above zero (0.017 to 0.063; 0.007 to 0.133) at average (M) and at high (M + 1SD) values of the moderator – social justice respectively. Similarly, bootstrap confidence interval for all *pairwise contrast effects* were entirely above zero. Thus, it was verified that resilience partially mediated the relationship between social inclusion and happiness.

Table 4. Path analysis

Outcome variable Resilience							
Model summary	R	R-square	MSE	F	Df1	Df2	p-value
	0.571	0.326	0.049	43.569	3	270	0.000
Model 1	B	SE	T	p-value	LLCI	ULCI	
Constant	4.211	0.014	308.553	0.000	4.184	4.238	
Social inclusion	0.073	0.048	1.530	0.127	- 0.021	0.168	
Social justice	0.499	0.049	10.214	0.000	0.402	0.595	
Int_1 (SI*SJ)	0.562	0.070	8.012	0.000	0.424	0.700	
Test of highest order unconditional interaction							
SI*SJ	R ² -change	F-value	Df1	Df2	p-value		
	0.160	64.190	1	270	0.000		
Outcome variable Happiness							
Model Summary	R	R-square	MSE	F	Df1	Df2	p-value
	0.482	0.232	0.191	41.030	2	271	0.000
Model 2	B	SE	T	p-value	LLCI	ULCI	
Constant	2.404	0.425	5.658	0.000	1.568	3.241	
Social inclusion	0.701	0.085	8.267	0.000	0.534	0.868	
Resilience	0.247	0.100	2.462	0.014	0.049	0.444	

Table 5. Verification of the mediating effect

Direct effect	Effect	SE	T	p-value	LLCI	ULCI
	0.701	0.085	8.267	0.000	0.534	0.868
*Conditional Indirect effect SI>RES>HAP	Social justice levels	Effect (B)	BootSE	BootLLCI		BootULCI
		-0.328	- 0.027	0.023	- 0.082	0.009
		0.000	0.018	0.020	0.017	0.063
		0.328	0.064	0.032	0.007	0.133
	Index of moderated mediation					
	Social justice	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI		BootULCI
		0.139	0.060	0.017		0.257
Pairwise contrasts between conditional indirect effects (effect1 minus effect2)						
Effect 1 minus effect 2	Effect1	Effect2	Contrast	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
	0.018	- 0.027	0.045	0.020	0.006	0.084
	0.064	- 0.027	0.091	0.040	0.011	0.168
	0.064	0.018	0.045	0.020	0.006	0.084

D. Verification of the moderating effect

In order to verify the moderating effect of social justice in the path between social inclusion and resilience, bootstrap analysis based on 5000 corrected bootstrap samples was performed at 95% confidence level. Thus, the *interaction effect*, and *test of highest order unconditional interaction* was performed. As gleaned from table 4, bootstrap confidence interval for the *interaction effect* (0.562) based on 5000 bootstrap samples was entirely above zero (0.424 to 0.700). Furthermore, the *test of highest order unconditional interaction* was also statistically significant (R²- change = 0.160, F (1, 270) = 64.190***). Therefore, it was evident that social justice moderated the link between social inclusion and resilience.

Furthermore, using Johnson – Neyman floodlight method, the moderator values at which the moderating effect of social justice was significant was also verified. As gleaned from table 6, social justice moderated the link between social inclusion and resilience at regions when the values of social justice were below – 0.296 (representing 16.788% of the values below – 0.296), and also in regions where values of social justice were above 0.040 (representing 40.511% of values above 0.040).

Table 6. Johnson – Neyman significant region

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):						
XXXSJ	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULC
-.328	-.111	.048	-2.330	.021	-.205	-.017
.000	.073	.048	1.530	.127	-.021	.168
.328	.258	.058	4.439	.000	.143	.372

Moderator value(s) defining Johnson-Neyman significance region(s):			
Value	% below	% above	
-.296	16.788	83.212	
.040	59.489	40.511	

Conditional effect of focal predictor at values of the moderator:						
SJ	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-1.431	-.731	.100	-7.317	.000	-.927	-.534
-1.324	-.671	.093	-7.189	.000	-.855	-.487
-1.218	-.611	.087	-7.031	.000	-.783	-.440
-1.112	-.552	.081	-6.832	.000	-.711	-.393
-1.006	-.492	.075	-6.579	.000	-.639	-.345
-.899	-.432	.069	-6.257	.000	-.568	-.296
-.793	-.373	.064	-5.843	.000	-.498	-.247
-.687	-.313	.059	-5.312	.000	-.429	-.197
-.581	-.253	.055	-4.634	.000	-.361	-.146
-.474	-.193	.051	-3.786	.000	-.294	-.093
-.368	-.134	.048	-2.760	.006	-.229	-.038
-.296	-.093	.047	-1.969	.050	-.186	.000
-.262	-.074	.047	-1.579	.115	-.166	.018
-.156	-.014	.046	-.307	.759	-.106	.077
-.049	.045	.047	.965	.336	-.047	.138
.040	.096	.049	1.969	.050	.000	.192
.057	.105	.049	2.146	.033	.009	.202
.163	.165	.052	3.176	.002	.063	.267
.269	.225	.056	4.035	.000	.115	.334
.376	.284	.060	4.730	.000	.166	.403
.482	.344	.065	5.284	.000	.216	.472

.588	.404	.071	5.724	.000	.265	.543
.694	.463	.076	6.073	.000	.313	.614

More also, the moderating effect of social justice was visualized as showed in figure 3. As visualized, at low values (M – 1SD) of the moderator – social justice and at low values of the focal antecedent – social inclusion, the level of resilience is 4.083. Then as the value of moderator – social justice changes to average (M), and at average values of the focal antecedent – social inclusion, the level of resilience increases to 4.211. Then, lastly, as the level of moderator – social justice increases to high (M + 1SD), and at high level (M + 1SD) of social inclusion, the level of resilience increases further to 4.456. These finding suggest that as perceived by the respondents of the current study, low levels of resilience were associated to low levels of social inclusion and low levels of social justice, and also that higher levels of resilience were associated to higher levels of social inclusion and higher levels of social justice.

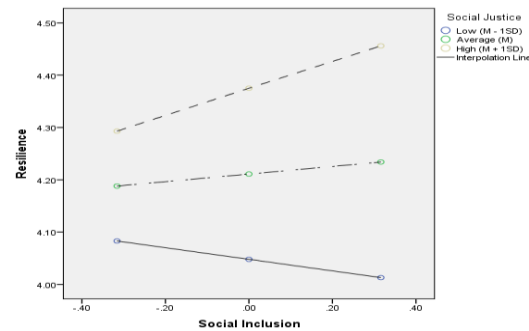


Fig. 3. Visual representation of the moderating effect of social justice

E. Verification of the conditional indirect effect

In order to verify the conditional indirect effect of social inclusion on happiness, *index of moderated mediation* analysis was performed. This is to verify whether social justice moderated the mediating effect of resilience in the relationship between social inclusion and happiness. The *index of moderated mediation* was verified using bootstrapping based on 5000 corrected bootstrap samples. As showed in table 5, bootstrap confidence interval for the *index* (0.139) based on 5000 bootstrap samples of moderated mediation was entirely above zero (0.017 to 0.257) which implies that social justice moderated the mediating effect of resilience in the relationship between social inclusion and happiness as established by participants of this study. In other words, the *conditional indirect effect* of social inclusion on happiness was verified to be statistically significant.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Whereas, several studies exist that connects individuals' social inclusion and other social resources to the outcomes of well-being, very few researches have acknowledged the direct influence of social inclusion on international students' well-being, and basically no study has investigated the moderating effect of social justice in the mediating effect of resilience on the influence of social inclusion on the happiness of international students as examined in the current study. The current study suggests the use of social justice and student resilience as critically vital construct that further influences the positive influence of social inclusion on international students' happiness. Using a status cross-sectional quantitative research design, overall analysis of this study revealed that social inclusion, happiness, resilience and social justice were all statistically significantly positively correlated to each other as established by those international students in South Korea who participated in this study. Furthermore, resilience was evident to significantly mediate the positive effect of social inclusion on happiness, and social justice was found to moderate this mediating effect.

From the point of view of research problem one – correlation. The significant positive correlation between social inclusion and happiness as observed in this study, suggest that when international students perceived positive levels of been socially included in all activities of the host university and the community, they feel happier with their life in the new country. On the contrary, the more socially exclusive international students perceive their presence in their new environment, the more unhappy they may become. Consistent with this finding, Delhey and Dragolov [60] posited that Europeans are indeed happier and psychologically healthier in more socially inclusive societies. Therefore, public or academic policy needs to promote social inclusion for all students irrespective of their age, gender, or ethnicity. However, strengthening immigrants' social relations, connectedness, and their civil society engagement remains challenging policy goals in some countries.

Furthermore, the positive correlation between international students' perception of social inclusion and their resilience indicates that international students become more resilient when they perceive good relations with peers (inner, middle, or outer circle), feel accepted by the community, and when they do not feel isolated. On the contrary feelings of being socially excluded in their new environment can make these students possess less resilient personality trait. Some empirical studies support our findings. For example, a recent study by Lee et al. [61] with Latinx in the United States of America asserted that

Latinx immigrants with greater social support and less feelings of been lonely were more resilient than their counterpart. Similarly, [62] found out that Chinese immigrants in Canada reported higher levels of resilience was significantly associated to lower levels of loneliness after undergoing intervention program on loneliness and social isolation. Therefore, institutions of higher learning in South Korea should promote socially inclusive activities and resilient curricular counseling with international students to help reduce their feelings of loneliness.

The positive correlation between social justice and social inclusion as established by respondents of the current study suggest that a country with well established norms on equal rights, equal security, fairness and opportunities for all will promote a socially inclusive society, whereas a country which doesn't emphasize on equal rights and opportunities for all will leave its residents with a socially exclusive societal experience. The concept of social justice and social inclusion are often discussed alongside. For example, Fortune and Arai [63] argued that if the principles of social justice guided inclusion efforts, there would be dialogue and negotiation aimed at re-imagining social inclusion and create a space that is inclusive and hopeful for all citizens. Hawkins [64] suggested the strategies that support the pedagogy of teaching for social justice as it raised critical consciousness of both preschoolers and early childhood educators to respect and value difference, diversity and human dignity (3Ds). Hawkins further suggested that with early introduction of this framework on social justice in the curriculum and its practical implementation on the practice of social inclusion, have implications for early childhood education, both internationally and nationally as it supports teaching for social justice with judicious use of children's literature which promotes their understanding of difference, diversity and dignity. Therefore, higher institutions in South Korea should practicalize the international students' involvement in social justice and social inclusion.'

The positive correlation between resilience and social justice as perceived by respondents suggest that the more international students perceive a socially just community the more resilient, they become, whereas when there is high level of social injustice experiences by these students' they will become less resilient. Similarly, Vakeva et al. [65] suggested that creating institutional resilience by means of music education can lead to new insights on how social justice and inclusion may be enhanced with opening of its borders to the exchange of new information and resourcing options. Furthermore, the positive correlation between perceptions of social justice and happiness suggests that more socially just a society is perceived by international students the happier they will become. In most cases the decision

to migrate sometimes is based on one's expectations for one's living conditions and therefore, one's wellbeing. However, these expectations become a nightmare for some international students or for some immigrants in general. Partly consistent with the current findings, Paloma et al. [66] in a study with Moroccan Migrants in Southern Spain, reported that their wellbeing was strictly determined by the level of social justice in the receiving context (openness to diversity of the receiving community). Therefore, policy makers, academic institutions should educate all students on the implications of social justice as this will help create a happy atmosphere especially for the foreign students. Lastly, the positive correlation between students' resilience and their happiness implies that the more resilient these international students are, the happier they become. This is so because resilience is a good buffer to stressors that might negatively affect students' happiness. Similarly, a recent study by [67] on medical students in Jeddah – Saudi Arabia found out significant positive correlation between student resilience and life satisfaction, and between resilience and happiness.

According to research problem two and three. To begin with, we found out that perceptions of social inclusion directly influenced happiness as established by the respondents. This implies that increase levels of socially inclusive activities to international students by the institution will increase these students happiness levels. In other words any perceived increase in acceptance, relations, fairness, connectivity by international students in South Korea, the happier they will become in their new environment. Consistent with this assertion, [68] posited that the likelihood of being happy for Taiwanese who received medical benefits, as well as those who do not have housing problems or financial difficulties was higher compared to their counterparts (those who didn't receive medical benefits). Thus, it is evident that a socially inclusive society will lead to a happy society, therefore, academic institutions in South Korea should strive to a more socially inclusive academic environment as this will improve on the life satisfaction of all students.

The significant partial mediating role of resilience in the effect of social inclusion on happiness implies that resilience is a significant personality trait that buffers the negative influence socially exclusive society might have on international students. In other words ensuring a socially inclusive academic environment with the creation of resilience promoting frameworks in academic institutions will further improve on the happiness and well-being of international students. Some empirical studies suggest the use of resilience as a good mediator variable. For example, Roslan and Zaremohzabieh [69]

in a study with Chinese students in Malaysia found out that resilience and spirituality partially mediated the relationship between social support and psychological well-being. Several other recent studies [70-72] supported the use of resilience as a mediator construct. However, there was a gap on the specific mediating effect of resilience as observed in the current study. Therefore, resilience is a critically important personality trait that academic authorities should emphasize its implementation in their educational curricular.

Lastly, the moderating role of social justice in the relationship between social inclusion and resilience implies that a socially inclusive academic environment that is further based on strong principles of social justice will further strengthen international students' resilience, and thus improve on their levels of happiness. There is rich literature on the importance of social justice in the society [73, 74] however, very few research has addressed the perception of social justice as a moderator construct to improve on the well-being of international students.

In a nutshell, the current study opens new door to future research and as well add to existing literature on ways to improve the well-being of international students. We suggest the use of academic resilience, social inclusion and social justice as critically important factors that would help improve on the happiness levels of international students, thus their well-being. In review of the literature, we found out that there was rich empirical evidence of the positive relationship between social inclusion and social justice, and also strong support for the use of resilience as a construct to fight stress in general. However, there was a huge research gap in the use of resilience and social justice as strong intervening construct to improve the positive influence of social inclusion on international students' happiness, which is the strong contribution of this study to future research.

The current study had some limitations. Firstly, the use of status cross-sectional research design, which precludes studies into causal relationships. Therefore, future research on this topic should perform a longitudinal design. Secondly, participants were selected in some selected universities in South Korea, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future studies should include all universities with foreign students.

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